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Class and nation

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In recent years liberal political theory arranged itself along a continuum which ranges from globalism (G) to communitarianism (C). Over a lifetime, most of us do not occupy a single position along this continuum. What makes us move from one position to another? Why do we tend to see ourselves at certain points in time as free, unattached individuals, citizens of the world, at others as deeply rooted members of a community of fate? Are these moves random ones? Are they motivated by rational considerations or by emotional upheavals?

This paper tries to examine the way we think about our affiliations. To understand why, at times, we lean towards the global pole giving preference to freedom over belonging, to the opening up of economic and political systems over protectionism, to supporting the needy of the world over our own fellow nationals, while at others we lean towards the communitarian pole.

The main assumption of this paper is that the position individuals occupy along the G-C continuum is not merely a result of a process of weighing different sets of values and reaching a conclusion that one set is of greater moral value than the other. Rather, it is the outcome of a process of rational reflection and evaluation of one's interests which leads to the adoption of self-serving policies which are then justified in normative terms. Namely, that much of the global-communitarian dialogue by-passes the real reasons for action and deals with justifications rather than with motivations.

1 • Class, risks and opportunities

Why then would one prefer globalism to communitarianism or vice versa? In order to answer this question, one needs to introduce a certain factor, external to the list of norms and values individ-

uals refer to when justifying their positions on the G-C continuum, a factor that could enable individuals to reflect on and evaluate their own interests. I shall call this factor class* (shorthand for a mode of classification). Its correlation with the Marxist definition of class is rather weak, as class* incorporates much of the recent sociological and political criticism of the more traditional Marxist definition and its place in post-industrial societies.

The notion of class* used here is not grounded merely in the distribution of means of production or wealth but also in an evaluation of risks and opportunities. These risks and opportunities are grounded not only in economic notions like income, wage, ownership of means of production, or exploitation. They are a reflection of the ownership of human capital and the ability to use it in order to improve one's well-being or protect one against risk.

According to this description, individuals belong to the same class* if they share similar opportunities and risks, as well as a set of hopes and fears that influence their evaluation of their social position. This evaluation leads them to pursue certain social, political and economic goals which they assume will enhance their opportunities and reduce their risks.

Individuals, it is therefore argued, place themselves at different points along the G-C continuum not because they are guided by different values or different modes of thinking but due to different evaluations of their *individual package of risks and opportunities*. In view of such evaluations they "rationally" define ways of action which serve their interests and meet their fears. Or, to put things differently, one's location along the G-C continuum is a reflection of one's self-interested evaluation of what one can or cannot achieve at a certain point in life rather than of one's norms, values or moral development.

Communitarians and globalists alike would probably reject this description. Communitarians may resent its grounding in self-interest, globalists may feel uneasy about the fact that it takes human capital and social position — neither of which is context-free — as a main motivating power. Moreover, both may feel that the above description undermines their basic justifications; if the difference between globalists and communitarians has little to do with adopting the right set of moral values and a lot more to do with what serves us best then neither side can claim moral superiority. Neither can aspire to educate others to join its own camp as such a move will necessarily demand not merely a change of heart but also of one's life conditions.

Yet, the proposed model can help us trace the process that leads individuals to shift their commitments from the communitarian pole to the global one and back. Such a process is most evident at times of war. When all members of society are exposed to existential risks, society leans towards the communitarian pole. In times of peace and prosperity social cohesion is often eroded and individuals lean in a more universalistic direction. The question often raised of why we cannot stick together in the good times as much as we do in bad ones may then have a simple answer: it is simply against our interests, or at least against the interests of most of us.

What is the relationship between class* and other social groups? The answer depends on the distribution of education and income in any given society. If such a distribution is influenced by ethnic origin, religion, or gender, then one's membership in a class* will overlap (or be highly correlated) with membership in those groups that determine one's social and educational fate. In other cases when the distribution of human capital has little to do with membership in social, ethnic, religious, or gender groups then class* will cut across these groups.

