Where Is the European Union Today? Will It Survive? Can It Thrive?

Vivien A. Schmidt

Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress. By Olaf Cramme and Sara Hobolt, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. $49.95.

Which European Union? Europe after the Euro Crisis. By Sergio Frabbrini. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. 376p. $98.00 cloth, $37.99 paper.

The Politics of Everyday Europe: Constructing Authority in the European Union. By Kathleen R. McNamara. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 224p. $45.00 cloth, $30.00 paper

Over the past few years, the European Union has suffered through a cascading set of crises. The sovereign debt crisis for countries in the Euro began in 2010 with the buildup to the bailout of Greece. This was quickly followed by the refugee crisis, which hit the headlines in 2012, as thousands fled conflict in Syria and poverty in Africa. All the while, the security crisis continued, whether as a result of terrorist attacks, in particular since the Charlie Hebdo massacre of January 2015, or trouble in the neighborhood, especially with Russian incursions in the Ukraine since 2014 and the unending civil wars in the Middle East. And then there was the British vote on exit from the EU in June 2016, raising questions not only about the future of the UK but also about the EU. Finally, let us not forget the most recent potential crisis, the election of U.S. President Donald Trump, with all the uncertainties it brings for the EU in terms of transatlantic relations, trade, and security.

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With all these crises, analysts often ask: Will the EU survive? And even if it survives, can it thrive? Their focus has generally been on the cross-cutting divides among member-states. In the Eurozone crisis, Northern European creditor countries push for strict adherence to rules of austerity and structural reforms while Southern European debtor countries ask for flexibility and growth-enhancing policy. In the refugee crisis, Western European countries push for sharing responsibility for refugees in the name of human rights while Central and Eastern European countries resist in the name of sovereignty and identity, and surround their borders with barbed wire. In the security crisis, EU member-states have been unable to forge a common security and defense policy—and this despite the rising risks of terrorism and the continued standoff with Russia. As for Brexit (British exit from the EU), the negotiation process risks splitting the member-states on the terms of engagement at the same time that British exit in any form challenges the very idea of European integration, and raise the specter of EU disintegration.

As if these policy-related crises were not enough, they have been accompanied by major crises of politics and democracy for the EU as well as its member-states. At the EU level, questions are increasingly raised not only about the EU's (lack of) effectiveness in solving the various crises but also its democratic legitimacy. The causes are EU governance processes characterized by the increasing predominance of closed-door political bargains by EU member-state leaders in the Council and by a preponderance of technocratic decisions by EU officials in the Commission and the European Central Bank, without significant oversight by the European Parliament. At the national level,

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concerns focus on the ways in which the very existence of the EU has diminished elected governments' authority and control over growing numbers of policies for which they had traditionally been alone responsible, often making it difficult for them to fulfill their electoral promises or respond to their constituents' concerns and expectations. The result has been increasing political disaffection and discontent among citizens across European countries, with a growing Euro-skepticism that has fueled the rise of populist parties on the political extremes.

The three books under review here address the many challenges to European politics, institutions, and culture resulting from the EU's multiple crises. The overarching message from these books is that, despite the divisions among member-states and the problems surrounding the EU's supranational governance, let alone the failure to solve the crises themselves, an integrated European Union has not just survived, it has moved forward with integration in unexpected ways, for better and for worse. Whether it can thrive remains an open question.

For the contributors to the edited volume by Olaf Cramme and Sara B. Holbolt, *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress,* the Eurozone crisis has generated problems not only for EU governance but also for EU politics and legitimacy. For Sergio Fabbrini in *Which European Union*? EU-level institutions have deepened integration, developing different "unions" in different areas of governance, which remained largely in institutional balance until the Eurozone crisis. For Kathleen McNamara in *The Politics of Everyday Europe*, the EU's political authority rests not just on politics and institutions but also culture, as constructed by citizens through their everyday practices as Europeans.

