

Chapter Two

The Decline of the State and the Rise of New Forms of Belonging

Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored how ontological fear and secure collective identities are strongly related to stability. This clearly indicates that states, as key guarantors of stability, have a main role as providers of identities' needed stability due to their role as referent in the international and social scenario. However, this historical role of the state is currently being undermined significantly by what is generally referred to as 'the decline' of—or even 'the end' of—the state. It seems to me that 'decline' of the state perhaps comes the closest to describing the contemporary western context. That decline has had a huge impact on how ontological fear has affected collective identity construction in several areas.

In this chapter I look at when this rupture occurred to better understand how identities and allegiances have been modified since. For knowing the moment and the causes of this rupture expands the possibility of making more accurate forecasts on the future of identity issues and their relation with the state. I argue here that both internal and external factors associated with the decline of the state contribute to the rupture of links of belonging between individuals, communities and the contemporary state and cause a slackening of feelings of allegiance to the state. The main conclusion to be offered here is that as a result of the slackening of feelings of affiliation and allegiance to the state, the search for new, or renewed more psychologically fulfilling, modes of belonging to groups outside of (or transversing) the state structure becomes all the more important.

To examine the decline of the state and the slackening of the relation between state and political community, I examine briefly the external factors that are usually on the lists of those authors who discuss the state's demise. But there are other factors causing state's decline, including the state's diminished capacities and the increasing importance of new

international actors. These new actors have appeared in vast variety and include Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Governmental Organizations, Multinational Corporations, and Regional Associations, etc. Even international crime and terrorism have, to some extent, become fairly powerful international actors that motivate inter-state and intra-state behaviour. The external factors have a dual function since they also generate conditions for the appearance of the internal ones. These internal factors are at the same time very linked to society's response; i.e. revisionist ideas about sovereignty, nationalism or identity claims.

The final section analyses the historical evolution of the state's diminished capacities. Here I show that the appearance of new international actors with better supplying capacities have both contributed toward the rupture of belonging ties between states and society *and* begun to provide alternative locations around which new forms of collective identities and feelings of belonging to a defined group have congregated.

Situating the Decline of the State

Significant changes in the status and performance of the state in relation to its population and to other states are now more visible than they were some decades ago and far from being just a question of social science. What concerns me here most is the way in which the relation between the state and its own society has been damaged by the loss of sovereignty and traditional forms of power that many arguments on the decline of the state focus on. Most of this process is rooted in the contemporary increase in the diffusion of information and in the ongoing construction of a global consciousness. But perhaps it was the terrorist attacks of September 11 that succeeded the most in captivating population's attention and reflections about the possible end of state. The attacks raise a series of doubts about the state's capacities, given that 9/11 and its aftermath provided clear evidence that even the strongest and most affluent of modern states was lamentably unable to give adequate security and physical

protection to its population—protection from a mere handful of terrorists. The extremely weak American government response in 2005 to the damage that Hurricane Katrina caused for the people of New Orleans just reinforces the general picture that states appear to no longer be able to guarantee or implement the basic security needs of peacetime populations. The federal American state could or would not mobilize adequately the greatest technology and greatest riches in the world to come to the aid of thousands of its own people.

A focus on such events has again made pertinent recent versions of the older arguments about the diminished capacities and power of the state that sprung up at the beginning of the 1990s¹ and the end of the Cold War (as a response to the following uncertainty, of course), but subsided between 1995 and 2001. It also revitalizes the discussion about the new role and functions of the ‘reduced-capacity state’ in the international arena. Since the 1970s, neo-liberals have recognized the appearance of new international actors who now shadow the role and abilities of states. The Keynesian² idea of states as providers and protectors prevalent in the first part of the twentieth century started to part company with reality as states fell into a downward spiral of inefficiency. The resulting deep gap between availability of resources and the modern western state’s control over them has certainly brought into question the realist’s view of the power of the state and how it can be used. Neo-liberal scholars such as Joseph Nye,³ Immanuel Wallerstein,⁴ Robert Gilpin,⁵ etc and

¹ John Dunn, “Introduction: Crisis of Nation State?,” in *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?* ed. John Dunn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 4.

² For further reading of the text and an understanding on its political implications on the states see John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (London: McMillan & Co, 1961) or “The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money,” *Marxist Internet Archive* (2002 [cited January 24th 2008] Marxist.org): available from: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/economics/keynes/general-theory/>

³ Joseph S. Nye Jr. and John D. Donahue, eds., *Governance in a Globalized World* (Washington: Brookings Institution Press, 2000). See also: Joseph S. Nye Jr. and Robert O. Keohane, “Transnational Relations and World Politics: A Conclusion,” *International Organization* 25, no. 3 (Summer 1971): 721-48.

⁴ Immanuel Wallerstein, *After Liberalism* (New York: New Press, 1995). Also *World Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (United States: Duke University Press, 2004). And *The Capitalist World-Economy: Essays by Immanuel Wallerstein* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 269-82.

⁵ Robert Gilpin, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001).

neorealist Robert Keohane,⁶ recognize that the inability of the state is not only due to the scarcity of resources, but also because of new international challenges and threats. These facts evidenced the diminished preponderance of the state and its growing inefficiency in the international sphere. Yet it also affects the domestic ambit and the relation between the state and its people. The well-known and accepted conclusion of such arguments is that the state is no longer the principal and most powerful actor in international relations. It is losing its role of referent and symbol of stability and security both inter- and intra-nationally. Much has been written about the end (even death) of the state, about its importance in identity and other social issues, and the possible consequences of the disappearing of state as referent structure.

To understand importance of the declining of the state as well as its social and popular consequences it is important to remind ourselves of two important functions of the state. The first is that the state has, for a long time, been a most stable institution; the second is that for human evolution it has been an important referent and synonym of stability, predictability and order. It is not difficult to see, therefore, that any decline in the power and stability of this symbol not only means the weakening of an anachronistic concept and institution based on old-fashioned machinery, but the loss of the security and stability that went with the image of this machinery that people hold in their minds. Moreover, as it will be remembered from chapter one, insecurity and instability constitute two major causes of ontological fear which is closely related to the rupture of traditional identity links and forms of belonging.

So the question then becomes, if the decline of the state does produce uncertainty and instability that leads to ontological fear, does it produce enough ontological fear to affect significantly how individuals and groups forge their collective identities in the contemporary west? In other words, is the state really in so much decline that it is dying or nearing its end, or is the state going just through a declining situation relative to the natural human and stately

⁶ Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Globalization: What's New? What's Not? (And So What?)," *Foreign Policy*, no. 118 (Spring 2000): 104-19. Also Robert O. Keohane and Joseph S. Nye Jr., "Transgovernmental Relations and International Organizations," *World Politics* 27, no.1 (October 1974): 39-62.

evolution? I argue below that there is more evidence to support the latter position, suggesting that the state will not totally disappear or at least not in the short-term future.

The Decline or the Death of the State?

