Editors' introduction

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The world of identities, affiliations, and allegiances is elusive. Nations and peoples have formed and reformed themselves with astonishing variety over much of the twentieth century, calling into question older orthodoxies that had been buttressed, perhaps, by traditional nation-state projects. It has become truistic, even ritualistic, to reject primordial depictions of human attachment as hopelessly out of touch with its socially constructed character. Anyone willing to look knows that primordialism involves bad anthropology that is all too easily pressed into the service of dubious ideological projects.

If we can speak with confidence about what human attachment is not, things rapidly become more difficult when we try to pin down what it is. Indeed, trying to answer this question in general terms may be a hopeless endeavor. In any event, it will not occupy us here. Our concern is with the political dimensions of human attachment, with why people identify and affiliate themselves with the political projects that they do, how and why these allegiances change, and how and why they should change – to the extent that they can be consciously influenced if not directed.

Pressing as these questions might be, we seek less to supply definitive answers to them than to illuminate some of the complexities that those who aspire to come up with definitive answers will need to take into account. A degree of humility is likely a precondition for progress in this field, given the lamentable track record of prior scholarship. It is not just the primordialists who have missed the boat. The dominant social-scientific theories of the past century and a half give us scant leverage on the nature and evolution of political attachments. According to classical Marxists, nationalism and other forms of attachment that ran counter to class interest would atrophy as the worldwide proletariat came to identify itself as a "class-for-itself." Whig historians and modernization theorists of the 1950s and 1960s reached a comparable conclusion – if by different routes. Traditional attachments would be ploughed under by the rationalizing forces of industrialization, as the world's populations became

increasingly urban and their aspirations gradually more bourgeois. History demurred.

The rational choice theories that have been so influential in the social sciences in recent decades hardly fare much better in accounting for the political attachments people form and the astonishing things that these attachments can induce them to do. The reduction of human motivation to the instrumental calculations of *homo economicus* is as impotent in the face of individuals flying jetliners into skyscrapers with the faith that theirs is a holy cause as in accounting for the tens of thousands of British, French, Indian, Australian, and New Zealand soldiers who charged to certain death at the battle of Gallipoli in 1915. Even the mundane political allegiances that induce people "irrationally" to vote in the tens of millions in democracies the world over defy these instrumental models. It seems an understatement to say that there is much about political identities, affiliations, and allegiances that is not well understood.

Rather than rehearse these and other arguments about primordial, constructivist, epiphenomenal, and instrumental conceptions of political attachment, our plan here is to consider political identities in the context of institutional and historical practices. Identities and institutions mutually reinforce one another; we are less interested in their causal interdependence than in their continuing interaction across time and space. New political identities are enabled by novel institutional configurations; such institutional configurations come under pressure when they can no longer satisfy new identity needs.

The authors in part I explore the origins of particular conceptions of national identity, the ways in which they have evolved over time, how linked they are to geography and other relatively enduring aspects of peoples' circumstances. They do not eschew the large theoretical and normative questions just alluded to, but they explore them in particular contexts. In chapter 1 Faruk Birtek considers the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the modern Turkish Republic in order to supply a basis for larger claims about the nature of republican citizenship. Birtek makes the case that modern Turkish republican consciousness was in significant part a response to the Greek invasion of Asia Minor. It galvanized a previously syncretic Ottoman identity into a much more virulent nationalism that could not be absorbed by the old order that had managed multiethnic society with comparatively high levels of toleration. It is common to think of multiethnic societies as vulnerable principally to centrifugal pressures – to "the enemy within" – if there are too many distinct groups and there is an insufficient sense of common purpose. Birtek's discussion provides a salutary reminder that they may be just as vulnerable – perhaps even more so – to external pressures. Put differently,

the need for a hegemonic sense of national purpose may have more to do with external threats than with the internal dynamics of multiethnic societies.

