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**Culture in Politics and Politics in Culture***Institutions, Practices, and Boundaries*

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In the 1990s, the idea that culture had a role to play in political sociology was relatively novel. Identifying sociologists who fit this emerging interdisciplinary subfield posed a challenge. Today, it is difficult to imagine a sociologist, or even a political scientist, who would argue against the importance of culture to politics. It has become de rigueur to acknowledge culture in political analysis. If anything, the field of politics and culture borders on oversubscription. Methodological issues that dominated early syntheses (Berezin 1994, 1997b) remain salient. These include epistemological discussions of culture as an explanatory factor in social analysis (e.g., Berezin 2014a; Wagner-Pacifici 2017) distinctions between qualitative and quantitative methodology (Goertz and Mahoney 2012).

Boundaries (Lamont and Molnár 2002) are intrinsic to politics and culture. A range of sociological subfields – inequality studies (Lamont, Beljean, and Clair 2014), comparative historical sociology (Adams, Clemens, and Orloff 2005), and political sociology itself (Steenland 2009; Hall 2003) – fall within the analytic purview of politics and culture, even if they do not always employ the label. History (Bonnell and Hunt 1999; Sewell 2005), anthropology (Herzfeld 2005; Nugent and Vincent 2004; Paley 2002), and political science (Bowen and Petersen 1999) also fall under the rubric of politics and culture, underlining the interdisciplinary character of the subfield.

This chapter proposes a framework based upon territoriality and varieties of political space that aims for analytic coherence while capturing the empirical diversity that falls within the arena of politics and culture. As a conceptual lens, territory is simultaneously empirical and analytic; it is coterminous with national borders and suggestive of boundary-making (Berezin 2003). In earlier work, Berezin and Sandusky (2017) develop a descriptive map of the empirical and theoretical landscape. This chapter works as a synthesis, aiming for breadth in a discussion of territory, political institutions, and practices, and

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signals topics that other chapters in this handbook will cover in more detail. As the interest in politics and culture has grown, certain substantive areas have dominated the field. Even a cursory review of the extant literature reveals two distinct areas: first, the study of nationalism and national identity; and second, the theory and practice of democratic politics. Within each of these areas, nodal contributions set the research agenda within the field. In addition to these two broad areas, there are subareas in distinct spheres of analysis that can be recalibrated within the space of politics and culture. These include religion, human rights, civilization, and security.

Territoriality, the political division of material space, is the underlying conceptual frame that allows us to speak of the national and the transnational as political and cultural arenas (Berezin 2003; Maier 2016; Sassen 2006). Geographical borders and physical boundaries are crucial (Sack 1986). Territory demarcates who is in and who is out. It is the core of nations and states as well as the physical spaces that serve as arenas of political practice. Territory and spatiality govern the organization of this chapter, which begins with the major political form of modernity – the nation-state. From that starting point, the chapter moves to constitutive topics: nationalism, citizenship, legal belonging in the national state, and inclusion and exclusion; practices of democracy from the civil sphere to social capital; and political cultural forms across national boundaries. While scholars usually consider nationalism, political practice, and transborder processes separately, this chapter shows how they interconnect conceptually and analytically to form the nexus of any understanding of the intersection of the cultural and the political. Nations, political practices, and transnations bear a material relation to space and place: the physical locales where cultural and political practices occur.

The chapter proceeds as follows. The first section identifies keywords – culture, nation, state, identity – that form a vocabulary of politics and culture. This section views the nation as a collection of cultural institutions that imbue the state with political and cultural power. Political institutions embed the nation in lived experience. An arsenal of political symbols (Cerulo 1995; Ozouf 1988), practices (Schwartz 2008), and discourses (Smith 2005; Wedeen 2015) develops around the nation-state that reinforce collective and individual national identities.

The second section “Nation-States: Culture in Politics” engages the concepts laid out in the first section to approach issues of nationalism, citizenship, belonging, and multiculturalism. This section explores issues of the nation and the state, citizenship as a legal and social entity, the tension between inclusion and exclusion in modern nation states, and how different national states adjudicate that tension. Underlying this analysis is the assumption that institutions pattern meaning for collectivities and are thus cultural as well as organizational entities (Fourcade and Schofer 2016; Schmidt 2008).

The third section, “Politics in Culture: Arenas of Political Practice,” explores modes of political engagement (i.e., pluralism, association, discourse, social

movements, and social media) as cultural processes. The fourth and last section “Political Culture beyond the Nation-State,” turns the concept of territoriality on its head. It examines cultural and political entities that are genuinely global and transnational, such as religion, human rights, and security. It discusses their status outside of national institutional spaces. The section asks how culture that is not embedded in a national state travels and becomes embedded in a broader global framework.

#### VOCABULARIES OF POLITICS AND CULTURE

Dynamic vocabularies provide the concepts and analytic distinctions that serve as heuristic devices for thinking about politics and culture. Rather than reifications, vocabularies are historically and geographically contingent. This section parses the keywords culture, nation-state, and identity.

#### From Culture to “Deep Culture”

Meaning is constitutive of culture and cultural analysis. The political imposes an additional layer of complexity upon cultural analysis as it requires that we add the regularities of politics to the variabilities of culture. The conception of culture that informs this chapter acknowledges and reworks a body of theorizing in the sociology of culture that has evolved over 30 years. Early theoretical engagements (Swidler 1986; Griswold 1987) aimed at creating a science of culture and focused on falsifiability. As the field developed, cognition (DiMaggio 1997) and process became more of a focus (Patterson 2014). Lamont and her collaborators (2017) argue for the importance of developing a bridge between cultural sociology and cognitive psychology. This chapter relies on the processual and the historical to excavate the analytic dimensions of political meaning.

