

The Fantasy of Congruency: The Abbé Sieyès and the ‘Nation-State’

Problématique Revisited

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Abstract

This paper offers an alternative reading of the Abbé Sieyès and the modern ‘nation-state’ problématique. I argue that the subject/object that is constituted in the early days of modernity is the incomplete society: an impossible-possibility ideal of congruency of population, authority and space. I suggest reading this ideal of congruency as a *fantasy* in that it offers a certain ‘fullness to come’, the promise of *jouissance* that can never be attained and is thus constantly re-envisioned and re-invoked. Drawing on discourse-analytical and psychoanalytical tools I explain the logic of fantasy before analysing Sieyès’ *What is the Third Estate?*, as I show how he critiques and fragments the old model of the state and how his reading of the nation is fantasmatic, a continuous project towards impossible congruency.

Keywords: Abbé Sieyès, Nation-State, Society, Congruency, Fantasy

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Introduction

Critiques of modernity have pointed to late eighteenth century Europe and specifically the French Revolution and the writings of the Abbé Sieyès as the modern birth-place of the ‘nation-state’ problématique.¹ That is, the problematic emergence of the principle of congruency of nation and state sovereignty. As Robert Wokler puts it: ‘the modern state since the French Revolution requires that the represented – that is, the people as a whole – be a moral person as well, national unity going hand in hand with the political unity of the state’.² To the anthropologist Ernest Gellner the principle of congruency is at the heart of modern nationalism as ‘[n]ationalist sentiments are deeply offended by violations of the nationalist principle of congruence of state and nation’, for ‘[n]ationalism is primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent’.³

This ideal of congruency is still pervasive in our contemporary discourses, practices and policies at both domestic and international levels. In mainstream political science and international relations the lack of congruency is the root cause of conflict, affecting the stability and territorial integrity of polities world-wide. Security, stability and good governance are thus the result of a unity or even a fusion of national sentiments with territorial-sovereign demarcations such that the war-proneness of regions like the Middle-East is attributed to their lack of congruency, or what some defined as a ‘state-to-nation imbalance’.⁴

Practicing congruency is, nonetheless, much more subtle and ‘banal’ than the above examples of war and/or the territorial disintegration of states, nor is the principle of congruency to be solely associated with expressions of chauvinist-nationalism or the atrocities of mass killings – it is not simply ‘pathological homogenisation’ practices ‘... that state-builders have employed to signify the unity of

their state and the legitimacy of their authority'.⁵ Consider the scholarship on multiculturalism, communitarianism and liberal nationalism in which the exclusionary practices of ethno-nationalism and xenophobia are rejected but the ideal of congruency is nonetheless key.⁶ Nationalism and a sense of communitarian unity are not contradictory to the principles of liberalism but rather commensurable and complementary as the goal of multiculturalism is '... not to balkanize the nation, but rather to find a new *modus vivendi* for achieving national unity',⁷ a model of societal 'unity in diversity'.⁸

Establishing congruency through non-ethnic/sectarian models of societal unity is quite pervasive in the scholarship on nations and nationalism, theories of the state as well as literature on post-conflict societies. Some have suggested that congruency has been established historically in polities where strong functioning state control was ascertained before the advent of modern national fervour, that is, where the state preceded the nation, as it were.⁹ To others this was defined as a 'state-nation' model, which may also be applied to post-conflict societies en route to democratization, whereas some have further developed and elaborated the models of civic-nationalism and patriotism as opposed to the exclusionary models of ethnic-based nationalism.¹⁰

This paper takes a Nietzschean (1988 [1887]) perspective and thus a genealogical approach and asks 'how did we get here?'¹¹ Within the framework of European/'Western' thought, under which conditions have we come to define our socio-political existence, problems and solutions in terms of unity and congruency? Under which conditions has the principle of congruency, however defined, come to be rendered intelligible and legitimate even in modalities that seek to break-away from the exclusionary vocabulary of (ethno-) nationalism?

To merely begin answering these questions I suggest we revisit the ‘nation-state’ problématique by interrogating one of the constituting text on the ‘nation-state’ in modernity: the Abbé Sieyès’ *What is the Third Estate?* I would argue that the ‘nation-state’ discourse in modernity does talk of congruency and unity, but not merely of the ‘nation-state’ *qua* a state of a nation or a Nationalstaat.¹² Rather, the ‘nation-state’ model refers to the fantasy of the ‘congruent society’. This is a society that from the late eighteenth century knows and evaluates its identity through the fantasy of congruency between population, authority and space, broadly defined. What Sieyès does, I argue, is neither to fuse the nation with the state (through the language of popular sovereignty and constituent power), nor is Sieyès’ discourse ‘... a continuation of the Hobbesian theory of indirect popular sovereignty.’¹³ Rather, what Sieyès suggests is a complete disavowal of the state model of early-modernity, that is, a break-up, fragmentation and critique of the Hobbesian state of early-modernity as modality of congruency, and construct instead an impossible idea(l) of the congruent society, not of the ‘nation-state’ *qua* fusion of nation with state.¹⁴

I further maintain that this ideal of congruency can be read as a *fantasy*, or a *fantasmatic project*, an endless endeavour of overcoming the lack and contingency of social life by offering a ‘fullness-to-come’.¹⁵ The idea of congruency is a fantasy for it masks the disunity of, and the split in, society by offering an explanation for why ‘society’ (the ‘nation’, the ‘people’ and other tropes referring to an imagined collectivity) is not yet congruent and by promising resolution and thus unity ‘... once a named or implied obstacle is overcome’.¹⁶ Since such a mode of wholeness, a fixed identity, is never possible congruency has constantly to be re-imagined and reinvigorated, a certain utopia that is never ascertained and hence continuously re-

invoked.¹⁷ In a way, this is the ‘permanent crisis’ of the ‘nation-state’ that Hont refers to when he offers

a happy escape from death, which falls short of achieving a utopian return to real health. In such a scenario the patient stumbles from one relapse to the next, the ‘crisis’ always recurring, yet constantly changing in its precise nature and location.¹⁸

Revisiting the conventional ‘nation-state’ discourse has important implications for our contemporary theories and models of socio-political life. Firstly, it allows us to examine the issue of congruency which is a leitmotif in modernity, but that is usually lost in the literature or at least made concomitant to sovereignty, territoriality and the ‘state’.¹⁹ Secondly, revisiting Sieyès’ Third Estate may also contribute to the common focus on Sieyès’ discourse as a theory of representation and the notion of the constituent power as I suggest that Sieyès’ Third Estate does not only have a juridical function, but a fantasmatic one thus explaining how the concept of the nation is inherently split, seeking continuously to locate the Other, who/which hinders the congruency fantasy.²⁰ Thirdly, focusing on the fantasy of congruency and the ideal of the ‘congruent society’ exposes how various contemporary discourses that seek to escape from the vocabulary of the ‘nation-state’, *statism* and nationalism – e.g., communitarianism, multiculturalism, ‘civic nationalism’, consociationalism – nonetheless subscribe to the ideal of congruency, a unity of population, authority and space.²¹ The potential contribution of this paper thus rests in introducing a different lexicon for understanding modernity’s preoccupation with the fantasy of congruency, however constructed, and thus to potentially change ‘the way in which a situation is apprehended’ and political intervention is rendered possible.²²

To offer this somewhat alternative reading of the ‘nation-state’ in modernity, I interrogate the ‘discursive practices’ by which the ideal of congruency is rendered palpable in Sieyès, that is, the ways in which congruency is constituted and legitimated.²³ This paper, however, is not an intellectual history of European modernity; a quest to find the origins of nations and nationalism, nor will I be contextualising Sieyès’ work within late eighteenth century French politics.²⁴ Rather, I am reading Sieyès from the present and with the objective to offer a different reading of modernity and the nation-state problématique and thus free-up the possibility to problematise the present, that is, to de-naturalise contemporary apparatuses of congruency-making (something I will point to in the conclusion but not explore due to space limitation).