It is important to acknowledge right now that ‘the state’ is here understood (at least at this point) in the traditional terms of the Westphalian (so-called) nation-state. This conception of state as James Caporaso establishes involves “a state with a centralized structure of political authority organized along territorially exclusive lines.”⁷ These territorial lines generated a well-delimited homeland for people whose rights to live and thrive securely in it were ensured by the concept and practice of citizenship. Well-limited territorial borders allowed the emergence of sovereignty but also the duty of state to cover people’s needs, most of all that of security.

This is the political and geographical unit in which social evolution and interaction between ethno-cultural groups takes place. Nevertheless, I prefer to use just the term ‘state’ instead of ‘nation-state’ to describe the notion in this thesis (and for similar reasons I choose ‘collective identity’ instead of ‘national identity’), since states—even at the height of their modern sovereign imperial power—did not always draw their political boundaries (state borders) along the same lines as the boundaries that divided their constituent nations (cultural, ethnic or racial differences). Few single states were conformed by just one nation. Now, more than ever, the plural composition of states is evidenced by the difficulty one experiences in finding examples of states conformed by even an ethno-cultural majority group or nation. The

⁷ James A. Caporaso, “The European Union and the Democratic Deficit: The Emergence of an International Rechtsstaat,” in *Federalism Doomed? European Federalism Between Integration and Separation*, ed. Andreas Heinemann-Grüder (United States: Berghahn Books, 2002), 85. On how the functionality and importance of borders produce cohesion see: Mathias Albert and Lothar Brock, “What Keeps Westphalia Together?: Normative Differentiation in the Modern System of States,” in *Identities, Borders, Orders: Rethinking International Relations Theory*, eds. Mathias Albert, David Jacobson and Yosef Lapid (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 44, 52. For a critical version on the too much focus of territoriality and sovereignty on which Westphalian state was constructed see Stephen D. Krasner, “Compromising Westphalia,” *International Security* 20, no. 3 (Winter 1995-1996): 115-51.

cases of Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Poland and Portugal⁸ are the exceptions, but even these contain minority groups who demand political representation and protection by the state.

Conversely the term ‘nation’ is used here to denote common cultural heritage ties because of its ability to ease the creation of belonging ties with the political unit or state. There are also other elements helpful in the classification and creation of nations and included in this thesis in the term cultural heritage. These include shared language, common history, ethnicity, or shared traditions. However, and no less important, there are blends of myths and realities as well as the collective convictions or metanarratives of shared origins: what have been called as *invented nations* or, famously, *imagined communities*.⁹ These also figure in the way I understand notions of collective identities, what they comprise and their ontological status (i.e., they may be based more on shared *beliefs* of common truths, membership or history, rather than on “reality”).

So, now it has been established how this thesis conceives the terms state, we can inquire whether and to what extent the decline of the state is really a global tendency or a more localized phenomenon. While some scholars are convinced about the radical transformation of the state and the severing of the belonging links that bind a society to a single state, others argue that states have never had such a great influence as these authors believe or such a strong and emotionally encompassing link with their people.

Mathew Horsman and Andrew Marshall, Jean Marie Guéhenno, and Sheila Croucher belong to the first group. Horsman and Marshall extends the point of a radical transformation of the state and people’s allegiance to it by affirming that,

⁸ Mathew Horsman & Andrew Marshall, *After the Nation-State: Citizens, Tribalism and the New World Disorder* (London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994), 47.

⁹ This is a very interesting argument claiming that nations are not only a natural-given, political or geographical product but also result of the human beliefs and convictions over what to believe. For further reading on this topic see Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 10. Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 1-2. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 4.

tribalism and globalism, fragmentation and integration, are responses to various, sometimes contradictory, impulses: changes in the nature and reach of capitalism; technological advance, and market deregulation; the altered relations of citizens to their governmental structures; and the lack of one more hegemonic powers that might sponsor a global system.¹⁰

On the same line, Guéhenno declares that “the essential is not to master a territory but to have access to a network”¹¹ to denote the less importance of state in the contemporary globalised context, as well as the increasing relevance of the new international actors which, as I will argue later, do not find in state a strong referent for certainty and stability. Conversely, Croucher recognizes the huge erosive power of the process of globalization not only for the state but also for the belonging links this establish with people. In her words, “[t]he bond of citizenship has long been premised on the belief that state serve to protect certain socioeconomic, political, and civil rights of their citizens. In each of these arenas, globalization has affected the capacity, willingness, or need for states to act as the ultimate guarantors of these rights.”¹²

However, Horsman and Marshall conclude that even if the state is threatening to disappear, there is no “effective candidate to replace it.”¹³ Their work is particularly interesting since it supports the argument that the result of this process will be very likely to bring a period of uncertainty and instability. Extending their conclusion a little further, it is not difficult to see that this uncertainty will reign either while new and rival institutions vie to fill the power vacuums that the decline of the state is producing, or while the state consolidates its own evolution into something more capable of dealing with current contexts. What is important for this thesis is that since uncertainty and instability are both powerful

¹⁰ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, x.

¹¹ Jean-Marie Guéhenno, *The End of the Nation-State*, trans. Victoria Elliott (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 8.

¹² Sheila L. Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging: The Politics of Identity in a Changing World* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 80.

¹³ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, xi.

causes of existential angst and ontological fear, the nature of the power vacuum and/or the reconfigured character of the state will be most important in future attempts to deal with ontological insecurity. As a result, looking at just how this vacuum is being filled now will be necessary to forecast how collective identities will relate to the reconfigured (or reduced-in-power) state in terms of their priorities of allegiance and patterns of belonging to, and being accepted by, different groups. This task will be attempted in chapter three.

Guéhenno's argument rests more fully on several claims that it will be crucial for states to redefine themselves in the coming century to continue to retain at least some of their former control and sovereignty. He emphasizes that the state as an institution is losing some of its initial preponderance because of the increasing mobility of people, deterritorialization and the appearance of new international actors modifying the economic precedent system.¹⁴ One can build on his arguments by making clear that increasing mobility coupled with technological advances in communications certainly bypasses the former control a state would have on most of its population concerning how much and what kind of information the people have access to. Likewise, deterritorialization continues this trend in a similar kind of way, with virtual spaces that are less controllable by state means becoming increasingly important, and physical spaces declining as a factor in building new group identities—often selected from a widening array of non-state actors. Guéhenno's text is valuable for this thesis because it provides the reasons that underpin the contemporary context in which states are performing and, to some extent explains their particular performances.

Kenichi Ohmae's text is more economically oriented, though it relates economics to identity issues, the social field and, naturally, the political course that states will probably follow. His text argues that the end of the state is due to economic inefficiency when confronted to the capacities of new international actors. Issues like a major ability of

¹⁴ Guéhenno, *The End of the Nation-State*, 9-10.

mobilization and representation, the use of more sophisticated technology in favor of those actors and the support they offer to social groups are the principal reasons why Ohmae affirms that the state as we know it is about to end.¹⁵ However, he recognizes some specific functions proper of the states which are at the same time advantages in confronting the new international actors. The first is the power of taxation; the other is the capacity to sign international agreements which MNCs and ONGs do not.

