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REVIEW ESSAY

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Reflecting on the Principles and Problems of Solidarity

Arto Laitinen and Anne Birgitta Pessi (eds.), *Solidarity: Theory and Practice*, Lexington Books, Lanham, 2015. / Keith Banting and Will Kymlicka (eds.), *The Strains of Commitment: the Political Sources of Solidarity in Diverse Societies*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2017.

Abstract   This review essay takes a critical look at two recently published edited volumes, both focusing on the notion and problems of solidarity. *Solidarity: Theory and Practice* (Laitinen and Pessi, eds.) attempts to unpack the complex idea of solidaristic practice by looking at a whole range of related concepts, such as the social brain, collective intentionality, empathy, work, and voluntary organizations. *The Strains of Commitment: The Political Sources of Solidarity in Diverse Societies* (Banting and Kymlicka, eds.), on the other hand, focuses on a concrete problem: the generation and maintenance of redistributive solidarity within societies marked by diversity. Still, both volumes take a thorough and systematic look at existing scholarship on solidarity, and by encompassing both the theoretical and the empirical, mark a significant step forward in deepening our understanding of the role and place of solidarity in general social theory.

Keywords: solidarity, political community, communalism, internationalism, social justice, pro-social behaviour, redistribution.

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Introduction

Solidarity seems to be *in vogue* these days. The recent economic crisis, the withering away of welfarism, and massive waves of migration that have been triggered by wars in Syria and the Middle East have made us think anew about what holds societies together, about what kinds of mutual assistance, recognition, and rights we can and should offer to one another – within groups, and across different groups – as well as what constitutes the "we" of a group and how a group's boundaries are formed and re-formed (and how firm or open these boundaries are and should be). Yet, it is puzzling that a notion so widespread, in both academic and vernacular use, has rarely been thematised as a focal problem of social theory; a fact that is nearly always mentioned by authors trying to reverse this trend (Bayertz 1999, Scholz 2008, Alexander 2014, Vasilev 2015, Rakopoulos 2016).

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Admittedly, solidarity is not the easiest concept to define and theorize about, for at least two interrelated reasons: 1) it is hard to situate solidarity in its proper slot between empathy and general pro-social behaviour, and 2) it remains an open question as to whether we are discussing one and the same phenomenon when describing/prescribing intra-group solidarity, inter-group solidarity, communal solidarity, or international humanitarian solidarity. It is no wonder then that some classification of the notion usually precedes any analysis, and indeed both volumes reviewed here establish their own parameters for solidarity along with referring to older classifications, especially those of Scholz and Bayertz (Scholz (2008) writes about civic, social and political solidarity; Bayertz (1999) distinguishes between four uses of solidarity: the universal bond between all members of humanity, attachments that bind people together in concrete communities, the political bond uniting people with same interests, the bond between citizens of a modern welfare state that legitimizes redistribution mechanisms).

This essay will take a critical look at two recently published edited volumes – *Solidarity: Theory and Practice* (Laitinen and Pessi 2015) and *The Strains of Commitment: the Political Sources of Solidarity in Diverse Societies* (Banting and Kymlicka 2017) – that seem to be making the case for theoretical, empirical, comparative, and historical in-depth research into solidarity, which is recognized as a major problem for social and political theory and the social sciences. The aim here is not to compare the two volumes (although some comparative remarks will inevitably emerge) given that they assume very different approaches and starting premises. *Solidarity* examines "us together," where "solidarity requires a presumption of reciprocity and *perhaps* shared group membership…" (Laitinen and Pessi 2015: 2, emphasis added). *The Strains of Commitment*, on the other hand, is interested solely in group-bounded solidarity, namely solidarity "on a social level" – which is mostly viewed in the context of a nation or state throughout the book – and within this frame, explores the concrete problem of redistribution. In other words, the scope of solidarity constitutes one of the research problems in *Solidarity*, whereas in *The Strains* it is pre-determined. Also, Laitinen and Pessi mostly understand solidarity as (prosocial) *behaviour*, while Banting and Kymlicka take interest in solidarity as a set of *attitudes*.

Below, I will briefly present each volume, though in slightly different ways. In reviewing *Solidarity*, I will take the "usual" approach and discuss individual chapters, as the diversity of the subjects and theoretical angles they present are a defining feature of this book. *The Strains of Commitment* is a much more coherent volume since the editors determine the scope of analysis and the working definition of solidarity at the outset, in a lengthy and elaborate introductory chapter that could be read as a working theory of redistributive

solidarity. For that reason, I will concentrate my analysis on this introductory chapter, at the expense of presenting the individual chapters more thoroughly. Finally, I will close with some remarks about the status and prospects of researching solidarity as a social-political problem.