These books differ in their substantive focus and methodological perspectives: The contributors to the edited volume of Cramme and Hobolt concentrate on the political consequences of the Eurozone crisis, and use a mix of methodological approaches from political, economic, legal, and sociological perspectives to examine EU actors' differing interests and ideas about the EU under stress. Fabbrini is more interested in the EU's institutional forms and development, and therefore follows a historical institutionalist approach that concentrates on the historical regularities and path dependence of the EU's many different "unions." McNamara is concerned instead with questions of culture and the construction of identity in the EU, and takes a sociological institutionalist approach that builds on the "practice turn" in sociology.

I begin with the stresses on the EU today, and therefore consider first Cramme and Hobolts' *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress*. I next look at the EU's institutional makeup and governance processes, which takes us to Sergio Fabbrini's *Which European Union?* Finally, I turn to EU political culture, and how it has been constructed over time via citizens' everyday practices, with McNamara's *Politics of Everyday Europe*.

EU under Stress in the Eurozone Crisis

The main focus of *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress* is the Eurozone crisis, as the greatest test of the EU's ability to survive. The problems, as the introduction nicely outlines, come from the design flaws of the Euro, the impact of the regulatory and legislative processes on eurozone policymaking, and the effects on democratic politics at EU and national levels, all of which raise questions about the prospects for the future. In a remarkable set of chapters by leading scholars who offer detailed analysis of different aspects of the Eurozone crisis, the focus is not so much on the economics of the crisis as on the politics and processes. They address such questions as whether European Monetary Union can create a level playing field amongst their members, heal the spit between Northern creditor and Southern debtor countries, and regain the mutual trust required to complete the currency union, as well as what all this might mean for further integration. The book's overall theme, however, is the EU's democratic legitimacy, and how that plays out in terms of Eurozone policies, politics, and processes.

The EU's claims to democratic legitimacy have been a matter of contention ever since the 1990s, when the question of the European Union's democratic deficit first arose. But prior to the Euro Crisis, the scholarly debate was divided between those who saw a growing democratic deficit and those who found the EU sufficiently legitimate. That division has largely disappeared in the wake of the sovereign debt crisis. Most scholars now see the EU as suffering from a significant democratic deficit as a result of Eurozone policies and processes and their effects on EU politics. Scholars see the failures of the Eurozone's policy performance as having served to undermine the EU's "output" legitimacy, in particular because of the deleterious consequences of EU policies of austerity and "structural reform," especially for the political economies of peripheral member-states. They have also been concerned about the paucity of "input"' legitimacy resulting from the lack of citizen political engagement in, let alone impact on, EU decision-making, and therefore worry about the concomitant rise in citizen disaffection accompanied by growing political volatility.[1] And many additionally blame the poor quality of EU governance, which we could call its "throughput" legitimacy, as a result of the increase in supranational and intergovernmental rule to the detriment of the "Community Method" and any significant involvement of the European Parliament (EP).[2]

The first chapter in *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress,* by Fritz Scharpf, delves deep into the Eurozone's problems of democratic legitimacy in all three areas, but in particular with regard to output legitimacy. Scharpf provides a masterful account of the dysfunctional

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logics of the Eurozone, including an original design that created centralized monetary policy in a non-optimal currency area and rescue policies that only exacerbated the divergences between the creditor countries and the debtors, in the interests of the former to the detriment of the latter. Scharpf also shows that the hardening requirements imposed on member-states' budgetary compliance, together with the enhanced discretionary powers of the Commission, also pose problems for the EU's throughput legitimacy, given its insulation from political accountability. His sobering conclusions suggest that Eurozone is in even worse shape with regard to input legitimacy.

Waltraud Schelkle's chapter adds to our background understanding of the Eurozone's problems of output legitimacy with her innovative discussion of the initial design flaws of the European Monetary Union (EMU). These, she argues, result from the incompleteness of the risk pool and insurance mechanism that the EMU structures and policies embody, which the member-states put in place more by default than design to respond to the pressures of global financial markets and the challenges of global competition. The problem, she shows, has to do with too little EU integration, that is, the lack of a fully-fledged insurance scheme with effective shock absorbers, including a joint tax system and joint public-debt management, such as some form of Eurobonds or mutualization of debt. But these kinds of (output) solutions have come up against political (input) resistance by citizens as well as governing elites, in particular from Northern Europe, once the crisis hit.

