Promise and failure: Nationalism in the interwar thought of Carl Schmitt and Eric Voegelin

Pedro T. Magalhães
Centre for European Studies, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

ABSTRACT
This article analyses the role played by the concept of nation in the interwar writings of Carl Schmitt (1888–1985) and Eric Voegelin (1901–1985). It contends that, although these conservative thinkers were drawn in different ways to the anti-progressive potential of nationalist ideas, the centre of their political and theoretical horizons in that period is occupied by the problems of political unity and authority. Therefore, their nationalism is fundamentally determined by, and instrumental to, their adherence to a monistic and authoritarian conception of the state. This, in turn, leads them to embrace, though not without some reservations, the solutions put forward by the emergent far-right ‘strongmen’ to the interwar crisis of liberal democracy. Each author tested in his own way the porous borders between conservatism, nationalism, and fascism – a topic whose scholarly and political relevance is far from being exhausted.

Introduction
There is probably no better illustration of the axiom that political concepts resist clear-cut definition and easy categorization than the scholarly disputes over the nature of nationalism. As soon as one scratches the surface of the word in search of deeper layers of meaning, a wave of aporias hits us without mercy. Benedict Anderson, in an important work on the topic, lists three paradoxes that baffle students of nationalism: 1) the discrepancy between the ‘objective modernity of nations’ and their ‘subjective antiquity’ for the nationalists; 2) the tension between universal and particular, between ‘the formal universality of nationality’ and the ‘particularity of its concrete manifestations;’ 3) the incongruity between, on the one hand, ‘[t]he “political” power of nationalisms’ and, on the other, ‘their philosophical poverty.’

For the student of ideas and ideologies, the latter paradox deserves special attention. Based upon the claim that it ‘has never produced its own grand thinkers,’ Anderson avers that nationalism is not an ideology and should instead be ‘treated . . . as if it belonged with “kinship” and “religion,” rather than with “liberalism” or “fascism.”’ Such an assertion helpfully underscores the non-rational elements that nationalist ideas stimulate, but it rests on a misconceived notion of what ideologies are and where they stand in relation to political philosophy. Ideologies are forms of political thinking which aim at action, not at
'producing grand thinkers' – whatever the criteria of grandeur might be – or highly abstract theoretical edifices. Indeed, ideologies more often co-opt some distinguished members of the philosophical canon, for the purpose of legitimating their worldviews, than generate the 'grand thinkers' who would, in turn, supply their intellectual foundations. Of course, the relationship between ideology and philosophy is far too complex an issue to be dealt with here, but one can safely maintain that the fact that there is no Marx of nationalism does not constitute a valid reason to deny it the status of an ideology.

In any case, even those scholars who do treat nationalism as an ideology are troubled by the enigmatic conjunction of a conspicuous lack of substance and coherence, on the level of ideational elaboration, with an extraordinary efficacy in political practice. Adams presents us with a variation on Anderson’s paradox when he states that ‘among modern ideologies, nationalism is the simplest, the clearest and the least theoretically sophisticated, but it is also the most widespread and the one with the strongest grip on popular feeling.’\(^\text{15}\) If nationalism is an ideology at all, it seems to be an ideology manqué at the theoretical level, even if – despite such deficit – it is able to attract large numbers of followers. What must be clarified, then, are the precise contours of such paucity, and what they entail.

Freeden has put forward an elegant solution to the riddle of nationalism by analysing it from a morphological perspective. He argues that nationalism does possess a core structure which generates a relatively autonomous and self-sustained universe of meaning. This structure combines five components: 1) the principle that the nation constitutes the framework for identity and culture; 2) the elevation of the nation above its individual members both as a subject of rights and as an object of esteem; 3) the desire, framed as an inalienable right, to consolidate the cultural unit of the nation as a political unit; 4) the significance of space and time, of real or imagined contiguity and continuity, as sources of identity and community; 5) the importance of affective and emotional elements for fostering attachment, belonging and solidarity. These core concepts can be interpreted in different ways, thus accounting for the varieties of nationalism that the historical record shows. Such flexibility is not peculiar to nationalism, but rather a general feature of ideological families. What actually distinguishes nationalism from the mainstream ideologies of liberalism, socialism and conservatism is the thinness of its conceptual core and the consequent restriction of its political scope. In other words, nationalism is unable to answer a range of significant questions – pertaining especially to economic and class conflict – that other, fully-fledged ideologies address. The ideological core denies nationalism as such access to many pressing issues on the domestic agendas of modern polities. Hence, Freeden concludes that nationalism can hardly stand on its own as an ideology and only occasionally, when struggles for national liberation override all other political concerns, does it attempt to do so. Normally, it appears as a component of more comprehensive ideologies, to which it adds extra layers of complexity. In such cases, the role nationalism plays can only be apprehended in light of the broader ideological configurations.\(^\text{4}\)

In this article, I explore the interpenetration of nationalism and conservatism in the European interwar context by reviewing the works of Carl Schmitt and Eric Voegelin, two thinkers who in the early 1930s endorsed transitions to far-right regimes in Germany and Austria. My contention is twofold. First, I claim that, while nationalist ideas were invoked to validate right-wing solutions to the crisis of liberal democracy, they remain
subordinate to the more fundamental aim of salvaging political unity through an authoritarian state. Second, I argue that this subordination leads them to positions that conflict with core conservative ideas, such as opposition to uncontrolled change and the belief in the extra-human origins of the social order.\(^5\)

Methodologically, I proceed from the conviction that intellectual history and ideological analysis can fruitfully illuminate each other. On the one hand, I use the insights of ideological analysis as selection criteria and interpretive lenses to read the conceptual material supplied by the interwar works of Schmitt and Voegelin. On the other, I seek to glean from a close, context-sensitive reading of their theoretical output clues for a more precise understanding of the syntheses occurring at the perimeters between the ideological formations of nationalism, the more radical variants of conservatism and fascism.

The article is structured as follows. In the first section, I carve out the anxiety that descended upon the more radical strands of European conservatism in 1918, i.e. the realization that the dynastic principle, which tied political authority to a transcendent, non-human origin, was gone for good. To those conservatives who would not compromise with liberalism, and particularly not with the justification of political rule by the consent of the governed, this constituted a tremendous challenge. In such a context of political and theoretical orphanhood, nationalist ideas could appear as promising alternatives to accommodation to liberal principles. This was especially the case among the younger and less nostalgic thinkers on the right, who nurtured no hopes of a return to monarchic authority. Schmitt and Voegelin belong to such a generation of conservative-leaning – yet forward-looking – thinkers who emerged as the dust of war and the ashes of the dynasties had not yet settled on European soil. The two main sections of the article examine their interwar writings to assess how they considered re-anchoring political order and authority on nationalist grounds. As underscored in the conclusion, the juxtaposition shows that, for both thinkers, the prospect of a non-transcendent, yet still supra-individual, re-legitimation of political rule could only be achieved through and by authoritarian leadership. They thus joined the orbit of fascism.