If membership in an ethnic or religious group determines one's social fate, all other kinds of social differences will be marginalized. Few tensions will then emerge between one's ethnic identity and interests and one's class*. The opposite is true in cases in which group membership has little influence on one's life prospects. Obviously, group identity will be strengthened in the first kind of cases and weakened in the second.

Take for example the case of a Jew in Germany of the Nineteen-thirties. It did not matter much how educated or skilful she was. Her risks and opportunities were determined by her identity. It was therefore rational for her to adopt a communitarian mode of thinking.¹ That is not the right kind of thinking for a member of a minority group who lives in a society that is ethnically or racially blind. Such a society will encourage individuals to adopt a much less communitarian mode of thinking.

Globalism	Communitarianism
Openness	Rootedness
Change	Continuity
Mobility	Culture
Modernization	Stability
Freedom	Authority
Universality	Particularity

¹. As many Jews could not accept the fact that this was the case many of them made the wrong personal decisions.

As the next table suggests, some risks and opportunities are unifying, as they promote social unity and undermine class* tensions ; others are divisive, namely pull the different classes* in different directions and enhance class* conflict. One would think that a society will consequently opt for the unifying options. Yet some of the most effective unifying options are violent ones, like war or natural disaster. The benefits of unity are then outweighed by their costs.

TABLE 2

Risk	Opportunity	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War, terrorism. • Natural disasters. • Risks no one can avoid. • Welfare policies creating a risk pool and reducing the risk faced by individuals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non zero-sum goods which are collectively produced and often collectively consumed. « National Goods. » • Distribution of goods — equal or unequal — that allows all participants to win some gains. 	Unifying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks only some members are exposed to and especially risks which are the outcome of voluntary actions of some members of the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero-Sum goods. Goods which cannot be shared. Goods only some can enjoy. • Unequal distribution that leaves some members with losses only 	Divisive

The above table suggests that social unity could be achieved by either unifying risk or unifying opportunities. The price of war is obvious. The price of unifying opportunities and goods is much less evident and is paid solely by the more able members of society who could win internal competitions for social status and social goods. Those must sacrifice some of their own gains in order to keep social cohesion. They would do so only if such cohesion would serve their interests. Strategies of social unity could thus be developed if the more powerful members of society were ready to pay their price. If and when the price becomes too costly the strategy would change. Social unity would then be eroded and social tensions could erupt.

In what follows, I examine such a process which is driven by the shift from national economies to a global one. Its outcome is particularly troubling as it leads to the erosion of the liberating and progressive cross-class coalition which was the backbone of the modern nation state and enhances the proliferation of defensive and regressive forms of nationalism. It thus turns the state from a locus of cooperation among the different classes to a locus of conflict. A conflict

between those for whom globalism is a promise and nationalism a burden and those for whom nationalism is an asset and globalism a source of fear and intimidation. We shall therefore hear more about class conflict in years to come. Marx was then wrong about the century in which class war will erupt. If at all, it will erupt in the twenty-first century and it will not contradict but reinforce ethnic national struggles.

The conflict between those who favor the thinning of national identities and those who seek solace in thickening their national, religious, cultural identities, is not a conflict between rational and irrational agents. It is a conflict between those who believe they can enjoy the benefits of a new and open world order and those who fear they may be left behind.

The nation state was able to repress this conflict and support the formation of a cross-class coalition by offering all citizens a set of worthwhile goods and opportunities that installed hope for better opportunities and lesser risks. This ability is severely eroded in the newly emerging global reality leaving the weak members of society to cope with their fears and uncertainties on their own. What could the state, in the nation-state era, offer the lower classes and why cannot this offer be sustained today?

The answer has to do with the ability of the nation state to construct a delicate balance between the interests of all classes. An ability, which has faded away in recent years, as the interest gaps between the different classes grow too large to bridge.

This paper is written with the hope that some of this balance could be restored, both to the benefit of the worst off members of society, but also to the benefit of restoring a more liberal type of nationalism which emphasizes care, loyalty and belonging rather than ethnocentrism and xenophobia.