In the well-known introductory chapter to *The Interpretation of Cultures*, anthropologist Clifford Geertz describes culture as a “web of significance” that we ourselves have spun (1973: 5) and elaborates his description by pointing to the difference between a twitch and a wink. The interpretations of this neurological movement of the eye are vastly different depending on the culture space where one is located. A twitch may signal a medical condition or intense nervousness. A wink in Western culture is often considered an invitation to shared knowledge or a flirtatious gesture. To the uninformed observer both appear the same, but understanding the meaning of this eye movement is important to the interpretation of a situation.

Geertz’s twitch/wink example points to characteristics of culture that social actors take for granted. First, culture is collective. Actors usually know the difference between the twitch and the wink depending upon their social context. This means that they can engage in conversation without translation. Shared culture is akin to shared language (Sewell 1996). Second, culture is public – it is

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not a hidden dimension of social life. Berezin (2012) compares it to an “invisible brick wall” – when we crash into it, we know it. These characteristics of culture point to its “meaning” dimension; but culture also has performative (Alexander 2004, 2010), practice (Wedeen 2002), and material dimensions. Practices – what people do together and how they behave – provide a form of social glue. The material dimension of culture is embedded in recognizable objects (Miller-Idriss 2017; Zubrzycki 2016a, 2017) or even engineering projects (Mukerji 2009). These characteristics and manifestations of culture that are analytically separable are in reality melded together. Definitions of culture, no matter how diverse, invariably end in the concept of community and shared meaning.

This leads to the question of how we know what we mean (Berezin 2014a) in the realm of social and political life. In his posthumously published memoir *Defying Hitler*, written as a youth observing the rise of Hitler in pre-Nazi Germany, Sebastian Haffner argued that successful political communication captures “what every 7-year-old thinks that he knows” (2002: 31). In other words, as a community of shared meaning, “deep culture” does not require explanation. Group members, by virtue of belonging to the group, understand immediately. “Deep culture” suggests emotional recognition as well as cognitive reasoning and bears a kinship relation to Durkheim’s concept of “social facts” or collectively instituted external constraints on individuals’ beliefs, emotions, and behavior (1982: 31). “Deep culture” also suggests a dynamic form of collective understanding that is embedded in the social and political structure. Collective recognition or what Schudson (1989) describes as “resonance” is a core feature of “deep culture.” McDonnell, Bail, and Tavory speak to the issue of “deep culture” in their description of resonance as an emergent experience that arises when cultural objects are used to make sense of “the ways in which people encounter their world – from the most mundane to the deeply existential – as situations that need to be worked through and overcome” (2017: 3). This chapter uses these concepts to explore how political institutions calibrate and recalibrate culture (culture-in-politics) and how political practices are inextricable from cultural practices (politics-in-culture). A cultural approach to institutions ties these concepts together.

In earlier work, Berezin conceptualized political culture as “the matrix of meanings embodied in expressive symbols, practices and beliefs that constitute ordinary politics in a bounded collectivity” (Berezin 1997b: 364). This current chapter works with a more refined definition that identifies institutions as powerful conduits of cultural meaning and constitutive of multiple forms of political arrangements (Clemens and Cook 1999; Hall and Taylor 1996; March and Olsen 1989). The new definition draws on Parsons’ definition of institutions as structures that pattern expectations: “the primary focus of institutions is the definition of expectations with respect to actions in concrete human social relationships” (1954: 147). Expectations are constitutive of futurity and meaning, both of which are central components of culture (Tavory and Eliasoph 2013). Reformulating Parsons, an institution may be

conceived as culture that is not left to chance, the embedding of practices and symbols in formal organizations with repeating rules and values that are guaranteed frequently by laws. This definition of institutions incorporates political culture, which we reformulate as the matrix of meanings embodied in expressive symbols, practices, and beliefs that constitute ordinary politics in a bounded collectivity and regulated by political and legal institutions (Berezin and Sandusky 2017).

### Nation-States

The nation-state is the second vocabulary term that requires development. The nation-state is a modern (post-1789) and durable form of political development and organization (Weber 1978). As a thought experiment, separating the cultural from the political lends analytic purchase to the dynamic process by which politics enters culture and vice versa. The nation represents the community of shared meaning or “deep culture.” While there is a large literature on the development of the modern state (e.g., Loveman 2005; Poggi 1978), for current purposes the state can be simply defined as representing the technology of political rule – laws and bureaucracies. The nation-state as a political and material entity represents the territorial division of geographical space.

Four political possibilities emerge from the analytic distinction between nation and state. These possibilities serve as a template for discussion in the next three sections. First, the nation-state, where culture and organization are in synchrony with each other, is the paradigmatic model of modern political organization. Separating the nation and state analytically makes us aware of three other possibilities. A state may exist without a nation. The former Yugoslavia is an example of an instance where a national culture never developed – the consequences of which became apparent when the regime dissolved in 1989. Empires, while not strictly states, may be a subform of this category. A third possibility is a nation without a state – the stateless people that Hannah Arendt (1973 [1951]) identified in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* provides the extreme example. But, contemporary history provides numerous examples, such as the Kurds, Palestinians, the Rohingya. Finally, nonmodern forms of political organization (e.g., feudal or traditional) are neither states nor nations.