The paper has two main parts: Firstly, I explain the psychoanalytical category of fantasy and how it draws on the Lacanian vocabulary of the Mirror Stage, jouissance and desire. This part will thus demonstrate how the logic of fantasy can be deployed to analyse the ideal of (national/societal) congruency. Secondly, I analyse the Abbé Sieyès’ text *What is the Third Estate?* ([1789] 2003: 92-162), as I deploy the ‘discursive practices approach’. Herein, I demonstrate how the state modality of early-modernity is not fused with the nation; rather, it is fragmented and critiqued and how from that moment on the subject that emerges is that of society, an ideal of collectivity desiring to achieve the impossible mode of congruity. Finally, I conclude by pointing to avenues for future research.

The Logic of Fantasy

We may begin discussing fantasy by elucidating Lacan’s ‘Mirror Stage’, a key starting point to understanding Lacan’s logic of fantasy.²⁵ The Mirror Stage, the

moment in a child's early development in which the child recognises him/herself in the mirror, is precisely the moment in which human subjectivity is rendered both meaningful and incomplete. The Mirror Stage is thus an alienating phase because what the child sees in the mirror is both more 'real' and less 'real' to what the child (and the adult person) can identify and identify with.²⁶ The 'imago' is more real because it captures the entirety of the subject's body, indeed as it is seen by others in the environment, an imago which the subject can perhaps imagine but not fully capture. One's own bodily entirety is not accessible to one's senses as it is to one's environment. But the 'imago' is also less real because it is not 'really' the subject's being. To begin with it has no materiality, nor depth as it is a mirage. It is less real also because it offers an inverted image of one's body, i.e. a 'mirror image'.

The 'imago' is thus an 'alienating identity'²⁷ as it both captures the whole of the subject's body, which the subject can never achieve, and at the same time it negates its core being, further distancing the ability for one to capture one's subjectivity.²⁸ The imago thus offers an 'Ideal-I, i.e. as an I that can never be realized'.²⁹ This is how and why the Mirror Stage helps us understand the logic of fantasy, a support of sorts for the incompleteness of social reality that is more real and less real to that of society, the nation, the state or any form of imaginary collectivity, and that precisely because of this must continuously aspire to capture its being/becoming in the world.

The imago of society is always in flux and ambivalent at its core, in the same manner that a child both identifies with and is alienated by his/her mirror image. The function of fantasy is thus to cover this lack, this ambivalence and ambiguity of being/becoming. Fantasies or fantasmatic projects are thus similar to what Taylor defined as 'social imaginaries':

... the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations.³⁰

Fantasy thus always attempts to frame the ideal society in which we wish to live; it sets the criteria by which the 'good life' can be attained. Fantasy constantly strives to cover the lack, the incompleteness and indeed void of and within society. As such, fantasy, or fantasmatic projects, constantly aspire 'to account for the unpredictability, indeed, the contingent nature of social life by providing an ideal and reassuring blueprint for a fixed and structured world', a certain necessary utopia, that is, the future promise of fulfilment in which fantasy is realised, although a realisation that can never be attained as I explain below.³¹

Taylor's 'social imaginaries', nonetheless, only offers part of the story since fantasy is not merely a social imaginary, an ideal utopian world that aspires to transcend or negate reality and our troubled present. Quite the opposite, fantasy operates as the supporter of the present reality:

Are we than dealing here with the simple opposition between reality and its fantasy supplement? The topology is more complex: what precedes fantasy is not reality but a *hole* in reality, its *point of impossibility* filled in with fantasy (Žižek, 2008: xiv).³²

Fantasy, therefore, should not be read as the antonym of 'reality'; rather, it is that which constructs and renders 'reality' possible – a reality that is contingent and in which society, the nation, 'we' is anything but a homogeneous symbolism. As Žižek puts it: '[f]antasy is the ultimate support of reality: "reality" stabilizes itself when some fantasy-frame of a "symbolic-bliss" forecloses the view into the abyss of the Real'.³³ This is because 'fantasy is basically a scenario filling out the empty space of

a fundamental impossibility, a screen masking a void'.³⁴ We could, therefore, read 'fantasy' as a socially constructed *project* that envisions a certain ideal, thus entailing a sense of fullness and completeness, but one that must incorporate its own failure, and this is again how the mirage of the child imago in the Mirror Stage is key to understanding how the logic of congruency is fantasmatic:

Fantasy operates so as to conceal or close off the radical contingency of social relations. It does this through a fantasmatic narrative or logic that promises a fullness-to-come once a named or implied obstacle is overcome ... or which foretells of disaster if the obstacle proves insurmountable.³⁵

Indeed, congruency fantasies either suppress and mask differences, or create an image of an harmonious whole whereby differences and divisions coexist in peace and in their diversity make the whole congruent since '... fantasy is precisely the way the antagonistic fissure is masked'.³⁶ The modern fantasmatic project of (national/societal) congruency ushered by the Abbé Sieyès, as I show below, nonetheless, is not merely a discursive or structural filling whereby society, the nation, 'we' is constructed and filled with meaning. Rather, the fantasy of congruency becomes palpable through *affect*, that is, by invoking bodily *jouissance*, which refers to '... the powerful, bodily enjoyment that drives human desire'.³⁷ Bodily enjoyment that are 'always-already lost'.³⁸ Simply think about national myths and narratives, or what Duncan Bell calls 'mythsapes', which narrate the past as a one-dimensional, often self-aggrandisement, story by which identity is forged and legitimated, and through which prospective political programmes are rendered intelligible and often embroiled with eschatological elements.³⁹ This is where the heroic past and 'Golden Age' of nations and societies are invoked, not only to consolidate collective

sentiment, but also to justify continuous and future struggles designed to fashion and perfect the imagined national/social monism. Such myths in order to sustain their affective coordinates project their present incompleteness onto an Other, the Jew in the Nazi/anti-Semitic worldview or the immigrant in contemporary populist European discourse.⁴⁰ This Other is not so much the ‘remainder’ of a sovereignty based international system; rather, this Other stands for difference as such and, consequently, is blamed for ‘our’ inability to achieve congruency, the fulfilment of the fantasmatic utopia, and for stealing ‘our’ enjoyment by taking our jobs and exploiting our welfare system, by marrying our daughters and destabilising our perceived cultural stability.⁴¹

Fantasmatic projects, therefore, have an affective quality in the sense that they cover the lack and the split nation/society by promising future closure, but at the same time ensuring such realisation is never attained for such mode of congruency ‘...would kill desire, induce anxiety, and put identification processes in danger’ thus creating a trauma/nightmare.⁴² It is this that makes the imagined congruity of the nation/society such a powerful emotive ideal, a leitmotif that is never attained and thus continuously reinvigorated and re-articulated, precisely because any attempt at satisfying the lack (of unity) in the nation/society will reveal the split itself, the void behind the fantasmatic mask of closure, fullness and congruency.