Solidarity: Theory and Practice (Laitinen and Pessi, eds.) – collective intentionality and pro-social behaviour

The very title of this book suggests that it aims to treat solidarity in an all-encompassing way, without a pre-set framework or particular context to be explored. In fact, the editors explain in their introductory chapter that, "The purpose of this book is to offer tools for conceiving the world from the perspective of solidarity" (16). They acknowledge different expressions of solidarity and distinguish between four contexts, or rather four group-defined spaces in which solidarity emerges as a cohesive and ethical force: 1) concrete and small communities, where solidarity goes hand in hand with exclusivity; 2) solidarity on a societal scale, where the notion becomes almost inseparable from the question of just distribution and, in this respect, becomes an institutional question; 3) "fighting solidarity," or what Sally Scholz (2008) would call political solidarity in a narrow sense, where solidarity has a fighting cause at its core and is characterized both by intra-group solidarity and solidarity with others (usually with a group considered repressed or facing injustice); and 4) solidarity of all humanity, or humanitarian solidarity, which is mostly a hypothesis or utopian political project. The book is not divided into thematic sections, instead presenting individual chapters that move the reader's focus from general conceptual problems, to problem-specific analyses, to empirical studies of different instances of pro-social behaviour.

The opening chapter of *Solidarity* is by **Siegwart Lindenberg**, whose work on solidarity as a broad cognitive and behavioural concept is cited frequently throughout the volume. In this chapter, he discusses *the norms* of solidarity from an evolutionary approach, taking as a starting point Dunbar's revolutionary concept of "the social brain." One of the most important recent findings about human evolutionary history is that our frontal lobes have evolved to allow humans to derive adaptive advantages from living and cooperating in groups. In Lindenberg's account, biological and social evolutionary processes are inseparable, as the adaptive advantages from living in groups will "facilitate explicit prosocial behaviours and the development of norms in general and solidarity norms in particular" (32). He defines solidarity as a set of established norms that enhance a group's ability to produce *collective goods*; or in his words: "norms are a kind of codification of group goals, and solidarity norms in particular are the codification of norms that pertain to jointly creating collective goods in the group" (36). In other words, he

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assumes a highly functional approach to solidarity. Further, he argues that unlike other social norms, which differ from one group to another, solidarity norms are identical in all groups, as they are linked with the biological advantages of living in groups, and "emerge in every group in which people perceive common goals … that enable groups to be useful to its members" (37).

The universal norms of solidarity outlined by Lindenberg – cooperation, sharing, and helping – are supported by "added norms of solidarity," which help strengthen groupness and signal an individual's commitment to common goals, which are: the effort to understand and be understood, trustworthiness, and considerateness. However, where evolutionary psychology converges with social and political theory in this account is where Lindenberg argues that to remain important and guiding elements of human behaviour, especially in bigger and more complex societies, solidarity norms must be supported by social and institutional conditions. It is this shift from an evolutionary-social argument to a socio-historical one, and the claim that informal solidarity in smaller groups evolves into state-administered solidarity, that I believe inevitably raises many questions. First, how exactly does this shift occur? How do we transition from the lived experience of cooperation – inspired by the norm enabling its continuation – to institutionalized cooperation that no longer has to be lived as cooperation? And if cooperation becomes institutionalized, legitimized in functional terms only, and separated from the lived experience, do we still speak of the phenomenon of solidarity? Second, what if these institutions cease to promote and foster solidarity, as could be argued is the case with the dismantling of welfare institutions?

The next chapter, by **Mikko Salmela**, follows the previous in a very literal way; it is written as a comment and addendum to Lindenberg's work. It argues for better recognition of the role emotions play – especially *collective emotions* – in stabilizing a normative *solidarity frame*. Here he refers to Lindenberg's account of framing, as a cognitive mechanism that guides our perception and interpretation of situations, and hence, influences our course of action. Salmela argues that "people experience emotions about matters of collective concern, and that these shared emotions contribute to the emergence and maintenance of social groups" (62). Additionally, he emphasises *collectively intentional* shared emotions, noting that "a collective mode of feeling an emotion is to feel the emotion *as* a member of a relevant group, not as a private person" (68, original emphasis). While Lindenberg's previous chapter does suggest that solidarity is primarily a feature of groups, rather than a universal humanistic value, Salmela seems to be sealing this view without explicitly claiming so, with his insistence on the importance of the *awareness* that other members are feeling the same emotion; which implies that solidarity can take place only within rather small groups featuring an

intimate history of mutual inter-relations. However, the problem of scale is not explicitly addressed.

The chapter that follows, by **Kristen Renwick Monroe**, treats the issue of solidarity implicitly, through a question: why do we treat others the way we do? What compels the variety of responses to human suffering – from compassion, to help, to indifference, to cruelty? She claims that the critical factor is *psychological* – that our "ethical perspective" derives from how we see ourselves in relation to others. This argument relies on her previous work and a database of interviews with over 100 people who lived through WWII, whom she categorized as bystanders, rescuers, or Nazi supporters. Monroe found that members "belonging" to each of these groups seemed to share the same worldview within groups, claiming that: "…self-image and identity … delineate the range of choice options we find available, not just morally but cognitively" (90).