### Identity

Identity is a concept that unites culture and structure. Berezin (2010) lays out a political cultural approach to identity that incorporates sociological theories (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Calhoun 1994) and draws contrasts to social psychological approaches. Identity theory often answers the question “who am I?” on an individual level and “who are we?” on a collective level. Identity

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is a twofold concept with ontological and epistemological dimensions. The ontological dimension relates to how social actors emotionally define themselves, individually and/or collectively. Epistemology refers to the legal and institutional categories within which we are individually and collectively inscribed. Citizenship law, for example, demarcates individuals as member of a national space whether they ontologically identify with it or not. Family law sets up a series of legal relations among kin that hold whether we are fond of our relatives or not (Beckert 2008). Politics focuses upon the epistemological or categorical dimensions of identity, which precede emotional or psychological identification in most iterations. The landscape of individual or collective meanings is embedded in territorially defined national states through legal and institutional means.

## NATION-STATES: CULTURE IN POLITICS

**Nationalism, Identity, and State Structure**

Nation-states are the political and cultural projects that characterized the nineteenth- and twentieth-century polity. As they flourished in post-1789 Europe, nation-state projects are modern and Western. The term “project” signals the dynamic nature of the process that governed political development. First, the modern nation-state is the result of two processes – nation building and state building – which developed along separate and only sometimes parallel trajectories. With the exception of Italy and Germany, state building primarily took place in the eighteenth century and culture building in the nineteenth century. The modern nation-state is a marriage of culture and structure. Second, modern nation-states are not always democratic. As scholars of democracy (Lipset 1994; Schmitter and Karl 1991) and political regime type (e.g., Linz 2000) have argued, there is no necessary correlation between the form of the state and type of governance. In addition, procedurally democratic nation-states can engage in practices that might not ordinarily be associated with democracy – what Zakaria (2003) labeled “illiberal democracy.” In short, democratic institutions do not always align with democratic sentiments. And democratic institutions are not inviolable as Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018) demonstrate in their recent work on the fragility of Western institutions in the onslaught of authoritarian leaders and populist politics.

The nation-state is the primary vehicle that inserts cultural meaning into politics. Nationalism is a necessary but not sufficient condition of nation-state formation. Nationalism is an ideology about belonging to a particular nation or nation-state. Ideologies are often coherent and sometimes independent narratives that inform sociopolitical reality. But nationalism is more than ideology. As Calhoun (2007) suggests, nationalism is, first, a felt emotion; second, the basis of political mobilization of both ontological and epistemological identity, and,

third, a form of public moral evaluation – a discourse about how a collectivity ought to live.

Primordialism and constructivism capture competing conceptions of the nation. A primordialist account views the nation as a “natural” community of peoples who share blood, race, and kinship (Geertz 1963; Suny 2001). The history of interwar Europe suggests that primordialism does not end well. The second view of nationalism is as a historically grounded construction. This idea is at the core of Ernst Renan’s classic essay “What Is a Nation?,” in which he argues that the shared experience of living on a territory over time imbues a people with a feeling of nationality. Renan defines the nation as “a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future” (1996 [1882]: 53). He argues that a nation’s existence is “a daily plebiscite, just as an individual’s existence is a perpetual affirmation of life” (Renan 1996: 53). In short, *national experience* is a committed and committing phenomenon, a part of the “deep culture” that lies dormant within the collective and individual national consciousness until an exogenous event triggers nationalist emotion. In contrast to Renan, Weber’s (1978) conception of political community places a stronger emphasis upon the territoriality of nationhood and the sentiments of prestige or pride in national belonging.

In postwar political sociology and political science, modernization theory (e.g., Almond and Verba 1963; Apter 1965) eclipsed nationalism as a favored analytic concept in the realm of theory and practice. Kohn’s *The Idea of Nationalism* (1944) and Deutsch’s *Nationalism and Social Communication* (1953) were the last comprehensive accounts in the mid-twentieth century. In 1983, nationalism (e.g., Anderson 2006 [1983]; Gellner 1983) reemerged in the academy. Anderson’s (2006 [1983]) constructivist formulation of a nation as “imagined community” had the greatest influence. Anderson argued that it is impossible for citizens to know each and every one, or even some portion, of their co-nationals. Therefore, they have to imagine what they have in common. The “style” of national imaginings defines the bounds of nationality. A technological advance – the invention of the printing press – provided a fixity to common language and geographical representation. Linguistic consolidation and the establishment of a vernacular facilitated a common national culture. Material objects such as maps and museums strengthened national imaginings.

Anderson’s book predated and helped give rise to the “cultural turn” (Bonnell and Hunt 1999; Steinmetz 1999) in historical and political sociology. In addition, events such as the fall of the Eastern European bloc and the Soviet Union, the burgeoning of the European Union, and increased immigration flows encouraged scholars to turn their attention to issues of nationality and nationalism. In an influential collection of essays, Brubaker (1996) claimed that nationalism was a “contingent event.” The political theorist Miller (1995) pointed to the sentimental dimension of nationality. A distinction began to emerge in the literature between ethnic nationalism – a form of

nationalism which was blood based, inherited, and the kind of nationalism that leads to ethnic cleansing, and civic nationalism that was legally inclusive, chosen, and a characteristic of the democratic nation-state (Brubaker 1992; Ignatieff 1994).

### Practicing National Identity through Memory and Institutions

A constitutive element of the discussion of nationalism was a burgeoning literature within history and sociology on national identity (Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008; Kumar 2003; Rivera 2008; Spillman 1997) and on memory studies (Jansen 2007; Olick and Robbins 1998; Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz 1991). The literature on memory illustrates how the past is made and remade to align with present context. The “memory” literature ranges widely in the American and European variants. American scholars tend to focus on events that analyze and commemorate past injustices – Armstrong and Cragé’s (2006) analysis of the Stonewall riots as well as Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz’s (1991) discussion of the Vietnam War Memorial fall in this category. The European cases tend to focus upon rewriting and reinterpreting the events of the Second World War and the Communist period. Zubrzycki’s work on Poland (2006) and the occupation is one example of this – work that she has extended to include the recent movement of young Poles to assume Jewish identity in a way to combat a resurgent Polish nationalism (Zubrzycki 2016b). Molnár (2005) shows how memory influenced building style and urban design in Germany and Hungary. Alexander’s (2009) analysis of the invention of the Holocaust through trials and popular culture is an example of history not only being remade but also being named and invented.

