

**Reconciling Europe and National Parliaments:
Reflections on Technocracy, Democracy, and Post-Crisis Integration**
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SUMMARY: I. Introduction: the disconnect between *power* and *legitimacy* and the search for “reconciliation” in European integration. - II. Matteo Renzi and Europe’s “soul”: seeking a “large-scale solidarity” to transcend austerity in the Eurozone? - III. “Building Europe without Europeans”? The problem of supranational technocracy as the driver of integration. -IV. Europeanization or Reconciliation? On the “legitimacy resources” of national parliaments and the need for a *riserva di legge* in European integration. - V. Conclusion: Matteo Renzi, Max Weber, and “the assault of technocracy”.

ABSTRACT

This paper builds on a lecture delivered at the Summer School on “Parliamentary Democracy in Europe” at the LUISS Guido Carli School of Government in Rome on 18 July 2014. The lecture closed the first week of courses on the “Europeanization of National Parliaments.” The paper argues, ultimately, for caution in using the idea of Europeanization to describe the changes in national parliamentary responsibilities and procedures as a consequence of integration. It asserts, rather, that there is a risk of understating the “legitimacy resources” possessed by national parliaments as the constitutional expression of self-government in the European system. To make the point, the paper deconstructs some recent statements of the Italian Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, most importantly his speech before the European Parliament on 2 July 2014, viewed in relation to statements made before the Italian Chamber of Deputies and elsewhere. Renzi’s line of rhetoric on Europe — notably his quest for Europe’s “soul” and “the meaning of [its] life together” — provides a point of entry into a broader set of reflections on the current state of the integration process, its socio-political/socio-cultural underpinnings, as well as the “reconciliation” between Europe and national parliaments (technocracy and democracy) that is the focus of this lecture.

I. Introduction: the disconnect between *power* and *legitimacy* and the search for “reconciliation” in European integration

Allow me to begin by thanking everyone here at LUISS—Nicola Lupo, Cristina Fasone, Mattia Guidi, and the entire staff associated with this summer school—for the extraordinary hospitality they have shown over these last several days. I am extremely grateful. And let me also thank Carmela Decaro for chairing this event—I very much look forward to our dialogue.

The advertised title of this lecture (which, incidentally, was suggested by Nicola and Cristina) is “Reconciling Europe and National Parliaments.” This is obviously a variation on the sub-title of my most recent book, *Power and Legitimacy: Reconciling Europe and the Nation-State* (OUP 2010). Of course, Nicola and Cristina know my work well, and in many respects their suggestion goes right to the heart of my thesis. My book asserts that European integration is characterized by a

fundamental disconnect between, on the one hand, the amount of normative *power* that has been transferred to the supranational level (which is obviously extensive) and, on the other, the failure of EU bodies to attain an autonomous democratic and constitutional *legitimacy* commensurate with that power. For better or worse, the latter form of legitimacy has remained wedded to national bodies—most importantly national parliaments, but also national executives and national judiciaries—despite the diffusion of regulatory and disciplinary power to the supranational level.

This disconnect is not necessarily a “bad thing.” Indeed, there are any number of functional and normative reasons why the transfer of power in pursuit of integration has been a “good thing,” even if the transfer of democratic and constitutional legitimacy in the most robust sense has not followed suit. Nevertheless, if we are going to try to understand the evolution of European public law and institutions over the last six decades—or perhaps, more importantly, understand how it might evolve into an uncertain future—we must acknowledge the centrality of this disconnect between power and legitimacy and appreciate how the effort to surmount it has shaped the deeper grammar of European public law. That is the aim of my work.