Turkey was, of course, a latecomer by European nation-state standards, but Birtek's story nonetheless illustrates one path by which national political identities can be cemented into existence. It also suggests that a novel perspective on other modern nationalisms may be worth exploring. Perhaps the aggressive imperialisms of Britain, France, Spain, Germany, and Belgium in Africa, Asia, and Latin America had more to do with consolidating their own national political identities than with the societies that came under their tutelage. Just as recent scholarship has suggested that racism in the American South, Brazil, and South Africa was largely about consolidating alliances within the dominant group, so, too, nineteenth-century European imperialisms may have been integral to manufacturing the national identities of modern Europe.[1] Similar hypotheses might be explored in relation to many wars. How likely is it that George W. Bush could have held together the disparate members of his electoral coalition in 2004 – religious fundamentalists, fiscal conservatives, heavily subsidized farmers, libertarians – without the corralling effects of the "war on terror"?

No matter how historically contingent national identities may be, they are all too easily naturalized or otherwise taken for granted by the people who are caught up in them. Indeed, part of the power of primordialism derives, no doubt, from its usefulness in getting people to embrace their national affiliations as nonnegotiable – given for all time. The idea that national political identification is an ineradicable feature of the human condition permeates much contemporary thinking so completely that people do not even notice it – just as fish cannot see the water in which they swim. In chapter 2 Nancy Fraser shows how much of our thinking about the public sphere is shaped by such unexamined assumptions about national political identity. She makes the case that the idea of the public sphere was originally developed, among other things, to contribute to a normative political theory of democracy. In a like spirit to David Held, she argues that historically it was a progressive idea, geared to the democratization of the highly centralized absolutist states that made up the Westphalian system.[2] Once that goal was substantially accomplished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, the idea of the national public sphere became depoliticized – seen as part of the "natural" political environment. The difficulty, in Fraser's view, is that it is decreasingly adequate to a globalizing world in which it

[1] See, e.g. Key (1949); Marx (1998). [2] See, e.g. Held (1999).

has come to operate as a brake on progressive democratic change. She believes that some of the responses to the harmful effects of globalization on the transnational public sphere, such as the anti-corporatist consumer movement and even transnational social movements, are unwitting hostages of the nation-state idea. As a result, they do not go far enough in challenging the foundations of an increasingly depoliticized and corporative global order. This analysis leads Fraser to argue that we should rethink our conceptions of the public sphere for a global era and promote institutional changes that would restore it as an instrument of democratization.

Fraser wants us to reassess assumptions taken for granted in arguments about the public sphere, the first of which is the assumption about the presumed naturalness or obviousness of nations. In chapter 3, Charles Maier offers some salutary cautions about how difficult such reassessment might be to realize in practice. Just as some of Held's critics have argued that he is too sanguine in assuming that an international *Rechtsstaat* can be created in the face of strong nationalistic attachments, Maier warns that we should not be quick to dismiss the role of spaces, places, and territories in creating and sustaining collective identities.[3] Maier makes the case that among sociologists, historians, and political scientists – indeed in virtually all academic disciplines except for geography – scholars have tended to take these spatial parameters as mere background. They have focused instead on citizenship, religion, and ethnicity as the building blocks of political identities. Maier argues that this is a mistake. Space, territory, place, and geographic boundaries do not produce contending identities all by themselves. But they are intimately and reciprocally linked to identity formation. They help forge political identities, and, though they are themselves partly shaped by the social structures they help produce, they also take on relatively enduring lives of their own. They are unlikely, on his account, to be abandoned as vital elements of political identity any time soon. Even a passing acquaintance with the ways in which space and territory have become bound up with the identity conflicts in the Middle East suggests that Maier's caution is not to be dismissed.

Political identities that are rooted in territorially defined nation-states are likely, then, to be enduring features of political reality despite the globalizing pressures of the contemporary world. Indeed, widespread attachment to these identities may well have intensified in recent decades partly in response to the insecurities – most obviously of employment and income – that have accompanied globalization. Whatever the cause, an important agenda for political theorists is to develop accounts of how

[3] See, e.g. Kymlicka (1999); Wendt (1999).

democratic institutions can be developed that are realistic about these constraints but which take better account of the evolving power relations in the contemporary world. One approach, advocated by Rainer Bauböck in chapter 4, is to stop thinking about political membership in zero-sum ways.