In contrast to memory studies, which are firmly grounded in temporal and spatial analysis, identity studies do not uniformly distinguish between the categorical and the ontological dimensions of identity. Nation-ness is as institutionally dependent as state-ness. The literature on nation-making is somewhat underdeveloped when compared to the literature on state-making. Exceptions include Berezin (1997a) on fascist public culture, Laitin (1998) on language transition, Loveman (2014) on racial categories, and Steinmetz (2007) on colonialism. Institutions regulate cultural practices as they do practices more typically associated with state structures. In this view, culture is institutionally embedded. Weber, in his classic work *Peasants into Frenchmen* (1976), captures the institutional dimension of nation building and creation of national culture. In order to become French, or Italian, or German, one needs to participate in institutions that contribute to a sense of common or national purpose. Weber identifies the education system and the military.

In the same mode, Kastoryano’s (2002) study of the “negotiated” character of identities illustrates how legal categories intersect with “feelings” of identity. Díez Medrano (2003) analyzes national identities as they confront the supranational legal structure of the European Union. Secularization is another

aspect of modern nation-stateness. Gorski (2003) describes a bottom-up regime of soft coercion in the Netherlands maintained through networks of local Dutch Reformed Church clerics whose discipline and surveillance activities created a strong social infrastructure. While these are participatory institutions, the legal framework of constitutions is another place where national identity is located. Preambles to national constitutions often begin with narratives of national and political belonging that the entire document reinforces (Dahl 1998; Norton 1993).

### National Identity as Agency

Recent work by Wimmer (2013, 2017, 2018) and Bonikowski (2016, 2017; Bonikowski and DiMaggio 2016) exemplifies innovative directions in studies of nationalism. These scholars attempt to incorporate issues of agency and structure into the study of nationalism that lend dynamism to the concept of identity. Hiers, Soehl, and Wimmer (2017) introduce the idea of shared national history using the concept of “national trauma” to articulate how xenophobia, or anti-immigrant sentiment operates. “Anti-immigrant sentiment” is a proxy for nationalism. The authors quantify geopolitical threat in 33 European countries and find that citizens of nation-states that have experienced war or invasion with substantive losses (i.e., territory) are more likely to express xenophobic sentiment.

Wimmer (2013) develops a model of political closure that focuses on agency and contributes to the *culture-in-politics* argument that this chapter advances. According to Wimmer, the nation-state, unlike more traditional or feudal forms of political organization, is a contract among competing groups of elites that emerge as states begin to centralize. Nation-states, and political organizations more generally, represent a negotiated equilibrium between elites and masses with room for variation depending upon how that negotiation plays out. The modern nation-state is the product of institutionalized exchange among all potential political actors. Wimmer’s model is process oriented and answers *how* nation-states came to be. But, it also provides a novel answer to the *why* question: nation-states spread because subordinate elites (e.g., intellectuals, culture producers of various sorts) within diverse political spaces observe that nation-states work, and take on the role of *legitimacy entrepreneurs* to promulgate the new political form.

Reworking Wimmer’s argument, networks of *legitimacy entrepreneurs* who promoted the modern state understood that cultural consolidation was a necessity for political consolidation. Communities of people who were like each other (or who thought that they were like each other) were essential to providing the emotional identification that encouraged individuals to pay taxes and to go to war in the name of the state. The cultural community of the nation provided the collective rationale for self-sacrifice.

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Bonikowski's (2016, 2017) studies of nationalism lay firmly in the realm of politics and culture. He locates cultural change in collective mental states that vary among individuals, rather than in external events impinging upon some national whole that moves everyone in a similar direction. Bonikowski (2016) argues that scholars who study nationalism in terms of crisis know little of ordinary "everyday" nationalism and how and when it comes into play. Bonikowski and DiMaggio (2016) conduct an empirical test of this position. Using the United States as a case, they identify four categories of national dispositions – creedal, restrictive, ardent, and disengaged – that map onto different social groups with different class practices and ideological commitments. Their findings indicate that there is more coherence to American popular nationalism than the literature suggests. Using cross-national public opinion data Bonikowski (2017) finds, first, that national styles are relatively stable across a wide range of national states; and, second, that restrictive nationalism can be more right wing than ardent nationalism.

**Boundaries of National Belonging**

No matter what conflicts they cause, nations and nation-states are a resilient form of political organization. Calhoun (2007), echoing Renan, argues that nation-states matter not because they have intrinsic merit as a form of political organization, but because they are constituted as moral ontologies, collectively defined ways of being in the world, as well as political categories. Moral ontology is a shorthand term for the body of unspoken assumptions that nation-states deploy to address the normative issues that they regularly encounter as they organize political and social security for their members.

Citizenship law is the principal legal mechanism that locates an individual epistemologically or categorically, as well as institutionally, within a national state. Citizenship law is often embedded within national constitutions, and defines and limits membership in the nation-state and confers rights as well as obligations on members. It reinforces the territorial dimension of national space because it firmly delineates who is in and who is out, who has rights and who does not. Citizenship law speaks to issues of membership and incorporation and underscores the collective meaning behind the *feeling of* and the *fact of* belonging to a national state.