One obvious way European public law has attempted to overcome this disconnect has been through an attempt to “democratize” and “constitutionalize” supranational institutions themselves, notably through the elected European Parliament but also through the European Court of Justice as the constitutional arbiter of the European system. In my view, although this strategy has certainly not been a complete failure (far from it), it has nevertheless been a very uphill struggle. The EU possesses many kinds of legitimacy—legal, technocratic, even electoral in some sense (at least with regard to the European Parliament). But what events have repeatedly affirmed is that the EU lacks autonomous democratic and constitutional legitimacy in the most robust sense—that is, as a “gov’t of the people,” or the institutional expression of an historical identity between a population and a set of governing institutions that is the ultimate basis of democracy and constitutionalism (Lindseth 2012).

I will return to this idea further below. But suffice it to say for the moment that this sort of legitimacy builds on the political-cultural perception that institutions of government are genuinely the people’s “own,” which they have historically constituted for the purpose of self-government over time (rather than being a mere functional expression of regulatory authority). For this robust form of democratic and constitutional legitimacy, European integration still depends on national institutions and the historic identity they share with their national political communities.

Consequently, from a scholarly standpoint, focusing on the attempted democratization and constitutionalization of European institutions can be misleading, even if the process has captured the imagination of scholars over many decades. What this historic focus obscures are less celebrated but arguably more persistent dimensions of European public law and institutional change that continue to draw on the more robust sense of legitimacy on the national level (hence pointing to the limitations of the democratization and constitutionalization at the EU level).

Over the last six decades, a central goal of European public law has been to “reconcile” the functional demands of integration (often entailing the extensive migration of regulatory power to the supranational level) with the continued political-cultural attachment to ideals of representative government and constitutional democracy on the national level. These ideals, most importantly but not exclusively expressed in the national parliament, were a crucial inheritance of nineteenth-

century liberal nationalism, albeit readjusted to the demands of mass democracy, public welfare, and international cooperation after the catastrophe of 1914-1945.

As *Power and Legitimacy* recounts in some detail, the public law of European integration since its inception has quietly and in some sense unconsciously sought to effectuate this reconciliation by establishing, over time, a range of *national* mechanisms to oversee and legitimize (if not necessarily directly control) supranational regulatory power. The aim of these mechanisms has been to borrow legitimacy from the national level even as regulatory power shifts beyond the confines of the nation-state. These national legitimating mechanisms include, of course, the well-known collective oversight of supranational policymaking exercised by national executives via the Council of Ministers and the European Council (this mechanism is indicative of the decisive role played by national executives under the post-war constitutional settlement). But national oversight also includes judicial review by national high courts with respect to certain core democratic and constitutional commitments—the so-called *Kompetenz-Kompetenz* jurisprudence in Germany, for example, or the *contro-limiti* jurisprudence in Italy. Finally, and most recently, these national mechanisms include increasing recourse to national parliamentary scrutiny of supranational action, particularly over the last two decades, whether of national executives individually or of supranational bodies more generally (the latter culminating in the new “subsidiarity early-warning mechanism” of the Treaty of Lisbon).

These national mechanisms exist, I would argue, to strike a balance. On the one hand, they seek to accommodate the evident functional and political demands for supranational regulatory solutions. On the other, they build on the continued political-cultural attachment to the nation-state as the primary locus of democratic and constitutional legitimacy in Europe. Put another way, these national legitimating mechanisms establish a framework within which the otherwise undoubted complexity of Europe’s policymaking processes, distributed across multiple levels of governance, can operate *without evident democratic and constitutional legitimacy of their own*, at least as classically understood.

II. Matteo Renzi and Europe’s “soul”: seeking a “large-scale solidarity” to transcend austerity in the Eurozone?

To explore this dynamic of reconciliation further, I propose to take a little bit of an analytical detour. What I propose to do is to deconstruct, if you will, a recent speech given by the Italian Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, before the European Parliament on 2 July 2014 (Renzi 2014c). The purpose of the speech was ostensibly to present the objectives and priorities for the six-month Italian presidency of the Council. Instead, Renzi used the speech as an opportunity to make some broader observations about the state of the integration process, and more particularly its socio-political / socio-cultural underpinnings.