In a way not too dissimilar, Croucher forecasts the emergence of a revolution in the way the state is understood and how it operates—a change that will lead to the creation of something different from the traditional institutional structure with which we are still familiar.¹⁶ She is aware of the imminent reconfiguration of the belonging links that social groups will have to resort to, to recreate, or strengthen themselves in other areas traditionally thought of as non-political to fill the gap created by the loss of their former main referent (the state).¹⁷ Croucher considers that the death of the state will be gradual and is not soon to happen. In fact, following Kachig Tölölyan’s argument, she concludes that “it is too soon to write the obituary of the state—a still privileged form of polity.”¹⁸

So, from all these authors we can gather that among the most important causes of the decline of the state are deterritorialization, slackening of the importance of citizenship, the search for modes of belonging to groups that can replace increasingly formal and meaningless citizenships (political belonging) that may not be so politically understood, the appearance of new international actors and, most of all, the varied forces of globalization. Because of its capacity to shrink time and space, globalization has been characterized as the most destabilizing cause.¹⁹ Croucher’s work is particularly valuable because she depicts what can be the future uncertain and unstable situation that may well leads to increasing disruption of

¹⁵ Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State: Rise of Regional Economies* (New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1996), ix.

¹⁶ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 2.

¹⁷ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 2.

¹⁸ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 31.

¹⁹ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 9-42.

belonging links not only between polity and state, but between different communities that need to live side by side without violence.

By contrast, other authors, like Susan Strange, affirm that popular allegiance to the state has never been as strong as most scholars assume it was before the late-modern state dived into its present decline. For her, belonging to a state as a citizen produces an allegiance no greater than (indeed sometimes much less than) the loyalty one might display to their football team, family, or political party.²⁰ Her point is interesting and certainly plausible from some perspectives, given that—in some countries at least—football teams (e.g., Manchester United supporters famously willing to fight Leeds supporters in the United Kingdom purely on the basis of their allegiance to their football team) or extended families (e.g., the Sicilian Mafia families) or political parties (e.g., the German National Socialist Party [Nazi] before 1936) have indeed commanded an enormous and enduring loyalty from significant parts of the population: loyalty that is often expressed through violence toward *opposing* groups.

Yet despite the violence that is often associated with examples of these groups, what is important is that belonging to them, and being accepted by the other members, makes one feel secure. The secure and protected feeling of belonging to such groups is clearly a huge part of the make-up of one's identity. It certainly does seem that, in the case of the modern liberal state, the belonging feelings that citizenship provides (beyond basic voting rights and the right to leave and enter the country freely, which are arguably more important to individuals than to communities) does not even come close to the personal and shared emotional fulfilment that belonging to these other groups obviously instills.

However, I think that Strange's argument holds only where political belonging links between state and society (formal liberal citizenship, for example) are very detached from cultural or ethnic belonging ties (nationality). The example of the Nazi Party after 1936, when

²⁰ Susan Strange, *The Retreat of the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 72.

it achieved formal political power, demonstrates that much allegiance to the state could be generated if it were linked with an agenda that stressed cultural and racial belonging links. Contrary to Strange's position, allegiance to this state is well-known for overriding family and other strong loyalties. And the reasons why this overriding belonging link could be maintained rested on the Nazi Party's promises to eliminate the uncertainty and insecurity (especially financial) that predominated in the period of German war reparations after World War I. It is when the state either cannot fulfill these promises, or cannot maintain them, that it loses the priority of allegiance of the people.

The traditional concept and institution of the state plunged into an uncontrollable downward spiral of changes that have been well documented topics since the 1990s. This is understandable since the end of the Cold War marked a key moment in the relation of identity and state. The end of bipolar global security preceded several indications of a real expiration of the structure and conformation of states in the post-Cold War period. The importance of the ensuing crisis of the state is highlighted by taking a look at the work of John Dunn.²¹

Dunn affirms that nations are conformed not only by those belonging by birth but also by the people who are the subject of a state's sovereign legal authority. He remarks that nation-states are composed as a whole by a nation and a political unit. Dunn also recognizes the ideological force that nations have had over the years over the state but he claims that a lack of evidence makes arguments contending the decline of the state and its power (understood in the realist sense) invalid and oversimplified. According to him, "it is hard to see firm grounds in any of these lines of thought for judging that the intrinsic practical efficacy of modern state forms has deteriorated over the last half century."²²

I strongly disagree with this affirmation since the date and the context in which it was written, 1995, falls within a decade that clearly evidenced a sea-change in the fortunes and

²¹ Dunn, *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?* 3-15.

²² Dunn, *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?* 4.

power of the state. It is well-known that the 1990s were an important period because of the abrupt transformations that took place in both the international and the domestic sphere of states. It is in this decade that globalization reached its peak in spreading out and really become global. This decade also witnessed the many identity crises derived from the fall and division of the USSR. It was a period of virulent nationalism that spread almost everywhere. 1995 was, in fact, a key year since the detonation of the war in the Balkans. This war evidences the violence of identity issues that subsisted before the Cold War, but reanimated anew with that war's end precisely because the Soviet state was no longer there to provide the kind of ontological security and stability that stopped sustained violence from breaking out in Yugoslavia. The war in the former Yugoslavia is also a prime example of deterritorialization²³ and its how its existence reduces the ability of a weak state to control its population.

The 1990s were indeed chaotic in terms of how the concept and operation of the state was. As such, it is not difficult to see that, by 1995, the problems that Dunn appears to have missed were already well under way and about to get worse. At the very time the end of the Cold War was expected to bring stability and security, when many groups needed to recover and strengthen their collective identities in a way that did not appeal to the ethnic similarities behind Nazism or the fundamentalist political ideologies behind Communism, the decline of bipolar global security signaled a similar decline in ontological security and certainty. Just as scholars thought that the stage was set for states to focus more on the promise of their peaceful, democratic future, their stable, legitimate and rights-based relation with the democratic citizens who elected them, and their expected increase in economic certainty and sovereignty, globalization arrived undermining the state's role as key player in all these things. As a result of its increasing inability to provide security and certainty, the people were

²³ David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia* (Minnesota: Minnesota University Press, 1998). See specially the chapter on ontopology (security related to a stable and determined location), 33-82.

forced to search elsewhere in hope of recovering certainty in strong group attachments to things other than the state. The fragmentation so often mentioned together with globalization was the main result.