2 • The nation-state era: the formation of a cross-class coalition

The secret strength of the nation state was its ability to enhance a cross-class coalition that supported social unity. Though it was first and foremost a project of the intelligentsia and the middle classes, the nation-state was cautious enough not to overlook the needs and aspirations of the working classes and provided them with ample reasons for cooperation.

It was able to create this balance of interests by offering a way to transcend competitive zero-sum games, in which the goods one class gets cannot be granted to others, and replace them with cooperative games in which the goods produced can be shared. It did so by enhancing the value of symbolic, positional, educational and economic goods, which are collectively produced and consumed. Such goods, which can be gained only through collective efforts, have unifying effects, which can take place even if not all the beneficiaries acquire the same benefits. For social cooperation to persist, it is sufficient that each participant acquires some benefits she could not have acquired otherwise. Such benefits would make cooperation rational.

The most valuable good the nation state offered all its members was a positional one — the status of a citizen. National movements, Tom Niran claims, have invariably been “populist in outlook and sought to introduce lower classes into political life. In its most typical version, nationalism assumed the shape of a restless middle class and intellectual leadership trying to set up and channel popular class energies into support for a new state.”² In return for their support the working classes were granted entry into circles of social power and into the community of political equals.

Time and again national ideals were used to justify the sharing of political power. In the days of the French revolution, it was the middle classes who employed the idea of *the nation* in order to fight the old regime that prevented them from acquiring political rights. In the nineteenth century, elites who wished to create for themselves new opportunities employed national justifications in their struggle to achieve political liberation. In the age of decolonization the intelligentsia collaborated with the middle classes to fight against external oppressors in order to secure the political and economic benefits embedded in self-rule. During the fight for political power and opportunities, different classes marched along the same route. Though they were not to reach the same final goal, participation promised significant benefits to each and every one of them.

The main revolution embedded in the idea of national citizenship was the detachment of political membership from social status and the possession of property, making the right to vote independent of social and economic performance. In previous periods, “possession was the only real source of power, and no distinction was made between economic and political power.”³ In the age of the nation state membership in the nation became the only relevant criteria for inclusion (and exclusion). Wealth, education, social status were still relevant for the distribution of power but they could not be used as criteria for participating in the political game. One cannot overestimate the importance of this unprecedented state of affairs

² Niran (1977).

³ Guéhenno (1995: xi).

especially to those who had no wealth, education or status, nor any prospect of accumulating some.

Shared national citizenship evoked solidarity and eased the transformation of the modern nation-state into a welfare state. A state in which individuals, as economic producers or as members of the different classes, were “still treated unlike by the market and by the inherent hierarchies. But as creatures subject to risk, they could stand as equals. Full membership in the community was possible for all citizens, not only as bearers of civic rights or as political participants, but as mortals buffered by misfortune and unsettled by insecurity.”⁴ Claims have been made suggesting that the readiness of the “better off” to provide all citizens with some scheme of protection and some social goods was a reactionary move intended to help the elites to retain their social power. The modern welfare state, it is argued, was meant to meet the fears of the better off as much as it was meant to meet the needs of the least fortunate members of society.

This may indeed have been the case, yet the receivers gained a set of goods, which is irreplaceable. Goods that made them part of a risk pool and improved their ability to deal with misfortune. “Society’s disinherited were, for once, given a status equal to the better-off, not just formally, but also in the tangible measure of common basic protection against risk.”

The conservative desire for social stability, on its own, could not have justified the kind of distribution offered by the modern welfare state. The Great Wars, sparing neither rich nor poor, forced the acknowledgment that all members of society share the same existential risks and paved the way for egalitarian social policy. “Wartime hardships created a sense of social cohesion and unanimity, and a wish to continue the new spirit of equality into the peace and to temper inherited class divisions.” (Baldwin 2000: 24-25). In a similar spirit the preamble of the French law of social security legislated immediately after the end of World War II (October 1945) stresses “the spirit of brotherhood and reconciliation of classes that marked the end of the war.” (Baldwin 2000).

The most general effect of war, argues Beveridge, the founding father of the English welfare state, is that “every able-bodied person in the community becomes an asset.”⁵ War thus instituted a principle of radical equality, where each life has the same weight. The welfare state was to carry that same principle to peacetime. The fact that the war initiated a feeling of shared destiny and with it of shared responsibility leading to generous distributive policies taught the working classes a powerful lesson they were unlikely to forget.