Bells’ ‘mythscape’, therefore, is not only part of a nation’s ‘invented tradition’, its ‘imagined community’ narrative or ‘... the particularity or specificity of its world of significations’ by which it is rendered real.⁴³ What national and social myths demonstrate is actually the continuous attempt to recapture the lost enjoyment, to establish the authentic community by getting rid of the obstacle, the Other, who stands for the blocked identity.⁴⁴

This is precisely the added-value of the analytical category of fantasy and how it can assist us in re-reading the ‘nation-state’ problématique, namely in that fantasy is not merely a tool designed to show how national/societal identities are forged or how they are imagined and/or socially constructed; rather, the fantasy of congruency demonstrates the negation inherent in any ‘mythscape’ and/or ‘social imaginary’ since fantasies of congruency always incorporate their own impossibility, the inability to recoup their lost golden age or to fully achieve the utopian mode of unity and fulfilment.⁴⁵ This is because what comes before or lies underneath fantasy is not reality, but a lack of any meaningful sense of being. Equally important, the category of fantasy allows us to interrogate the libidinal investment in national/societal congruency projects, that is, the ways in which congruency fantasies are able to hail people through bodily affect and an appeal to recapture the always-already lost enjoyment.⁴⁶

The point here is not to extrapolate from the human unit to the social one as if the social unit is merely an aggregate of persons. My deployment of Lacan’s Mirror Stage and the logic of fantasy is strategic and analytical thus enabling me to understand the affective power of fantasmatic projects, indeed how (certain) fantasies are able to interpellate people and emotively mobilise society, whilst creating a sense of identification, an identification which is ambiguous and incomplete at its core.

ABBÉ SIEYÈS AND THE BREAK-UP OF THE STATE AS MODALITY OF CONGRUENCY

The Abbé Sieyès’ discourse is often mentioned as the birth of the ‘nation-state’, a political order based on popular sovereignty and ‘... the fusion of state and nation’.⁴⁷ This reading is somewhat problematic because in Sieyès’ formula the state of early-modernity is not fused with the novel notion of the nation, the Third Estate; rather, the

state model of early-modernity is challenged and fragmented and then re-articulated and re-positioned. To Sieyès, the state is important but only if it represents the already in existence complete nation. Perhaps, this is the source of contemporary readings of Sieyès, because the *ultima ratio* of Sieyès' discourse is indeed an alignment of state and nation, but only if the state is the expression of the complete nation, and not solely a fusion of the two. This means, as I explicate below, that with Sieyès the subject/object that arises and thus becomes a site of interventions is not so much the state, the nation or the so-called 'nation-state', but rather the incomplete *society*, that is, a fantasy of congruency of population with space and authority that is already-lost and is thus always-desired.

In his Pamphlet, *What is the Third Estate?* The Abbé Sieyès critiques not only eighteenth century France but the contemporary European system of governance.⁴⁸ What is problematised in this work, and in other pamphlets Sieyès published at the same time (Sieyès, [1789] 2003), is the inequality amongst men with respect to rights and the power to govern. In other words, Sieyès problematises the aristocratic system of his time, what he defines as '*palace aristocracy*', and maintains that the Third Estate constitutes the majority in France.⁴⁹ It carries most of the burden of daily life and yet has no power and is actually ruled by a minority of nobility and clergy-men. The Third Estate is the 'people', a unity of individuals, which makes the nation. In other words, to Sieyès, the 'people' is the source of authority; it is united and complete and thus must be expressed through and by the state. The two signifiers, 'nation' and 'people', are thus rendered synonymous: 'all public powers ... come from the people, that is to say, the nation', and '[t]hese two terms ought to be synonymous'.⁵⁰ This means that with Sieyès it is no longer the 'state' commanding authority. The nation and the people, which are the same to Sieyès, are the source of

legitimacy and authority/sovereignty, though the question that now emerges with this discourse is whether, firstly, the ‘people’ is indeed complete and, secondly, whether it is expressed in its own state.

Sieyès details at length the current political system in France and explicates what can and should be done to reform the political system and empower the Third Estate, the nation. Sieyès begins with a definition of the Third Estate. He asserts that the Third Estate is in effect the majority of people who provides most of the public goods and services and who engages in private employment as well as the ‘... liberal and scientific professions’.⁵¹ The Third Estate, to Sieyès, is the nation, indeed ‘... a complete nation’⁵², which should be freed to govern itself, and that other privileged orders have no place in its midst. The Third Estate, the nation, is thus the main discursive field since it ‘... encompasses everything pertaining to the Nation, and everyone outside the Third Estate cannot be considered to be a member of the Nation. What is the Third Estate? EVERYTHING’.⁵³

The idea of the Third Estate as the nation represents in Sieyès’ writings a totality, a congruity of individuals, who share together the burdens of society and the power to govern, indeed to operate state apparatuses, as Sieyès offers ‘... a theory of the complete nation as an embodiment of utilitarian or commercial sociability operating through the reciprocities of the division of labour’.⁵⁴ Here is where Rousseau’s idea of the will reappears, although in a very different schemata following the logics of majority rule and division of labour.⁵⁵ To Sieyès, the people embody the common will, which cannot be appropriated other than in an equal approach to individual wills; each person has one will and hence one vote. Therefore, the power of governance cannot be in the hands of a few holding certain honours and privileges, but must be in the hands of the majority: ‘[r]easoned argument is pointless if for a

single moment one abandons the self-evident principle that the common will is the opinion of the majority, not the minority'.⁵⁶

The conceptualisation by Sieyès of the nation as a totality entails the notion of 'constituent power', that is, the legitimacy of the Third Estate to freely govern its business and thus reject the legitimacy claims of both the aristocracy and the king.⁵⁷ What Sieyès then suggests – in contrast to Rousseau's ([1762] 1968) idea of the 'general will' or the Jacobin's cleansing of 'enemies of the people'⁵⁸ – is a representative system designed to ensure the efficiency of state affairs but, equally important, to ensure the representatives come from and represent the complete nation:

It is patently obvious that in national representation, either ordinary or extraordinary, influence should be in proportion to the number of individual heads that have a right to be represented. To do what it has to do, a representative body always has to stand in for the Nation itself. Influence within it ought to have the same *nature*, the same *proportions*, and the same *rules*.⁵⁹

The constituent power embedded in the idea of the nation à la Sieyès and his theory of representation is often taken as one of Sieyès' innovations or contributions to modern political thought.⁶⁰ My point, however, is that Sieyès' theory of the nation and national democratic representation is not only about juridical power/legitimacy but that it also entails a fantasmatic function since what he offers is not merely a narrative of constituent power and the legitimacy of the Third Estate, but why the Third Estate is not yet fully congruent and in control of its fate, namely because of the nobility which claims to be the nation but are 'simply a word'.⁶¹ This further illustrates the added-value of the category of fantasy, for what Sieyès ushers with his theory of the nation is an endless battle against obstacles to the legitimate and promised congruent telos. Sieyès's discourse is thus not only a theory of legitimacy/constituent power but

a modality of congruency that entails its own failure, the explanation for why the nation is not yet fully congruent with the state. The ‘biopolitical fracture’ at the heart of the concept of the people, which ‘has no single and compact referent’, is thus both the drive and inevitable result of this fantasy of congruency.⁶²