The flows of technology, economy, information and even migration increased phenomenally in a short period of time.²⁴ Things as diverse as investment patterns to the appearance of new and stronger international actors²⁵ as the nongovernmental organizations²⁶ (Green Peace, the Red Cross or Human Rights Watch, etc), transnational corporations²⁷ (Coca Cola company, McDonalds, British Petroleum Company, Nokia, etc), or the Supra and Sub state actors²⁸ (The European Union, the Regions in Italy, or the Comunidades Autónomas in Spain, the regional organization as the ASEAN) reduced further the state's control over its own economy and populace. It also reduced a state's freedom to decide on its own economic, social, environmental and sometimes even political policies,²⁹ given that the influence and actions of many new actors on the increasingly integrated international stage affected many of their potential choices.³⁰

Technology also lessened the geographical barriers between states—a development over which many states cannot exercise much control,³¹ and which has immediate consequences for security of all kinds. Clearly, in military terms, the blurring of borders makes protecting a population more difficult. But in terms of other views of security, something similar is true. Human security, for example, is sometimes obstructed by lessening geographical barriers and enhancing technological communications (sexual exploitation or

²⁴ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 10-9. Also Catarina Kinnvall, "Globalization and Religious Nationalism: Self, Identity, and the Search for Ontological Security", *Political Psychology* 25, no.5 (Oct. 2004 [cited Feb 15th 2008] EBSCO): available from: <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=21&hid=118&sid=2ab8402f-97c0-4d7a-8986-c7767a35b09a%40sessionmgr101>

²⁵ Anne- Marie Slaughter: "Breaking Out: The Proliferation of Actors in the International System," in *Global Prescriptions: The Production, Exportation, and Importation of a New Legal Orthodoxy*, eds. Yves Dezalay and Bryant G. Garth (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 12-36.

²⁶ Slaughter: "Breaking Out: The Proliferation of Actors", 16.

²⁷ Slaughter: "Breaking Out: The Proliferation of Actors", 16-7.

²⁸ Slaughter: "Breaking Out: The Proliferation of Actors", 17-8.

²⁹ Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State*, 38.

³⁰ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, 200.

³¹ Though no one could deny that the United States has had a good try!

persons trafficking of women and children is arguably easier now, for instance). Then security and territorialization, two of the realist bastions of states are abated, leading to a similar abatement of the power of the state. When the state is confronted to other international actors more able to take care of security needs and also support the myths, beliefs and causes of its populace, it is obviously going to find holding its preponderance in the process of providing a nucleus of identification to its people difficult. This is one of the main reasons why religion, ethnicity, or international organizations devoted to improving social conditions, for example, are being increasingly chosen by individuals and by existing groups to be more worthy of investing their loyalty, allegiance and energy/time than the contemporary state is. Indeed, while it is not the topic of this thesis, on further investigation, this point might lie behind the current political apathy and lack of political participation in modern western countries like the United States and the United Kingdom.

On the attractive force that religion has over people looking for identification links to replace those that the state is failing to stimulate, Santiago Petschen has claimed that,

[r]eligion has not by itself been an element in nation creation. It has always been linked to other elements. But normally it has acted in nations as a factor of national strengthening... It cultivates their values, celebrates their glories and adapts to their traditions.³²

This fragment helps us understand the huge way in which new international actors like religious groups, supra-state actors, sub-state actors, and regional organizations are adapting themselves to the task of becoming central sources of group identity construction and belonging ties in the absence of the state's ability to rival them. What can be gathered from Petschen's point is that it is obviously not enough for states to just provide for people's physical needs (including physical security understood both militarily and domestically). Petschen makes clear that the psychological sphere in which ontological in/security and fear

³² Santiago Petschen Verdaguer, "La evolución del factor religioso en Europa como elemento de constitutivo de la identidad nacional," *Ilu. Revista de ciencia de las religiones* 0, no.0 (1995): 199, [my translation].

play such an important role must also be catered for by the institutions, actors and groups around which many people congregate to feel like they belong, like they have a secured place in the world where they will be accepted. What can be added to his point is that the thin, formal, liberal conception of citizenship³³ offered by contemporary western states appears to be just as ineffective in providing for this psychological element of belonging as it has been since the 1990s in guaranteeing public security.

Religious group affiliation is just one example of how actors other than the state can be successful in offering a source of identification that can compete against, and extract control and influence away from, the state because it is more able to appeal to the psychological component of the need to belong and be accepted. Religious group affiliation does not need a face-to-face dynamic in order to achieve identification. On this issue Ohmae presents a similar example based on the existence of belonging links more able to provide comfortable identification between distant members than with members of the same culture or location but diverse technological habitudes and practices.³⁴

Retaking Dunn's text, on the question of if the crisis of the state is general or particular to one location, he concludes that if the crisis were a fact "all nation states should be equally in crisis at the same time."³⁵ He refers to Afghanistan, Chad, Liberia, and Angola as unstable states where crisis is visible and a constant. Then he asserts that the status of these states—which have been in crisis—does not mean that other stable countries are in crisis too. He appeals to the reason that if the contemporary idea of the state (and thus contemporary non-failed states) *is* in crisis, this cannot be judged by "the experience of the feeblest of

³³ For a brief description of the problems of thin, formal, liberal citizenship see Mulhall and Swift, *Liberals and Communitarians* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 54-5. For more detail on thin liberal citizenship see Emma R. Norman, *El yo político*, (Mexico, D. F.: Ediciones Coyoacán, 2007) chapters 1 and 4. For an excellent review of thin citizenship in contrast with other conceptions of citizenship, see Diemut Bubeck, "Thin, Thick and Feminist Conceptions of Citizenship," in *Contemporary Political Studies*, eds. J. Lovenduski and J. Stanyer, (Belfast: PSA, 1995.)

³⁴ See Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State*, 27-41.

³⁵ Dunn, *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?* 7.

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contemporary states.”³⁶ However, as is well known, September 11 demonstrated that the experience of the strongest of current states cannot be ignored when coming to a conclusion. What can less powerful states expect if the hegemonic one is in crisis?

Thinking in realist terms, the terrorist attacks and the later incapacity of the United States to win the war against terrorism means a diminution in its powers. The paranoia and fear that characterizes the U.S. reaction to post-9/11 terrorism is perhaps the most important indicator that this most powerful of states is clearly feeling extraordinarily threatened in terms of its power, sovereignty on its own soil, ability to control its borders, and ability to maintain law and order inside those borders (as well as in other countries). But, the war on terrorism is not a war like other. As so many have argued,³⁷ the rules have been changed since the enemies are not conventional ones. The United States is combating an unknown and often unseen army that does not mobilize conventionally, aims for civilians not soldiers, are effectively indistinguishable from law-abiding citizens and are often prepared to die for their cause—making great destruction more likely than in the past.³⁸ Even terrorists are appearing as new (or at least newly empowered) international actors who are more able than traditional ones into take advantage on their special conditions and the contemporary context. Because of their special differences to those of the state, even terrorists can make use of some advantages provided by globalization (notably, mobility and the use of technology) to gather more members, or to express a *lack* of allegiance to the state (IRA terrorism in the 1980s in England is a good example of the latter point).

³⁶ Dunn, *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?*, 7. To read on a conversing perspective to the one that Dunn suggest see: Donal Cruise O’Brien, John Dunn, and Richard Rathbone (eds), “Contemporary West African States,” (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1989).

³⁷ See all the articles in the special issue of *Politics & Policy* vol. 34, no. 2 (June 2006) on the ‘War on Terrorism,’ and especially the articles by John Owens, “Introduction: Politics and Policy in America’s War on Terror,” *Politics & Policy* 34, no. 2 (June 2006): 233-56, and Richard Lock-Pullan, “The U.S. Way of War and the War on Terror,” *Politics & Policy* 34, no. 2 (June 2006), 374-99.