**Anxiety and reaction: nationalism, the rise of democracy and the conservative imagination after 1918**

There are three dates in 20\(^{th}\)-century history that qualify as watershed moments in the contest over the meaning of democracy: 1918, 1945 and 1989. The latter two have attracted considerably more scholarly attention and given rise to some well-known, albeit hotly disputed, claims. In 1989, Fukuyama argued that the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union signalled ‘the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.’\(^6\) Later on, referring to 1945, Habermas spoke of a ‘normative watershed’ whereby Allied victory in WWII ‘undermined the foundations of all forms of political legitimation that did not . . . subscribe to the universalist spirit of political enlightenment.’\(^7\) Compared to the far-reaching consequences ascribed to the events of 1989 and 1945, the significance of 1918 seems to recede to the background. After all, was it not, in so many respects, a false start? Did not most of the new postwar liberal-democratic regimes, as well as a would-be international order, fail to consolidate? And did not Europe plunge back into war within two decades?
Nonetheless, one must not neglect the relevance of what happened to the geographical and conceptual landscape of European politics in 1918. Indeed, long before liberal democracy could be interpreted as the final form of human government, and even before the turn towards democracy could – more or less unequivocally – be assigned a universalist spirit, democracy had to prevail as the uncontested principle of political legitimacy. This is the question that is definitely settled in 1918. The breakdown of the European continental empires announced the conclusive triumph of democratic legitimacy, of popular sovereignty, as the only generally recognized principle of validity. The victory of the democratic over the dynastic principle, however, was just that – the victory of a general principle of validity, not of any precise institutional arrangement or of a clearly discernible normative spirit. The more concrete meaning, specific values and wished-for institutional deployment of democracy remained a matter of contestation between – and even within – the different modern ideological families.

Democracy’s triumph as a principle of validity constituted an especially thorny challenge for those conservatives who, during the 19th century, had gathered under Louis de Bonald’s maxim that ‘the first legitimate and natural law of the political state is the legitimacy of succession.’ For democracy, however differently one might imagine and hope to model it, emerged in the modern political arena as ‘a state established by the will of man alone.’ Democracy was a revolutionary product and could hardly appear to the conservative imagination as anything other than a notion that defied ‘the will of nature or . . . of its Author.’ In short, modern democracy was scarcely compatible with the idea, so fundamental to the early conservative mind, of the divine origins of order and authority.

It is in the light of this problem that the conservative attraction to nationalist ideas must be analysed. The concept of the nation as a particular group that constitutes the primordial source of identity and culture figures already prominently in the earliest conservative reactions to the French Revolution. Burke, in his Reflections, famously contrasted the concrete ‘rights of Englishmen’ with the abstract ‘rights of men.’ Maistre, in his Considerations, stated that he had met Frenchmen, Italians and Russians, but not once had he encountered the abstract Man in whose name the Revolution had been carried out. In these instances, a conception of the nation is articulated that stands in sharp contrast to the one developed by the French revolutionaries. Instead of conceiving it as a voluntary association of free and equal individuals who, in a foundational ahistorical moment, decide to live under the same laws and political institutions, conservatives view the nation as an organic whole whose concrete historical existence precedes and exceeds that of the individual, who inherits language, customs and rights only when, by birth, she or he joins a particular national community.

Hence, there is no doubt that, for the early conservatives, the nation ranked higher as an object of esteem than the discrete individual. However, what must be emphasized here is that, despite such a valorization, the core belief in the divine origins of political rule prevented them from elevating the nation to the rank of absolute value. Surely, the nation was the source of much of what gives meaning to earthly existence, but it was not the source of political legitimacy. Language, customs and all the great artefacts of culture, including laws and rights, might spring from within the nation, but authority, legitimate power did not – its provenance was not of this world. Thus, the early conservative concept of the nation was diametrically opposed to the revolutionary one in another
respect. Contrary to what the Déclaration des Droits de l’Homme et du Citoyen proclaimed, precisely sovereignty did not lie in the nation, but in the omnipotence of God. The monarch derived his right to rule not from being the head of the most illustrious family of the nation, but from an act of anointment that was thought to confer upon his person a dual nature, conjoining the earthly and the sacred.\(^{13}\) Crucially, therefore, the nation could not be conceived by the conservative partisans of dynastic legitimacy as the source of the act of grace which founded the monarch’s right to rule.\(^{14}\)

These political-theological remarks put us finally in the position to understand the anxiety that befell conservative minds as the belief in the sacredness of the monarchy eroded. Considered in retrospect, the beheading of the physical body of the king at the Place de la Révolution constituted also, as it was meant to, an irrecoverable blow to the allegedly sacred and immortal nature of the monarchy. By 1918 at the latest, it was evident that democratic legitimacy had ousted the dynastic principle and its specific theological underpinnings. Not to lose touch with reality, conservatives had to adapt. But while adaptability is a structural feature of conservative thought,\(^ {15}\) in this case adaptation seemed to require sacrificing a core substantive idea, namely, the belief in the transcendent provenance of political authority.

In the pages that follow, we analyse how two German-speaking conservatives sought to tackle this problem by drawing on nationalist concepts, yet while prioritizing an authoritarian conception of the state. What emerged from their endeavour, as we will see, defied the ideological boundaries of conservatism.

**Carl Schmitt: the concept of nation in the struggle against liberal democracy**

It should be clarified, to begin with, that this analysis does not aim to offer a comprehensive comparative interpretation of Schmitt’s and Voegelin’s thought.\(^ {16}\) Certainly, important instances of their voluminous œuvre will be omitted, while others – especially in the case of Voegelin, some of whose early writings examined below were only posthumously published – will possibly be overemphasized. However, the analytic framework just laid out justifies moving to the foreground that which a philosophical or intellectual-biographical account would perhaps deem of only secondary importance. Indeed, Schmitt’s and Voegelin’s interwar works provide valuable insights into the uneasy permutation between conservative and nationalist ideological elements in the aftermath of WWI. In the German and Austrian contexts of military defeat and looming revolution, where the state, which had hitherto preserved an authoritarian and non-revolutionary character, was facing existential threats while trying to assert a new democratic identity, there was fertile ground for syntheses between conservative and nationalist ideas.

Schmitt’s attachment to the idea of the state, more than to the apparatus or concrete policies of the German imperial state, had already consolidated before the war broke out.\(^ {17}\) His post-doctoral thesis from 1914 affirms the priority of the state vis-à-vis the individual in all legal and political considerations, and thus fits neatly into the sustained anti-liberal pattern of his subsequent thinking. However, the reasoning deployed to arrive at such a statist conclusion is that of an author who was still struggling with the philosophical foundations of his project. On the one hand, Schmitt establishes a sharp contrast between the ‘worlds’ of facticity and normativity whose neo-Kantian traces are unmistakable. Perhaps surprisingly for those familiar with the so-called decisionism he
would develop a few years later, Schmitt posits not only that these ‘two worlds’ constitute self-contained systems of meaning, but also that the sphere of norms takes precedence over the sphere of facts, in the sense that only the former can ‘ground’ the latter. On the other hand, however, in what one could read as a Hegelian-Catholic twist, Schmitt proceeds to refer the ‘empirical’ individual to the lower sphere of facts, while endowing the state with the superior task of intervening between norm and fact so as to supply concrete reality to the normative ideal. Hence, while the train of thought developed in this early work might come across as unexpected, the verdict does not. In essence, Schmitt comes here, for the first time, to a conclusion he would never abandon: from the perspective of legal and political thought, there is no intrinsic value in the individual. Indeed, the significance that the latter might acquire is entirely constructed by the state.\footnote{18}

