

The Idea of a European Superstate

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GLYN MORGAN, *The Idea of a European Superstate: Public Justification and European Integration* (Princeton, Princeton University Press 2005) XII + 204 p., ISBN 0692122466

The principal thesis which lies behind Glyn Morgan's *The Idea of a European Superstate: Public Justification and European Integration* is that the most convincing justification for continuing, and indeed tighter, European integration lies in the need for greater security in relation to external threats. It is a judicious argument, nicely presented and in large part persuasive. It certainly resonates with the striking eruption of academic interest in the role and responsibility of the European Union as an international actor. What is fresh about Morgan's study is the reorientation of this interest towards the effect of this evolving responsibility upon essentially internal arguments about political justification and accountability.

The first chapter discusses classic debates regarding the possible 'justification' for European integration. Such debates, Morgan argues, tend to oscillate around questions of institutional format and process. They have, moreover, run their course. The argument is compelling, especially placed within the context of the demise of the Constitutional Treaty. The final rites of the Treaty have been said subsequent to the publication of *The Idea of a European Superstate*. But the prophetic imputation is acute. The second chapter elaborates discussion of the varieties of Euroscepticism which attach to the question of political justification, particularly those which inhere a nationalist strain. Morgan quite rightly castigates the essentially simplistic translation of cultural nationalism into visceral Euroscepticism. The idea that the European Union is a vital threat to national identity and autonomy is not only overblown, but critically distracting. Cultural differentiation matters. Visceral nationalism is as enervating as it is archaic. This argument is developed further in the third chapter of the book, which is specifically devoted to varieties of Euroscepticism. Here Morgan presents an insightful discussion of the familiar conservative and social democratic alternatives. Chapter four then investigates those intellectual arguments that tend to root arguments that are either

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sceptical or justificatory in merely economic or social terms. Both arguments, investigated primarily through a juxtaposition of Hayekian and Habermasian alternatives, are adjudged to be essentially simplistic. Such justificatory arguments, so often deployed in the context of the new Europe, are necessarily internal, speaking purely to the issue of the common market and its workings.

The alternative, discussed at length in the final three chapters, is altogether more outward looking. Chapter five presents the 'security-based argument' for integration. Here Morgan is at pains to argue that security in the twenty-first century is something that should no longer be understood in purely nation-state terms. The primary threats to security, for a start, are not found in other nation-states. Moreover, the primary focus of security should not, correspondingly, be thought of in terms of nation-states. It is the citizen, not the nation-state, which must be protected, and secured. Chapter six presents a necessary discussion of various post-sovereignty theories, focussing in particular on those of MacCormick, Weiler and Schmitter. Each, he suggests, to varying degrees is culpable in underestimating the impact of post-sovereignty theory on matters of external, as well as internal, security. The need to consider the international context of post-sovereignty theory is fleshed out further in chapter seven. Effective security, Morgan argues, must be understood in a post-sovereignty, and necessarily interdependent, world. The essence of his argument here finds a striking iteration in the concluding chapter, which affirms that 'To be fully secure, one needs not only an effective state but also an order-enhancing international society'. It is for this reason, because the new Europe has an ever greater presence beyond its increasingly porous borders, that it should assume the form, and the responsibilities that are incumbent, not just upon a power or superpower, but upon a state, or more appropriately a superstate.

There is much to be admired in *The Idea of a European Superstate*. The argument is well constructed and largely compelling. It is also accessible, and likely to be of interest to scholars with a broad range of interest in European studies. But perhaps most of all it enjoys a very immediate and contemporary resonance. Regardless of whether or not readers will be persuaded by the essential argument that questions of justification should be set within the context of global security, there is no doubt that the context itself is pressing. Europe's global responsibilities, nascent or not, have never been more starkly presented than they are today.