⁴. Baldwin (2000:2).

⁵. Rosanvallon (2000: 28).

One of the most important social goods was education. The nation state had an interest in developing the human capital of its citizens so that it could enjoy their productivity in times of peace as much as in times of war. In so doing, it eased the initiation of all its citizens not only to the political sphere but also to the market. Modern nations, Gellner argues, played a significant role in creating and sustaining market economies, allowing all individuals to enjoy their benefits. Nationalism has facilitated the emergence of modern economies, he argues, by abolishing local feudal rights and trade restrictions imposed by the colonizing country, and by forming large scale political units, the members of which shared a common language and culture.

The novelty of modern economies, Gellner adds, is that they demand mobility among occupations. In traditional agrarian societies “each occupation can develop its own idiosyncratic culture by which the skills, the “secrets” and the ethical codes are transmitted from one generation to another.”⁶ Diversity of language does not cause particular problems. It can even “contribute to the stability of society because it provides a clear sign of the position that is to be occupied by each one of its members.” (Pagano: 1995). Modern⁷ industrial societies, on the other hand, are characterized by frequent economic and technological changes, which force both occupational and geographic mobility. A shared culture and language decreases the retraining costs, reduces risks associated with professional specialization, and encourages mobility. Hence, national policies meant to homogenize culture and language — emphasizing the importance of linguistic and literary skills — fit well the needs of modern industrial societies. Thus “nationalism and the mobility of labor are self-reinforcing: the existence of a mobile division of labor induces rational agents to invest in the institutions of a national community that favors a mobile division of labor and vice versa.” (Pagano: 1995: 180-185)

Obviously, not all participants in the national market received the same gains. Marxists rightly argued that nationalism was an ideology used by capitalists to ensure national markets for themselves by keeping out, through protectionism, foreign capitalists, and by the bourgeoisie as an instrument of class domination, “a sort of cultural diversion to hide economic exploitation.”⁸ Indeed nationalist policies granted the middle-classes particular privileges at the expense of other social groups. Yet despite the uneven spread of gains members of no group were left empty handed.

Beyond all that has been mentioned so far, nationalism had one more advantage: while it was the most efficient agent of modernization it managed to wrap the message of modernization with promises of stability and continuity. The move towards the future was then

⁶ Pagano (1995: 177).

⁷ The term “modern” refers here to late nineteenth early twentieth century. Before the era of economic globalization.

⁸ Llobera (1995: p. 96).

to be seen as a continuation of the past, change and mobility as a stroll within the old family yard. Never was a mobilizing ideology marketed in such gentle and comforting tones, pleasing to the ears of those members of society for whom change and uncertainty seem a frightening prospect. What Marx considered to be the disadvantage of intermediate human associations — ethnic, national, religious groups — that they stand between man and humanity, and constitute forms of undesirable alienation, was in fact, their advantage. Nationalism generated a feeling of security and familiarity so much needed in a world of rapid change. It dressed modernizing in an old and familiar robe, and made it pleasing for those who would otherwise fear it.

The least well off found the emergence of the nation-state profitable. They were granted citizenship rights; basic education that provided linguistic and professional skills necessary for efficient social mobility; protection through strict immigration policies that restricted competition over jobs, and last but not least, welfare rights that provided reasonable living standards. “Nationality gave an exclusive membership in the enjoyment of these goods.” (Pagano: 1995: 186). Moreover, it grounded these services in rights rather than in the generosity or kindness of the ruling classes. A citizen need not beg to be allowed to participate in the political sphere, to be educated, or to receive welfare payments, she was able to demand these goods by virtue of her political standing. Consequently, nationalism could offer the most desirable good – human dignity. For those who had no pedigree, no property, no work, no gain can be more valuable than this one.

For members of this latter group it was therefore rational to ally themselves with the national project despite economic exploitation. Hence, the readiness of the working classes to take part in the erection of nation-states was not, as Marxists claimed, motivated by false consciousness but by rational considerations.