Schmitt’s earliest interwar writings, drawing on pre-war insights on the inherent juristic value of decisions that his experience on the home front helped develop, reverse the hierarchical relation between norms and facts still posited in the post-doctoral dissertation.\footnote{19} This leads to a resolutely non-idealistic conception of the state, which emphasizes the inextricable entanglement of normative and factual elements. The concept of dictatorship figures prominently in such a reconceptualization, as Schmitt seeks to demonstrate that the age of mass politics need not lead to a surrender of the state to liberal principles. On the contrary, he argues that the specific doctrine of popular sovereignty that triumphed with the Revolution of 1789 has laid the basis for a new conception of authoritarian rule. Popular sovereignty as constituent power, theorized most notably by Sieyès, opened the door to a new conception of dictatorship which, in contrast to the commissarial understanding of the concept inherited from Roman law, was not bound to an existing legal framework it was supposed to defend. On the contrary, the purpose of dictatorial action could now be to overcome the extant constitution and pave the way to a new one.\footnote{20}

Schmitt’s receptiveness to the revolutionary concept of the constituent power of the people has drawn many a left-radical democratic thinker to his work. However, the precise context of such a reception in a discussion of dictatorship reveals the counter-revolutionary intent of the Schmittian enterprise. Indeed, while he is ready to acknowledge the new principle of legitimacy, by relating it to the concept of dictatorship he turns popular sovereignty against the coeval liberal legacy of the Revolution, namely universal human rights, parliamentary government and the separation of powers. Dictatorship, in Schmitt’s own words, ‘is always not only action, but also counteraction,\footnote{21}’ and therefore a most suitable addition to the conservative struggle against the liberal agenda of the Revolution. Under the banner of dictatorship – as Schmitt’s favourite counterrevolutionary theorist, Donoso Cortés, had suggested as early as 1848\footnote{22} – conservative thinking could be supplied with a non-regressive political horizon and discard the outdated concept of dynastic legitimacy.

In Political Theology (1922), the emphasis on ‘who decides’ somewhat obscures the problem of the ultimate grounds of the exceptional transgression of the extant order that the distinction between commissarial and sovereign dictatorship had brought to the fore.\footnote{23} Even if Schmitt outlines there, in broad strokes, an irreversible transition from transcendent to immanent conceptions of legitimacy, he also entertains the possibility of the groundlessness of the decision as such. Indeed, he seems to suggest not only that decisions have – political, legal and moral – significance in themselves, irrespective of
their content, but also that they are self-sufficient and need not be referred back to a legitimizing source. This is especially the case in Schmitt’s dubious interpretation of the early counterrevolutionary thinkers (Maistre, Bonald and Cortés) as fellow decisionists, who had already envisioned ‘a reduction of the state…to an absolute decision created out of nothingness.’ In contrast to this radical decisionism, according to which the state emerges as a law-creating decision from a normative void, Schmitt’s conception of sovereign dictatorship had underlined the a priori sources of each and every constituted order in the constituent power of the people. Moreover, he had clearly pointed out that this new source of legitimacy evinces structural peculiarities which distinguish it from a theistic conception. The main consequence of identifying the people as the source of sovereign power is not so much that the former steps in God’s shoes and inherits His attributes, but rather a narrowing of the distance between the political order and the source of its legitimacy. Like God, the people in its constituent capacity comes before and stands above each and every political constitution, but unlike Him, the people belongs to this world and is an ever-present, potentially active factor in it.

Such is the broad framework in which Schmitt’s reflections on the concept of nation must be read: a counterrevolutionary reinterpretation of popular sovereignty that seeks to purge democracy from all liberal components. Still, the first instance in his interwar writings where nationalist elements come to play a role concerns another demarcation from progressive thought, namely, the assertion of counterrevolutionary dictatorship over against the communist conception of a dictatorship of the proletariat. In Die Diktatur (1921), a long footnote draws some parallels between the counterrevolutionary and the proletarian conceptions of dictatorship, alluding especially to George Sorel. In a subsequent work, Schmitt picks up the analogy and gives it a nationalist twist.

The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy (1923) comprises Schmitt’s attempt to disentangle democracy from liberalism in a few, rhetorically powerful pages. However, what most readers of this political tract fail to notice is that it also constitutes a vindication of dictatorship on nationalist grounds, developed in contrast to communist and syndicalist readings of dictatorship. According to Schmitt, Marx’s doctrine, erected on Hegelian foundations, framed the proletarian class struggle as a scientific category, and thus conceived the historical change it would bring forth in terms of acquiring consciousness and knowledge rather than as a concrete political task. This, he contended, had failed to motivate the Western European proletariat to take decisive action. On the other hand, when it comes to Sorel’s reading of the class struggle as an action-inducing myth, Schmitt is ready to praise the French revolutionary syndicalist for the attempt to break away from Enlightenment rationalism. However, the great merit of Sorel’s mythical class struggle lies not in its destructive – anarchist and atheistic – implications, but rather in the rediscovery of the power of myths per se, thus paving the way for other political mythologies which prove reconcilable with the principles of authority, order and hierarchy. In this context, the nation is referred to as a superior and more effective political myth. Contrary to the proletarian class struggle – a myth born out of the economic antagonism with the bourgeois class – national myths draw on deeper ethnic, linguistic and telluric sources; they are, according to Schmitt, more energetic, ‘closer to life’ and able to generate a more threatening picture of the political enemy. This, he argues, had been confirmed by the Bolshevik revolution, which could only triumph because it combined Russian nationalism with communist doctrine.
Furthermore, Mussolini’s rise to power in Italy is taken by Schmitt as evidence of the superiority of national myths.27

However, the theory of myths was a discontinuous episode in Schmitt’s interwar trajectory. In the final lines of The Crisis, he voices concerns regarding the fragmentary potential of a pluralism of political myths.28 Despite his attraction to the irrational – exemplified by the more radical formulations of his decisionism – Schmitt also realized that not even the most powerful of myths could provide the foundations for the reassertion of political unity and authority in the modern age. After all, action-inducing mythologies were no substitute for legitimacy-generating grounds. More relevant, therefore, than the nation as myth is the nation as substance of political unity, an idea that attains consummate expression in Schmitt’s most voluminous interwar work, Constitutional Theory (1928).