³⁸ Neta C. Crawford, “Just War Theory and the U.S. Counterterror War,” *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no.1 (March 2002): 5-25.

I conclude, contra Dunn, that the state *is* in crisis due to three main reasons. The first is that there are numerous external threats that states might not even know. Second, the state's capacities and power—even when power is understood in realist terms—have been diminished to the point of not satisfying its own population. The performance and increased abilities of several new forms of international actor is a factor in both of these reasons, where the actors control popular behaviour by posing themselves as threats to, or as suppliers of, what people need which the state ultimately cannot give. Finally, the crisis of the state is generalized, since 9/11 has shown us it is not only the feeblest states that suffer.

Dunn's conclusion of the inexistence of a real crisis is rooted in an analysis of the contemporary panorama, a context where realist and neorealist theories appeared to prove true: one of the contenders of the Cold War was winning and its ideology was the one to be implanted and seemed the right one. Not all scholars could see that great changes in the structure of states and the international system were about to become visible. Those few who were able to detect crisis of the state were also aware that “crisis” does not necessarily and textually mean the end or death of state. These authors were able to see the new challenges the state had to face, challenges which could certainly cause alterations in its structure and relations, but not its total disappearance. The point is made forcefully with respect to the state by Istvan Hont.

Crisis implies a moment of crucial decision in the face of acute difficulty or danger. Its meaning is most accessible as a medical metaphor depicting the decisive moment when a patient's fate was sealed. A crisis did not yet signify the ‘agonia’, or ‘being in the throes of death’, but the turning point where a road to recovery had to be opened if an irrecoverable descent into oblivion was to be avoided.³⁹

³⁹ Istvan Hont, “The Permanent Crisis of a Divided Mankind: ‘Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State’ in Historical Perspective,” in *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?* ed. John Dunn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 167.

It is important to remark that semantic debates on the term “crisis” enables and to some extent legitimates the creation of many different definitions that depend on the context and elements in which it is bound up. Crisis then, as Hont describes, does not mean the end of the state but a decisive moment of transformation in its evolution. If this is so, then it is not difficult to see that crisis-understood-as-change is part of the usual and constant process through which every states goes. On this account, the state is at a point where it will either have to adapt to its new context, role and different capacities, or become an increasingly outdated and relegated actor in the international system and/or the domestic social sphere. However, the state *has* historically been a stable actor and a referent of security and this does seem to suggest that the last word has not yet been written on the issue, and states could recover a stable and inclining course.

From the arguments previously presented it seems plausible that the state *is* in a general and widespread crisis, but it is not necessarily going to disappear or turn into something radically different. At this point it should be clear how the decline of the state is understood in this thesis and that it contributes to disrupting the belonging link between state and people. The question then becomes how exactly does it contribute to this rupture? And to what extent? To address these questions, the next step is to take a deeper look at how the causes of the decline of the state led to the rupture of the belonging link between western states and their people.

Main Causes of the Decline

Globalization: The Lessening of People’s Feelings of Affiliation and Allegiance to State.

As we have seen, one of the main reasons behind the decline of the state is globalization which has acted as catalyst for the other processes to happen. Globalization has the ability to shorten time and space, magnifying transformations and their domestic and

international impact. Moreover, it also diminishes a state's autonomous control over sources like technology, communications, economical interconnectedness, sovereignty, culture and many other elements. These elements have been traditionally considered as sources of the state's power, and hence a reduced control over them is taken as clear evidence of the state's declining status.

The state's diminished capacity as provider of what its people (particularly in western democratic states) consider necessary for maintaining their life and well being constitutes the second major cause for the decline of the state and it affects the way people identify with it. Belonging to the political unit (i.e., belonging to a particular state) is also based in western democracies at least on the principle of mutual obligations and rights. These, it is clear, have been modified by the impact that globalization has had on the declining power and autonomy of the state. Croucher clarifies the general point I am making here, and in so doing highlights the central focus of this thesis, when she says that,

[n]ot only does Globalization weaken the ability of states to fulfill various responsibilities toward their citizens, but it also provides citizens with new avenues or outlets for protection of rights typically guaranteed by states and facilitates forms of mobilization and attachment, often in pursuit of or in connection to those rights, that transcends the sovereign, territorial state.⁴⁰

Clearly globalization has not only weakened the state's ability to maintain the social contract it made with its people (protection and security in return for obedience and respect of political obligation) as well as basic social services. It has also helped multiply the new or different identity-forming locations that groups and individuals disillusioned with the state-as-identity-provider are turning to as alternatives to the state. The state's diminished ability as provider and guarantor of security evidences that there is a breach between what it is supposed to provide and its real capabilities in the late twentieth and (so far in the) twenty-first centuries.

⁴⁰ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 52-3.

This gap is able to affect identity links between states and its population since the exchange of the mentioned goods strengthened people's will to belong to state.

State Declining Condition

My argument so far has established that there is a breach between the real capabilities of states as providers and the desired abilities that figure in fulfilling the original contract that, going back as far as Hobbes and Locke, it had been thought to have made with the people. This claim may seem contentious. Indeed John Dunn claims,

there is a good reason to suppose that it must stem not from the diminishing intrinsic powers on the part of particular nation states but from a growing gap between the causal capabilities of even the more advanced nation states and the effective demands placed upon those powers.⁴¹

Dunn points out that a potential crisis of the state – since he does not agree with the claim that there is already a crisis– is based on the external and causal incapacities of states. He does not recognize an internal inefficiency as the root of the state's crisis and neither does he acknowledge in any way the effect even a potential crisis might have on the institutional focus it used to provide for group identity. Yet it is difficult to see how he could ignore that the supply of well being, recognition, welfare, or adequate life conditions missing or inadequately given by the state are now offered by the new international actors, in which people entrust new and stronger allegiances.

On this detachment between people and state Marshall and Horsman's position comes much closer to my view.

The nation-state, in its heyday, was able to bridge that contradictions to some extent by determining 'a national interest', by judging the necessary balance between the public and the private spheres, by responding to demands for wealth sharing...If the glue that kept multi-

⁴¹ Dunn, *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?*, 11.

ethnic nation-states together is weakened, the ties that bind co-religionists, ethnic groups, or members of distinct cultural groups can only grow in strength.⁴²

Once again the profound relation between the state's diminished capacities and the rupture of the belonging links with people can be observed, as well as how the new international actors are more capable to provide what is necessary and conquer people allegiance. Petschen arrives at a similar conclusion that fits well with the position I wish to build and support: “[i]n many cases the main group of identification is the nation despite the existence of other groups performing the same function as well.”⁴³ The point to be derived from this excellent idea is that the declining role of the state is not only important at the international, political and economic levels (those that most of the authors discussed earlier in this chapter tend to focus on). Perhaps a greater emphasis needs to be placed on the *social* dimension and, in particular, people's willingness to place their status as full members of a particular state in high regard; their desire to be part of a politically defined group that provides them what they deem necessary, and secures their life in order for them to pursue liberty and happiness.