In T. H. Marshall's classic essay "Citizenship and Social Class," he famously describes citizenship as a "status" that signals "who are full members of a community" (1998 [1949]: 92–93) and associates the beginning of citizenship rights as the beginning of "modern national consciousness" (1998: 105). Contemporary scholars have challenged some dimensions of Marshall's theory. Somers (1993) argues that more beyond its operation as a status, citizenship is an active engagement space. Brubaker (1992) emphasizes the boundary devices embedded within citizenship law that determine the parameters of exclusion and inclusion. He signals "deep culture" when he

describes the manner in which “cultural idioms” determined the design of citizenship law in France and Germany. Soysal (1994) argues that modernity demands the abandonment of territorial notions of citizenship and that citizenship should be a-territorial, postnational, and based upon universal norms of personhood embodied in human rights accords and transnational organizations.

But, territory and the materiality of space are hard to theorize away. Citizenship law and the protections that it accords to individuals is located within nation-states (Weil 2008). The inescapability of territory contributes to the dilemmas of multiculturalism. Kymlicka (1995, 2007) defines a concept of “multicultural citizenship.” Group culture is the core component of multiculturalism. From the perspective of groups, a core question is how to live in a national state that is not a state of origin and maintain the group’s collective cultural integrity? From the point of view of the host nation, the question is how do we accommodate and include groups who wish to live on our territory but do not necessarily wish to claim our culture? This question is less strident in the United States, which was founded on the notion of cultural pluralism.

#### POLITICS IN CULTURE: ARENAS OF POLITICAL PRACTICE

The nation-state is an arena for nationally and locally bounded political practices. Geographers refer to this spatial multivocality as the problem of scale (Jones 2017). Social science literature on political practice typically assumes democracy as well as the nation-state. This section explores how politics intervenes in culture to shape political participation which is sometimes democratic and sometimes not.

This section identifies four different theories of political participation: pluralist, associative, discursive, and social movement, each of which foregrounds different arenas of political practice and behavior and affords different possibilities for meaningful participation. The section ends by considering how social media technologies have reshaped political participation and how these theories can be deployed to understand these developments.

#### Pluralism

Pluralist theories of democracy focus on how the interests of citizens become represented in government via the practice of voting (Dahl 1961). However, these theories have been strongly critiqued due to the unequal influence of elites, who are able to capture government and have it work in their interests (Schattschneider 1960). The pluralist perspective tends to eschew culture in favor of the analysis of individual preferences from a rational choice perspective. Such studies not only neglect culture but they also do little to

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explain the decline in voting that has occurred in Western democracies in the last twenty years (Mair 2013). Moreover, voting requires citizenship and is often subject to particular local rulings that raise barriers to participation (Hajnal, Lajevardi, and Nielson 2017).

**Associationalism**

In contrast to the methodological individualism of pluralism theories, associative theories of democracy emphasize the importance of social relations and organization. These gained traction in political sociology in response to Robert Putnam's (Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1993) seminal study of democracy in Italy. Putnam derived his central insight in *Making Democracy Work* from Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (2004 [1835–1840]). De Tocqueville pointed to the importance of mediating institutions in the formation of a democratic culture. Mediating institutions, such as the nineteenth-century New England town hall, enable ordinary citizens to debate and give voice to political concerns at a level below the administrative state. De Tocqueville argued that these institutions allow citizens to cultivate civic "mores," the values and dispositions necessary to engage in democratic political life.

Putnam applied this insight to his study of reform of regional-level governments in Italy and the question of why Northern Italy appeared to be much more "democratic" than the South. Putnam and his research team recorded the number of associations across Italy, ranging from choral groups to bird-watching societies and observed that the North was richer in these associations. Borrowing from the theories of social capital developed by Bourdieu (1977) and Coleman (1988), Putnam argues that participating in associations enables citizens to develop trust in their fellow citizens. This trust generates social capital, as citizens form stronger bonds with each other and form bridges that unite diverse groups of citizens together. From this premise, Putnam makes the analytic leap that relations of trust and association bolster democratic practice at the national level and enhance broad-minded solidarity at the local level.

Association captures the multiple dimensions of the empirical studies that Putnam's theory generated, and also underscores its limitations as a conduit of democracy. Association is both a cultural and political entity with potential to exclude as well as to include. It also accounts for nondemocratic as well as democratic politics and practices. The empirical test of this theory is grounded in communities and local practices, making the question of who belongs and who does not especially salient.

Scholars have pointed out that the link between association and democratic and solidaristic outcomes is not straightforward (Kaufman 2002). For example, groups in Weimar Germany (Berman 1997), the American Ku Klux Klan (McVeigh 2009), and the Italian Mafia (Gambetta 1996) rely on social capital

and networks of association, but they are not democratic. Putnam's own empirical evidence suggests that democratic procedure does not ensure democratic sentiments or moral discourse. The regions that Putnam targets as most democratic in Italy gave birth to Communism and Fascism – neither ideology known for its affinities to liberal democracy. Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (Putnam 2000) tested his argument in the postwar United States. Many scholars entered in dialogue with Putnam (Lichterman 2005; Perrin 2014; Portes 1998; Skocpol 2013).

Culture is the strength and weakness of association as an indicator of the richness of democratic practice. Culture at the local level emphasizes similarity and points to exclusion rather than inclusion. Associative theories are based upon group membership and, often, the locale of participation is the community. The social capital that one develops is based upon relations of trust with others that are like you and live in the same place. Putnam went on to develop the concept of “bridging social capital” that solves this problem in theory, but the empirical evidence points toward homophily (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001). Eckstein (2001) analyzed the localism of political participation in her study of volunteerism in an old, working-class suburb of Boston. Her study suggests that association is particular, not universal.