As other contributors to *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress* show in a range of insightful chapters, input legitimacy has been in sharp decline as a result of the Eurozone crisis, as evidenced in public attitudes and debates. Sara Hobolt, for example, charts the increasing public disenchantment with the EU as well as with national governments, as all citizens, and not just those already skeptical about the EU, hold the EU responsible for the crisis. She shows that diminishing public trust in EU institutions is directly related to their inability to hold European politicians to account for their responses to the crisis, creating an unresolved "accountability" deficit, even as they still believe that EU-level institutions are better equipped to deal effectively with the crisis than national ones. Hans-Peter Kriesi and Edgar Grande, moreover, demonstrate that equally problematic for the EU's input legitimacy is that the increasing politicization of the debates in the wake of the Eurozone crisis has not moved the EU toward a single European public sphere characterized by pan-European debates but, rather, has led to a "parallelization of national public spheres," in which the main voices heard across public spheres have been those of the more powerful member-state leaders, German in particular.

National parliaments have done little to remedy this situation, say, by taking up the debate themselves in order to inform citizens about what is at stake. Although national legislatures, as Tapio Raunio suggests, are not as missing in action as is often assumed, given their gradual empowerment in EU governance, they still don't do much for increasing citizen awareness, given the limited amount of time they devote to debating EU-related issues. Moreover, as Jonathan White argues, increasing democratic political debate and political contestation is hindered by the executive-led discretion of EU leaders and officials, which creates a "politics without rhythm' that leaves national and EU level parliamentarians constantly scrambling to respond, and unable to organize any effective or sustained political opposition to Eurozone policies.

So what are the prospects for a more legitimate and democratic Europe? Scharpf is arguably the most pessimistic, seeing greater politicization as only exacerbating the already-existing divergences, in particular between core and periphery. Damian Chalmers and Mariana Chaves are also not very sanguine with regard to the future of EU governance, given what they see as a move toward "democratic foreclosure" in the crisis that has consolidated power in finance ministers, restricted parliamentary powers, and provided regulatory substitutes for real democratic governance. Even worse, Andreas Follesdal, after rehearsing all of the problems with regard to ensuring democratic standards in the EU's "asymmetric union," leaves us with "meagre" comfort, as he himself notes, given that all political orders with federal elements tend to be less stable, with the "requisite dual loyalty often insufficient." But this, he concludes, is no reason not to urge reforms (p. 213).

Simon Hix is the most positive about the possible benefits of EU-wide politicization as a way to ensure more input legitimacy for the increasingly-complex Eurozone governance architecture. He argues not only for the greater politicization of the appointment of the Commission President but also for a "maximalist strategy" for legitimizing Eurozone governance itself: constitutionalizing its emerging architecture by creating a treaty to be ratified via more direct forms of democracy such as referenda in the member-states. Given the EU's experiences with referenda (Brexit is only the latest—let us not forget the Constitutional Treaty of 2005), this might not be such a good idea unless the goal is to dismantle Eurozone governance in its current form, and force the EU to rethink it from the ground up. Short of this, as Catherine de Vries argues, a middle way to greater politicization would be not only to give national parliaments enhanced oversight over national executives' EU-level decisions but also to create a bicameral parliament at the EU level, elected by national parliaments and represented by them.