Sieyès’ Third Estate as a New Subject for Analysis

What Sieyès defines as the nation is not a romantic mythological subject, as German romanticists would have it, nor is it a socio-political model designed to liberate people from a ‘war of all against all’.⁶³ Rather, what emerges here is a new category – the ‘congruent society’ – which is imbued with the right to administer and rule ‘its’ juridical space. This is not only the idea of the nation as a common will, but most importantly that the ‘nation’ and the ‘state’ ought to be aligned, but only if the nation is ‘authentic’ and complete onto itself. To Sieyès, this logic of congruency follows three necessary stages, all relying on the idea of the ‘common will’ and the necessity of a unified nation.⁶⁴ The first stage is an association of individual wills, that is, a substantial group of people who wish to unite and in doing so they already form a nation. In the second stage, the individuals seeking to unite discuss their future socio-political arrangement, that is to say ‘... they confer with one another and agree upon public needs and how to meet them. Here it can be seen that power belongs to the public’.⁶⁵ In the third stage they produce a ‘*government by proxy*’, that is, a representative body that will be entrusted with the necessary power so as to execute the common will.⁶⁶ The establishment of a government of representatives is unavoidable, for Sieyès, because a nation, being an association of numerous people,

cannot fully and directly engage with the public services needed to satisfy the common will.

Sieyès' logic prescribes a new subject/object of analysis for knowledge production and juridico-political administration that is not predicated on a state organised according to privilege or a social contract between the people and the state. The latter point is key because Sieyès insists that the state and its various branches of governance are a manifestation of the people's will, the common will, and thus the notion of a social contract is one that is premised on a common bond amongst individuals, and not between them and their sovereign/state:

There is no other way to conceive of the social contract. It binds the associates to one another. To assume that there is a contract between a people and its government is a false and dangerous idea. A nation does not make a contract with those it mandates; it *entrusts* the exercise of its powers.⁶⁷

Nonetheless, the coupling of state and nation becomes in Sieyès' discourse a paradoxical necessity.⁶⁸ It is an impossible result, indeed a fantasmatic project, since it promises what can never be fully attained, *jouissance*, and thus continuously imagined. Firstly is the homogenisation of individuals themselves that through their will to unite form a nation. It is a unity of individuals in itself for the sake of a unity of wills. What then becomes necessary is the formal association of individuals into a juridico-political structure, i.e., the state. Therefore, to Sieyès, congruency stems from a homogenisation of wills that in its maturation produces the 'nation-state' couplet because the state entails a representative body that springs out of the *body national* as it holds the people's interests.⁶⁹ Its main language and operation are manifested through the law, and the law becomes the product of a unity of individuals and the congruency of the 'people' with its political system bounded by territorial

demarcation. 'The nation exists prior to everything; it is the origin of everything. Its will is always legal. It is the law itself'.⁷⁰

Here we can see how the relationship between identity, law and authority/sovereignty is construed quite differently from early modern thought as Sieyès fragments the state as modality of congruency and renders it possible only if it is the manifestation of the complete nation.⁷¹ The 'nation', accordingly, emerges here as the discursive space, rather than the 'state' in early-modern thought, and its relationship with 'law' is homologous, that is, the law is not solely a manifestation of the nation's will, but it is the nation's will.⁷² The 'nation'/'people' is rendered intelligible by virtue of, first, being true and identical with itself, an authentic and complete unity and thus embodying the law. However, second and as I also show below, the nation is made possible by virtue of being not, or at least not necessarily, concomitant with the state. Consequently, the state is not naturally synonymous with the nation and, therefore, one should critique and challenge existing states and inquire whether the 'true' and complete nation is indeed in power and thus expressed in its own state as this is not pre-given. The normative ideal, as I explained earlier, is a congruency of state and nation – the nation being a unified collectivity and the state its tools of management and governance – but the reality, according to Sieyès, is that existing societies are not truly congruent precisely because the 'complete nation' is not manifested in the state.

The political discourse that emerges here, as Foucault explains, assumes a twin-relationship, albeit an ambiguous one, between the nation and the state, such that the nation cannot co-exist with other 'nations' in its midst, that is, other collectivities like the nobility.⁷³ The nation encompasses everything; it provides the services and goods needed in a society.⁷⁴ Therefore, the nation ought to be embedded in a state that

speaks through law and is bounded by foundational laws, a constitution.⁷⁵ The state, however, is the organisation of the existing nation and thus the only right form of its expression. The discourse now is not only one of social contracts, sovereignty or ‘separation of powers’; instead, it invokes the right of the nation that is already homogeneous in its entirety and thus aspires legitimately, according to Sieyès, to coincide with the state.

This further demonstrates the fantasmatic nature of Sieyès’ Third Estate, that is, the socio-political and biopolitical fracture at the heart of the nation, which can never be eliminated for that will simply annul the all notion of the nation. This is because the nation, in Sieyès’ discourse, exists both before and independently of the state and at the same requires through its constituent power to manifest itself in, and thus merge, with the state. The nation is not only a subject of juridical power (functionality/capability),⁷⁶ but a fantasmatic subject that continuously strives for congruency and at the same time entails its own impossibility.

This, to reiterate, further stipulates the discursive rupture taking place in late eighteenth century thought and specifically with Sieyès, since the old (early-modern) practices of sovereign power are now transformed into a fantasy of a monistic society, a society in an endless project and thus a constant war.⁷⁷ Sieyès and the French Revolutionaries have stipulated the supposed completeness and homogeneity of the nation as the highest source of authority, but at the same time they have also begun ‘... a long struggle to create it’.⁷⁸ This moment is thus part of the ‘...emergence of ‘us versus them’’ discourses as a challenge to the traditional principle of sovereignty’,⁷⁹ for now it is a ‘race war’, which means that ‘true’ completeness of society is constantly threatened by ‘enemy race’, who/which is the obstacle to the fantasy of the congruent society, indeed the Other blamed for the unfulfilled congruity.⁸⁰

The Discursive Practices of Teleology, Representation and the Fantasy of Congruency

Sieyès' logic is an inversion of Hobbes' notions of the 'people' and the 'state' where sovereignty is the people and thus the idea of the 'people' can only exist via the state (which constitutes the 'people' through the unification of individuals and through their subordination to one will).⁸¹ Sieyès, accordingly, fragments Hobbes' state as the modality of congruency in early-modern thought and maintains that the idea of the 'people'/'nation' exists prior to the state and is not established through the state – unlike Hont's idea that both Sieyès and Hobbes offer a theory of 'indirect popular sovereignty'.⁸² Whilst Hobbes' state legitimacy came from its past, that is, the transition from the so-called 'state of nature' to the sovereign head, Sieyès' Third Estate was prescribing for the future-to-come, but which can never become the present. This means that attempts to create congruency may have already taken place before Sieyès, but that it is with Sieyès that a fantasy of congruency is fully articulated, a fantasy that subscribes a plan for the future, rather than justifying the past-present.⁸³

Moreover, the state model of early-modernity as a congruent entity is challenged, as Sieyès asserts that the state cannot be one, a unity *per se*, and must therefore be a manifestation, indeed a juridical, social and political embodiment, of the nation (and not a contract between the people and their ruler/sovereign).⁸⁴ This is key, for it shows again that Sieyès' discourse is not so much about the 'nation-state' or the fusion of state and nation. This is because whilst Sieyès' formula does ascribe an important role for the state, it is nonetheless only constituted through a manifestation, an expression of an already existing and complete nation, the *Third*

Estate. The subject/object that arises with Sieyès is, therefore, the fantasy of congruency, a totality that is conditioned by the expression of a complete nation in a state apparatus of 'its' own.