People's willingness to belong is not only rooted in a geopolitical need to belong but also in a psychological one. This is one reason why “nations” are also described as imaginary communities.⁴⁴ What needs to be understood here is that while “nation,” which signifies a cultural community, and “state,” which signifies a political community, remained fairly coterminous with each other (or at least a state's main boundaries coincided with the limits of a large national majority), then belonging to a nation-state and giving one's allegiance to it makes some psychological sense. However, once the concepts and practices of “nation” and “state” begin to part company, a point I focused on earlier, then it is fairly clear that the

⁴² Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, 187.

⁴³ Petschen Verdaguer, “Evolución del factor religioso en Europa,” 199, [my translation].

⁴⁴ This term has been used in diverse texts to refer to the psychological element that constitutes a bond that eases the construction of identities. For further reading see authors like Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991). See also Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, xvi for a brief argument on the topic.

shared cultural heritage is more likely to win allegiance than the shared political one if the two become rivals for the allegiance of the people.

Obviously the idea and existence of nations that become a focal point for shared identities and deep sentiments of belonging and acceptance are not new at all. But they are not the only focal points for collective identity-building that form successful alternatives to the declining state. Some new international actors (such as nongovernmental organizations, transnational corporations, supra-state actors, sub-state actors, and regional organizations) are proving to be more able to offer people identification link benefits, and are attractive because of the elements like increased mobilization and demarcation they can offer. States cannot take advantage of these elements since they are against the principles of sovereignty and the importance of well defined borders.

Deterritorialization is a third cause of the declining of state because it has been rapidly dissipating geopolitical boundaries. This process is in great part due to the immense and uncontrollable flows of technology, the new ways of communication, migration, and economy. However the cancelling of borders became more visible and received far more importance at the end of the Cold War than in the past. The state's territoriality has been ceded under globalization's influx of free movement and the lessening importance of world demarcations. Consequently, states were no longer able to exercise a firm control of what happens inside and through its territory reducing even more its influence over people but also its importance as international actor. Loss of geographical demarcations is also significant due to what their mean for security. Nevertheless, contemporary processes and challenges, as well as international actors have shown that borders are no longer the synonyms of security they are portrayed to have been in the past.

Territoriality has always played a significant role for states and the collective identities that reside inside them, since securing it not only used to assure a state's existence, it also

provided a “homeland” to which human groups could feel identified. The crucial place of territorial borders was never more evident than at the time wars were waged in order to move lines, i.e., the European frontiers.⁴⁵ But, in a world of free flows of people and goods, the meaning and importance of borders are not what they used to be, and allegiance to state is now minimal too. The main reason is that borders have not always been inclusive for ethnic or cultural groups in the past and are certainly nowhere near inclusive now. Where borders were less porous, they may well have been used (sometimes consciously) to divide and thus conquer groups that share an identity and perhaps pose a threat to the state. Some examples of borders consciously used to divide ethnically diverse groups in order to defend their diversity are the historical conflicts between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland and then localized in Northern Ireland,⁴⁶ the conflict between India and Bangladesh which led to the independence of Bangladesh and the posterior rise of Bengali nationalism,⁴⁷ and more recently the case of Eritrean independence from the Ethiopian state.⁴⁸

Despite the fact that borders are now more porous than in the past, there are already ethnical groups searching for the creation of their own independence from a state that seems to be threatening the existence of those ethnical groups. This is the case of nationalism as the

⁴⁵ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, 44.

⁴⁶ See David Fitzpatrick, “The Geography of Irish Nationalism 1910-1921,” *Past and Present*, no. 78 (1978):113-44. Also David George Boyce, *Nationalism in Ireland* (London: Routledge, 1991) and Alvin Jackson, *Ireland: 1798-1998* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999).

⁴⁷ See Talukder Maniruzzaman, “Bangladesh in 1976: Struggle for Survival as an Independent State,” *Asian Survey* 17, no. 2 (1977): 191-200. Also K.M. de Silva, “Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in South Asia,” *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 19, no.2 (December 1996): 133-48.

⁴⁸ See Ruth Iyob, *The Eritrean Struggle for Independence: Domination, Resistance, Nationalism 1941-1993* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Also Kjetil Tronvoll, “Borders of Violence-Boundaries of Identity: Demarcating the Eritrean Nation-State,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no.6 (November 1999): 1037-60.

Chechen⁴⁹ or the Basque ones,⁵⁰ the conflict between Kurdish people and the Turkish and Iraqi states,⁵¹ or the most recent conflicts in Darfur.⁵²

Yet deterritorialization provides new possibilities for such collectivities to reform and reunite, obviously renewing their potential threat to a state's sovereignty. This territoriality, together with the economical and political advantages over other actors (taxation and sign of international agreements), have become the state's last bastions to be fiercely defended. Nevertheless, security questions like those in the U.S. following the 9/11 attacks prove that even strict policies of entrance across borders have not really achieved a level of control adequate enough to retrieve the former autonomy and control a state apparently needs over its inhabitants if it is to provide them the right amount of security. However, and as has been mentioned previously, the rupture between state and populations is enhancing the decline of the state. While diverse collectivities are looking for identification, boundaries lost relevance and are abated easily because the state's territorial its limits do not always coincide with those of the cultural or ethnical groups. Foremost, the lack of a well-demarcated territory where identities can exist and evolve can and has been interpreted as a lack of security. This can also be conceived as and another reason for the rupture of belonging links between these actors.

Economics

⁴⁹ On ethnic and territorial issues at the post-soviet space including the case of the Chechens see: Vladimir Kolossov, "Ethnical and Political Identities and Territorialities in the Post-Soviet space," *Geo Journal* 48, no.2 (June 1999): 71-81. And Syed Adnan Ali Shah, "The Genesis of the Chechen Conflict," *Strategic Studies* 22, no. 4 (Winter 2002) [cited 15 Apr. 2008] The Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad): available http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2002_files/no_4/article/5a.htm#top

⁵⁰ Pauliina Raento, "The Geography of Spanish Basque Nationalism," in *Nested Identities: Nationalism, Territory and Scale*, eds. Guntram H. Herb and David H. Kaplan (Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 289-316. See also Jan Mansvelt Beck, *Territory and Terror: Conflicting Nationalisms in the Basque Country* (London: Routledge, 2005), and José Luis de la Granja Sainz, *El nacionalismo vasco: Un siglo de historia* (Madrid: Tecnos, 2005).

⁵¹ See Michael M. Gunter, *the Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis* (New York: San Martin's Press, 1999). Also Kevin McKiernan, *The Kurds: A People in Search of Their Homeland* (New York: San Martin's Press, 2006). And Kemal Kirişci and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An example of Trans-State Ethnic Conflict* (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1997).