Marx, one must admit, understood well the nature of capitalism and its urge to spread its reign over an ever-growing list of markets. Yet he failed to understand the workers. The proletariat, he claimed, had nothing to lose but their chains, yet they had something to gain. The nation state offered the workers gains, much more valuable than those an international class struggle could ever offer. It was therefore to be preferred.

To the disappointment of Marx, the lower classes embraced nationalism and made it the most popular ideology in the twentieth century. National loyalties and national struggles took precedent over class solidarity and class struggle. The class war was to be postponed for, at least, another century.

Upperclass Opportunities	Upper Class Risks	Lower Class Opportunities	Lower Class Risks	Nation State
Creation of new social, economic, political opportunities grounded in the formation of national frameworks.	Sharing risks with the other Citizens.	Positional goods	Welfare state	Liberal, progressive nationalism.
Protection from competition from without.	Competition on power and resources from within.	National pride	Allows for shared risks	The nation state reconstructed the balance of interests of all classes that led to the formation of a <u>cross-class coalition</u> .
Ability to use national discourse as a sort of cultural diversion to hide economic exploitation.		Citizenship dependent on National belonging; Independent of property		
		Status or education.		
		Political and welfare rights		
		Human dignity		
		Initiation to the market, education, linguistic skills (ease mobility)		

TABLE 3

The Nation-State era

3 • The global era: the return of the class struggle

Will the cross-class coalition encouraged by the structural logic of the nation-state wither away with the emergence of the global economy and of global politics? Many of the main advantages offered by the nationalism of the nation state are much less useful today.

The process of globalization has created a democratic deficit eroding the influence of citizens over decisions taken in global, regional and trans-national organizations. Those who have gained entry into the political sphere by acquiring the status of citizens of the nation — state now find that the state is slowly succumbing to external forces (international or regional organizations, NGOs, and trans-national corporations) on which they have little influence. Consequently, notions like self-rule, or independence, seem more opaque than ever. Citizens “constitute less and less of an entity capable of expressing a collective sovereignty; they are mere juridical subjects, holders of rights and subjected to obligations, in an abstract space whose territorial boundaries have been increasingly vague.”⁹

The erosion of national citizenship influences not only the political standing of individuals but also their economic status. The allocation of resources on the basis of mere membership, which was characteristic of the nation-state, is giving way to a new allocation

⁹ Guéhenno (1995: xii).

based on skill and performance. Never has competence been so sought after as it is today. Those who have the required skills experience an outburst of opportunities; those who don't feel left behind.

The class division today is a rather new one; it has less to do with wages and exploitation, and more with human capital and exposure to risk and occupational opportunities. The traditional Marxist definition emphasized the place of the individual in the system of social production. In Marxist terms, a class is the collective social expression of the fact of exploitation. Yet, class divisions in post-industrial societies are of a new and different kind. The complexity of the market in post-industrial societies makes exploitation hard to define as the relationships between the input of a worker's labor to the value of a product is hard to trace. Moreover, exploitation can no longer be discussed in terms of wages alone. The fact that a portion of one's labor does not remain in one's possession need not suggest that one has been exploited. Individuals can be rewarded for their labor in terms of social services and social goods and in other terms defying economic quantification.¹⁰

Changes in modes of production break traditional hierarchies and forms of social stratification. Less and less people belong to the manual working class as new forms of employment involving industrial management and services have rapidly evolved. Yet the erosion of old social structures does not imply the formation of classless societies. Individuals do classify themselves, and are classified by others, as occupying a certain place in the social structure, and those who occupy a similar location could be clustered into a class.

The upper classes of today are those who are mobile and adaptable, the lower classes are those who are not. A class, then, is a group of individuals who occupy a certain social slot, which defines (influences) their risks and opportunities, their educational and occupational prospects, their ability to be upwardly (or downwardly) mobile. Those who belong to the same class assess their life chances in a similar way, facing a similar range of alternatives. Consequently, they are likely to share hopes and fears and to reflect on social matters in a similar way. Members of each class are interested in spreading and sharing their risks, while restricting accessibility to their most worthwhile opportunities.