Given all these problems of legitimacy with regard to policy performance, governance processes, and democratic politics, what future can we expect for Eurozone

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governance? For Schimmelfennig, the Eurozone is already characterized by "differentiated integration," in which more integration has been accompanied by more differentiation, with different member-states participating to varying degrees. But how much differentiation the EU should have moving forward remains in question. Could it include de-integration, meaning a retreat from Eurozone governance as it now stands for countries suffering from its effects, in particular in Southern Europe? In an enlightening concluding chapter, Sverker Gustavsson argues that in order to restore the informal pact of confidence that had earlier characterized the EU, it needs not only to improve its problem-solving capacity and to encourage legitimate opposition. It also must agree to "legitimate protectionism," meaning a retreat from the Eurozone straightjacket of one-size-fits-all policies, in order to allow for greater divergence among member-states on economic and not only political grounds.

All in all, *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress* offers a wide panoply of carefully-crafted analyses of the Eurozone crisis and its impact, all very critical of where the Eurozone is today, and most rather cautious if not pessimistic about the future. None go the last mile, however, by calling for giving control over economic policy back to the member-states and thereby ending current Eurozone governance as we know it, that is, through ending one-size rules of oversight over national budgets. Nor do any call for moving forward into deeper integration around the Eurozone through some new institutional form. In contrast, our next author does exactly this, but after a more historical and institutional review of EU governance over the long term.

Who's in Charge of EU Governance?

EU scholars tend to hold very different views of how the EU is governed and which EU actors predominate. To understand where Sergio Fabbrini's *Which European Union* fits and how it adds to the discussion, we need first to consider scholarly debates over how to explain EU governance.

The main divide has long been between "intergovernmentalists" convinced that member-state political leaders are in charge through their intergovernmental negotiations in the Council and "supranationalists" persuaded that EU officials are in control via their supranational activities in EU administrative and regulatory bodies such as the Commission and the European Central Bank. In the minority has been what we could call the "parliamentarists," who see an increasingly significant role for the European Parliament. Such debates have changed over time, however, with splits in substantive theory over who governs joined by disagreements on methodological theory about how to explain such governance, whether in terms of rational choice institutionalist interests and incentive structures, historical institutionalist rules and path dependencies, sociological institutionalist cultural frames and practices, or discursive institutionalist ideas and discursive interactions.[3]

The traditional debates pitted intergovernmentalists, who insisted that the member-states pursuing (rational) national or domestic interests dominate EU decisions, against supranationalists, who maintained instead that EU officials in the Commission and other regulatory bodies drove deeper integration via (historical) institutional dynamics of spillover and (rational) self-interested entrepreneurialism. This divide continues today, but with a move away from rationalist or historical institutionalist approaches to more ideational and discursive institutionalist ones.

On the one side are the "new intergovernmentalists" who maintain that since the 1990s member-state leaders in the Council have engaged in more (discursively) deliberative processes to arrive at consensual agreements through persuasion rather than through the (rational) interest-based bargaining assumed by traditional intergovernmentalism.[4] These scholars further argue, now against traditional supranationalism, that the member-states' new intergovernmental activism in the Council has taken back control from the Commission by deliberately creating *de novo* EU bodies and instruments outside its purview, such as the European Central Bank (ECB) and the European Stability Mechanism (ESM).[5]

On the other side are the "new supranationalists" who contend that EU officials in supranational institutions—whether long-standing or *de novo*—are driving forces in the EU through their greater (ideational) role in policy design and their ever increasing powers of enforcement.[6] Ironically, according to these scholars, such EU supranational actors are responsible for having developed and proposed to EU intergovernmental actors the policy initiatives that have ensured their own further empowerment, whether via their increasing autonomy of action (especially the ECB) or discretion in applying the rules (in particular the Commission).[7] For the new supranationalists, deeper European integration is therefore a consequence of supranational agents' ideas and institutional entrepreneurship focused on making European integration work better, rather than a function of (historical) institutional dynamics or (rational) self-interest, as in the traditional supranationalist view.