Bauböck proposes moving toward a system in which most individuals will enjoy simultaneous citizenship in several nested polities, and where state sovereignty is delegated both upwards and downwards. The normative superiority of this model, according to Bauböck, is that it can much better accommodate the legitimate claims of and equal rights for those individuals that are misaligned in the Westphalian order that continues to dominate the world's state system. He explains why his proposed modifications need not threaten the strong horizontal pluralism that characterizes the present state system, but would instead extend it towards a pluralism of several types of political community and of multiple individual affiliations within them. Bauböck argues that this model offers at least a chance for strengthening global institutions and reducing the outrageous discrepancy between the normative equality of sovereign states and the drastic inequality in the current global distribution of power and resources.

The part of the world in which the kind of proposals Bauböck proposes have been most fully explored in practice is Europe. The chapters comprising part II explore different facets of this ongoing experiment. In chapter 5 Veit Bader explores how institutions can be designed that could both reflect and respond to flexible, multiple, and differentiated obligations and memberships. Bader considers various ways to manage the substantial tradeoff between national identities, cultures, and solidarities and European commitments. Bader explains why much of the huge literature on this subject is vitiated by a false dichotomy that appears to force a choice between the nation-state and the European federal state as the fundamental unit to which political allegiance is owed. Bader offers an alternative vision that appeals to multiple overlapping identities, solidarities, and affiliations, and to multilevel polities and governance. He defends a model of authority and individual rights that rests on differentiated powers, competences, rights, and obligations operating for different populations through different institutions. Because moral appeals and pedagogy, as Bader puts it, will not get the job done, he advocates particular institutional reforms that can facilitate his objective. He does not go so far as to suggest that these reforms will make the tradeoff between federal and national commitments disappear entirely. Rather, he shows how his institutional strategies can transform the one large tradeoff into many smaller and more manageable ones.

In chapter 6 Julie Mostov considers a different facet of multiple and overlapping identities, also in the European context. She considers possible ways of facilitating legal border crossings and cross-border polities as a democratic practice that respects ethnonational identities but does not recognize them as relevant criteria for the allocation and enjoyment of public goods. She takes issue with the view of identities as requiring long shared histories or strong cultural ties, pointing out that what are believed to be identities with ancient lineages have often been recently minted and externally imposed. But her argument revolves less around replacing existing national identities than mitigating their "gatekeeper" status. She shows how borders can be softened by recognizing allegiances to overlapping polities, including those that stretch across the boundaries of existing nation-states, and by facilitating different kinds of participation based on functional interdependencies, intersecting interests, and multiple attachments.

Mostov's argument draws on the experience from the Balkan countries of Southeastern Europe in which hard borders and external sovereignty have left the region with continuing ethnic conflicts, weak governments, and fragile political coalitions unable to provide goods and services. Indeed, basic features of public trust and the rule of law have been sufficiently lacking that these countries have been plagued by crime, illegal trade and trafficking, strained budgets, and increasing gaps between rich and poor. The alternative that Mostov proposes working toward would be focused more on state functions than state borders, and would involve the search for regional strategies for building institutional capacities and softening national borders. It appeals to a relational, rather than a jurisdictional, understanding of sovereignty. Mostov's agenda involves reconsidering the democratic polity in a way that allows for fluid, but loosely bounded polities that extend across networks of subnational units and existing national borders. In this respect it delivers on Fraser's invitation to re-imagine the foundations of public spaces in ways that straddle existing symbolic and territorial borders.

In chapter 7 Riva Kastoryano identifies a new type of nationalism, transnational nationalism, which she sees developing most clearly among Muslim immigrants in the European Union. Transnational nationalism, according to Kastoryano, is expressed and developed beyond and outside the borders of the state and its territory. The various forms of communities and networks created by the Muslim immigrants in Europe highlight, for her, the emergence of a distinct transnational community on a European level. Its members have settled in different national societies, but they share common national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic points of reference and they identify with common interests that straddle

national boundaries. Elites within the group seek to channel the loyalty of individuals comprising the territorialized political community towards a nonterritorialized political community, thus redefining the terms of belonging and allegiance to a kind of "global nation." Kastoryano argues that although the state remains the principal actor in the national and international domain, transnational nationalism increasingly provides for many an affective source of identification, resistance, and mobilization. She also suggests that this deterritorialized nationalism may become a critical new source of tensions between states and communities.