To be sure, Schmitt referred to the nation as ‘the substance of the state’ already in his monograph on dictatorship, where also the notion of the constituent power as the amorphous source of all political forms makes its first appearance.29 Yet, what is meant by ‘substance,’ and what such a notion more concretely implies, becomes clear only after the author has developed his conceptions of democratic equality and the political. According to Schmitt, equality – rather than freedom or a combination of the two ideas – is the cornerstone of democracy.30 However, contrary to what the liberal mind assumed, the basis of democratic equality was not the idea of a universally shared humanity as grounds for equal political rights, but rather that of belonging to a particular, homogeneous human group that is willing to assert its political existence. Democratic equality, for Schmitt, concerns not abstract, universal humanity, but the concrete homogeneity of the discrete political unit. This conception of equality is vehemently argued for in the foreword to the second edition (1926) of The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy:

Every actual democracy rests on the principle that not only are equals equal but unequals will not be treated equally. Democracy requires, therefore, first homogeneity and second—if the need arises—elimination or eradication of heterogeneity.31

Far from being a mere theoretical possibility, the ‘eradication of heterogeneity’ was a necessity for modern democracies emerging under increasingly complex social conditions. The pluralist idea that democracy is about fostering compromises between different groups co-existing within the territory of a state was flatly rejected by Schmitt, who refers to the agreements between Turkey and Greece, which resulted in the forced displacement of two million people, as impeccably democratic means of enforcing homogeneity. In this context, he clarifies that homogeneity stems mainly from membership in a particular nation. Democratic equality, hence, meant national homogeneity. However, he is also quick to add that in previous, pre- and early modern democratic experiences, other sources of homogeneity were used to include individuals in, and excluded them from, the demos, and it was safe to assume that, in the future, other categories would rise and replace nationality as operators of the citizen/foreign distinction upon which, according to Schmitt, democratic political unity rests.

Furthermore, to properly understand the contingency of ‘substance’ in Schmitt’s democratic theory one must take into account his formal concept of the political, first outlined in 1927.32 Schmitt’s thesis is that the distinction between friend and enemy
constitutes the particular criterion of the political, setting the latter apart from other spheres of thought and practice equipped with their own meaning-generating binomials (good and evil for ethics, profitable and unprofitable for economics, beautiful and ugly for aesthetics, etc.). In other words, grouping human beings into friends and enemies is, for Schmitt, the specifically political way of looking at the world. However, the political is not merely an autonomous realm of meaning and action among others. In contrast to other spheres, the political ‘does not describe its own substance, but only the intensity of an association or dissociation of human beings whose motives can be religious, national (in the ethnic or cultural sense), economic, or of another kind. In this sense, the very insubstantiality of the friend-enemy distinction generates the vaunted supremacy of the political, which draws for substance on potentially all domains of human conduct and elevates their antitheses to ‘the utmost degree of . . . association or dissociation,’ to sources of both state unity and interstate conflict. According to this view, thus, the nexus between nationhood and the formation of modern states is historically contingent rather than conceptually necessary.

In Constitutional Theory, the revolutionary conception of the nation is reinterpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, Schmitt radicalizes Sieyès’s idea that the constitution rests on the will of the nation as the subject of the constituent power. Sieyès’s oft-cited phrase – ‘[i]n whatever manner a nation wills, it suffices that it does will’ – is severed from the individualist premises of the Abbé’s political thinking and taken to imply that the will of the nation is the absolutely boundless ‘source of all power.’ To be sure, for Sieyès, all positive law and all constituted powers yield irresistibly to the will of the nation as soon as it appears, but the latter remains bound by the laws of nature and reason. The primacy of natural law, rooted in the individual, vis-à-vis both positive law and the collective will of the nation is firmly asserted by the French thinker. After all, the will of the nation is no more than the mechanical sum of individual wills, just as the nation itself is nothing more than a gathering of individuals who join together – and these are, for Sieyès, the only conceivable purposes of a ‘legitimate association’ – to mutually guarantee their security, property and freedom. In characteristically liberal fashion, Sieyès derives the collective will of the nation and its constituent power from the inalienable natural rights of the individual, whereas Schmitt uses the concept of the pouvoir constituant to denote the inexhaustible power of an uncaused collective being, the nation, which precedes and fully absorbs the individual.

If, in the first instance, Schmitt develops an absolutist and anti-individualist concept of the nation against both the letter and the spirit of French revolutionary doctrine, in a second move he accentuates the particularistic dimensions of the national community against the idea that democracy would constitute a universal human aspiration. In both instances, he establishes a conceptual distinction between people (Volk) and nation. First, he notes that the word nation should be used to refer to the subject of the constituent power because it ‘is clearer and less prone to misunderstanding’ a concept. Whereas Volk can also refer to a politically amorphous ethnic or cultural entity, nation ‘denotes, specifically, the people as a unity capable of political action,’ endowed with a will that by itself generates political forms. Later on, Schmitt specifies the concept of the nation ‘[i]n contrast to the general concept of the people.’ The aim here is to distance democracy from the Enlightenment ideals of universal humanity and brotherhood of peoples, making it appear as a political form that rests on the sovereignty of a particular, fully homogeneous people. For Schmitt, what triumphed in 1789 were not the lofty ideals of
the philosophes, but the French nation as a concrete political entity, laying the basis for the development, in the course of the 19th century, of a principle of democratic government based on national homogeneity. In line with the friend-enemy criterion, Schmitt was keen to emphasize the parallel rise of, and the intimate conceptual connection between, male universal suffrage and general conscription on a national basis. From this theory of national democracy follows 1) that where homogeneity is found to be lacking, it must be enforced, and 2) that peaceful means of achieving homogeneity are just as legitimate, from a democratic point of view, as more radical or even ostensibly violent ones. For without homogeneity there is no state, no political unity.

Jan-Werner Müller has pertinently observed that ‘Schmitt thought the nation from the vantage point of the state.’ Indeed, far from subscribing to the thesis that every nation should become a state, Schmitt’s theory moves precisely in the opposite direction: as long as national homogeneity constitutes the substance from which the political draws its strength – and only for so long – the state must mould its subjects accordingly and prevent the intrusion and development of any unity-dissolving foreign elements. By ‘the state’ Schmitt means, concretely, an authoritarian state, led by a dictator who represents the national will. The fact that, in modern democracies, legitimate power must be referred back to a world-immanent source does not alter the necessity of a strong, authoritarian state. Even if a pure democracy, as Rousseau theorized it, would entail unanimity and a ‘minimum degree of government,’ in practice the modern state emerged in the form of absolute monarchy – as pure representation – and Schmitt was firmly convinced that no other structure could guarantee political unity in the modern world. Liberalism, with its various limitations on state power, was thus conceived of as an interim condition of political paralysis on the way from the negation of absolute monarchy to the acceptance of an equally absolute democracy. Empirically speaking, for Schmitt, the people is an occasionally gathered mass of individuals appearing in public to voice approval or disapproval, to shout yes or no, and whose scope of positive action is reduced to the acclamation of the dictator who successfully connects to the mass and elevates it to the status of political unity.

Such a status is the very aim of the concept of the political as Schmitt understands it. Indeed, it may be that ‘[t]he concept of the state presupposes the concept of the political,’ but the latter’s purpose can be no other than the foundation of political unity, i.e. of the state as ‘a piece of concrete order.’ The concept of the political implies, thus, a plurality of states, but it cannot acknowledge pluralism within the state ‘without destroying . . . the political itself.’ The nation has provided the substance for the modern pluriverse of states, the main criterion for distinguishing friends and enemies after 1789, but it cannot claim a monopoly on the substance of political unity. Before the outbreak of WWII Schmitt, who had joined the Nazi Party in May 1933, became convinced that the age of the European nation-state – and this meant both the Westphalian system as its political expression and Hobbesian state theory as its intellectual foundation – was over, giving way to a new system of empires (Reiche) and great spaces (Großräume). These would still be based on homogeneity, but a new selection of substance had occurred: the Nazi state rested now on a racial understanding of the German people.