The speech was resolutely pro-European in its rhetoric and tone but was also surprisingly frank in its assessment of integration and the challenges before it. As noted in the press, Renzi’s presentation was full of historical allusions, both classical and contemporary. I am less interested in Renzi’s allusions to antiquity—in which, for example, he called on today’s generation of Europeans to show themselves, like Telemachus in *The Odyssey*, to be worthy heirs of the founding generation of the integration project. Rather, I am more interested in Renzi’s allusions to contemporary history,

to the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries, and what these allusions suggest about the future of integration, not to mention the reconciliation of Europe and national parliaments that is my topic for today.

Renzi began by offering congratulations to the members of the EP for their recent election. He spoke of the “great responsibility” of the EP to bring “trust and hope” (*fiducia e speranza*) to European institutions.¹ But note what he did not say: He did not say that EP brought “democratic legitimacy” to European policy-making. He did say that it was “only right and politically just” for the European Council to respect “the results of the recent electoral campaign” and hence the EP’s “prerogatives” in the choice of the new Commission president. But he avoided using the language of EU “democracy” to describe this step.

Of course, I have no special access to the workings of Renzi’s mind. Nevertheless, I think it is fair to say that he deliberately avoided the language of democratic legitimation with regard to the EP. The prior week, in a speech before the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Renzi stated: “Those who imagine that the democratic ‘gap’ in Europe will be overcome simply by the appointment of Juncker as President of the European Commission are living on Mars” (Renzi 2014b). In that earlier speech he went on to describe not only the low turnout in the European elections but also the significant percentage of the vote that went to parties hostile to the European project. From there he segued to a theme that would be central to his speech in Strasbourg the following week: “It is not enough to have a currency in common, or a President in common, or a source of funding in common.” Rather, what is needed is for Europe to “accept the idea that we have a destiny in common and values in common.” In his speech the following week before the EP, Renzi elaborated: “The real challenge confronting our continent is to find the *soul of Europe*, to find the profound *meaning of our being together*” (my emphasis).

Now I know as scholars we are not supposed to pay much attention to these sorts of rhetorical flourishes by politicians. Nevertheless, I found this entire line of discussion fascinating. Perhaps Renzi did not intend it but his reference to finding Europe’s “soul” and “the meaning of our being together” brought to mind a similar line of thinking in Ernest Renan’s famous 1882 lecture, “*Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?*” (“What is a Nation?”). According to Renan: “A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle.... [It is] the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories [but also] present-day consent, the desire to live together ... [It is] a daily plebiscite ...” (Renan 1996). In speaking of the current ills afflicting the EU, did Renzi intentionally mean to invoke this paean to liberal nationalism of the nineteenth century? After all, isn’t European integration supposed to be a “post-national” project, something designed to transcend the legacy and evils of nationalism?

Perhaps Renzi was not invoking Renan specifically, but there is much in the speech to suggest that Renzi would like nothing less than for the integration project to emulate at least some aspects of nationalism. Most importantly, Renan associated nationalism with a “large-scale solidarity”—something that Renzi might love to see replicated on a European scale in response to the Eurozone crisis.

¹ The translations of Renzi’s statement here and elsewhere in this paper are my own. I take full responsibility for any errors.

The clearest indication was Renzi's invocation of the famously dismissive observation of Metternich to describe Italy in 1847, in which Metternich asserted that Italy was nothing more than "a geographical expression" (Metternich 1883, 415). For Renzi, today's Europeans must demonstrate that that Europe is something more than a "geographical expression." According to Renzi: "There will be no space for Europe if we remain only a dot on Google Maps. We are a community, a people, we are not a geographical expression—to use the phrase applied to Italy by a great Austrian statesman of the nineteenth century" (Metternich was not specifically named).

The idea that EU citizens constitute "a people" (rather than "peoples") is of course a bold claim—that is, if you take it as a description of the current state of European political culture. I take it, however, as aspirational. It is a statement of what Renzi believes Europe must become ("a community, a people, not a geographical expression"); otherwise, as Renzi pointed out, integration amounts to little more than an exercise in "unit[ing] our bureaucracies." And as he continued: "I can assure that we Italians have enough of our own bureaucracy. Either we recover a strong, deep identity together or we lose the challenge we face."