In a global economy, the mobile and adaptable can avoid risks and explore new opportunities.¹¹ The skills and competences necessary for mobilization and adaptation are not grounded in any particular national culture. In fact, in most cases, for the mobile class, the national culture and especially the national language is of little use, it might even be an obstacle. If I want to ensure my children's

¹⁰ For example, individuals may value the social structure they are members of — be it a state, an ethnic community, or a nation — to the extent that they may willingly labor for its benefit. In fact, in some extreme cases, they may even be ready to sacrifice their life for that purpose.

¹¹ The class of the mobile is a varied one. There is a considerable difference between those who travel first class to take a job in an international firm, and those crowded beneath the decks of a shaky boat rejected from every port. Between the motivations and fate of refugees, illegal immigrants, guest workers, contract workers, and professionals. All the above are mobile yet the risks they escape and opportunities they encounter are very different. Some escape persecution, others hunger and extreme poverty, others still, the risk of becoming homeless or unemployed, or losing some of their income and status.

entry into the global market I should teach them English rather than Hebrew, and make them feel at home wherever there is a computer and access to the internet rather than in the town where they were born and raised. Their compatriots will then be other users of the net, those who watch MTV, CNN, and soap operas like *Friends* or *Beverly Hills 9201*. For those who inhabit this global sphere national ties are a relic of the past, which might be emotionally moving, but of decreasing social and economic value.

With the weakening of national ties, and the development of social opportunities only few can share, the notion of collective fate and shared risks has faded away and with them the readiness to share resources and responsibilities. Sharing in social responsibilities is rational for individuals expecting to spend their lives within the boundaries of one community; it is much less rational for those who expect to move from one state to another, or when the boundaries of the community itself might change.

The logic of the welfare state is grounded in closure that ensures the persistence of a stable community allowing for a life long, and often trans-generational type of sharing. Rapid population moves erode the moral relationship between citizens. "Citizens had obligations to one another. Democratic institutions provided a means of both installing and fulfilling such obligations simultaneously." Yet why would citizens inculcate partnership with their compatriots if their economic opportunities, their security, and their ecological well being were depended on others? In a world of permeable borders social stability is no longer assured, consequently the "haves" have less reason to share, the "have-nots" are left unprotected.

In the global age, the nation-state still supplies individuals with goods, but not with the most desirable type of goods, those fitting the newly emerging political and economic reality. Education is the best example. National education was the jewel in the national crown. It granted all citizens new occupational opportunities and easy mobility within the boundaries of the national economic system. Nowadays national education systems often seem out-dated. They were erected in order to teach the national language, transmit the national heritage, enhance national identity and strengthen the bonds of solidarity among fellow nationals. In order to prepare children for a global world they must undo some of their best achievements.

Despite the decline of the political influence of the citizen, the growing irrelevance of national education systems, and the erosion of the social securities assured by the welfare state, the lower classes are still dependent on the benefits of national solidarity. In

fact they are dependent on those fruits of solidarity, which are a burden for the mobile classes. We are then entering an age in which the cross-class coalition characteristic of the age of the nation-state is bound to break down. Members of the mobile classes are now looking beyond the national horizons to a world in which economic opportunities and risks are globalized. Members of these classes wish to maximize the utility of their skills and education and open up new venues for profit while minimizing their risks. They can do so much more effectively on a global scale.

The elites of the world have united: they send their children to international schools, then to Ivy League universities. They buy and sell commodities in the international stock exchange, live in several countries in order to avoid taxes; they ski in the Alps, sunbathe in Honolulu, enjoy the British theater and the Parisian restaurants. They have become citizens of the world.

Those who are less educated, less skillful, fear the prospect of being thrown into the global market without a home to come back to. They fear their states will no longer be able to defend them, they dread misplacement, exploitation and most of all losing control over their lives. For such individual's openness and change are a threat, they are likely to become xenophobic, seeking ways to thicken their identity, clinging to their national, religious tradition the best they can. They wish to slow down globalization by erecting higher and more impermeable national borders than ever.