The reader of Constitutional Theory, where the idea of race never appears as a possible source of political unity, might be tempted to interpret Schmitt’s conversion to a racial theory of the state as opportunistic. However, as Karl Löwith keenly notes, what one must
underscore is the permeability of Schmitt’s interwar political thought to whichever ‘substance’ could be harnessed to sustain political unity. In a world where political rule has lost its sacred, transcendent origins, the sovereign dictator can intervene directly in the process of making and remaking the foundations of the state. While, of course, these cannot be fabricated at will, modern political realities provide plenty of resources – in the form of national, but also of racial or class antagonisms – for the unity-generating capacities of the one at the top of the state apparatus to tap into. What ensues is, in sum, a much more intense variety of political absolutism, freed from all traditional limitations in the construction of a new homogeneous substance.

**Eric Voegelin: the spirit of the nation and the authority of the state**

Eric Voegelin earned his doctorate from the University of Vienna in 1922 with a dissertation on sociological theory and methodology. He was co-supervised by Othmar Spann and Hans Kelsen, an unusual combination that pulled the young scholar in divergent directions. Spann espoused a traditionalist theory of the corporate state, which would later inspire Austrian fascism, whereas Kelsen, a progressive theorist of law and state, had just drafted the postwar democratic constitution for the new Austrian republic. Voegelin admired both – Spann for the wide range of philosophical influences, Kelsen for ‘the precision of analytical work that is peculiar to a great lawyer’ – but did not wish to become a disciple of either. At such a crossroads, the puzzles of national identity and belonging, to which neither Spann’s traditionalism nor Kelsen’s progressivism provided the key, emerge as important topics in Voegelin’s first decade of intellectual activity.

Indeed, beneath the epistemological ruminations whereby Voegelin vindicates Spann’s concept of spiritual community (Gezweiung) against Georg Simmel’s notion of social interaction (Wechselwirkung), the question of ‘membership in a society,’ its apparently exclusive nature and peculiarity, appears as the main substantive concern of the dissertation. For Voegelin, to say that sociology should ‘grasp the phenomenon [it studies] in its social nature’ means, more concretely, that it ‘must be able to tell us why a particular painting is a Dutch painting, why a particular philosophical system is French, etc.’ The nation seems thus to emerge as the specific supra-individual entity that constitutes the scientific object of sociology. In other words, the national question lies for him at the very heart of sociological inquiry – a view which, in the context of post-Habsburg Vienna, hardly comes across as surprising.

The problem, however, is that sociological inquiry cannot thrust aside its own national determination. In this regard, Voegelin refers to Pierre Duhem’s *La théorie physique* (1906), a book he would quote from a great deal during the 1920s. The remarkable feature of Duhem’s book, according to Voegelin, is that it showed that even in a domain such as theoretical physics, descriptive and explanatory models displayed the indelible traces of the national provenance of their creators. Now, if this was true of theoretical physics, it applied to the social sciences to an even greater degree. But what did this entail for the possibility of objective sociological knowledge? Could anything of scientific value be said about the national question, if the issue was bound to be approached from a particular national perspective? In a 1922 article on ‘The Social Determination of Sociological Knowledge,’ Voegelin is at pains to formulate a positive answer to this predicament. Insofar as ‘a national element is a necessary concomitant in the determination of
knowledge,’ no science whatsoever could claim to be thoroughly objective in the Kantian sense of producing a system of judgements that are valid to ‘consciousness generally.’ However, he adds, this must not lead us – and by us one should understand here the social scientist trained in Kant’s transcendental method – to discard ‘the possibility of an objective science as well as of an objective critique.’ Instead, Voegelin continues, one should visualize the ‘system of knowledge’ as a structure composed of two distinct ‘planes,’ one ‘objective’ and the other ‘subjective.’ The former is the locus of true scientific progress, where judgements satisfy the conditions required by ‘consciousness generally,’ but these are also always embedded in a ‘subjective plane’ determined by national peculiarities. In the remainder of the article, by surveying contemporary British sociological writings and discerning what is British about them, Voegelin aims thus both to define the concept of nation and to grasp its epistemological implications. The latter, however, rest on assumptions about the structure of knowledge stemming themselves from a national perspective that is presumed to have a privileged access to the transcendental realm of ‘objectivity’ and scientific progress. As Voegelin concludes this strange and convoluted early piece,

In order to produce useful findings relevant to the type of transcendental sociology we have outlined here, sociologists, in terms of their mental structure, would have to be transcendental philosophers—and whether we can find this type of philosopher outside of Germany seems highly questionable.

In the mid–1920s, Voegelin’s research trips to France and especially to the United States drew him away from the arid terrain of the German-speaking Methodenstreit. Thus, in the latter part of the decade, the question of national types and their peculiarity, rather than being treated in connection with obscure methodological and epistemological quarrels, became a substantive scientific problem in its own right. In his post-doctoral thesis, On the Form of the American Mind (1928), Voegelin develops an idiosyncratic – and somewhat tautological – approach to the topic, which sees philosophical, scientific and political systems, but also such mundane things as steam boats and theatre tickets, as phenomena inescapably marked by the particular national formation in which they originate. At the same time, however, he envisions the national unit merely as an ‘embodiment’ of the ‘intellectual formations’ that happen to be gathered within it. Crucial to the national unit was, therefore, the peculiar spirit (Geist) that animated it. In a series of lectures delivered in December 1930 at the newly-founded Institut Universitaire de Hautes Études Internationales, Voegelin draws on the approach used in the American case study to delineate the basic features of a ‘science of national types of mind.’ These Geneva lectures, which were held (in English) under the title ‘National Types of Mind and the Limits to Interstate Relations,’ are essential to understand Voegelin’s interwar take on nationalism, for they relate the question of national minds with problems pertaining to the theory of the state.

But let us clarify, before taking a closer look at the lectures, where Voegelin stood by 1930 concerning the concept of the state. Already in a 1924 article, there is evidence of disappointment with Kelsen’s merger of state and law, with the restriction of the theory of the state (Staatslehre) to a theory of law (Rechtslehre). This disappointment consolidates and intensifies during the following decade, culminating in the outright rejection of Kelsen’s theory as ‘positivist metaphysics’ in 1936. Yet, what is
noteworthy about Voegelin’s criticism of Kelsen is that it wholly neglects the latter’s philosophical and sociological reflections on democracy, which evidently go beyond the scope of a pure theory of law.\textsuperscript{62} If I am allowed to speculate about the reasons for this rather conspicuous omission, I would relate it to the monistic orientation of Voegelin’s Staatslehre and its reliance on monarchical conceptions of political unity. It was, indeed, easier to charge Kelsen’s approach of being strictly juridical and thus incomplete than to acknowledge that his mentor offered a pluralistic reading of the foundations of the democratic state that stood in sharp contrast to Voegelin’s monistic conception. The essay ‘On the Theory of the State Form’ (1927) is particularly instructive in this regard, for there the author interprets the problem of state forms strictly as one of symbolization. ‘The state,’ according to Voegelin, ‘has only one constant element: the idea of the meaningful unit, and this idea is the same in all states.’\textsuperscript{63} The purpose of state forms is, hence, to symbolize political unity, and this is something that the monarchic symbol, carried by the physical person of the divinely ordained king and given duration by the principle of hereditary succession, achieved with superior adequacy. Drawing on Schleiermacher, Voegelin speaks of ‘a relationship necessarily arising from the nature of a perfect symbolization … between the idea of the state’s destiny and a deindividuated physical person.’ From such an idealistic-monistic perspective, democracy was plagued by an inescapable symbolic deficit, for ‘the people,’ lacking a body natural, would always constitute ‘less adequate’ a symbol of the idea of political unity.\textsuperscript{64}