⁵² See Farah Arbab, "Darfur: The Fight for Peace," *Strategic Studies* 24, no. 4 (Winter 2004) [cited 15 Apr. 2008] The Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad): available http://www.issi.org.pk/journal/2004_files/no_4/article/6a.htm

Security and offering a delimited homeland to identities are not the only functions of borders. Economically, borders are also important since they have allowed states to exercise control over their economy and ways of managing it. This reasoning leads me to think that opening borders to global commerce has been key in their cancellation. As a result of the disappearance of many borders, the state in the globalizing era began to erode more rapidly than in the past. Taking another perspective, Guéhenno claims that “people have become increasingly mobile—moving to avoid taxes if they are rich, to sell their competence at a higher price if they have a particular talent, and to find work if they are poor. Then...desire to attract foreign capitals makes it difficult to control a nation’s capital.”⁵³ His words help highlight how even one of the last bastions defended by states—taxation—is not a strong deterrent for the state’s decline. A state’s advantages over other international actors are shrinking, partly due to globalization, mobilization, and an intensive use of technology.

Despite the fact that economy has always been an indicator of state power, right now it has become another element of erosion. This is the fourth element fomenting the decline of the state and prompting alternative focal points for group identity construction and belonging to emerge. On this Ohmae affirms that “states have become inescapably vulnerable to the discipline imposed by economic choices made elsewhere by people and institutions over which they have no practical control.”⁵⁴ This is valuable in any analysis of the current capabilities of “the state” in general or existing states in particular as well as those of other international actors. To the extent that economy goes global, it is harder for states to obtain the required goods and resources to fulfill their role as providers.

Contrary to Ricardo’s⁵⁵ and Smith’s⁵⁶ theories, commerce is no longer based on the exchange of goods and commodities, but on manufactured products and services. This implies

⁵³ Guéhenno, *The End of the Nation-State*, 10.

⁵⁴ Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State*, 12.

⁵⁵ For further reading see David Ricardo, *The Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1948).

that for successful competitiveness it is not only important to find cheap raw materials and labor, but also the use of technology. MNCs have benefited from technology not only to acquire better manufactures but also to achieve a better interconnection and interaction with world markets. The openness and *mobility* of MNCs allows a wider contact and commerce from which states rarely benefit mostly because of the fear losing sovereignty. By performing this way, states become more inefficient and lose their preponderant role in the international economy.⁵⁷

States are competing with an actor—MNCs—possessing more availability of technological and mobile resources, which increases their competitiveness. MNC's networks allow them to have enough influence to participate in the international economy. In addition these resources also make them quite able to modify the present conditions of international commerce and global markets. They are growing in importance and are making new rules while states seem to remain stick the traditional way of operation. The relation that states maintain with transnational corporations (TNCs) nevertheless has a beneficial side of advantage to the state as well as to the MNC. On one side transnational corporations need states to provide the necessary conditions for the manufacture of products and beings. In addition, states also benefit from MNCs transference of knowledge, even if this just happens rarely and at the end of the process.

All these benefits are worthy and help states to participate in globalization and make use of some of the economical benefits that it brings. MNCs and new international actors are more able to profit from the contemporary situation given to their special conditions. But it is also true that states profit too, even if not in the same way. This profit constitutes a foremost reason to accept the presence and interaction with the new international actors. Additionally, there would be included in the social dimension an international actors' contribution. By

⁵⁶ Mortimer J. Adler, ed., *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2003).

⁵⁷ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, 49-51.

creating labor places and improving socio-economical conditions, new international actors could help states to accomplish the social pact contracted with people.

Of course there are some remaining capacities that can be exercised by states and as I have argued, these are fiercely defended by states. States are still a strong actor and referent in the political, economical and social ambits. There is no replacement actor for the state yet even though there is a multiplicity of rising contestants. Nevertheless, the rapid transformation of the international and domestic panorama and the evolution of its actors are challenging even the special capacities held by states. The future of the state is not decided, but without any radical transformation in states structure and the way they operate, its survival seems to be fated.

Up to this point I have explained the reasons behind the decline of the state (as a concept and as a practical institution) as well as how this is interconnected with a need for groups to find alternative focal points around which to build their collective identities in the absence of a strong state allegiance. It has been established that globalization, deterritorialization, state's diminished capacity as provider, state's economic decline and the appearance of new international actors are then the main causes of state's erosion. Once the causes are set up, it is important to look at the same process from a historical perspective to identify the moment when the stable and secure actor that the state used to be, fell into a downward spiral.

The Decline of the State in Historical Perspective

It is well known that the processes eroding the state are relatively new in comparison with the historical evolution of this. However they have – in a short time – challenged the state's abilities, functions, role and preponderance. The relevance of identifying the moment in which these eroding processes began to interact is that they have established the velocity

with which state is declining. The state has always been challenged by territorial issues, wars, reconsideration of some of its principles, economical crisis, globalization, etc and it has not come to an end. However, the interaction of these processes has eventually caused the breach between the state's security-protecting duties and its real capabilities.

Since the first Westphalian states of 1648, this kind of political institution has been a growing and evolving institution that has succeeded in obtaining stability and influence. These elements have offered states the opportunity to become a political, economic and even social referent throughout time.⁵⁸ The state then established a tacit pact with its population in which it compromised to be provider of what people would need while people owed and paid allegiance to state⁵⁹ (payment coming especially in times of war). This is a similar idea to the one exposed in Rousseau's social contract⁶⁰ because this is also based on the free will of the people. However, this last leads to the creation of sovereign states while the pact that states agreed with people maintains the state's legitimacy only to the extent that it provided people with the necessary security and prosperity.⁶¹ Despite the numerous wars that occurred before the nineteenth century, states achieved a growth in importance and maturity, and it is precisely in that century when states reached their maximum point of influence and stability. The economic and political sectors were also controlled by nation-states, giving them their preponderant role in the international system. Meanwhile other significant international actors – MNCs, NGOs, INGOs, terrorist groups, international crime, etc – did not exist, or lacked the importance they obtained in the successive century.

States then dominated and ruled until the mid-twentieth century when, as a result of the natural evolution of economics, their context transformed radically. After the Second

⁵⁸ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 47.

⁵⁹ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, xvi.

⁶⁰ Jean Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. Maurice Cranston (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968). The idea of the social pact between people and state is also present in the texts of John Dunn and Sheila Croucher. To contrast Rousseau's social contract to the revised idea of those authors see Dunn, *Contemporary Crisis of the Nation State?* 4. And Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 80.

⁶¹ Croucher, *Globalization and Belonging*, 52-3.

World War, the pass from warfare to welfare⁶² affirmed the social pact contracted with people for the state to satisfy the people's basic needs. The post-war period was a difficult one and the state faced many challenges from independence movements and the emergence of newly independent countries, and the first ethno-national and cultural movements, etc. This was, nevertheless, not quite enough to endanger its status or preponderance.