Association has a constitutive feature that leads to the potential for nondemocratic practice. A younger generation of scholars, focusing mostly on European cases, are exploring the negative and nondemocratic practices that association can generate (Molnár 2016; Riley 2010; Stamatov 2000). Recent research on the populist politics in the United States illustrates how the culture of association is not always benign (Skocpol and Williamson 2012).

### Discursive Participation

The downside of associative theories of democracy and its constitutive term “social capital” is that it takes quantities of ties or associations (whether local or national) as a proxy for the prevalence of engaged, public-spirited qualities and practices that de Tocqueville identified as American civic mores (Lichterman 2006). The least restrictive approach to democracy is the discursive theories that are associated with German political philosopher Jurgen Habermas (Habermas 1989 [1962]). According to Habermas, democratic practice is the coming together of individuals in the public sphere, which can be either literally public space, such as coffee shops, or in the media, for example in letters to the editor, to discuss pressing issues, share information, and collectively make decisions (see essays in seminal collection, Calhoun 1992). This view of democracy is completely open and individuals or groups only need to be concerned with the issue to have access to the discussion.

The Habermasian approach had its greatest influence in European political theory and empirical research (e.g., Koopmans and Statham 2010). It also

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contributed to the development of a strand of American social science that focused upon discourse around collective action and social issues. Eliasoph's (1998) book *Avoiding Politics* is a classic work on how groups "fail" to talk and be involved in political issues. Polletta (1998), who has called for the importance of narrative in politics, uses this model of "talk" and "discussion" in her work on the American Civil Rights movement and more recently in the discussion on how to rebuild the area around the World Trade Center in New York City through discursive democratic participation (Polletta and Wood 2005). Mische's (2008) research on Brazilian student activism also contributes to this line of work, by studying how different styles of communication mediated how different activist groups deployed their political partisanship to engage in civic life. We return to the topic of social movements and collective action in the following section.

**Social Movements and Civic Participation**

The fourth form of participation we consider is the social movement. Movements emerge when formal political channels and associations are unable to translate popular demands into political action. They tend to be a form of voluntary association that like-minded individuals can join, although the criteria for membership can vary greatly. A thorough review of this literature is beyond the scope of this chapter, but the general contours are worth outlining. The social movement theory that developed in the early 1970s (e.g., Gurr 1970) viewed mobilization as the consequence of people's emotional responses to purported grievances that formal institutions could not satisfy. This work was strongly criticized by McCarthy and Zald (1977), who argued that grievances are almost omnipresent in society but rarely result in collective action. Building upon the rational choice theories of Mancur Olson (2003 [1965]), they argued that movements are not irrational emotional responses, but organized structures. Later scholars working in the political process model argued for the importance of the relationship between social movement organizations and actors including the state, the media, and elites (Kriesi 2004; McAdam 1999).

By the 1980s a constructivist perspective began to emerge in response to the development of values-based and lifestyle-based movements that organized around women's rights, peace, and environmental issues, issues that political scientist Ronald Inglehart (1981) has called "postmaterialist" values. Philosopher Jean Cohen (1985) termed these "new social movements" in a breakthrough issue of essays in *Social Research*, and in the same issue, Offe (1985) argued that in contrast to "old" social movements that were anchored in preexisting political institutions and labor politics, these identity movements lacked institutional buttresses and were therefore likely to experience greater challenges in achieving their political objectives. Social movement theory underwent a cultural turn as theorists sought to understand these movements,

beginning with Snow and colleagues' (1986) seminal article on framing, which used a reading of Goffman's frame analysis to study how movements strategically deploy "interpretative schemas" to articulate their grievance. Constructivist scholars of social movements have also emphasized the role of identities in mobilization and how movements develop a sense of collective identity (Polletta and Jasper 2001). Moreover, we have also seen a return to the role of emotions in mobilization, which play a central part in the construction and articulation of meanings and identities (Jasper 2011). Empirical studies such as Kane's (1997) of the Irish Revolution, Stamatov's (2002) study of the political uses of Verdi's operas, and Gould's study of AIDS activism (2001) also show the significance of mobilizing in the cultural arena to movement success, each providing a vivid illustration of Swidler's (1986) dictum that culture provides a "toolkit" for social action.

The relation between civil society and democracy is the analytic space where the Habermasian concerns intersect with the Tocquevillian concern for relationships between citizens and the cultural understandings that empower those relationships. The concept of civil society classic to nineteenth-century social theory gained traction in contemporary theory in the 1990s (Cohen and Arato 1994; Calhoun 1995). This was in part due to the role that civil society actors were thought to have played in the fall of the Eastern Bloc. Alexander's (2006) *The Civil Sphere* is a major attempt to recalibrate the concept of civil society both theoretically and empirically. Alexander's book is 500 plus pages and it ranges widely over social theory and political movements and events from Civil Rights in the United States to anti-Semitism and Holocaust studies. Kivisto and Sciortino (2015) summarize the theory in a brief introduction to a volume of essays on Alexander's book. In short, solidarity, the belief in the possibility and necessity of a common membership in society, is the core conceptual frame of the book. Solidarity takes many forms and exists in various locales outside of the purely economic sphere and the purely private or familial sphere. For example, Ikegami (2005) has shown variation between the East and West in civil association. There is a kind of equilibrium to civil society, which has the capacity to break down as groups begin to understand that they lack full membership in society. It is at this point that social movements such as the Civil Rights movement come into the story as they are the principal vehicle of "civic repair," the attempt to recalibrate civil society to be more inclusive and to incorporate the excluded. The key mechanism here is the discursive element of social movements which both perform and aim to overcome the cultural trauma of exclusion, as well as create horizontal solidarity by renarrating difference as a legitimate dimension of common membership. Alexander's example is the Jewish community and its response to anti-Semitism, but the approach also applies to claims of multicultural incorporation.