The one view shared by both sides is that of the declining significance of the European Parliament (EP) and the co-decision mode of policymaking known as the "Community Method." For another set of analysts, whom we shall call the "new parliamentarists," this is a mistake because of the ways in which the EP has both formally and informally gained new powers.[8] Although they would agree that parliamentary actors are no match for intergovernmental or supranational actors, however they are analyzed, "new" parliamentarists argue that the EP

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nevertheless needs to be taken into account because its relative influence has increased significantly since the Maastricht Treaty. In fact, although the EP continues to have little comparative power, these scholars show that it has wielded increasing (historical) institutional influence, if only informally, by tactically using its legislative competences, as well as ideational and discursive power, in particular by becoming the "go-to" body for legitimacy.[9]

Into this seeming confusion comes Fabbrini's *Which European Union*, a magisterial study of EU institutional development that provides invaluable insights into the functioning of the European Union in its many different governance areas. The book largely sides with the new intergovernmentalists on the predominance of member-state leaders in the Council, but without fully rejecting either the supranationalist views on the importance of EU supranational actors or the parliamentarist insistence on the growing importance of the EP. Fabbrini manages this balancing act by taking an institutionally-nuanced view of the European Union as he details how it is made up of many different "Unions" in which EU actors have different degrees of influence. He sees the Single Market as a constitutional union largely dominated by supranationalism because based on the Community Method, in which the Commission and the EP predominate, even though intergovernmental processes are also present. In contrast, when it comes to the Eurozone, he sees it as a different kind of constitutional union, which is mainly intergovernmental, with the member-states in charge, even if supranational actors like the Commission are actively engaged in it, as is the EP in a minor way.

For Fabbrini, the shift from the supranational union of the early years focused on the Single Market to the intergovernmental union centered around nationally-sensitive policy areas like monetary and foreign policy, comes as a result of the Maastricht Treaty. But although he sees the EU change direction at this critical juncture, he nonetheless finds that these two unions continued to co-develop reasonably well through the multiple compromises necessary to co-exist in a single legal and institutional framework. The problem, Fabbrini argues, came with the next critical juncture: the Eurozone crisis. This is when he sees the benign increase in intergovernmentalism of the post-Maastricht years become malignant, as intergovernmental institutions are strengthened to the detriment of the pre-existing institutional equilibrium, while Council governance moves from consensus-seeking to hierarchical domination. For Fabbrini, this has been a disaster for the EU for the whole range of reasons discussed previously by contributors to *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress*. The only way out, he argues in a concluding chapter, is to fully rethink the EU, and to recognize that the future must be a differentially-integrated EU in which at the center is a more deeply-integrated "political union" around the Eurozone.

Fabbrini employs a historical-institutionalist methodological approach, joined with a comparative- institutions perspective that he opposes to the international-relations perspective that has long dominated theories about the drivers of European integration, to lend new insights into what the EU is and how it is developing. Such an approach, which enables Fabbrini to delve deeply into the path dependencies of EU institutional forms and structures, has many benefits, but also some drawbacks. On the benefit side, we learn a great deal about how the EU was constituted, how its institutions work (or don't), and how it compares (or not) to other federal unions of states (of which the United States and Switzerland are prime examples). We also find an implicit critique of new intergovernmentalists' convictions that the Council is mainly about deliberative consensus-seeking rather than the power and interests of traditional intergovernmentalists. This is apparent in Fabbrini's argument that the Council has moved away from consensus-seeking toward hierarchical domination both in its relations externally, with other EU institutions, and internally, by Germany over other member-states in the Council.[10]

But institutional logics only take us so far. Ideational and discursive approaches can help lend insight into what may be going on within the institutions, but hidden from view. In the Eurozone crisis in particular, a focus on EU actors' formal powers and actions makes it appear as if the Council has all the power, having sidelined the Parliament while turning the Commission into little more than a secretariat for Council decisions. But scratch the surface, and we find that, as the new supranationalists argue, EU officials' ideas for new initiatives have been highly influential in pushing institutional change. The Commission, although (mis)treated as a secretariat by Council leaders, was nonetheless responsible for the ideas behind the "European Semester" (which gave it major powers of oversight over national government budgets) that the Council approved. And the Commission had been promoting these very ideas in one form or another for a number of years prior to the opening of the window of opportunity constituted by the sovereign debt crisis. Moreover, Banking Union was the brainchild of the ECB.[11] Finally, we could even question not just how much hierarchical domination there is by the Council over other EU institutions but also how much there is within the Council itself by Germany, given its compromises over time, as it first reluctantly agreed to add growth to the agenda in 2012, then accepted flexibility in 2014, and finally investment for growth in 2015.[12]