Whereas the chapters in part II are concerned with strategies for multiplying and pluralizing the allegiances that have traditionally been attached to national political institutions, in part III the focus shifts to a different though related agenda: dissociating citizenship from national political identities. The authors all explore variants of the proposition that it may be possible to decouple citizenship from identity without any cost to democratic politics.

In chapter 8 Clarissa Hayward argues that the term "democratic citizenship" invokes two distinct sets of principles that live in mutual tension: a democratic ideal of inclusive collective self-government and a civic ideal of public-regarding politics motivated by a strong citizen identification. Hayward considers recent efforts to reconcile these principles, focusing on theories that analyze democratic citizenship through the lens of the contemporary city. This emerging body of work has led Jane Jacobs and others to argue that contact among strangers may be sufficient to foster a conscious awareness of the other that, while stopping short of shared identity, facilitates and encourages political openness to the stranger's views and claims. Jacobs' ethnographic sketch of her Greenwich Village neighborhood in the early 1960s is the classic of the genre.[4] Jacobs argued that regular and unplanned contact in urban dwellings encourages openness between people who are strangers not only in being unfamiliar with one another, but also in that they do not share an identity based on social sameness or even common interest. Politicizing Jacobs' notion of being "on excellent sidewalk terms" with strangers, others have argued that contemporary city life can forge an openness to "strange" political claims and views by enabling urban dwellers to recognize each other as citizens. Hayward evaluates this provocative thesis and finds it wanting. She points out that it rests on various implausible empirical assumptions, and that it assumes, no more plausibly, that citizenship can bind people together without imposing arbitrary civic boundaries on them. The tension Hayward identifies is a good deal harder to resolve than these scholars

[4] See Jacobs (1961).

of urban politics have contended. The best we can do, she thinks, is to work to render the tension explicit, with a view to promoting democratic contestation over the definition of the civic "we."

Jean Tillie and Boris Slijper's empirical research, described in chapter 9, suggests that there may be reasons to be more optimistic than Hayward is about detaching democratic citizenship from an overarching sense of shared political identity. Their empirical study examines variations in the degree of immigrant participation in local politics for the most important ethnic groups in Amsterdam (Turks, Moroccans, and Surinamese). They find that Turks (whose communities have the highest organizational density) are more inclined to vote in local elections and participate in local deliberative processes than the other two groups. Perhaps more significant, and counterintuitive, they find a strong positive correlation between high levels of organizational segregation and political participation.[5] If corroborated by future research, these findings bear importantly on contemporary debates in many Western countries on the integration of immigrant ethnic groups. *Pace* the conventional wisdom to the effect that ethnic communities and intense ethnic affiliations frustrate the process of integration by diminishing commitments to overarching identities and purposes, Tillie and Slijper's results suggest that exactly the opposite might be true. A strong ethnic community may be needed for successful integration, at least as far as political participation is concerned. If they are right, not only might the conventional wisdom be wrong. So might Rousseau and the authors of the *Federalist*, who so famously worried about the corrosive effects of intense subnational factions.

In recent years a number of theorists have explored a somewhat different tack in decoupling citizenship from strongly shared commitments to particular identities. More than two decades ago Benedict Anderson showed that citizens can believe themselves members of the same political community and identify with its legitimating symbols, yet interpret that membership very differently.[6] So long as they do not actually have to confront the implications of their differences in daily life, a secular liberal from Massachusetts and a Christian fundamentalist from the Bible Belt can both believe themselves to be authentic Americans without having to reconcile their very different understandings of what it means to be one. In what we might describe as this Andersonian spirit, John Rawls and Cass Sunstein have both defended variants of the notion that rather than shared identities, or even shared values, a legitimate democratic

[5] For a discussion of the political rights of Europe's third-country nationals, see Benhabib (2002: chapter 6).
[6] See Anderson (1983).

constitutional order requires no more than a minimal "overlapping consensus" or "incompletely theorized agreement."[7] Although it is often said that it is easy to get widespread agreement on general principles and commitments but that "the devil is in the details," this literature proceeds on the contrary intuition. A majority in a legislature may be able to agree that a law should be enacted even if its members could never agree on why it should be enacted. Indeed, that is perhaps the typical case in modern democracies. The important thing to realize, on this view, is that it is unnecessary that they agree on the values and commitments that lead them to agree on the particular outcome.