Renzi did not engage in all this high-minded rhetoric for its own sake. Rather, he had a specific policy agenda in mind: to escape the austerity that has been the cornerstone of the response to the Eurozone crisis so far; to add flexibility to the interpretation of the Stability and Growth Pact; and perhaps, even more ambitiously, to augment the fiscal capacity of the supranational level—perhaps through Eurobonds—in order to help counter-act the asymmetric economic and financial effects of monetary union. As Renzi's rhetorical flourishes all suggest, however, the lack of a robust, shared identity at the supranational level in Europe is a barrier to institutional change that might permit policies with real macro-economic significance in the Eurozone—not the mere one percent of European GDP that is the current EU budget.

The problem is that fiscal capacity of such macroeconomic importance still remains fundamentally national, in the hands of national parliaments, despite the supranational discipline to which national parliaments have subjected themselves. Without autonomous supranational fiscal capacities—and more importantly without the autonomous democratic and constitutional identity to support them—the central instrument used to pay for the Eurozone crisis has necessarily been national austerity, combined with national pre-commitments to fiscal discipline enforced by supranational institutions. Conveniently, this combination of national austerity and supranational surveillance/discipline has to date made little or no redistributive demands on "Europe" as a collectivity. All essential costs—political and economic—have been and continue to be borne internally, by the individual states. This may well change if the crisis once again intensifies. But the current approach ultimately relies on, and in fact validates, the democratic and constitutional legitimacy of national institutions as a central foundation of the European project.

It is this reality that Renzi apparently would like to transcend, by exhorting Europe to find its "soul," "the meaning of [its] life together," and a "strong, deep identity" based on a "common destiny and common values." What Renzi seems to be seeking is a transformation of nineteenth-century nationalism's emergent "large-scale solidarity"—something that would obviously be so crucial to the welfare state in the twentieth century—into a supranational reality for the twenty-first century. And without that sense of intra-European solidarity, genuine fiscal capacity at the EU level (whether in the form of Eurobonds or otherwise) is impossible.

III. "Building Europe without Europeans"? The problem of supranational technocracy as the driver of integration

At this point, I cannot help but think of the famous statement attributed to Massimo d'Azeglio in the aftermath of the *Risorgimento*, that "we have made Italy; now we must make Italians."² As Renzi's speech before the EP suggests, creating a European polity beyond the nation-state is not simply a matter of institutional engineering—that is, of creating an institutional apparatus called "Europe," with all its seemingly autonomously democratic and constitutional features, whether via the EP or the ECJ or otherwise. Rather, Renzi seems to be saying that "we have made Europe; now we must make Europeans."

If that is the case, then I cannot help but also think of Paul Reuter, the French law professor instrumental in writing the Schuman Plan that kicked off the integration process in 1950. It was Reuter who came up with the proposal to Monnet to create the High Authority, the forerunner of today's European Commission.³ And Reuter's reasons for placing a technocratic body at the heart of the integration project are telling. The creation of the High Authority (the future Commission) was, according to Reuter, "in some sense a desperate solution," because, as he put it, there was "neither a European parliament, nor government, nor people" on which to build an integrated polity or market (Reuter 1953, 51). In something of the inverse of d'Azeglio's aspiration for Italy, Reuter said that the purpose of supranational technocracy was "to build Europe without Europeans" by "address[ing] ourselves to independent personalities" (Reuter 1953, 51–52), whose decisions would then be binding on national governments and parliaments. This formula has of course since been expanded to include not merely the Commission but also the European Court of Justice and the European Central Bank (to name just the most prominent supranational bodies composed of "independent personalities" whose decisions are binding on national governments).