Politics also matters, in particular regarding the proposal for deeper integration. In a Europe suffering from multiple crises, of which the Eurozone is only one, how does one get the citizens on board for a political union when, as the contributors to *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress* make very clear, neither

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the member-state leaders nor the citizens are ready for any such thing. Even when considering just the institutions, there are big questions as to whether a political union built around a hard core of members in the Eurozone could even work. This assumes that the member-states within that hard core would agree on policy—something not at all certain given fundamental differences between France and Germany on economic policy alone. A political union focused on the Eurozone could very well mean the very policy domination by Germany that Fabbrini seeks to avoid. But even if Fabbrini's political union could avoid this, there is no guarantee that a small hard core of member-states in agreement on the Eurozone would be able to come to agreement more readily than the larger EU membership in other policy areas. If deeper integration is the answer, then political union is indeed necessary to solve the range of problems of democracy and legitimacy. But it is likely to come only with the acceptance of differentiation in member-state engagement in the EU's many different policy communities, by envisioning the EU as having a *soft* core of overlapping clusters of member-states, united by participation in common institutions, with a common vision of where the EU is going.

These are all secondary issues, however, when considering Fabbrini's impressive feat in providing a major historical institutional reassessment of the EU's governance over the long term, as well as at the moment. We are still missing one element, however. What is the glue holding the EU together, making EU actors and citizens stick with it, despite the travails of the Eurozone. It need not just be a question of interests, institutions, or ideas and discourse. For our next author, it is also about culture and identity.

Who Builds Europe?

McNamara's *The Politics of Everyday Europe: Constructing Authority in the European Union* is a trailblazing book. It turns the study of the EU on its head, by arguing that the politics of everyday life is as necessary to building authority and legitimacy as the institution-building by elites that most scholars of the European Union emphasize. The book demonstrates that culture matters not just in a static way, as constraints on the action and imagination, but in a dynamic way. McNamara's main point is that the EU's authority has grown not just as a result of institution-building via treaties and elite action but also as a result of peoples' everyday understandings, constructed through their use of EU-related symbols and practices that are deeply grounded in the reality of everyday life. This is also therefore a book about the European Union's hidden sources of power and legitimacy, through the very banality of the EU's socially constructed authority.

At the same time that McNamara provides a substantive theory about the development of the EU in everyday life she builds a methodological theory about the importance of culture to understanding European construction. The theory is grounded in recent sociological approaches that highlight the dynamics of cultural practice, to show how these lend insight into the building of the EU through such processes as "labeling," "mapping," and "narrating" Europe as well as "localizing" it in such things as buildings, citizenship and mobility, the Euro and Single Market, and foreign policy. By addressing all the main areas of European integration, McNamara demonstrates that citizens are not nearly as alienated from the EU or lacking in a European identity as much of the literature suggests.

For McNamara, the sources of EU identity are found in everyday activities such as using Euros to buy food and other necessities or carrying a driver's license that looks almost identical to those of other EU countries, as well as in passive reminders of the EU such as its flag. Visa-free travel, Erasmus programs, and other EU amenities also build identity, although as McNamara admits, this is mainly for the benefit of elites across Europe, who are most likely to identify themselves as European. But she argues that the Single Market and the end of borders have affected people from all social and economic classes, largely thanks to discount air travel. McNamara also persuasively argues that EU officials themselves consciously built banality into the symbols, such as designing the Euro bills with abstract bridges and monuments rather than the faces of historically important people, or making EU buildings unassuming. All of this, McNamara contends, has served to build a common European identity, even if only a thin one, which is constantly reaffirmed through the repetition of the mundane. As a result, even if people may not feel European, they are living and breathing "European-ness."