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However interesting it might be to include personal narratives in an attempt to theorize solidarity, I find it full of obstacles as well – especially with narratives of past events, as they do not necessarily reveal the true motivations of actors, let alone the socio-material conditions from which individuals acted. The complexity and inconsistency of human behaviour warns us against falling for the notion that one's worldview and belief system can be captured in a single story. And, while it may be possible to accept the idea that Nazi supporters share a worldview among themselves, it is difficult to believe that every *bystander* shared another one, and all the *rescuers* yet another, distinct and relatively homogenous. However, the interesting insight of this chapter is that solidarity can also be seen as a negative idea, as part of a worldview that emphasizes our place within and with "our" group first and foremost. In a way, Monroe responds to suspicions that might arise after reading the first two chapters, which imply that solidarity is primarily a group-bound notion.

In the next chapter, **Simon Derpmann** precisely focuses on the problem of universality vs. partiality of solidarity. From the perspective of moral philosophy, he attempts to unpack the nature of the *moral idea* of solidarity "and, in particular, a specific form of partiality that is arguably contained in solidarity relations" (106). For solidarity to have a distinct place within moral philosophy, Derpmann argues, it needs to be understood as communal, not universal; if *communal obligation* – "obligations *towards* others, and not merely obligations *with regard to* others" (112) – is central to solidarity, then this communality requires partiality, meaning that solidarity cannot be understood as universal (114). This universality of moral obligations is incompatible with the "communal partiality that can be argued to be distinctive of solidarity" (114). He claims that "solidarity is an idea that grounds moral obligation neither in personal ties on the one hand nor in formal

recognition on the other, but in *meaningful commonalities* like a shared history, a joint struggle, a common ideal of a good life, or social utopia" (116, 117, emphasis added).

Yet, I would ask: what is it that renders a commonality *meaningful*? And how does "shared history" become meaningful: through concrete lived experience or through institutionalized and ideologized narratives? Is shared history something that a group of people actually have in common or are they convinced and educated to believe it is so? This is an extremely important question, especially if the author is right to claim that "solidarity establishes a morally significant 'we'" (118). Is this moral significance a given commonality or a field for (political/ideological) struggle?

The chapter by **Arto Laitinen** that follows continues to reflect on communalism and/or the universalism of solidarity. He proposes thinking about solidarity as a phenomenon that combines different forms of mutual recognition, so as to connect "the thin principle of universal mutual respect, and the thicker relations between people, more sensitive to their particular needs and contributions" (126). He distinguishes between different kinds of solidarity: "universal *moral* solidarity, *political* solidarity of social struggles and revolutions, and *social* solidarity of the normal evolutionary phases of society" (127, original emphasis). He then argues for the combination of thin and thick aspects of solidarity, or for the connection of the three ideas pertinent to solidarity: mutual *respect* (thin solidarity), and mutual *aid* and *support* (thicker features of solidarity). When elaborating the difference between moral and normative issues related to solidarity, his arguments touch upon the question of community and expose several problems. "While there are normative issues of who is entitled to express criticism against whom … concerning *moral* issues third parties are always already in principle included, as members of the relevant all-inclusive community, and indeed have related duties as witnesses and preventers of crimes" (140 original emphasis). In a similar vein, he notes that "a violation against anyone is at the same time a violation against the norm which it is everyone else's task to sustain." But here we could ask what defines a *relevant all-inclusive community*? What makes it relevant (as opposed to not-so relevant)? Is any community all-inclusive?

At the very end of his chapter, Laitinen lightly touches upon a topic that is of central importance in the other edited volume reviewed here – the problem of societal diversity and solidarity. Laitinen's assertion is that solidarity does not presuppose sameness or homogeneity, although he admits that "a certain type of normative likemindedness can be experienced as a kind of unity," and adds shortly afterward that "cultural, ethnic, national identities – they are a powerful force." Still, the questions of the relationship between different kinds of communities (and the related question of identity),

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degrees of normative like-mindedness, and thinner and thicker versions of solidarity remain largely open.

Nicholas H. Smith constructs his argument, in the next chapter, around the idea that solidarity is intricately related to work; in a way, his chapter suggests, that is largely ignored in contemporary literature. He contends that progressively associating solidarity with the public sphere and simultaneously developing ideas about the public sphere as separate from work systems (referring to the Habermasian contrast between lifeworld and system) has obscured from sight the fact that the work sphere requires some forms of solidarity to remain operational. He argues that the activity of working is inescapably social (working is always working with others and for others), and must rely on some normative dimensions with an ethical basis, invoking solidaristic norms of reciprocity. He elaborates on the *expressivist* account of work, which centres on the need of workers to express themselves through work activities that in turn regulate these activities at least to a certain degree, as they have to rely on cooperation and mutual trust. Though it is refreshing to see the sphere of work returned to the very centre of the debate on solidarity, it is doubtful to me that this particular notion is pertinent to the discussion of whether the necessary cooperation and coordination that maintains work processes should be thought of in terms of solidarity.