The discursive practices through which the ideal of the congruent society is established and constituted are those of teleology and representation. First, the state is not construed as the existing manifestation of a union of many, or a social contract; rather, the state is now the goal of the nation. To Sieyès, the ideal state is the ultimate and complete manifestation of the nation which exists prior to the state. As such, and second, the state can and should only represent the 'real' nation. The knowledge system that emerges here is not the knowledge of state affairs as with cameralism (Kameralwissenschaft), but rather a knowledge system of society – the 'congruent society'.⁸⁵ The questions that society should then ask itself are not whether the state is secured or wealthy, or whether it pertains to the common-good; rather, society now asks itself: are we a 'real' and complete nation? Are we indeed a nation that manifests its 'completeness' in a state? This demonstrates that with Sieyès, the fantasmatic function of the Third Estate is two-fold. The nation and the state are indeed in an endless relationship, that is, '... between the nation's statist potential and the actual totality of the state'.⁸⁶ But society must now also interrogate its alleged 'completeness' and totality. Is the nation indeed congruent onto itself and whether, once we have established national congruency, is it congruent with the state?

What is constituted here is the subject/object of the incomplete society that now structures its internal/external relations and knows itself via the fantasy of congruency. Jens Bartelson is thus correct in arguing that Sieyès' discourse is circular because '... the concept of a nation state comes to express nothing more than a vaguely tautological relationship between two entities which are merely numerically

distinct from each other'.⁸⁷ By this, Bartelson means that with Sieyès the nation concept is both '... the ultimate source of all authority' but also the desired objective of the revolution, which is to exclude other orders from within the nation (e.g., clergy, nobility) and manifest the nation within 'its' state.⁸⁸ In other words, the 'nation' presupposes the state but nonetheless requires to be aligned with the state, which in turn constitutes the idea of the nation.⁸⁹ But is not this state-to-nation tautology that which indeed produces the *fantasy of congruency*? It is a fantasmatic project, I suggest, by virtue of being an endless process; a constant apparatus of becoming that is never satisfied and cannot. The 'tautological' logic is thus what allows 'society' to know itself not only through the historicization and temporalization of its identity (as well as the construction of narratives and social imaginaries);⁹⁰ rather, society knows itself also through constant efforts at achieving the ideal of congruency, which can never be truly attained and yet must always be envisioned. The fantasy of societal congruency thus prescribes a utopian *ultima ratio*, the promise of jouissance, but at the same time introduces a prohibition on obtaining congruity, an explanation for why congruity is not yet achieved, either because we are not a complete nation and/or because we do not fully express our will in a state of our own.⁹¹

Back to the Present and Avenues for Future Research

In this paper I suggested to re-read Sieyès' text and to revisit the 'nation-state' problématique. I argued that late eighteenth century thought does not produce the so-called 'nation-state' model, a fusion of the old modality of state sovereignty with that of popular sovereignty. My argument was that since the late eighteenth century the key subject/object that emerges is not solely the 'nation-state', but an ideal of congruency, a congruency of population, authority and space whether it is structured

around the state, nation or society markers or any other sign that pertains to an imagined collectivity. This ideal of congruency, I argued, can be read as fantasy, that is, a narrative that supports the contingency of social life and the incompleteness of ‘our’ society and how this is the result of an obstacle, an Other, who had stolen our enjoyment, the key to our promised future of congruency and fulfilment. Such fantasies of congruency, I suggested, cannot be realised for they will simply reveal the void of, and in, our imagined collectivity. Fantasy, accordingly, must continuously reproduce and re-invoke its becoming through affective technologies, offering an explanation for why ‘we’ are not yet congruent but at same time keeping us from fully eliminating the obstacle, the Other, for that will simply result in trauma.⁹²

Revisiting the ‘nation-state’ problématique through Sieyès can assist us in re-assessing the historical changes in the notion of the nation and the state, thus further exploring genealogically the continuities and changes in the production of congruency as well as Sieyès’ effects on post-revolutionary discourses and practices.⁹³ The creation of the citizen-subject in 1789 and the oft-cited distinction between civic-based and ethnic-based forms of nationalism, or between the “‘demos’ of citizens” and the “‘ethnos’ of fellow countrymen’ is a point to consider.⁹⁴ In Sieyès’ discourse of congruency the authenticity and comprehensiveness of the nation is juxtaposed to the clergy and the nobility, which thus constitute in those days the Other, the obstacle to achieving full French congruency. A fantasy of congruency that has come to be based on the ideals of citizenry, the republic and the rejection of class-based privilege. Nonetheless, to German romanticists like Johann Gottlieb Fichte the fantasy of congruency is achieved organically through the body of the Volk. Congruency is thus understood as a natural and primordial unity between the individual, its habitat (e.g., nature, way of life, livelihood, and historical narratives) and the community, an

indivisible and ‘authentic’ totality as the ultimate source of legitimacy.⁹⁵ This is the *Volksnation* modality of congruency ‘... assuming that the demos of citizens, in order to stabilize itself, must be rooted in the *ethnos* of fellow countrymen’.⁹⁶ The criterion for national membership can thus be differentiated between a primordial, albeit a constructed one, reading of the nation and nationalism and a citizenry and civic-based form of polity making. An issue that still plays a key role in nationality laws and types of regimes.⁹⁷ And yet, as some have already pointed out, such distinctions create a false dichotomy between civic and hence ‘good’ nationalism and an ethnic and hence ‘bad’ nationalism, as it also masks the problematic past of contemporary civic-based countries in the so-called ‘new world’, which entails the elimination of native populations.⁹⁸ It also obscures the exclusionary practices of perceived republics in which the non-citizen can be marginalized in the same fashion as the non-ethnic.⁹⁹

Therefore and whilst this distinction is relevant to our understanding of the development of the notion of the nation, we can see how in both (ideal-type) cases the apparatus of exclusion takes place, that is, how it is the impossible ideal of the complete society that renders the various articulations of nationalism and the ‘nation-state’ palpable. Equipped with this reading of the ‘nation-state’ problématique we can thus further look into the various articulation of the nation, the state and congruency in modern thought and practice. We can thus explore state and nation congruency in, for instance, Hegel’s *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History* in which congruency gives rise to civilizational grandeur albeit only temporally.¹⁰⁰ We can also engage with the linking of national congruency to democracy and freedom as expressed in the works of John Stuart Mill, or Alexis de Tocqueville’s writings on the congruency of New-England towns as a prerequisite to free and equal society.¹⁰¹ We may further interrogate the ambiguous system of nationhood and the protection of

minorities as ushered during the 1920s under the League of Nations.¹⁰² Or, as I have demonstrated in the introduction, interrogate the production of congruency in contemporary models of multiculturalism and communitarianism.