The situation radically changed by 1970 when the internationalization of foreign investment, the opening of world markets, and competitiveness, etc. led to globalization. This major shrinking of the time and space dimensions ushered in by social motivations evidenced the state's diminished capacity as providers. As Horsman and Marshall conclude, "[t]he forces now at work *have* raised troubling questions about the relevance – and effectiveness – of nation states."⁶³ Globalization did not help states to provide the wellbeing and the effective distribution of wealth promised to people. On this Marshall and Horsman have stressed that "[t]he result is not the neo-liberal dream of a world governed by commerce and free of strife...Instead, it is a world of rapid change and conflict where the nation-state is not the main player, merely one of several."⁶⁴ Globalization and the success of capitalist theory had the contrary result to the expected one. It ushered in the questioning of the state's diminished capacities and how less than useful they are for the new international and social panorama.

If the 1970s witnessed huge transformations in the economic field; the succeeding decade contained plenty of political and social transformations. The 1980s, in fact, marked the major rupture of identity links with state. It also settled the basic conditions that allowed the appearance of new international actors and their growing in importance. It was at this time that the basis for the later confrontation between MNCs and states for competitiveness and influence was established. For the first time, the exponential trend of expansion and

⁶² See Roger W. Lotchin, *Fortress California: 1910-1961* (Illinois: Illinois University Press, 2002), 173-4. Also Carol Pateman, "The Patriarchal Welfare State," in *Readings in Contemporary Political Sociology*, ed. Kate Nash (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), 238-63.

⁶³ Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State*, viii [emphasis in the original].

⁶⁴ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, 201.

acquisition of influence by MNCs was revealed, while states would go in the opposite direction.

The end of this decade led to an optimistic context that lasted for a short period. The state's challenges seemed to be eased with the victory of the capitalist bloc and the implementation of freedom, democracy and stability. It was hard to foresee that the end of the dual opposition meant the multiplication of possibilities and so, the increment of individual and social responsibilities. The expected stability and security were just an expectation that turned into the opposite situation and led to the rupture of belonging links between state and people that is discussed in detail later in this chapter. The state's crisis and inefficiency were positioned over the communist state, blaming it and not the West as the synonym of failure and the end of a certain kind of state.⁶⁵ What was really happening was not the end of the antagonist force but the announcement of the future path that communist and non communist states would take some years later.⁶⁶

The state's new challenges were, in some part, due to the loss of certainty resulting from the fracture of the bipolar system. The end of the Cold War is that moment in which the processes eroding the state converged, hastening its decline and setting its speed to "high." The fragmentation of the USSR preceded the global fragmentation of states, the new challenges to face and the rupture of the identity links with people. Immanuel Wallerstein was able to see that the end of Cold War was just the start of new changes in both, the international and the domestic arena.

The destruction of the Wall of Berlin and the subsequent dissolution of the USSR have been celebrated... like the definitive triumph of liberalism like ideology. This is a perception totally mistaken of the reality. On the contrary, those events marked still

⁶⁵ For a critical version on this kind of claiming see John J. Mearsheimer, "Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War," *The Atlantic Monthly* 266, no. 2 (August 1990) 35-50. Also Russell J. Dalton, "Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies," in *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*, ed. Pippa Norris (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 57.

⁶⁶ See Masao Miyoshi, "A Borderless World? From Colonialism to Transnationalism and the Decline of the Nation-State," *Critical Inquiry* 19, no. 4 (Summer 1993): 726-51.

more, the landslide of liberalism and our definitive entrance in "the world after liberalism."⁶⁷

He focuses on the world after liberalism—a free and democratic world in which states had passed from being *the* central actor to just another one in the international system. The world after liberalism is one in which democratic values, so defended by states, started to make their duties and obligations far more difficult to achieve. People were encouraged to ask for better life conditions, for more rights and freedom but states are no longer able to successfully accomplish their role as suppliers and guarantors of these rights. In the postliberal world, borders are fading, the postliberal state is inefficient, weak, slow to change or react to new needs, cumbersome and old-fashioned. Guéhenno extends the idea by pointing out the growing importance of technology to “[t]he essential is not to master as territory but to have access to a network.”⁶⁸

The state, an institution that used to be the epitome of stability and security, began its declining course in this way. One result was that people found it increasingly difficult to feel identified to it. States became an inefficient referent unable to provide a “homeland” for identities or the adequate conditions for well living. It is clear that the end of the Cold War and world fragmentation have formed the first major moment in the disruption of identity links with state. It marked the end of the bipolar certainty and the conception of state as referent of stability.

The second major moment in the disruption of identities and its link with the state arrived with the terrorist attacks of September 11. If identities were free to search identification links, September 11 confirmed this search and enhanced the construction of new identities. These new identities are supposed to be able to avoid the ontological fear produced by the loss of the state as referent of stability and security and, as experts assure us,

⁶⁷ Immanuel, Wallerstein, *Después del liberalismo* (México: Siglo XXI Editores, 2001), 3. [my translation]

⁶⁸ Guéhenno, *The End of the Nation-State*, 8.

there is a return to the primary categories of identification. While Marshall and Horsman are convinced of a return to tribalism,⁶⁹ Kinnvall⁷⁰ and Petschen⁷¹ depict a sort of religious nationalism that derives its strength and attractiveness from the inclusive characteristics of both conceptions. Other scholars have a different vision of the future of identities. This is the case of Ohmae⁷² whose conception of these is based on the cultural regional similarities. The list of authors concerned with the topic of the end of the state and the search and construction of new identities is vast. It is therefore very possible that the list of the studies based on these issues will be increasing in the coming years according to world transformations.

Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter was to show that both internal and external factors associated with the decline of the state contribute to the rupture of links of belonging between individuals, communities and the contemporary state and cause a slackening of feelings of allegiance to the state. By making such a move I was able to support the main claim of this thesis and show that as a result of the slackening of feelings of affiliation and allegiance to the state, the search for new, more psychologically fulfilling, modes of belonging to groups outside of (or transversing) the state structure becomes all the more important.

To reach my objective I first presented a discussion about the real existence of a declining situation of the state, concluding that the future of this is still not fated. Nevertheless it presents a heavy tendency toward decline due to the state's inadequacy to the current global and domestic transformations. As a second step I analyzed the main causes of the decline of state in order to argue that people's awareness of state's weakening as provider of security and identity is producing the slackening of feelings of allegiance to the state. Finally I

⁶⁹ Horsman & Marshall, *After the Nation-State*, 77-90.

⁷⁰ Kinnvall, "Globalization and Religious Nationalism."

⁷¹ Petschen Verdaguer, "Evolución del factor religioso en Europa," 202, 205-6.

⁷² Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State*, 27-40.

presented a historical analysis to in which I have evidenced that the decline of the state has produced a generalized concern of people about their belonging links. As a consequence I was able to conclude that the decline of the state have also set up the opportunities for new ways of belonging to increase their importance and prove their ability to transform reality to achieve ontological security and a more comfortable, stable collective identification. To validate and illustrate my claims, in chapter three I will apply the theoretical framework constructed on chapter one and two to the analysis of the Basque case and queer nationalism. Consequently, I will be able to prove that as a result of the slackening of feelings of affiliation and allegiance to the state, the search for new, more psychologically fulfilling, modes of belonging to groups outside of (or transversing) the state structure becomes all the more important.