While for Alexander, "civic" is a realm of societal solidarity slowly expanded by social movements, for Lichterman and Eliasoph (2014) "civic" is a kind of public action. They critique the neo-Tocquevillian view and define "civic" as

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collective, social problem solving one might find in governmental or commercial settings as well as citizen associations. Drawing on cases of community volunteering, social movement, and social service activity, they argue that different “scene styles” produce different kinds of civic action with different political and social capacities. Scene style is a way of performing good membership and coordinating action in a distinct scene. The “community of interest” is a short-term, competitive, issue-focused style; the “community of identity” is a long-term style focusing participants on defending a social category from external threats. The same complex organization may host different styles in different scenes. What all variations of social movement theory suggest is the openness of public space and the relatively low barriers to participation in extra-parliamentary forms of democratic process.

**Political Participation in the Age of Social Media**

While social media technologies have altered the political landscape the theoretical toolkits outlined above can prove useful to understanding these changes. The traditional model of media and democracy in the United States is firmly embedded in the First Amendment to the Constitution, which champions a free press and freedom of expression. The underlying assumption was that informed citizens would contribute to democratic practice (Schudson 2008), based on the assumption that journalists provided citizens with “objective” facts which could be used to arrive at an informed opinion.

However, we have known since the 1930s, with the beginning of the science of public opinion and propaganda regimes in Europe, that the media can also misinform and manipulate publics (Stanley 2015). Whether informing or misinforming, media intellectuals constitute an important part of the public sphere (Jacobs and Townsley 2011). Furthermore, Bail’s (2012) work shows how a small set of organizations was able to exert its influence on the media to shape contemporary narratives about Islam. While studies of the media have often looked at the top-down effects of the media on citizens, a number of studies have shown that citizens are also involved in media discourse. Zaret (2000) charts the emergence of a “dialogic culture” in seventeenth-century England, as citizens responded to articles published by the press, developing and diffusing a democratic culture. Perrin and Vaisey (2008) showed how citizens engaged with the media through writing letters to the editor to express their opinions and discontents.

In the past decade, the emergence of online social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter has reshaped the media landscape and enabled new forms of political engagement. Castells (2012) argues that social media enables “mass self-communication, based on horizontal networks of interactive, multidirectional communication,” breaking the traditional media hierarchy and enabling citizens to form new associations almost

instantaneously, transcending the bounds of locality. These technologies have been lauded for enabling new social movements like the Arab Spring, Occupy, and the Indignados (e.g., Gerbaudo 2012; Mason 2013), although the role of social media in these movements has been called into question (Gladwell 2010; Morozov 2011). Interventions on these platforms have also been shown to improve traditional participation like election turnout (Bond et al. 2012). But this early optimism has recently given way to skepticism, as social media have been used by terrorist groups to recruit new members and by the Russian state-led misinformation campaigns intended to influence the results of elections in the US and Europe (Tucker et al. 2017). Like the associations of de Tocqueville and Putnam, social media technologies can be used to promote both democratic and undemocratic ends.

These technologies have promised a radical expansion of the public sphere into digital space, as citizens can access an unprecedented amount of information and engage with one another en masse. However, a growing body of empirical work has documented the presence of online “echo chambers” (Garrett 2009; Sunstein 2018), as politically and culturally similar people congregate in spaces that reinforce their own beliefs and identities, rather than challenging them, although these concerns may be overstated (Bakshy, Messing, and Adamic 2015). As social media continue to become a central component of the public sphere, it is increasingly important for scholars to understand the conditions under which these technologies can foster democratic political participation and when they may pose threats to democracy (Davidson and Berezin 2018).

#### POLITICAL CULTURE BEYOND THE NATION STATE

The nation-state is the unit of analysis in the first sections of this chapter. The analytic unit is spatially and territorially bounded by the borders of national states whether the focus is culture-in-politics or politics-in-culture. This section shifts to public and collective phenomena that exist beyond the traditional borders of national states and are political in practice. Globalization is the rubric that often covers the process of transnational phenomena. Scholars who study globalization often reference findings that John Meyer and his students disseminated in a series of research articles on cultural diffusion (e.g., Meyer et al. 1997). Theories of globalization (Archibugi 2000; Held and McGrew 2007) as well as empirical research (Appadurai 1996) often focus on economic issues – namely, the homogenization of production and consumption practices (Kaufman and Patterson 2005). But, markets and goods are not the only entities that cross global borders. Environmental issues endemic to climate change are global. Natural phenomena such as microbes and disease in the form of epidemics (Baldwin 1999) cross borders. However, natural phenomena are beyond the scope of this chapter. Social movements also cross borders (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Tarrow 2005). They rarely become institutionally embedded and, if and when they do, they can no longer be labelled movements.

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Religion and human rights are cultural and political phenomena that are global in scope. Religions are mental repositories of deep culture (Geertz 1968). The meaning of personhood is constitutive of human rights, making it a cultural phenomenon (Beitz 2001). Religion and human rights are political because extra-territorial or transnational institutions govern them.

Religion and human rights transcend national borders in different ways. Religion creates a community of shared meaning that transcends nationalism yet religious groups and institutions reside in national states. Doctrinal beliefs tend to be otherworldly whether one practices a religion or not. Human rights are based upon a secular community of shared meanings that valorize personhood. The ontology of universal humanity transcends national identity (Moyn 2015). The institutional bases of religion and human rights differ from those of the nation-state. Legal codes (e.g., Canon law) undergird religion and the organizational bases of world religions are older than the institutional framework of nation-states (Herzog 2018). The legal structure of human rights lies in international treaties (Koskeniemi 2001) and accords. Human rights governance and enforcement lies within international institutions such as the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg and the United Nations International Court of Justice in the Hague.