I would argue that such a genealogical enquiry is important for it will demonstrate the pervasiveness of the fantasy of congruency despite it being practiced in myriad ways throughout modern history. In other words, it will show that despite various readings of the nation and nationalism, the impossibility of congruency is at the heart of modern socio-political life. The need to exclude and articulate a certain Other, an obstacle, is thus key to the fantasmatic project of congruency, be it the non-ethnic Other, the foreigner or the non-citizen. Exposing the production of congruency and the myriad ways in which the process of exclusion take place, the processes of Othering, will have ethico-political implications for the ways in which we interrogate the socio-political, including democratic theory and questions of legitimacy, as well as the problematic relations between nationalism and liberalism.¹⁰³ It is of course beyond the scope of this paper to fully explore these avenues, but some tentative ideas can be drawn. Firstly and as I have argued in this paper, the modern constant preoccupation with congruency means that as with Sieyès the problem doesn't rest with the taken-for-granted ideas of the state and nationalism, what many argued against and defined as 'state-centrism', 'statism' and 'methodological nationalism'.¹⁰⁴ It is actually the opposite, the incompleteness of the state, the nation and society. The unfulfilled promise of 'our' congruity that projects its failure onto the Other, the obstacle, and thus onto a future that must always be in the process of becoming and never realised. This means that critiquing traditional approaches throughout the social sciences as being statist and nationally-biased has somewhat missed the point, because the entire modern project around the nation, the state and society is precisely

how these are not yet congruent, how they are not yet secured and complete in themselves. Social divisions, cultural clashes, crime and immigration, insecurity and the threat of (nuclear) war and so on are testament to the ways mainstream approaches in sociology, politics and international relations didn't really take the nation, the state and/or society as given; rather, it shows how these various tropes pertaining to the ideal of congruent collectivity were constantly constructed around and through the Other, who/which is responsible for the impossibility of congruency.

Secondly, reading Sieyès and modernity through the prism of congruency also means that we should be careful not to simply naturalise and normalise contemporary modalities of congruency as post-national, multicultural and racially heterogeneous. These modalities may seem to reject the practices of national-chauvinism, racism and national xenophobia,¹⁰⁵ but they still subscribe to the fantasy of congruity albeit now operationalised around the markers of heterogeneity and 'unity in diversity'.¹⁰⁶ For us to engage critically with the implications of the fantasy of congruency we might move beyond, and thus collapse, the binary distinctions, between 'organic' and 'civic' nationalism, 'patriotism' and 'nationalism' or between the 'nation-state' and the 'state-nation'.¹⁰⁷ This will reveal how the ideal of congruency is still pervasive and why it requires more critical and reflexive thinking.

¹ Jens Bartelson, *The Critique of the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 40-41; István Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind: 'Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State' in Historical Perspective', *Political Studies*, 42(1) (1994), pp. 166-231; Robert Wokler, 'Contextualizing Hegel's Phenomenology of the French Revolution and the Terror', *Political Theory*, 26(1) (1998), pp. 33-55, especially pp. 39-43; Robert Wokler, 'The Enlightenment, the Nation-State and the

Primal Patricide of Modernity’, in *The Enlightenment and Modernity*, eds. Norman Geras and Robert Wokler. (UK: Macmillan Press, 2000), pp. 161-183. See also Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: Deutsch, 1962 [1951]), pp. 267-302; Zigmunt Bauman, ‘Sociology after the Holocaust’, *The British Journal of Sociology*, 39(4) (1988), pp. 469-497; George L. Mosse, *Nazism: A Historical and Comparative Analysis of National Socialism* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1978), pp. xvi, 1–3, 5, 10–11.

² Wokler, ‘The Enlightenment, the Nation-State and the Primal Patricide of Modernity’, p. 178.

³ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (2nd edition) (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006 [1983]), pp. 128, 1 respectively.

⁴ On the theory of ‘state-to-nation balance’ see Benjamin Miller, *States, Nations, and the Great Powers: The Sources of Regional War and Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Other examples include Stephen Van Evera, ‘Hypotheses on Nationalism and War’. *International Security*, 18(4) (1994), pp. 5–39; Gidon Gottlieb, *Nation Against State* (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1993); Alexander B. Downes, ‘The Holy Land Divided: Defending Partition as a Solution to Ethnic Wars’. *Security Studies*, 10(4) (2001), pp. 58–116. For more on this see Moran M.

Mandelbaum, ‘One State-One Nation: The Naturalisation of Nation–State Congruency in IR theory’. *Journal of International Relations and Development* 16(4) (2013), pp. 514-538.

⁵ Heather Rae, *State Identities and the Homogenisation of Peoples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 5. On the ‘banality’ of nationalism see Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE, 1995).

⁶ see Shlomo Avineri and Avner de-Shalit, eds., *Communitarianism and Individualism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Will Kymlicka, *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and the 'Politics of Recognition'* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992); Michael Walzer, 'The Communitarian Critique of Liberalism', *Political Theory*, 18(1) (1990), pp. 6-23. On critiques of such post-Rawlsian approaches see, for instance, Arash Abizadeh, 'Does Liberal Democracy Presuppose a Cultural Nation? Four Arguments', *American Political Science Review* 96(3) (2002), pp. 495-510; Arash Abizadeh, 'Liberal Nationalist versus Postnational Social Integration: on the Nation's Ethno-Cultural Particularity and 'Concreteness'', *Nations and Nationalism*, 10(3) (2004), pp. 231-250; Moran M Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited: Towards a 'Genealogy' of Cultural Homogenization and Nation-State Congruency', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 37(11) (2014), p. 2027.

⁷ Peter Kivisto and Thomas Faist, *Citizenship: Discourse, Theory, and Transnational Prospects* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007).

⁸ Alfred C. Stepan, 'Comparative Theory and Political Practice: Do We Need a 'State-Nation' Model as well as a 'Nation-State' Model?', *Government and Opposition*, 43(1) (2008), pp. 1-25.

⁹ Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New-England, 2000);

George W. White, *Nationalism and Territory: Constructing Group Identity in Southeastern Europe* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2000); Ernest Gellner, 'Nationalism Reconsidered and EH Carr'. *Review of International Studies*, 18(04), (1992), pp. 285-293; Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, (2nd edition) (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991), pp. 73-74.

¹⁰ On the 'state-nation' model see Juan J. Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), especially p. 23; Buzan, *People, States and Fear*, pp. 72-74; On 'civic' nationalism as opposed to 'organic' / 'ethnic' nationalism see Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in its Origins and Background* (New York: Macmillan, 1944); Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Greenfeld, *Nationalism*; Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), pp. 15-20. For more on ethno-nationalism see Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton University Press, 1994). For critiques of the civic-ethnic binary see, for instance, Bernard Yack, 'The Myth of the Civic Nation'. *Critical Review* 10(2) (1996); Taras Kuzio, 'The Myth of the Civic State: a Critical Survey of Hans Kohn's Framework for Understanding Nationalism', *Ethnic and Racial studies*, 25(1) (2002), pp. 20-39; Abizadeh, 'Liberal Nationalist versus Postnational Social Integration'. On the distinction between 'patriotism' and 'nationalism' see Maurizio Viroli, *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

¹¹ Niels Å. Andersen, *Discursive Analytical Strategies: Understanding Foucault, Koselleck, Laclau, Luhmann* (Bristol: The Policy Press, 2003), pp. 17-23. For more on genealogy see, for instance, Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 139-164; Michel Foucault 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (London: Penguin, 1991), pp. 76-100; Jeffrey Minson, *Genealogies of Morals: Nietzsche, Foucault, Donzelot and the Eccentricity of Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 1985), p. 20. Michael S. Roth, 'Foucault's 'History of the Present'', *History and Theory*, 20(1) (1981), pp. 32-46; Larry Shiner, 'Reading Foucault: anti-Method and the Genealogy of Power-Knowledge', *History and Theory*, 21(3) (1982), pp. 382-398.