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Hauke Brunkhorst is among the authors most recognizable, and rightly so, for work related to the notion of solidarity (Brunkhorst 2005). However, his chapter in this volume, while insightful and rich in lucid arguments, offers little to the debate on the "theory and practice" of solidarity. It is by far the longest chapter in the book, and although it carries "solidarity" in its title, any references to the concept come at the very end in concluding remarks. The chapter elaborates on the evolutionary development of European constitutional law and structural problems of legitimization, which are now becoming manifest in "existential crisis of legitimization." Brunkhorst offers an excellent account of the constitution as an evolutionary universal – from revolutionary constitutionalization to gradual constitutional evolution – with a specific emphasis on the history of the European "inchoate revolutionary constitution" (190).

Some of his core arguments about current economic predicaments in Europe are summed up here: "The idea of decoupling the economic constitution from the state was progressive and regressive at once. It was *progressive* insofar as it led to the *establishment of a constitutional regime beyond and above the states*, and it was *regressive* because it *reduced* constitutionalization beyond the state to the *economic sphere,* and *decoupled constitutionalization from democratization* – with sweeping consequences" (198, original emphasis). In other words, it was the demand of the common market for legal norms that drove the development

of European constitutionalization ("structural coupling of law and economy" 201). So today, the EU has high functional integration backed by procedural democratic structures, and low social integration exemplified in post-democratic, technocratic politics that are producing complex crises of legitimization. Whereas the argument and structure of Brunkhorst's chapter is impressive, the conclusion is a bit vague, referring to solidarity very broadly as a new "mental revolution of reframing the European mindset" that, he hopes, can be initiated by "the academically educated precariat" (220).

The next chapter, by **Juho Saari** and **Anne Birgitta Pessi**, treats solidarity in rather reductive but concrete terms, mostly equating the concept with helping others and defining it as comprising the "sentiments of communality and prosocial acts" (239). More precisely, the chapter presents the results of a comprehensive survey capturing people's attitudes toward solidarity in EU states, which aimed to study the impact of both official institutions and unofficial social norms on the attitudes of citizens. The findings show that citizens in EU countries with better economic indicators have greater concern for helping others, which the authors interpret as an indicator that: "social cohesion between people … creates social bonds – a prerequisite for a culture of shared responsibility. Solidarity promotes further solidarity." Similar arguments, supported by empirical findings, can be found in other articles (in both of the volumes reviewed) as well, and the impact of state institutions on the willingness of citizens to be in solidarity with their fellow citizens can hardly be overestimated. Of course, this emphasis on a top-down perspective, as well as on a (nation) state-bound framework for researching solidarity as a concept and a practice, has its problems.

Arto Laitinen and **Pessi**, again, follow this in the next chapter by examining the helping behaviour and attitudes of Finns, remarking that "some helping behaviour is demanded by solidarity, whereas some helping behaviour exceeds the demands of solidarity" (272). As in the previous chapter, their focus is on solidarity between members of a group. The theoretical part of this chapter repeats and summarizes some of the points laid out in previous, more explicitly theoretical chapters: "Solidarity at its purest requires a normative attitude emphasizing *our* perspective… However, solidarity as we-centred thinking can be separated from not only I-centred egoism but also from you-centrism such as altruism, sympathy, caring, or Christian charity" (277, 278).

Empirical findings revealed an interesting relationship between the question of who we (the Finns in this case) are most willing to help and with whom we feel the greatest sense of togetherness. For example, social norms were found to play an important role, and helping relatives or helping neighbours is regarded as highly important; though it is not followed by subjective feelings

of closeness. Similarly, even though Finns express greater feelings of togetherness with other Europeans than with the rest of the world, global solidarity is valued more (than solidarity with other Europeans), which is probably linked to assumptions about who is in greater need. These findings suggest that the "we" in solidarity is not the same as the "we" in a social group, as the normative demands are different and must be taken into account when assessing solidary attitudes and behaviours.

The last two chapters also focus on Nordic states, and both share a thematic focus on volunteering and voluntary organizations. **Heikki Hiilamo** contributes a chapter that reconfirms the importance of state institutions – especially welfare institutions – in sustaining and promoting solidarity. He analyses the interplay between voluntary organizations, especially the church, and the welfare state in alleviating poverty in Finland. The next chapter, by **Bente Blanche Nicolaysen**, is a case study of a Norwegian voluntary association and its disbursement of funds outside of Norway, as an example of transnational solidarity, which maintains the idea (previously laid out by Gould 2007) that solidarity should not be thought of in generic terms; rather, we should think of it at once in a narrow and a transnational sense.

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The Strains of Commitment: The Political Sources of Solidarity in Diverse Societies (Banting and Kymlicka, eds.) – exploring the sources of solidary motivations and attitudes

The carrying title of this book, borrowed from John Rawls, is suggestive in its own right; however, the subtitle leaves no doubt that this collection sets out to study solidarity in a very concrete framework, in relation to specific problems and contexts. This volume is not driven by a desire to examine the many sometimes contradictory meanings and modes of usage of the notion of solidarity, but to examine its place and role as a cohesive element in societies marked by high degrees of diversity. In fact, the anchoring is even stronger as, throughout this volume, the terms "societies" and "societal" almost always imply the (nation) state, and "diversity" is a stand-in for *ethnic* diversity (even when discussed in terms of religious, linguistic, or the broader and never entirely comprehensible "cultural" diversity, in the way in which all these discourses are ethnicized; see Brubaker 2009: 25–28; 2015: 28–35). Additionally, the two other coordinates helping orient the direction of this book are *citizenship* and the *welfare state* (and the effects of its demise on solidarity), which immediately recalls the 2006 collaboration between these same editors, *Multiculturalism and the Welfare State: Recognition and Redistribution in Contemporary Democracies*.