Voegelin’s ‘science of national types of mind,’ in comparison to this conception of the state, waters down the idealistic penchant. Revealingly, in the first Geneva lecture, Voegelin draws on Oswald Spengler’s conception of culture as a closed, self-sufficient unit to lay the groundwork for his enterprise. Despite the many flaws in Spengler’s argument, Voegelin considered that his morphological approach to cultures provided a fruitful angle for dealing with the problems of co-existing national units endowed with peculiar intellectual forms. Indeed, Spengler furnished an alternative to the progressive philosophical-historical speculations of both French positivism and German idealism. From within such perspectives that attributed themselves a universal mission, no objective treatment of ‘contemporaneous, independent units,’ no serious study of nations and their peculiar spirit, was possible.\textsuperscript{65}

Voegelin’s previous study of the American Geist rested on the premise that philosophical systems constitute the ‘central sphere of material’ for an inquiry into national minds, a position he reiterates in the second of his Geneva lectures.\textsuperscript{66} However, in beginning the third lecture, Voegelin states that ‘[t]he great function in national life’ is ‘not the attainment of an aim in the realm of spirit, but the strengthening and the justification of the nation’s existence.’\textsuperscript{67} At the heart of the nation stood, thus, not the rational mind of the philosopher, but an ultimately irrational will to assert a national existence:

The rational discourse has a center that is not rational but in reality is will, and brutal as will always is. And the will at the center of the national unit has to act on a body just as the will of the individual functions as the mover of the individual’s body.\textsuperscript{68}

According to this view, the concept of a national existence encompasses an adjacent self-reflective, rational realm and a core active, irrational will. This bifurcation, with its
priority on will over reason, constitutes a serious obstacle to any attempt to arrive at
a scientific definition of nation. Max Weber, whose influence on Voegelin is here
unmistakable, had faced this same problem when he tried to approach the topic from
a sociological perspective. Eventually, Weber had to give in to the utter impossibility of
offering an empirically valid definition, and he placed the concept in the (irrational)
sphere of values and emotions. In Voegelin’s own unfinished attempt at
a Herrschaftslehre (1930–32), the nation appears, in vague and mystical terms, as the
specifically modern incarnation of the ‘common whole’ that unites ‘the ruler and the
ruled’ and is ‘the source of power.’ A more precise definition is impossible, for, as the
author argues in Kantian parlance, ‘the substance that creates community’ is an
sick inaccessible, and ‘only the phenomenal forms of the self-manifesting entity (…) are given
to our direct perception, not the entity itself.’

The tension between truth and will, between reason and existence, and the burden it
places on the shoulders of the scholar, who cannot simply withdraw to a neutral,
insulated sphere of science because ‘political science itself is a part of political existence,’
are prominent themes in the third Geneva lecture. Torn between the irreconcilable
demands of science and politics, the scholar bears the serious responsibility ‘to know
in all clarity what parts of his thought may be regarded as rational, and where the
irrational belief comes in.’ The inability to master such a tension results – as is often
the case – in mistaking belief for unbiased truth. However, the Weberian topic of
responsibility wanes when Voegelin, moving closer to the critical issue of the connection
between nation and state, considers the genealogy of national political existence. Like
Hans Kelsen, Voegelin deems sovereignty – the theory of which lies at the core of
national political existence – to be a misleading concept. Yet, in contrast to his mentor,
Voegelin targets not the unscientific mystifications, but rather the political importance of
sovereignty – and, in particular, the exhaustion of the ‘fighting value’ of popular
sovereignty. Against the backdrop of European political history in the long 19th century,
marked by the triumph of national sovereignty understood as popular sovereignty, this
contention seems bizarre. However, the sense of bewilderment fades, if one recalls
Voegelin’s stance on the symbolic deficit of ‘the people’ and democracy’s difficulty in
giving form to the idea of political unity. His point is that the undeniably successful
challenge of popular sovereignty to all monarchical and aristocratic forms of government
had not produced a form of its own:

After being exposed to the effects of the democratic idea over several hundred years, the
traditional forms of government have been dissolved and today no longer exist. We have
arrived at a situation rather erroneously styled the ‘Crisis of Democracy.’ There is no such
crisis because, as yet, democracy has not existed at all. Democracy up to this time, at least in
Europe, has been a dissolver of traditional forms, the last of which was the bourgeois
parliament; it has had a purely negative function. And now having performed this function,
democracy faces the problem of what to do, and how to organize a thoroughly democratic
nation.

In seeking an answer to this difficulty, Voegelin veers towards Carl Schmitt, whom he
sees as the chief representative of a German political science that has advanced ‘further
than the rest of the world in creating concepts to meet the new problems of political
existence.’ The fundamental problem, as Voegelin put it in his positive review of
Schmitt’s Constitutional Theory, is that ‘of the foundation of the nation as a political
and legal unit,’ i.e. as a state. Divergences in various matters of interpretation and emphasis notwithstanding, Voegelin agrees with Schmitt on one essential point: to acknowledge that ‘the people’ or ‘the nation’ are the foundation of the state, in the sense that they constitute the source of legitimate rule in the modern age, does not imply that they are able to found the state, to bring about political unity. The latter, according to them, emerges only from the representative (Schmitt) or symbolic (Voegelin) potential of personal political leadership. To be sure, Voegelin treads cautiously here – as Schmitt did, too, especially in his Constitutional Theory – but does not fail to draw the consequences of his conception of the state to the prospect of ‘a thoroughly democratic nation.’ Structurally, such a nation-state ‘may be rather similar to ... absolute monarchy, the decisive difference being that the belief in the sacrosanct person of the monarch ... [is] gone and replaced by an immediate attachment to the personal qualities of the statesman in power.’ In that sense, ‘[t]he Italy of Mussolini, for example, would be a model democracy.’

Thus, a few years later, when facing the constitutional troubles of post-dynastic Austria, Voegelin puts forward a long-winded defence of Dollfuss’s and Schuschnigg’s authoritarian regime. According to him, the ongoing process of ‘[r]evolution from below’ against ‘the authority of the state,’ whose latest expression was central European parliamentary democracy, constituted a symptom of decadence that could only be countered, if the state would take the initiative and create – as it were, from above – a hitherto inexistent political nation. Modern Austrian politics, in Voegelin’s view, was characterized by the cyclical recurrence of absolutist moments which, until 1918, had prevented in extremis the dissolution of the multinational empire. Now, another such moment was necessary to supply the German-speaking successor state with its indispensable national basis. In spite of his attempt to disentangle the concept of authority from that of dictatorship, Voegelin was conspicuously aligned with Mussolini’s critique of nineteenth-century nationalism, according to which it was not the nation that shaped the state, but vice versa. In the Austrian case, in contrast to Italy and Germany, this was not due to the fact that nationalism had already fulfilled its historical mission of political unification, but rather because, in the absence of a spontaneous Austrian national sentiment, the state had to fill in the void and use its resources to turn the population into a nation, into a political people. The charge that this reversion of the nexus between state and nation would be undemocratic was categorically dismissed, because democracy, as Schmitt had shown – and Voegelin agreed – was far from being the development of the progressive ideals of self-determination and freedom from coercion, was essentially about the (if need be) forcible imposition of a homogeneous substance.