¹² Friedrich Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970 [1908]).

¹³ Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind', p. 172; Bernard Yack, 'Popular Sovereignty and Nationalism'. *Political Theory*, 29(4) (2001), pp. 517-536. See also Wokler, 'Contextualizing Hegel's Phenomenology', especially pp. 39-43; Wokler, 'The Enlightenment, the Nation-State and the Primal Patricide of Modernity'. On the Hobbesian state in early-modernity see Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought: The Renaissance*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp. ix-x; Quentin Skinner, 'The State', in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, eds. Terence Ball, James Far and Russell L. Hanson. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 90-131.

¹⁴ Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited', especially p. 2025.

¹⁵ Jason Glynos and David Howarth, *Logics of Critical Explanation in Social and Political Theory* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 147.

¹⁶ Glynos and Howarth, *Logics of Critical Explanation*, p. 147; Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX, Encore* (New York: Norton, 1998 [1972-1973]); Slavoj Žižek, *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), p. 165; Slavoj Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies* (London: Verso, 2008); Jason Glynos and Yannis Stavrakakis, 'Lacan and Political Subjectivity: Fantasy and Enjoyment in Psychoanalysis and Political Theory', *Subjectivity*, 24(1) (2008), pp. 256-274.

¹⁷ On the impossibility to fix meaning and identity, the signifier and 'its' signified, see Ernesto Laclau, *Emancipation(s)* (London: Verso, 1996), pp. 57-58; Ernesto Laclau, and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985). On the concept of fantasy see Glynos and Stavrakakis, 'Lacan and Political Subjectivity', pp. 261-262. On utopia see Ruth Levitas, 'Looking for the Blue: the Necessity of Utopia', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 12(3) (2007), pp. 289-306.

¹⁸ Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind', p. 169.

¹⁹ Jens Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991 [1974]); R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited', pp. 2014-2033.

²⁰ On representation and the notion of constituent power see, for instance, Ben Holland, 'Sovereignty as Dominion? Reconstructing the Constructivist Roman Law

Thesis', *International Studies Quarterly*, 54(2) (2010), pp. 449-480; Mikael Spång, *Constituent Power and Constitutional Order: Above, Within and Beside the Constitution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Nadia Urbinati, *Representative Democracy: Principles and Genealogy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006); Illan Rúa Wall, *Constituent Power and Human Rights: Without Model or Warrant* (London: Routledge, 2012). On the juridical function of the nation in Sieyès' Third Estate see Michele Foucault, *Society Must be Defended* (London: Penguin, 2004 [1975-1976]), p. 218. As I explain in this paper, this may also contribute to our understanding of the biopolitical nature of the nation/people in modernity since it is the fantasy of being/becoming a complete nation merged into its own state that continuously requires deployments of biopolitical technologies of congruency making, of homogenisation. On the 'biopolitical fracture' in the concept of the people see Giorgio Agamben, 'What is a People', in *Means Without Ends: Notes on Politics*, trans. Cesare Casarino and Vincenzo Binetti (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

²¹ See Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited', p. 2028.

²² Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, eds., *The Essential Foucault: Selections from Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984* (New-York: New Press, 2003), p. 13. This draws on my reading of critique. See, for instance, Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States and World Orders: beyond International Relations Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 10(2) (1981), pp. 126-155; Kimberly Hutchings, 'The Nature of Critique in Critical International Theory', in *Critical Theory and World Politics*, ed. Richard Wyn Jones (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), pp. 79-90.

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- ²³ Bartelson, *A Genealogy of Sovereignty*, pp. 71-72; Roxanne Lynn Doty, 'Foreign Policy as Social Construction: a Post-Positivist Analysis of US Counterinsurgency Policy in the Philippines', *International Studies Quarterly* 37(3) (1993), pp. 297-320.
- ²⁴ Patrice L.R. Higonnet, *Class, Ideology, and the Rights of Nobles during the French Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981)
- ²⁵ Jacques Lacan, *Écrits* (New-York: W.W. Norton, 2006 [1966])
- ²⁶ Dany Nobus, ed., *Key concepts of Lacanian Psychoanalysis* (Rebus Press, 1998), p. 117.
- ²⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ Ibid.; See also Lacan, *Écrits*, p. 76.
- ³⁰ Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), p. 23.
- ³¹ Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited', p. 2022; Yannis Stavrakakis, *Lacan & the Political* (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 99-121; on the necessity of utopia see Levitas, 'Looking for the Blue'.
- ³² Žižek, *The Plague of Fantasies*, p. xiv.
- ³³ Slavoj Žižek, 'From Virtual Reality to the Virtualization of Reality', in *Reading Digital Culture*, ed. David Trend (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 17-22;
- ³⁴ Slavoj Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology* (London: Verso, 1989), p. 126.
- ³⁵ Glynos and Howarth, *Logics of Critical Explanation*, p. 147.
- ³⁶ Žižek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, p. 126.
- ³⁷ Lacan, *Encore*; Claudia Ruitenber, 'Conflict, Affect and the Political: on Disagreement as Democratic Capacity', *Factis Pax*, 4 (1) (2010), p. 47.

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- ³⁸ Glynos and Stavrakakis, 'Lacan and Political Subjectivity', pp. 261.
- ³⁹ Duncan S. A. Bell, 'Mythsapes: Memory, Mythology, and National Identity', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 54 (1) (2003), pp. 63-81.
- ⁴⁰ Jef Huysmans, *The Politics of Insecurity: Fear, Migration and Asylum in the EU* (New York: Routledge, 2006); Nina Glick Schiller and Ayse Çağlar, 'Towards a Comparative Theory of Locality in Migration Studies: Migrant Incorporation and City Scale', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 35(2) (2009), 177-202. Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited'; Mandelbaum, 'One State-One Nation'.
- ⁴¹ Jorge Fernandes, 'Ebola Takes to the Road: Mobilizing Viruses in Defense of the Nation-State', in *Sovereign Lives: Power in Global Politics*, eds. Jenny Edkins, Michael J. Shapiro and Veronique Pin-Fat (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 189–210.
- ⁴² Yannis Stavrakakis and Nikos Chrysoloras '(I Can't Get No) Enjoyment: Lacanian Theory and the Analysis of Nationalism', *Psychoanalysis, Culture & Society*, 11(2) (2006), p. 152; Slavoj Žižek, *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema* (UK: Sophie Fiennes, 2006)
- ⁴³ Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press and Polity Press, 1987), p. 359.
- ⁴⁴ Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, p. 125; Stavrakakis and Chrysoloras, '(I Can't Get No) Enjoyment'
- ⁴⁵ Glynos and Stavrakakis, 'Lacan and Political Subjectivity'.

⁴⁶ Stavrakakis and Chrysoloras, '(I Can't Get No) Enjoyment'; Glynos and Stavrakakis 'Lacan and Political Subjectivity'.

⁴⁷ Bartelson, *The Critique of the State*, p. 41.

⁴⁸ Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès, *Political Writings: Including the Debate between Sieyès and Tom Paine in 1791* (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, (2003 [1789])); Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind', p. 192.

⁴⁹ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, 102.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 94

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 98

⁵⁴ Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind', p. 193; Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, pp. 217-221.

⁵⁵ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, (1968 [1762])), p. 14; Chimene I. Keitner, *The Paradoxes of Nationalism: The French Revolution and its Meaning for Contemporary Nation Building* (New-York: SUNY Press, 2007), p. 63.