Of course, much has changed since the 1950s, but perhaps less than is often supposed. As Joschka Fischer famously pointed out in his speech on Europe's constitutional future at Humboldt University in 2000, European governance has long been afflicted by the broadly held sense that integration is a largely "bureaucratic affair run by a faceless, soulless Eurocracy in Brussels" (Fischer 2000). Many Italian citizens today might modify this statement slightly, in order to add (at least) "Frankfurt" to "Brussels" as an additional locus of this "faceless, soulless Eurocracy" that seems to predominate in today's Europe. But you get the point: Whether we are referring to the Commission in Brussels or the ECB in Frankfurt, the sad truth is that many Europeans still experience the exercise of authority by EU institutions as technocratic and distant.

The official response to this broad political perception toward the EU—beginning with the SEA in 1986, continuing with every subsequent treaty up to Lisbon in 2009, and intensifying in the Eurozone crisis—has been to increase the role of the European Parliament in the supranational policy process. Today, the EP now plays the decisive role in choosing the Commission president while also enjoying the right of co-decision in nearly all regulatory domains within the competence of the EU. However, the problem with this formal "parliamentary democratization strategy" (as I called it in an article published in 1999) is its failure to stem the perception of the EU as fundamentally technocratic and distant. This failure is reflected not just in low turnouts in EP

² For a sense of the debate surrounding this attribution, see, e.g., Gigante (2011).

³ For background, see Lindseth (2010), 96.

elections or in the votes given to parties hostile to integration, as Matteo Renzi stressed (Renzi 2014b). Rather, it is also reflected in the stubborn refusal to confer on the EP autonomous taxing, spending, and borrowing authority (again, beyond the one percent of EU GDP that the current budget comprises).

To put it in the terms I have used elsewhere (see, e.g., Lindseth 2012), the problem is not “input legitimacy” (gov’t “by” the people) or even, surprisingly, “output legitimacy” (gov’t “for” the people). Rather, as I mentioned at the outset of my talk, the problem is Lincoln’s threshold criterion: gov’t “of” the people. This refers to the historical identity between a population and a set of governing institutions, no matter how flawed or criticized. It refers to the political-cultural perception that the institutions of government are genuinely the people’s “own,” which they have historically constituted for the purpose of self-rule over time. Antecedent to this perception, of course, is the perception of the existence of a “people” itself, i.e., a historically constructed sense of communal solidarity within a political grouping. It is out of this historically constructed sense that majority to rule over the minority becomes legitimate in a political-cultural sense without that rule being regarded as “foreign” domination (subject, of course, to the protection of human rights). Within such a demos-legitimate polity it is “we” who are governing “ourselves” rather than being governed by “others.” And it is this sense that creates the “large-scale solidarity” described by Renan, most importantly including common fiscal capacity—taxing, spending, and borrowing—that has been at the heart of the “remarkably resilient”⁴ function of national parliaments since the nineteenth century.

In his quest for Europe’s “soul,” for a sense of Europe’s “being together,” etc., I would suggest that Renzi is aware of this fundamental socio-political / socio-cultural obstacle to European legitimacy—even as supranational institutions now exercise a great deal of power across a whole range of regulatory and disciplinary domains. In fact, I would argue that this sense of demos-legitimacy (gov’t “of” a people) is not merely essential to democracy but also to constitutionalism in the most robust sense of the term. It is on the basis of this demos-legitimacy that merely functional institutions of rule—like those in the EU—are transformed into genuinely “constitutional” bodies for a political community, because these bodies have come to be understood as the institutional expressions of the right of the demos to rule itself.

To put it in the terms of Massimo d’Azegli’s famous expression, the process of “making Italy” and “making Italians”—or “making Europe” and “making Europeans” for that matter—are in fact deeply intertwined, something that Renzi appears to understand.