Their attitude towards free trade exemplifies these tendencies clearly. While the consensus among mainstream economists is that free trade is desirable, it is striking how little this consensus resonates with public opinion. When asked about their views on trade, sixty percent or more of the respondents in opinion polls express anti-trade views. The strength of such views correlates with the individual's relative economic status, measured in terms of either relative income within each country or self-expressed social status. "Individuals who rank high in the domestic income distribution or consider themselves to belong to the "upper classes" are significantly more likely to be pro-trade. It is relative income not absolute income that seems to matter."¹² As expected anti-trade attitudes and protectionism correlate with a high degree of neighborhood attachments, nationalism and patriotism, pro-trade attitudes and free trade correlate with cosmopolitanism.¹³

What is true for the free movement of goods is also true for the free movement of people. Those who resent free trade also resent immigration. They object the fact that national boundaries become totally porous with respect to goods and capital and even more porous

^{12.} Mayda and Rodrik.
(unpublished paper: 29).

^{13.} Mayda and Rodrik.
(unpublished paper: 29).

with respect to people who are simply viewed as cheap labor — or in some cases cheap human capital.”¹⁴ Those who resent immigration describe immigrants as invaders who entered the sacred sphere of national harmony violating its unity and ripping off collective goods they have no right to share.¹⁵ Such anti-immigration views allow those who encounter social insecurity to blame on others for their plight while exhibiting patriotic sentiments that alleviate social alienation.

Weakness and fear provoke the erection of barricades meant to keep the forces of modernization and globalization at bay. Defensive nationalism thus emerges. In its thick, ethno-religious form it is one of the last allies of the weak and the fearful. In the past the nationalism of the nation state offered the lower classes status and dignity, education and opportunities, solidarity and welfare and managed to introduce them to the virtues of modernization and industrialization. It could grant them such benefits because a political coalition could, using national discourse, convince the more able and affluent members of society to share their wealth, opportunities and risks with the less fortunate ones. In the age of globalization the forces that hold such a coalition together pull in different directions. Consequently social bonds are being eroded and with them the goods states can offer their members.

The stronger members of society set out to search new grounds. They speak the language of freedom endorsing open borders, free mobility, and free markets. The least well off, betrayed and deserted, fear the language of freedom and counter it with conservative discourse highlighting the value of tradition, continuity, culture, belonging and identity. Nationalism and modernization thus find themselves evolving in different directions, estranged from each other. Divorce is soon to follow.

4 • Concluding remarks

Defensive-regressive nationalism threatens those who are eager to ride the waves of global open markets. For them nationalism is no more than a set of burdensome sentimental recollections, for all the rest it is still the most profitable socio-economic option. It is thus rational, for the immobile classes to try and force the mobile classes to participate in the nationalist game—they attempt to do so by exerting political pressures and quite often by means of social and political violence.

The history of the welfare state suggests that war has a mobilizing force no discourse on social justice can replace. It creates

¹⁴. Daly (2001: 17).

¹⁵. Immigration, Borjas argues, seems to have been an important contributor to the rise in income inequality in the United States, depressing the economic opportunities faced by the least skilled workers. The fact that some native-born workers lose from immigration implies that US firms gain because they can now hire workers at lower wages. Many native-born consumers also gain because the lower labor costs lead to cheaper goods and services... However, immigration more than just increases the total income accruing to native-born workers: it also induces a substantial redistribution of wealth away from workers who compete with immigrants and toward employers and other users of immigrant services.” Hence, Jencks summarizes his review of recent publication on immigration by claiming that immigration has a small effect on the national product but has a big effect on the distribution of income. “Under America’s current immigration policy, the winners are employers who get cheap labor, skilled workers who pay less for their burgers and nannies, and immigrants themselves. The losers are unskilled America-born workers.” Jencks (2002).