In a 1934 newspaper article, Voegelin had already anticipated the conclusions of his book on The Authoritarian State (1936). The Austrian constitution that Hans Kelsen had drafted in 1920 was ‘a construct fashioned to a high degree of perfection in accordance with democratic parliamentary axioms that had no foundations in political reality.’ The republic had ‘failed to create a national community capable of generating a political formation’ and ‘a point was reached where an absolutist intervention again became necessary in order to save the state.’ The absolutist intervention, indeed, would not merely save the state, but also create the nation by infusing it ‘with a content of its own choosing.”
Conclusion

Carl Schmitt’s and Eric Voegelin’s encounter with nationalist ideas ended in subordination to an authoritarian and monistic conception of the state, and to the intellectual vindication of the far-right ‘strongmen’ who, in the interlude between the two great wars of the 20th century, elevated a national community ‘of [their] own choosing’ – and which they alone could represent – to the status of supreme political value. When it came to solving the riddle of desacralized authority without giving in to liberal modes of thought, their vision of the state allowed for the nation only a subsidiary position. The nation was not the source of authority, but rather the product of authoritarian leadership. In the absence of a transcendent source of order, the endorsement of an absolutist conception of the state thus gave free rein to the activism of the authoritarian leader, who was deemed capable of remaking the grounds upon which the state rests. Traditional conservative scepticism towards political voluntarism and its disruptive effects was swept aside in this rethinking of the origins of order and authority, which inevitably drifted to the ideological terrains of fascism.

Voegelin came to recognize this predicament more unambiguously than Schmitt. While the latter refused to take part in the Allied programmes of re-education after WWII and retreated to the margins of West German intellectual and political debates, Voegelin had begun to interpret mass ideological movements as political religions – and as the consequence of an ominous process of secularization of the modern mind—before fleeing from Austria after the Anschluss.80 In his unpublished History of Political Ideas, written already in American exile, nationalism appears as part of a broader ‘apostatic revolution’ that resulted in the collapse of ‘Western Christian mankind.’81 The crisis of Western civilization, whose culprit is modernity understood writ large as a heretical movement, constitutes the thematic core of The New Science of Politics (1952), the book that made Voegelin known in the American intellectual scene. But crucially, despite the sweeping attack on the modern age, Voegelin now saw Anglo-American democracy as a restorative force. Strange though it may seem, intellectual radicalization in an anti-modern direction was not incompatible with accommodation to the institutions of liberal democracy, which now rose to the status of bulwarks of a ‘civilizational tradition’ worth preserving.82

The pull of what Habermas called a ‘normative watershed’ was strong enough to force the staunchest opponents of political Enlightenment to retreat, surrender or conform after WWII. Today, however, the resurgence of nationalism coupled with an authoritarian outlook, in Europe and beyond, shows that scholarly engagement with the radical perimeters of conservative ideology has more than strictly historical implications.