Where one finds this robust sense of demos-legitimacy, one finds the true locus of “self-government” in a normative-legal (or fiscal) sense, even as functional demands of modern governance often compel the diffusion and fragmentation of regulatory power to other bodies, whether subnational, national, or supranational. Regardless of any legal, technocratic, input, output, or even “messianic”⁵ legitimacy that the integration process might otherwise possess, what integration lacks, for the present, is the necessary sense of Europe as a “large-scale solidarity” (Renan), something ultimately beyond a “geographical expression” (Metternich). As Renzi recently stressed before the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Europe is too often still regarded as “another

⁴ Cf. Eley (1995), 110 (referring to “the constitutional frameworks fashioned [throughout Europe] in the 1860s” as “remarkably resilient”).

⁵ Weiler (2011).

place ... [W]e go to Europe not just when we go to Brussels or Strasbourg or Ypres [the location of the most recent European Council meeting]. We go to Europe when we leave the house in the morning, when we walk the streets of our cities, when we look in the mirror. This is Europe; it is not different from us" (Renzi 2014b). And yet, there remains the sense of Europe as distant and technocratic—despite all that has occurred in the integration project over the last sixty years. For the more robust sense of demos-legitimacy, the EU continues to depend on its member states.

IV. Europeanization or Reconciliation? On the “legitimacy resources” of national parliaments and the need for a *riserva di legge* in European integration

It is for this reason that I am generally cautious about using the terminology “Europeanization” to describe the current changes in national parliamentary responsibilities and procedures as a consequence of integration. The problem with Europeanization is that it entails a questionable teleology, in which, as Herman Van Rompuy once put it, “national parliaments have become, in a way, European institutions” (Van Rompuy 2012). The term also implies that national parliaments have little or no agency in the process of integration and are merely “acted upon” rather than “actors” in their own right. What national parliaments possess, above all, is the great store of “legitimacy resources” that come with being the constitutional expression of self-government in a culturally and historically recognizable, if evolving sense (rather than mere “functional” cogs in the European system, as might be suggested by one reading of Article 12 TFEU).

Thus, it is hardly surprising, in my view, that over time the integration process has needed to involve national parliaments more directly. This is particularly the case as integration has, by way of the Eurozone crisis, cut increasingly close to the parliaments’ core historical prerogatives: taxing, spending, and borrowing. This increased involvement should not be regarded as some retrogression or sign of crisis in the system, as if the increasing role of national parliaments is merely part and parcel of the “renationalization” of European politics. Rather, the demand for national-parliamentary involvement is evidence of an ongoing process of “reconciliation,” as I argue extensively in my book *Power and Legitimacy*.

This process is born of the essential reality of European governance, in which significant normative power has shifted to the supranational level in response to functional demands, but democratic and constitutional legitimacy has remained fundamentally wedded to the nation-state and its core institution, the national parliament. Despite the very significant changes in the place and role of national parliaments over the last six decades, they remain the preeminent expression of the desire of the various national “demoi” in Europe to rule themselves (Lindseth 2014). The deeper grammar of European public law takes cognizance of this fact, despite the increasing role of the EP across a range of domains.

There is one final implication of this crucial role of national parliaments in the integration process that I’d like to explore. The question is whether the disconnect between power and legitimacy in the European system, as well as the continued dependence of integration on national institutions for democratic and constitutional legitimacy in the most robust sense, implies any limits on the nature and scope of authority transferrable to the supranational level. In other words, does European public law need to develop an integration analogue to the Italian *riserva di legge* or the German *Vorbehalt des Gesetzes* on the national level, i.e., a constitutionally enforceable limitation on the scope of

authority delegable to supranational bodies, consistent with the need to preserve the role of the national parliament in a democratically recognizable sense?

In my view, unless Europeans are prepared to change fundamentally their understanding of what democratic self-government means, or where it is located, then the answer to this question is “yes”—outer constraints on supranational delegation are necessary in order to fully “reconcile” Europe and national parliaments.