Of course, citizenship is a special area of expertise of the editors, and *The Strains of Commitment* features chapters by some of the most prominent

scholars of citizenship, like Rainer Bauböck, but also David Miller. Solidarity in this context becomes part of the question typically asked in relation to citizenship: "what binds citizens together into a shared political community?" (Beiner 1995: 3), but with an additional sub-question: What makes citizens comply with the politics of inclusive redistribution? The introductory chapter, written by the editors, is lengthy (58 pages) and elaborates quite thoroughly on the approach taken to solidarity in the chapters that follow; outlining what are understood as the problems regarding political uses and values of solidarity in modern liberal democracies, and at the same time providing a sketch of the theory of the notion. For this reason, it deserves a special attention.

Firstly, Banton and Kymlicka assert that solidarity and social cohesion are treated primarily as a *political* problem and process viewed in the context of three levels: political communities, political agents, and political institutions. The question is how these levels – of organizing and managing the political, one could say – sustain and/or produce solidarity? And, is diversity truly a threat to social cohesion and solidary bonds? Already, the authors reveal their orientation toward a top-down perspective, where solidarity is primarily seen as produced and sustained by institutions, policies, and related actors. However, the notion itself is defined in purely subjective terms, as *attitudes and motivations*, rather than behaviours. The authors strongly argue that "solidarity does not emerge spontaneously or naturally from economic and social processes but is inherently built or eroded through political action" (3). It remains a bit unclear, though, why the spheres of economy and "social processes" are separate from the sphere of political action, and why political action stands in opposition to "natural" action; in other words, why the political is confined to the state-institutional level.

Similar to other scholars (Scholz, Bayertz) who have classified different types (or uses of the notion) of solidarity in order to concentrate on one, Banton and Kymlicka differentiate between *civic*, *democratic*, and *redistributive* solidarity, focusing on the latter. The nature of this classification further cements their focus on state-level analysis (even though they frame the scope of their interest as the *societal level*), and we can easily replace the word solidarity in this context with (state) *citizenship* – democratic and civic citizenship, as promoters of tolerance and democratic values; and redistributive citizenship, as a sum of social rights in the Marshallian sense (Marshall 1949), resting on and further enhancing intra-national solidarity.

The principle research motivation behind this edited volume is not to examine the assorted and sometimes ambiguous meanings of solidarity, but to understand how solidarity works within a state, where it comes from, how it is sustained and what threatens to dissolve it. Therefore, international

solidarity or inter-group solidarity is not thematised here at all. Instead, the focus is on "bounded solidarities" within the modern, democratic-liberal, welfare (at least in principle) state: "This, then, is the crux of our understanding of solidarity: it is attitudinal in nature and societal in scope. We are interested in attitudes of mutual acceptance, cooperation, and mutual support in time of need, which transcend ethno-religious differences, operate at a societal scale and have civic, democratic, and redistributive dimensions" (6).

The reasoning put forth for the growing interest in solidarity is its inherent connection with social, egalitarian justice (where Habermasian perspective becomes obvious), which again justifies "the societal level" of analysis.[1] It could be argued that the normative stance of the authors is built around *social justice* – seen in this respect as a primary social good to be pursued – whereas the role of solidarity is mainly functional: it is a precondition for fairness. Solidarity is not seen primarily as an intrinsic need of humans for cooperation and mutual help, nor as a force that can produce political effects or change the nature of political communities, but as a *political effect in itself* – a kind of "social glue," the presence or absence of which depends on political institutions, actors, and policies. Admittedly, the relationship between solidarity and social redistributive justice is not treated uniformly across all the chapters, with some authors arguing that just redistributive policies and institutions can exist without solidaristic feelings (Jackob Levy, for instance).

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The reason diversity is another key notion in this volume is that it has peculiar effects on solidarity conceived as a group-bound phenomenon. Namely, solidarity rhetoric can have exclusionary effects on those seen as a threat to resources that are supposed to be shared in solidarity, *between members of a group*. Of course, the key issue here is what defines a group, and how the failure of redistributive mechanisms – the demise of a welfare state – is actually connected with growing diversity. Indeed, many chapters in this volume warn that what is crucial about this relationship is how it is *perceived*; that is, how narratives about diversity and social rights are mediated by media, politicians, etc. With this in mind, Banton and Kymlicka suggest "that rather than looking for universal patterns regarding the impact of diversity on

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1   Also, when briefly discussing global solidarity, authors claim that national solidarity precedes and, in fact, enables global solidarity (another justification for societal level analysis): "A study of 'global good Samaritans' showed that, in many cases, the impulse to global concern was rooted in national identities: acting globally was a way of expressing one's identity as a 'good Swede' or a 'good Canadian' … The fact that countries with the highest levels of domestic redistribution also have the highest level of foreign aid also suggests that 'the achievement of justice at home in fact sustains justice abroad' … and that 'individuals project their values from home abroad' … This suggests that a commitment to global justice often grows out of national solidarities, rather than the suppressing of national solidarities (45)."