Notes

1. Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities, 4th edition (London: Verso, 2016), p. 5.
2. Anderson, ibid.
3. Ian Adams, Political Ideology Today (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 82.
4. Michael Freeden, ‘Is Nationalism a Distinct Ideology?,’ Political Studies, XLVI (1998), pp. 748–765.
5. On the substantive core of conservative ideology, see Michael Freeden, Ideologies and Political Theory (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 333–334.
6. Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?,' *The National Interest*, no. 16 (1989), p. 4.
7. Jürgen Habermas, *The Postnational Constellation*, trans. Max Pensky (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), p. 46.
8. Louis de Bonald, *Œuvres complètes*, vol. 6 (Brussels: Société Nationale pour la Propagation des Bons Livres, 1845), p. 101. This and all further translations, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.
9. Freeden, *Ideologies and Political Theory*, op. cit., Ref. 5, p. 334, notes that the 'extra-human' origins of order need not be understood in religious terms. However, one can hardly deny that the idea of a divine provenance stands, both chronologically and logically, at the genesis of such a conservative conception. In Bonald's above-quoted aphorism, God appears unmistakably behind nature as the will that emanates order into the world. Later on, such a link was severed and historical, biological or otherwise scientific understandings of 'nature' took the place of the metaphysical divinity as extra-human, non-voluntarist sources of social order. The suspicion, however, that there is something intrinsically derivative about these later understandings is hard to dissipate.
10. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, ed. J. G. A. Pocock (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987), p. 28.
11. Joseph de Maistre, *Considerations on France*, trans. Richard A. Lebrun (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 74.
12. Emanuel JosephSieyès, *Qu’est-ce que le Tiers état?* (Paris: Éditions du Boucher, 2002), p. 5.
13. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King’s Two Bodies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).
14. On early conservative thought, see Karl Mannheim, *Conservatism*, trans. David Kettler and Volker Meja (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), esp. pp. 86–110.
15. Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia* (New York: Harcourt, 1954), p. 208.
16. For a study that does so, see Claus Heimes, *Politisund Transzendentz* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2009).
17. Schmitt’s childhood in a semi-rural Catholic milieu was still marked by the echoes of Bismarck’s *Kulturkampf*, which might explain the rather abstract, distanced terms of his early valorization of the state. See Carl Schmitt, *Glossarium*, 2nd edition (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 2015), p. 370.
18. Carl Schmitt, *Der Wert des Staates und die Bedeutung des Einzelnen* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1914), pp. 20–24, 43–45, 93. In a retrospective periodization of his life at the age of 70, Schmitt, *Glossarium*, op. cit., Ref. 17, p. 370, sees his youth years from 1907 to 1918 marked by the combination of Wilhelmine Prussianism and neo-Kantianism. The fact that the neo-Kantian influence did not divert him from an apology of the state should not, in my view, be taken to imply that such influence was negligible in comparison to others. Frederick C. Beiser, ‘Normativity in Neo-Kantianism: Its Rise and Fall,’ *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 17, no. 1 (2009), pp. 9–27, elaborates insightfully on the problems with the neo-Kantian concept of normativity and how these led, paradoxically, to a return to Hegel in particular, and metaphysics in general, on the eve of WWI. It is thus important to note that Schmitt’s attempt to bridge the gulf between the ‘worlds’ of facts and norms, drawing on Catholic doctrine as a model for state theory, coincided with the demise of the neo-Kantian concept of normativity.
19. Carl Schmitt, *Gesetz und Urteil* (Berlin: Otto Liebmann, 1912) is the work where the author himself sees the origins of his decisionism. See also Michael Dylan Rogers, ‘The Development of Carl Schmitt’s Political Thought during the First World War,’ *Modern Intellectual History*, 13, no. 1 (2016), pp. 123–149.
20. Carl Schmitt, *Die Diktatur* (Munich: Duncker & Humblot, 1921), pp. 137–139.
21. Schmitt, ibid., p. 136.
22. Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 51–52.
23. Schmitt, ibid., p. 5.
24. Schmitt, ibid., p. 66.
25. Schmitt, *Die Diktatur*, op. cit., Ref. 20, pp. 139, 145–146.
26. Schmitt, *ibid.*, p. 146.
27. Carl Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, trans. Ellen Kennedy (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), pp. 62–76.
28. Schmitt, *ibid.*, p. 76.
29. Schmitt, *Die Diktatur*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 20, pp. 142–144 (quotation on p. 144).
30. In this respect, too, Schmitt stood in marked opposition to most pro-Weimar theorists, who viewed both freedom and equality as indispensable democratic principles. Some of them, indeed, would even give priority to the idea of freedom. See esp. Hans Kelsen, *Vom Wesen und Wert der Demokratie* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1920), pp. 1–5.
31. Schmitt, *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 27, p. 9.
32. Carl Schmitt, ‘Der Begriff des Politischen,’ in Schmitt, *Positionen und Begriffe*, 3rd edition (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1994), pp. 75–83.
33. Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 26.
34. Schmitt, *ibid.*, p. 38.
35. Schmitt, *ibid.*, p. 26.
36. Sieyès, *Qu’est-ce que le Tiers état?*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 12, p. 55.
37. Carl Schmitt, *Constitutional Theory*, trans. Jeffrey Seitzer (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), p. 128.
38. Sieyès, *Qu’est-ce que le Tiers état?*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 12, p. 73.
39. See Stefan Breuer, ‘Nationalstaat und pouvoir constituant bei Sieyes und Carl Schmitt,’ *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie*, 70, no. 4 (1984), pp. 510–511.
40. Schmitt, *Constitutional Theory*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 37, p. 127.
41. Schmitt, *ibid.*, pp. 261–263 (citation on p. 261).
42. Jan-Werner Müller, ‘Carl Schmitt– An occasional nationalist?’, *History of European Ideas*, 23, no. 1 (1997), p. 27.
43. Schmitt, *Constitutional Theory*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 37, pp. 239–248 (citation on p. 248).
44. Schmitt, *ibid.*, p. 272.
45. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 33, p. 19.
46. Carl Schmitt, ‘Staatsethik und pluralistischer Staat,’ in Schmitt, *Positionen und Begriffe*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 32, p. 162.
47. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 33, p. 45.
48. Carl Schmitt, ‘Großraum gegen Universalismus,’ in *Positionen und Begriffe*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 32, pp. 333–343; Der *Leviathan in der Staatslehre des Thomas Hobbes*, ed. Günther Maschke (Cologne: Hohenheim, 1982).
49. Carl Schmitt, *Staat, Bewegung, Volk* (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1935), p. 42.
50. Karl Löwith, ‘The Occasional Decisionism of Carl Schmitt,’ in *Martin Heidegger and European Nihilism*, ed. Richard Wolin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 137–158.
51. Othmar Spann, *Der wahre Staat* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1921). For Kelsen’s defence of democracy, see Ref. 30.
52. Eric Voegelin, *Autobiographical Reflections*, ed. Ellis Sandoz (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2011), p. 48.
53. Eric Voegelin, ‘Interaction and Spiritual Community,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 32, ed. William Petropulos and Gilbert Weiss (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), p. 33 (emphasis added).
54. Voegelin, *ibid.*, p. 22 (interpolation by the translators).
55. Eric Voegelin, ‘The Social Determination of Sociological Knowledge,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 7, ed. Thomas W. Heilke and John von Heyking (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), pp. 29–30 (emphasis in the original).
56. Voegelin, *ibid.*, p. 48.
57. Eric Voegelin, ‘On the Form of the American Mind,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 1, ed. Jürgen Gebhardt and Barry Cooper (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1995), pp. 5–6.
58. Eric Voegelin, ‘National Types of Mind and the Limits to Interstate Relations,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 32, *op. cit.*, Ref. 53, p. 433.

59. Voegelin had an appointment to Geneva in view – a door that was opened to him by his mentor, Hans Kelsen. The correspondence between Kelsen and William Rappard, director of the Geneva Institute, concerning Voegelin’s lectures is filed in the IHEID archives. For Kelsen’s initial endorsement of Voegelin, see letter from Kelsen to Rappard, 10.05.1930.

60. Eric Voegelin, ‘The Pure Theory of Law and of State,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 7, *op. cit.*, Ref. 55, pp. 49–99.

61. Eric Voegelin, *Der autoritäre Staat*, ed. Günther Winkler (Vienna: Springer, 1997), chapter 6.

62. Hans Kelsen, *Vom Wesen und Wert der Demokratie*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 30. Especially the second, expanded edition of this work, published in 1929, shows Kelsen’s sociological acumen. Voegelin’s picture of a fetishist fixation on ‘the norm’ by his Doktorvater, as well as the corollary of a loss of touch with political realities, can only be maintained by totally ignoring these writings.

63. Eric Voegelin, ‘On the Theory of the State Form,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 7, *op. cit.*, Ref. 55, p. 254.

64. Voegelin, *ibid.*, p. 246.

65. Voegelin, ‘National Types of Mind,’ *op. cit.*, Ref. 58, pp. 436–440 (citation on p. 436).

66. Voegelin, *ibid.*, p. 447.

67. Voegelin, *ibid.*, p. 460.

68. Voegelin, *ibid.*, p. 461.

69. Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), pp. 921–926.

70. Eric Voegelin, ‘The Theory of Governance,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 32, *op. cit.*, Ref. 53, pp. 358–359.

71. Voegelin, ‘National Types of Mind,’ *op. cit.*, Ref. 58, pp. 463–464.

72. Hans Kelsen, *Das Problem der Souveränität* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1920).

73. Voegelin, ‘National Types of Mind,’ *op. cit.*, Ref. 58, pp. 469–470.

74. Voegelin, *ibid.*, p. 471.

75. Eric Voegelin, “‘Die Verfassungslehre von Carl Schmitt,’” in *Collected Works*, vol. 13, ed. Jodi Cockerill and Barry Cooper (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001), p. 42.

76. Voegelin, ‘National Types of Mind,’ *op. cit.*, Ref. 58, p. 470 (my interpolation).

77. Voegelin, *Der autoritäre Staat*, *op. cit.*, Ref. 61, pp. 27, 43–51, 83–87 (citation on p. 51).

78. Eric Voegelin, “‘Die Verfassungslehre von Carl Schmitt,’” *op. cit.*, Ref. 75, p. 62.

79. Eric Voegelin, ‘Drafting a Constitution for Austria,’ in *Collected Works*, vol. 9, ed. Thomas W. Heilke (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001), p. 27.

80. Erich Voegelin, *Die Politischen Religionen* (Stockholm: Bermann-Fischer, 1939).

81. Eric Voegelin, ‘History of Political Ideas, Volume VI,’ in *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 24, ed. Barry Cooper (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), p. 74.

82. Eric Voegelin, ‘The New Science of Politics: An Introduction,’ in *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*, vol. 5, ed. Manfred Henningsen (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000), p. 241.

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