In the “Social Psychology of World Religions,” Weber (1958) analogizes religion to a railway switchman that sets a society on a “deep cultural” path. Weber’s *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1992 [1904–1905]) reinforces the “deep culture” of religion as it demonstrates how ascetic Protestantism is the core cultural assumption behind modern capitalism. The key point that Weber illuminates is that one does not need to either practice a religion or believe in its doctrines for religious framing to give meaning to social, economic, and political life. Huntington (1993) reframed Weber’s thesis as an interplay between civilization and religion which he described as a “clash of civilizations.” Huntington’s basic argument is that in the post–Cold War period territorial conflict will recede and cultural conflict embedded in transterritorial cultural systems will become the norm.

Huntington defines civilization as the “totality” of cultural practices, which even transcends common language. According to Huntington, religion is a prime mover of “civilizational consciousness” and future geopolitical clashes will not only be over territory and economic power but also over the promulgation of values. Huntington argues that the notion of universalism – ironically, the type of idea that human rights is predicated upon – is a peculiarly Western idea that he claims is “directly at odds with the particularism of most Asian societies and their emphasis on what distinguishes one people from another” (1993: 40).

When Huntington’s *Foreign Affairs* article on this subject was published, his ideas were described as reactionary and discriminatory. Citizen struggles over democracy in the Middle East, the rise of terrorism, Al-Qaeda, and ISIS have forced a reevaluation of Huntington. In 1993, secularism was an undebated

component of Western national political practice. In both Europe and the United States, the separation of church and state is a hallmark of modern political organization. In Europe, nation-state formation was secular and it aimed to break the moral authority of religion and replace it with the moral and legal authority of the state. In practice, this meant controlling the power of the Catholic Church. Grzymała-Busse (2015) suggests that the marginalization of churches through law in some national instances enabled them to wield “soft power.” In European secular societies, state religions, for example in England or in Sweden, coexisted with laws that carved out a specific place for religion, such as the 1905 French law on *laïcité*.

The European strategy of religious incorporation through law underscores the challenge that multiculturalism poses to European national cultures (Chin 2017; Joppke and Torpey 2013). Since the advent of the millennium, struggles over incorporation of non-Western religions, particularly Islam, have dominated European political practice and public discourse. Controversies around the headscarf in France (Bowen 2007), Danish cartoons (Klausen 2010), and murder of Theo van Gogh (Buruma 2006) underscore not only the fraught nature of cultural diversity but also its capacity to generate violence. The full story of the terror events of the last few years in Europe has not yet been written but scholars are beginning to address the political cultural impact of these events (e.g., Faucher and Boussaguet 2018; Todd 2015).

In contrast to Europe, the First Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees that there will be no established or state church. This enshrined legal separation of church and state contributes to what Bellah (2006 [1967]) describes as “civil religion” and American religious exceptionalism. Civil religion created an American commitment to “religion in general” and a “genuine vehicle of national religious self-understanding” (2006: 233). American politicians are unique in their constant invoking of the deity. America is the only nation-state that has never elected an atheist as president. In short, “civil religion” is a part of the “deep culture” of American political life. Gorski (2017) has recently extended Bellah’s ideas in his discussion of what he terms an “American covenant.”

Historians have written extensively on human rights (e.g., Hunt 2007), as have political theorists (Benhabib 2008). Political sociologists while slower to enter this area have produced a number of empirical studies – among them Heger Boyle (2002) on female genital cutting, Kurasawa (2007) on global justice movements, Stamatov (2013) on religion and empire, and Bhabha (2014) on child migration. Human rights and religion come together in the concept of security. Rothschild (1995) explores the nature of transnational security and asks how we might understand safety in a world that transcends territory. Global terrorist attacks highlight the transterritoriality of security. Kastoryano (2015) brings together religion, human rights, and security in her work on the burial of Jihadis. Studying terrorist events from the 2001 World Trade Center bombing to the Friday night attack in Paris in 2015, Kastoryano

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explores the question of who has the right to claim a terrorist's body. Her research shows that the claim to the body raises issues of religious practice, national identity, and the human right to burial.

## CONCLUSION

The territorial and legal dimensions of the nation-state as a location of collective meaning are the organizational frame of this chapter. Going forward, there are multiple research streams that political and cultural sociologists might pursue. First, is the nation-state really an obsolete form of political arrangement? What would be the location and meaning of culture and politics if the world becomes truly global and the nation-state is transcended? New studies on the sociology of empire (Kumar 2017; Steinmetz 2014) might give us purchase on that question. The current resurgence of nationalism and populism in Europe and the United States as well as the political authoritarianism that accompanies them suggest a research avenue in which to consider questions of nationalism and collective identity. Second, political practices are becoming more creative and extending beyond the voting booth. Movements such as Occupy in the United States and a range of insurgent movements in Europe suggest that political voice is increasingly being practiced in a range of arenas that sociologists should explore. Lastly, political cultural sociology needs to harness a whole range of “big data” techniques such as web scraping, machine learning, and natural language processing to bring new evidence to provide the kinds of understandings that we seek.

Politics and culture are interdisciplinary and cover multiple topics, methodologies, and subareas. This chapter has developed an analytic framework that aims to pull together a range of topics. Now that scholars acknowledge the importance of culture to political analysis, the challenge that we face is how to provide theoretically sound and empirically rich studies that explore the intersection of the political and the cultural in a variety of fields. Political sociologists have accomplished much in the last 20 years, but there certainly remains more to do.

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