solidarity, we need to ask more fine-grained questions about how specific dimensions of diversity affect specific types of collective identities, under specific political conditions" (12). Especially interesting is the modern trend of paradigmatic separation of (multi)cultural tolerance (civic and, to a certain degree, democratic solidarity) and protection of social rights (redistributive solidarity). The authors rightly observe that, "In some countries, these seem to be the two main choices on offer: a neoliberal multiculturalism that secures civic solidarity at the price of the hollowing out of democracy and redistribution, and a welfare chauvinism that secures redistributive solidarity at the price of civic solidarity towards minorities and newcomers" (14).

Their sketch of a normative theory of *solidarity in diverse societies* – built step-by-step by prioritizing the group-bound approach, the top-down perspective, institutionally-supported diversity, and intra-national solidarity as necessary for attaining inter-national solidarity – is rounded out with an argument advocating *multicultural nationalism*. And here, the usual critique of liberal multiculturalism could be applied again; though, I wish to highlight one thing specifically: a perspective that could be said to support a quasi-historical/evolutionary perspective in which nations/states are expected for to go through certain phases in "achieving" liberal multicultural nationalism, which is allegedly most suitable for containing and justifying solidarity on a societal level. Related and problematic is an understanding of the cultural as something pre-political: "In many contexts, a common national identity emerged within a core ethnic group before the society developed into a liberal-democratic constitutional order… the nation preceded the democratic order" (17, 18). Admittedly, discussing empirical studies and the importance of complementing political theory with social science-based empirical research, the authors state that: "The distinction between 'political' and 'pre-political' sources of national identity may seem clear and important to political theorists, but may be more difficult to disentangle and to measure in empirical research" (20). I am not sure if it is clear in theory either, as the notion of cultural, ethnic, religious etc. identities and groups as pre-political has long been criticized extensively, along with warnings about the many problematic implications this entails (see, for example: Sahlins 1976, Spivak 1987, Archer 1988).

To summarize, *The Strains of Commitment* rests on the premise that inclusive solidarity, that is *just redistribution within diverse societies*, should be thought of as a political process and a project to be built and maintained through a universal welfare state, impartial public institutions, and multicultural policies. State and institutional frameworks are crucial here: "The idea that state policies can influence identities and collective imaginaries is hardly a new theme. In many countries, nation-building projects in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were state led… In the contemporary period, the

challenge is to shape the identities inherited from these earlier nation-builders to help normalize diversity in modern life" (34). The role state institutions play in establishing, legitimizing and even normalizing solidarity should in no way be underestimated, but what seems to be missing here is a take on globalization processes that are continually diminishing and shrinking the power and effectiveness of sovereign states and their institutions. Their power in shaping and managing identities (and diversity) cannot be compared to nineteenth century nation-building.[2]

The volume is organized into three parts. The first part discusses the political theory of solidarity; the second presents research on public attitudes on solidarity and diversity; and the third examines the concrete policies and politics of diversity and solidarity, concluding with a final chapter by Philippe van Parijs – who reflects on the implications of these various studies for the future of solidarity in diverse societies. The volume is not only coherent, in terms of following and being guided by the arguments and propositions outlined in the editors' introduction, but presents a nice balance of theoretical and empirical chapters.

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The first chapter, by **David Miller**, reviews some theories of solidarity, but with an emphasis on how to sustain solidarity rather than on how to generate it in the first place. Solidarity is primarily seen as functional, offering instrumental benefits to a collective. Miller defines its features as: a sense of groupness (the "we"), a sense of mutual concern, a sense of collective responsibility, and a social force that exerts limits on inequality. **Rainer Bauböck** looks, in the next chapter, at the important and sometimes overlooked fact that many political processes take place "below" or "above" the nation-state level. He offers one fruitful way of thinking about the three dimensions of solidarity (outlined in the introduction), by linking them with three levels of political community (and here, Bauböck differentiates between polity and political community, the latter referring to "identity shared by the citizens of a polity" 80): the local level (civic solidarity of co-residents), the state level

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2   To quote Brunkhorst, from the previous volume (whose general remarks on the increasing importance of supranational and international organizations and institutions in relation to national institutions is not particularly noted in either of the volumes reviewed here): "These organizations no longer simply *complement* but increasingly *substitute* more and more classical functions of the state (see only as a striking example the present role of the IMF)… To be sure, the national state still plays a constitutive role in the dissonant concerts of the world society, and the state plays its important role as the only power that is able to *enforce binding decision*. But the state has become itself deeply transformed by its own globalization" (Laitinen and Pessi 2015: 191, original emphasis). States were able to distribute wealth because one of their primary functions was to collect taxes; they certainly continue to do so, but as the major paradigm today is *indebted state*, the tax money is increasingly going to debt collectors – the true agents regulating the direction of redistribution policies in a highly globalized world.