⁵⁶ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, p. 142.

⁵⁷ Spång, *Constituent Power and Constitutional Order*, pp. 26-29; Wall, *Constituent Power and Human Rights*, 46-53.

⁵⁸ Keitner, *The Paradoxes of Nationalism*, pp. 62-63; Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind', pp. 206-217.

⁵⁹ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, 142, italics in the original.

⁶⁰ Holland, 'Sovereignty as Dominion?', pp. 449-480; Pasquale Pasquino, 'The Constitutional Republicanism of Emmanuel Sieyès', in *The Invention of the Modern Republic*, ed. Biancamaria Fontana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 107-117; Urbinati, *Representative Democracy*, pp. 138-161.

⁶¹ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, p. 147.

⁶² Agamben, 'What is a People'; see also Foucault 2004.

⁶³ On German romanticism see Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Fichte: Addresses to the German Nation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009 [1808]); Hans Kohn, 'Romanticism and the Rise of German Nationalism', *The Review of Politics*, 12 (4) (1950), pp. 443-472. On the state as an escape from a 'war of all against all' see Thomas Hobbes, *Hobbes: On the Citizen* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998 [1642]).

⁶⁴ Keitner, *The Paradoxes of Nationalism*, pp. 64-65.

⁶⁵ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, p. 134

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*; Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind', pp. 192-193.

⁶⁷ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, p. 120 ft. 19, italics in the original.

⁶⁸ Keitner, *The Paradoxes of Nationalism*; Nicholas Xenos, 'The State, Rights, and the Homogeneous Nation', *History of European Ideas*, 15 (1-3) (1992), pp. 77-82.

⁶⁹ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, pp. 105-110.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁷¹ Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, p. 219.

⁷² On the concept of the state in early modernity see Skinner, 'The State', pp. 90-131.

⁷³ Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, pp. 220-224.

⁷⁴ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, p. 98

⁷⁵ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, p. 136.

⁷⁶ Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, pp. 217-225.

⁷⁷ Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*.

⁷⁸ Xenos, 'The State, Rights, and the Homogeneous Nation', p. 79.

⁷⁹ Elizabeth Frazer and Kimberly Hutchings, 'Avowing Violence: Foucault and Derrida on Politics, Discourse and Meaning', *Philosophy & Social Criticism*, 37(1) (2011), p. 8

⁸⁰ On the concept of 'enemy race' see Ibid. and in Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, pp. 255-256. On the Other as an obstacle see Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, and Jules Townshend, 'Laclau and Mouffe's Hegemonic Project: The Story So Far', *Political Studies*, 52(2) (2004), p. 271.

⁸¹ Hobbes, *On the Citizen*, chap. XII: Section 8, p. 137.

⁸² Hont, 'The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind'. On Hobbes' theory of the state see Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 [1651]).

⁸³ I do not claim in this paper that congruency projects only emerge in revolutionary France, but that with Sieyès congruency becomes fantasmatic, that is, an impossible-possibility to achieve congruency both as a nation and as a nation manifested in a state. On attempts to homogenise populations before the French Revolution see Michel Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977--1978*. trans. Graham Burchell (London: Macmillan, 2009); Liah Greenfeld, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 27-88; Heather Rae, *State Identities and the Homogenisation of Peoples* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

⁸⁴ Sieyès, *Political Writings*, p. 120 ft. 19.

⁸⁵ On Kameralwissenschaft see Albion Woodbury Small, *The Cameralists: The Pioneers of German Social Polity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1909).

⁸⁶ Foucault, *Society Must be Defended*, p. 224.

⁸⁷ Bartelson, *The Critique of the State*, p. 41

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Xenos, 'The State, Rights, and the Homogeneous Nation'

⁹⁰ Michele Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1985); Maurice Mandelbaum, *History, Man, and Reason* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1974), p. 51; Bell, 'Mythsapes', pp. 63-81; Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*

⁹¹ Stavrakakis and Chrysoloras, '(I Can't Get No) Enjoyment'.

⁹² Ibid; Glynos and Stavrakakis, 'Lacan and Political Subjectivity'

⁹³ On nationalism and modernity see, for instance, Daniele Conversi, 'Modernism and Nationalism', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 17(1) (2012), pp. 13-34. On congruency in nineteenth century thought and theories of nations and the state see Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited', pp. 2024-2027.

⁹⁴ Jürgen Habermas, 'National Unification and Popular Sovereignty' *New Left Review* (1996), pp. 3-13, p. 9. Rainer M. Lepsius, 'The Nation and Nationalism in Germany', *Social Research*, 52(1) (1985), pp. 43-64

⁹⁵ Fichte, *Fichte: Addresses to the German Nation*, translated and edited by Gregory Moore, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2009 [1808]). See also Kohn, *Romanticism and the Rise of German Nationalism*.

⁹⁶ Habermas, 'National Unification and Popular Sovereignty', p. 10.

⁹⁷ On the implementation of civic/ethnic membership criterion and its effect on political issues see, for instance, Sammy Smooha, 'Types of Democracy and Modes of Conflict Management in Ethnically Divided Societies'. *Nations and Nationalism* 8 (4) (2002), pp. 423-431.

⁹⁸ David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press 1992).

⁹⁹ See Yack, 'The Myth of the Civic Nation'; Kuzio, 'The Myth of the Civic State'.

¹⁰⁰ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, translated by Hugh Barr Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975 [1830]).

¹⁰¹ John S. Mill, *On Liberty and Considerations on Representative Government* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1946 [1861]); Alexis de-Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated by George Lawrence (New-York: Harper & Row (1988 [1885])). See also Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1991), pp. 129-140; Mandelbaum, 'The Gellnerian Modality Revisited', pp. 2024-2027.

¹⁰² See, for instance, Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (N.J.: Princeton University Press 1999); Trygve Thrøntveit, 'The Fable of the Fourteen Points: Woodrow Wilson and National Self-Determination'. *Diplomatic History*, 35(3) (2011), pp. 445-481.

¹⁰³ Sofia Näsström, 'The Legitimacy of the People', *Political Theory*, 35(5) (2007), pp. 624-658; Abizadeh, 'Does Liberal Democracy Presuppose a Cultural Nation?'; Abizadeh, 'Liberal Nationalist versus Postnational Social Integration'; Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*.

¹⁰⁴ Daniel Chernilo, 'Social Theory's Methodological Nationalism: Myth and Reality', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 9(1) (2006), pp. 5-22; Daniel Chernilo, 'The Critique of Methodological Nationalism: Theory and History', *Thesis Eleven*, 106(1) (2011), pp. 98-117; Alex Sager, 'Methodological Nationalism, Migration and Political Theory', *Political Studies*, (2014) Early view DOI: 10.1111/1467-9248.12167; Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: New York University Press, 1979); Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, 'Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-State Building, Migration and the Social Sciences', *Global Networks*, 2(4) (2002), pp. 301-334.

¹⁰⁵ Tariq Modood, *Multicultural Politics: Racism, Ethnicity, and Muslims in Britain*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005); Bhikhu C. Parekh, *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: The Parekh Report* (London: Profile Books, 2000); Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*.

¹⁰⁶ Stepan, 'Do We Need a 'State-Nation' Model as well as a 'Nation-State' Model?'; Mandelbaum, 'One State-One Nation', p. 527.

¹⁰⁷ On collapsing binary distinctions see Eva M. Knodt, 'Forward', in Niklas Luhmann, *Social Systems* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. xxxiv. On these models see endnotes 9, 10 and 20.