The question is: Is the banality of such European-ness enough to lend the EU real political authority? On foreign policy, McNamara admits that the people don't think of the EU as an international actor, but she notes that the body nonetheless gains legitimacy from external recognition. As for the Euro, she argues that whether citizens like it or not, it nonetheless represents an icon that has done a great deal to strengthen peoples' perceptions of the EU as a united entity through its physical presence alone. Moreover, the euro's very existence generates a more fully European material culture, since the euro is ever-present in the lives of Europeans—in their wallets and in their banks. But we still need to ask if this unconscious acceptance of everyday practices, which builds a certain kind of European identity, is sufficient to ensure the political authority of the EU, let alone its legitimacy.

The linkages between an identity that emerges from people's everyday practices and the legitimacy demanded by their willingness to confer political authority are not entirely clear. The two constitute separate processes of political construction. Whereas identity demands the development of people's shared sense of constituting

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a community, legitimacy relates to people's sense that the political institutions of such a community along with the decisions emanating from those institutions conform to accepted and acceptable standards. These two processes are often inter-linked in the EU, as each may have an impact on the other in building (or undermining) political identity or legitimacy. But they are not always interrelated, since it is possible to build a European identity without enhancing the EU's legitimacy and vice versa. Moreover, EU legitimacy does not entirely depend on European citizens having a sense of European identity. Rather, legitimacy also derives from separate perceptions of the democratic nature of the processes and outcomes of European Union-level governance.

This complex interaction between identity and legitimacy is important, in particular in the context of the Eurozone crisis. The growing loss of trust in the EU, the increasing polarization of views of Eurozone governance, along with the continuing nationalization of debates, as outlined in *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress,* suggests that people may increasingly question the EU's legitimacy and even the appropriateness of the euro even as they continue to engage in the everyday practices of using the euro. In other words, even if people feel European as a result of their everyday cultural practices of being European, they may question the legitimacy of the euro and with it, the EU's political authority.

In short, while citizens' cultural practices means that they may passively accept EU political authority and implicitly give it legitimacy in their daily lives, they may still reject the EU and its policies in the absence of political practices that enable them to affect EU decisions. That said, none of this takes away from the rich scholarly contribution constituted by *The Politics of Everyday Europe* or the importance of the "sociological turn," which adds a new methodological approach to the political science toolkit, and thereby opens up a very rich new vein of research.

Conclusion

Our introductory question was will the EU survive in the face of its multiple crises and can it thrive. All three books agree that the EU will indeed survive, but whether it will thrive leads to different answers. Contributors to *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress,* focused on the Eurozone crisis, are not very hopeful, given the failures of policy performance combined with policy processes that compound the problems resulting from the lack of sufficiently democratic politics. *Which European Union,* concerned with EU governance, offers a more positive response, so long as institutional rebalancing results from the forging of a deeper political union by a smaller number of EU member-states. *The Politics of Everyday Life* is the most positive, since people will continue to build a sense of European-ness through their everyday cultural practices, even if the Eurozone crisis continues, with no solution in sight. All are right, within their different substantive concerns and methodological approaches.

Notes

1 For output and input legitimacy, see Scharpf 1999 and his chapter in this volume.
2 On throughput legitimacy, see Schmidt 2013, 2016a.
3 See, e.g., Hall and Taylor 1996; Thelen 1999; Schmidt 2008.
4 Puetter 2014.
5 E.g., Puetter 2014; Bickerton, Hodson, and Puetter 2015.
6 Bauer and Becker 2014; Dehousse 2015.
7 See Schmidt 2016a.
8 For further discussion, see Schmidt 2016b.
9 Hix and Hoyland 2013; Héritier et al. 2016.
10 See also Fabbrini 2016.
11 Dehousse 2016; De Rynck 2016; Schmidt 2016a.
12 Schmidt 2015.

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