(redistributive solidarity of co-citizens), and the regional level (promoting democratic solidarity among different polities). The chapter that follows, by **Jacob Levy**, complements this bloc nicely with a dissenting argument that democratic politics do not and should not be grounded on solidaristic belonging. Partisan politics, he reasons, is a much better way to ensure just distribution, and to simultaneously avoid turning cultural difference into disloyalty.

Céline Teney and **Marc Helbling** contributed the next chapter, in which they interpret the results of a survey conducted among German elites regarding their attitudes toward redistributive solidarity. They conclude that the assumption that cosmopolitanism strengthens civic solidarity (by embracing a 'citizen of the world' worldview) but diminishes redistributive solidarity is not entirely true. First, there are differences among the types of elites (business, union, or intellectual); and secondly, attachments to cosmopolitan and national identity have dynamics of their own. The chapter that follows, by **Richard Johnston, Matthew Wright, Stuart Soroka,** and **Jack Citrin** analyzes a similar survey of public attitudes, in this case toward national identity, with separate samples for the United States, English speaking Canada, and Quebec. The results showed that thicker forms of nationalism, which involve more than the national pride of being born in the country, tend to be exclusionary and hostile toward the idea of expanding redistributive solidarity. But another interesting finding is that in cases where nation- and society-building processes were followed by the strengthening of the welfare state, support for redistribution policies forms an intrinsic part of feeling a national pride. In the next chapter, **Tim Reeskens** and **Wim van Oorschot** present a comparative study of public opinion data from the 2012 Round 6 wave of the European Social Survey, which focused on evaluating citizenship rights and tolerance toward newcomers (immigrants). Their findings reconfirm something that authors from the first volume reviewed here have also argued: in societies (states) where people have difficulties obtaining social rights, hostility toward the expansion of those rights is more likely to emerge; conversely, when citizens feel their social rights are provided, they tend to be more open to the inclusion of newcomers.

Peter A. Hall opens the third part of the book in a chapter that explores how ideas of solidarity are concretely mobilized in public debates and policy regimes. Hall disagrees with the notion that "national identity" best captures the feelings of obligation toward others. "Cultural imaginaries" or "cultural frameworks" are broader containers of notions about who belongs and what the value or deservingness is of other people – a combination of national identity and social justice. Historically, these imaginaries have largely been shaped by institutions, meaning that solidarity has been strengthened top-down, and supported by social democratic parties, trade unions, and similar

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actors that now see their role and prominence in public life declining. In the chapter that follows, **Zoe Lefkofridi** and **Elie Michel** take up this question in a discussion of how right-wing parties are positioning themselves as the new champions of a welfare state – of course, in an exclusionary manner. Next, **Edward Koning** explores the debate over whether the rise of such parties should be seen as a cause or effect of anti-immigrant sentiment. Focusing on the phenomenon of Pim Fortuyn List in the 2002 elections in the Netherlands, Koning discusses the "contagion effect" on other political parties and, in line with the previous chapters, affirms the decisive role of political actors and agents.

Bo Rothstein follows with a chapter that adds another layer of complexity to this argument by making the case that support for redistributive and equality-enhancing policies on the part of citizens depends on their "forward-looking predictions" about the behaviour of their co-citizens. And these predictions, in turn, are linked to how citizens evaluate their public institutions – if citizens see them as impartial and non-corrupt, effective and fair, they will display a greater support for inclusionary and redistributive mechanisms aimed at helping co-citizens; conversely, if state institutions are perceived as corrupt and ineffective, this results in diminished support for egalitarian policies. In the next chapter, **Irene Bloemraad** reviews the effects of multiculturalism on inclusive solidarity and suggests that it has had positive effects on civic and democratic solidarity, but that it is difficult to assess its impact on redistributive solidarity. Still, when looking at equality-enhancing policies in the US and Canada, she argues, they have historically emerged as a result of the political struggles of minorities; in other words, they were obtained through processes of political contestation, and then legitimized and safeguarded through political institutions, rather than rooted in pre-existing solidarities. **Karin Borevi** compares the different national "philosophies of integration" in Denmark and Sweden in the next chapter. Both these countries are examples of welfare states, but with rather different approaches to immigration and integration, where Denmark has traditionally been less hospitable to immigrants' claims than Sweden. Borevi suggests that this may result from different perspectives on welfare: the welfare state of Denmark has been built through a "society-centered" approach which means that "social cohesion and cultural homogeneity are perceived to be the causal prior," whereas in Sweden, "a state-centered approach instead prevails where the welfare state is rather seen as a potential promoter of social inclusion" (379). The next chapter, by **Patrick Loobuyck** and **Dave Sinardet**, is about Belgium, and makes the case for a weak nationalist thesis. In Belgium, a shared national identity is promoted, but simultaneously, two competing "nested nationalisms" thrive in Flanders and Wallonia. In a way, the authors treat Belgium as a test case for liberal nationalism, with a

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distinctive dynamic between national identity, nation-building projects, different policy regimes toward immigrants, and different solidarity strategies.