Concluding remarks

Upper Class Opportunities	Upper Class Risks	Lower Class Opportunities	Lower Class Risks	Globalization
<p>The state can no longer provide the kinds of opportunities individuals seek to secure for themselves.</p> <p>Global opportunities. National language and skills unhelpful.</p> <p>Obligations toward the nation a burden.</p> <p>Members of the mobile classes are now looking beyond the national horizons to a world in which economic opportunities, and political dangers are globalized. Members of these classes wish to optimize the utility of their skills and education, to maximize their risks and open up new venues for profit. They can do so much more effectively on a global scale.</p> <p>The stronger members of society set out to search new grounds. They speak the language of freedom endorsing open borders, free mobility, free markets.</p>	<p>The state can no longer provide the same kinds of protections.</p>	<p>Democratic Deficit.</p> <p>National education systems less useful.</p> <p>National language less useful for acquiring professional skills or for mobilization</p>	<p>The logic of the welfare state was grounded in closure.</p> <p>Trans-generational cooperation.</p> <p>Open, permeable borders, erode the logic of the welfare state and weaken its ability to share risks.</p> <p>The LC feel deserted, left to cope with risks on their own.</p> <p>Defensive nationalism thus emerges. In its thick, ethno-religious form it is one of the last allies of the weak and the fearful. In the past nationalism offered the lower classes status and dignity, education and opportunities and introduced to them the virtues of modernization and industrialization.</p> <p>In the age of globalization, most states are unable to offer their citizens these goods.</p> <p>The least well off, betrayed and deserted, fear the language of freedom and counter it with conservative discourse highlighting the value of tradition, continuity, culture, belonging and identity.</p>	<p>The state cannot provide the same protections and opportunities as it did in the age of the nation state. (American exceptionism)</p> <p>The breakdown of the cross-class coalition and the emergence of defensive, aggressive nationalism.</p> <p>Defensive-regressive nationalism threatens those who are eager to ride the waves of global change.</p> <p>For them nationalism is no more than a set of burdensome sentimental recollections, for all the rest it is still the most profitable socio-economic option.</p> <p>It is thus rational, for the immobile classes to try and force the mobile classes to participate in the nationalist game—they attempt to do so by exerting political pressures and quite often by means of social and political violence. Class conflict may therefore erupt. Nationalism and modernization thus find themselves evolving in different direction.</p> <p>Divorce is soon to follow.</p>

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shared existential risks, invoking social cohesion and social solidarity essential for the establishment of distributive mechanisms. It is then not the conflict itself that the weak members of society are eager to invoke but its social effects, that spirit of “brotherhood and reconciliation of classes that marked the end of the war.” (Baldwin: 2000) A persistent conflict thus seems the best assurance for the duration of the welfare state well into the twenty-first century. When members of the mobile classes try, in order to loosen the social bonds, to either ignore or solve the conflict they are accused of non-patriotic tendencies. The class conflict is translated into nationalist terms.

Marx was, then, wrong about the century in which class struggles will take place. And these struggles will not feature international solidarity of the proletariat. They will be struggles in which the immobile classes fight against each other as well as against their own mobile elites. Members of the middle classes for whom globalization is no less threatening are likely to join the immobile, making them a social power that cannot be ignored.

The workers of the world will never unite. They have no real interest to do so. Nationalism is therefore here to stay. Yet it might turn from the vision of the elites into their nightmare. It will join hands with every ideology that fosters closure and justifies exclusion. Xenophobic nationalism, the kind fostered by Le-Pen, Jörg Haider, the late Pim Fortuyn, by advocates of transfer policies in Israel as well as by supporters of White Australia or White California, will become more popular. It is not, however as many have suspected a nationalism driven by irrational forces. It is a rational nationalism driven by the self-interest of the masses to protect them from a global dream they cannot share.

Can these developments be avoided or slowed down? The present global crisis provides an opportunity for change. The terrorist attack on September 11th made members of the mobile and affluent classes in America, and elsewhere, much more aware of their susceptibility to risks — life-threatening risks. The present economic crisis makes them aware of their economic vulnerability. This may inspire, in the upper classes, the will to come back home in order to form a new risk pool, which will serve their interests, as well as the interests of lower classes. If this will be the outcome of September 11th events then they will enhance national solidarity and delay the class struggle. If, however, the different classes keep marching on different routes, a moment of confrontation will come.

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