Melissa Williams pursues a variant of this thought in chapter 10. For a political unit to be viable its citizens must share something in common on her account, but it is better understood as a sense of shared fate than something as demanding as a shared political identity. Her central claim is that human beings live in relationships of mutual dependence that emerge from the past and extend into the future. What transforms relationships of shared fate into political communities, on her telling, is that these relationships are, at least potentially, the subject of shared deliberation over a common good – including the common good of justice or of legitimacy. Communities of shared fate define structures of relationship that may or may not be chosen, valued, or regretted. What matters is that their members believe that they can be sites of mutual justification on equal terms. This requires more than a Hobbesian *modus vivendi*, but considerably less than a shared sense of political identity. If Williams is right, even when people embrace the same national symbols they may interpret them in an Andersonian spirit – so long as those differences are not seen to be mutually threatening.

Conceived as membership in a community of shared fate, citizenship consists in action aimed at governing relations of interdependence for the sake of a common good. Over time, a widely accepted sense of shared fate may generate strongly shared identities, loyalties, and mutual affection among citizens, but it is far from clear that this is necessary for the society to function or be perceived as legitimate by its citizens. Williams makes the case that conceiving of the relations between identity and citizenship in this way is both normatively appealing as well as better attuned to the realities of membership in actual democratic communities. She also thinks it is likely to supply a better basis for recognizing obligations of citizenship that transcend territorial borders. Notice that although Andersonian views like Williams' are less epistemologically demanding than those requiring strongly shared group identities, they are by no means

[7] See Rawls (1985); Sunstein (1995).

politically vacuous. For instance, Richard Wilkinson's research suggests that wide relative inequalities undermine perceptions of shared fate.[8] Taking Williams' injunction seriously might therefore require policies to ameliorate them.

It is but a small step from thinking about the distributive preconditions of citizenship to considering the distribution of citizenship itself. This is the subject taken up by Ayelet Shachar in chapter 11, where she calls into question the idea of birthright citizenship. Rawls was famous for ignoring the distribution of citizenship by assuming the existence of closed societies as a precondition for theorizing about justice.[9] In this he made the standard liberal move of taking the legitimacy of some variant of the Westphalian state for granted. It was obviously a problematic move for Rawls. As Charles Beitz and Henry Shue, among others, have noted, the distribution of citizenship in the world fits squarely into the category of our circumstances which, Rawls argued so convincingly, should be seen as morally arbitrary.[10] Rawls' various communitarian critics fare little better on this score, succumbing, as they do, to the tyranny of prevailing distributions of membership.[11] Nor does democratic theory escape the problem. Democratic theorists typically focus on a decision rule, usually some variant of majority rule, treating who constitutes the appropriate *demos* as given.[12] It is this assumption that Shachar wants to question.

Instead of seeing citizenship as a birthright, she urges us to think of it as a particular kind of inherited wealth. In Shachar's view, taking this tack both avoids the moral arbitrariness problem and opens up strategic opportunities to mitigate injustices in the distribution of citizenship. Instead of responding to a Hobson's choice between fully open and completely closed borders, she wants to show that treating citizenship as inherited property makes it potentially subject to redistributive policies by governments. Bounded national communities with inherited citizenship could continue to exist on her account, but accompanied by obligations to mitigate inequalities of voice and opportunity across national borders. Just as people are taxed when they enjoy the benefits of inherited wealth so,

[8] See Wilkinson (2001). Generally, see Shapiro (2003b: chapter 5).

[9] "I assume that the basic structure is that of a closed society: that is, we are to regard it as self-contained and as having no relations with other societies. Its members enter it only by birth and leave it only by death. This allows us to speak of them as born into a society where they will lead a complete life. That a society is closed is a considerable abstraction, justified only because it enables us to focus on certain main questions free from distracting details" (Rawls 1993: 12); see also Benhabib (2004b).

[10] See, e.g. Beitz (1979); Shue (1980).

[11] See, e.g. Sandel (1982); Walzer (1983).

[12] See, e.g. Shapiro and Hacker-Cordon (1999); see also the "Introduction" in Benhabib (2004a).