Finally, concluding remarks by **Philippe van Parijs** close *The Strains of Commitment* nicely, with a short but interesting take on solidarity and justice. He reminds us that, between bounded solidarity and unbounded humanitarianism (terms used in the introduction), lies the "civilizing force" of deliberative democracy – a demand that power be justified to all those affected by it. This "justificatory community" transcends, goes beyond or cuts across "traditional" communities: "Starting from the local level, one can so hope to create and constantly recreate a municipal patriotism, an urban fraternity, a sort of fellow feeling that may remain more fragile and shallow than a strong sense of national belonging but may still be sufficient to help sustain the sense of an 'us' required by motivational solidarity and therefore most welcome for the stability of institutional solidarity" (424).

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Concluding remarks

The importance of both *Solidarity* and *The Strains of Commitment* for the study of solidarity is hard to overstate. Especially valuable is the balance, in both volumes, of theoretical and empirical research, which will surely inspire further inquiries into the intertwined nature of the conceptual and lived dimensions of solidary attitudes and behaviours.

Solidarity is not the easiest notion to define, and for that reason is typically approached through strategies of differentiation and classification, with the aim to position solidarity between or beyond, or in partnership with empathy, altruism, cooperation, and pro-social behaviour in general. Efforts are made to distinguish between social, civic, and political solidarity, or inter- and intra- group solidarity; to argue for the difference between solidary attitudes and emotions on one hand, and behaviour and collective action on the other. However, some defining features are agreed upon and these are, most importantly and most broadly: symmetry, equality, and social justice. Needless to say, much room still remains for further definition, theoretical frameworks, and analysis of different forms of solidarity.

The question of the nature and function of solidarity is also left open, with opposing views as seen in the volumes reviewed here. Whereas *Solidarity* presents many chapters that argue solidary behaviour is part of our biological predisposition, and in any case, something that *precedes* the political and *enables* political communities in the first place; *The Strains of Commitment* insists that solidarity "does not emerge naturally from economic and social processes" but is inherently built (or eroded) though political action. Despite this contrasting approach, chapters in both volumes accentuate the

importance of (political, state) institutions for maintaining social solidarity. The conclusion of many empirical studies is that the willingness of citizens to "share" social rights, benefits, and resources with others is stronger if institutions are perceived as functioning, fair, and reliable.

Finally, I wish to conclude by highlighting some of the issues I find particularly relevant to thinking about solidarity today, but which are strangely absent from both of the volumes reviewed above. Though migration and immigration policies – from assimilationism to multiculturalism – are widely discussed in both, the current refugee crisis and responses to it, from the bottom-up solidarity of ad hoc voluntary groups to the outright hostility displayed by both official and unofficial institutions is left buried. Of course, this may be a consequence of the timing, as the refugee crises reached its peak in 2015; but it certainly represents a salient topic for future solidarity researchers, and invites us to pay attention to bottom-up solidary mobilization. Another issue is the Greek economic crisis, which of course overlaps with the refugee crisis, since Greek islands were the first European soil contacted by many refugees. But also, harsh austerity measures and the sudden impoverishment of a vast population urged people to turn to solidary mechanisms to replace crumbling state institutions – a trend that has caught the attention of some anthropologists, looking at solidarity, again, as primarily a bottom-up phenomenon ("solidarity networks", "solidarity economies", see Rakopoulos 2014). In this vein, it would be interesting to read about rising social movements, such as Occupy, Indignados, Nuit Debout, etc., the discourse, actions, and programmes of which often make reference to solidarity. All this testifies to the importance of the topic and to the growing rhetorical relevance of solidarity, but also to the need to study it bottom-up, as a potential driver of the establishment of new institutions and not merely as their effect.

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Promišljanje principa i problema solidarnosti:
Kritički osvrt na zbornike *Solidarity* (prir. Laitinen and Pessi)
i *The Strains of Commitment* (prir. Banting and Kymlicka)

Apstrakt

Ovaj tekst donosi kritički osvrt na dva recentna zbornika koji se fokusiraju na problemske aspekte pojma solidarnosti. *Solidarity: Theory and Practice* (prir. Laitinen and Pessi) razmatra kompleksnu ideju solidarnih praksi kroz čitav niz pojmova kao što su društveni mozak (social brain), kolektivna intencionalnost, empatija, rad, dobrovoljne organizacije. *The Strains of Commitment: the Political Sources of Solidarity in Diverse Societies* (prir. Banting and Kymlicka) se, pak, usredsređuje na konkretan problem: kako kreirati i održati redistributivnu solidarnost unutar diverzifikovanih društava. Ono što je zajedničko za oba zbornika jeste temeljan i sistematski pregled postojećeg naučnog znanja o solidarnosti, kao i nastojanje da se, obuhvatanjem kako teorijskih tako i empirijskih istraživanja, načini značajan korak ka boljem razumevanju uloge i mesta pojma solidarnosti u društvenoj i političkoj misli.

Ključne reči: solidarnost, politička zajednica, komunalnost, internacionalizam, socijalna pravda, prosocijalno ponašanje, redistribucija.