Whenever we talk about the legitimacy of European integration, we must always ask the question “legitimate for what?” The EU is clearly legitimate when it acts as a vehicle to harmonize regulatory standards in various domains. Indeed, it may well also be legitimate, in certain circumstances, as a vehicle to enforce national “pre-commitments” to fiscal discipline precisely because the ultimate legitimacy for those pre-commitments come from sovereign decisions made on the national level. But the EU is not (yet) sufficiently legitimate in its own right to exercise taxing, spending, or borrowing power of any real macroeconomic significance, precisely because the EU does not (yet) possess the demos-legitimacy to support the exercise of such power.

This perspective helps to explain some of the recent—particularly German—judicial decisions on European integration, especially in how they have articulated the so-called *Demokratieprinzip* in the context of the Eurozone crisis.⁶ In my reading of the German decisions (admittedly as an outsider, always subject to correction), the *Demokratieprinzip* has both a substantive and procedural dimension. The substantive dimension defines the outer bounds of constitutionally permissible delegation in terms of maintaining the national parliament’s budgetary autonomy. The procedural dimension, by contrast, focuses on the nature of national—particularly parliamentary—oversight that is constitutionally mandated in order to legitimize otherwise delegable powers to the supranational level. This German jurisprudence, in my view, in fact expresses general principles regarding the relationship between national parliaments and European governance that should be available to any national high court in Europe, not just in the “core” but also in the “periphery.” Jurisprudentially, what is good for the German “goose” should also be good for the Greek, Irish, Portuguese, Italian, or Spanish “gander.”

V. Conclusion: Matteo Renzi, Max Weber, and “the assault of technocracy”

Lurking in the background here is, of course, the increasingly important role of supranational technocracy in the Eurozone crisis: the European Central Bank (ECB) along with its fellow members of the “troika,” the European Commission and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The increasing disconnect between the supranational technocracy and national political life creates the danger of a kind of Weberian nightmare involving supranational technocratic domination

⁶ *Greek Bailout Decision*, 2 BvR 987/10, 2 BvR 1485/10, 2 BvR 1099/10, 7 September 2011, <www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/pressemitteilungen/bvg11-055en.html>, visited on 17 August 2013 (2011); *Bundestag Right of Participation/EFSF*, 2 BvE 8/11, 28 February 2012, <www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/pressemitteilungen/bvg12-014en.html> visited 17 August 2013; *Bundestag Right of Information ESM/Euro Plus Pact*, 2 BvE 4/11, 19 June 2012, <www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/en/press/bvg12-042en.html> visited on 17 August 2013 (2012); *Rejection of Temporary Injunctions ESM/Fiscal Compact*, 2 BvR 1390/12, 2 BvR 1421/12, 2 BvR 1438/12, 2 BvR 1439/12, 2 BvR 1440/12, 2 BvE 6/12, 12 September 2012, <www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/en/press/bvg12-067en.html> visited 17 August 2013.

without the possibility of any kind of legitimation via representative government in a historically recognizable sense. Matteo Renzi seems very much alive to this concern. In recent remarks Renzi spoke of a Europe at risk of becoming home simply for “bureaucracies and banks.” “It serves no purposes to share a currency,” he insisted, “if you do not share a destiny. We must defend Europe from the assault of technocracy” (Renzi 2014a).

Again, I know as scholars we are not supposed to pay much attention to political speeches. However, as I bring this lecture to a close, I am struck that this sort of rhetoric would likely have also caught the attention of no less a scholar than Max Weber. For Weber, the very purpose of the national parliament was as a forum for developing political leaders capable of projecting national power and resisting the claims of technocracy.⁷ On both fronts, Matteo Renzi has his work cut out for him (not least in reforming Italian political institutions, much less those in Europe). But if Max Weber were alive today, I think he would be following Renzi’s rhetoric and political trajectory quite closely. Renzi’s efforts may well serve as a test case for whether such political leadership can successfully emerge from today’s national parliaments, in order to counteract new forms of technocratic domination in the very challenging context of post-crisis European integration.

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⁷ For a discussion, see Lindseth (2004), 1409–1410, citing Weber (1978 [1922]).

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