

Actual Democracy and a United Europe of States:  
A case study of Austerity and Protest in the Republic of Ireland

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They call it the Kissinger Question. “If I want to call Europe, who do I call?” Henry Kissinger reportedly remarked in the 1970s, when he was US Secretary of State. At the time, there was no European Union, and there was far less economic, fiscal, and political integration than today.

If Kissinger was confused and ambivalent about the lack of centralized power in the European Economic Community, the precursor to the EU, one can only imagine his confusion with today’s expanded and crisis-ridden union.

The Kissinger Question is a good one. The political and fiscal union in Europe, motivated by a desire not to repeat the mistakes leading to the two world wars, rests on centuries of interrelated but distinct national beliefs, values, traditions, and morals—factors that lie at the foundation of economic practices and attitudes towards democracy. The cultural psychological differences across the EU reveal some foundational issues at the heart of the current financial eurozone crisis, with examples from how we can understand variable response to Syrian refugees to the controversial decision of Britain to vote to leave the EU. This is because cultural psychological processes, including moral reasoning, lie at the foundation of people’s understandings of, and reactions towards, these emerging social phenomena. Understanding cultural psychological processes of denizens within the EU can help us comprehend current and future crises as well as larger issues concerning democratic processes within the region.

In this essay I outline Moghaddam’s (this volume; 2016) idealized theory of actualized democracy. I argue this is a worthy framework to inform and drive democratic activities. I apply the framework outlined by Moghaddam to examine some dynamics of democratic activity, couched in culture and morality, in the Eurozone financial crisis. As an illustrative example, I specifically examine the curious case of the unfolding of protest in the Republic of Ireland. Protesting is one manifestation of democratic engagement that is permitted, and at time made manifest, in EU democracies.

Protest has a long history of association with the potential for political change (de Tocqueville, 1857/1955; Le Bon, 1903; Thompson, 1971). More contemporary work highlights the dynamics of demonstrations and the behaviours of protesters as they seek to effect social and political change (Reicher & Stott, 2011; Warren & Power, 2015). In this essay, demonstrations – both on the streets and in the form of refusing to pay taxes - are conceptualized as denizens engaging with the tools of democracy. I examine when and how Irish citizens air their social and political grievances in the form of civic unrest following the global economic collapse of 2008. The analysis details the importance of understanding the temporal unfolding of protest and other forms of civic unrest within broader historical, cultural,

economic, political and legal contexts. Democratic engagement is not idealized; it unfolds in shifting contexts that are at once new, yet bound to the past.

I argue that an idealized version of democracy is a worthy goal, but the impact social scientists can have in generating future societies with actualized democracies lies in examining the actual contexts in which democratic activities unfold. Idealized versions of democracies provide powerful cognitive alternatives of how one ought to act in society and the best way to organize societies to promote peace within a culturally pluralizing and globalizing world. These imagined futures also impact how democracy is interpreted and understood in the past and practiced in the present.

### The Psychology of Democracy

In his visionary work on the psychology of democracy Moghaddam provides an ambitious framework to conceptualize actualized democracy (this volume; 2016). He articulates an idealized framework to guide understanding of what actualized democracy is, what it means, and why it can be so elusive.

First, Moghaddam outlines a simple continuum for thinking through forms of government. His broad conceptualization dovetails with Popper's classic characterizations of more closed and open societies in *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1966). At one end of Moghaddam's spectrum are pure dictatorships (this volume; 2013). These governments are characterized by oppressive and myopic leaders, privileged and corrupt elites, and intimidation and aggression from agents of the state used to control the population. In contrast, at the opposite end of this spectrum are actualized democracies. These forms of government are ideal and open societies and are characterized by a plurality of national, local, and psychological factors. Moghaddam argues no society has ever achieved a fully actualized democracy. There are multiple and interrelated reasons for this. He outlines a broad structure to comprehend the three ways in which social change can, but very often does not, occur, and inhibits the progression towards an actualized democracy. First order change – involving major shifts, such as the failure of a dictatorship, or a global financial crisis - occurs without any transformation to either the formal law or informal norms and behaviours within a region. Second order change involves creating new, or altering existing, formal documents and laws. However, this can, but does not necessitate, changes in social norms or behaviours. Third order change, according to Moghaddam, is far more elusive, but is fundamental to achieving an actualized democracy. It involves transformation in both the formal system and informal normative behaviour.

Third order change is necessary for achieving actualized democracy, but history is replete with examples of failures to make these changes manifest, even when opportunities to do so are created by first and second order change. Expanding his theory, Moghaddam outlines three prerequisites for realizing third order change. First, when moving from a dictatorship, leaders must want to move towards actualized democracy. Second, there must be institutional support to help achieve the actualization of a pure democracy. However, the third prerequisite is for a population to become democratic citizens. This involves acquiring, both through education and informal learning, the social and psychological skills to think and act democratically. Moghaddam articulates a series of interrelated, idealized, and potentially contradictory, abstract propositions that characterize a perfect and actualized democratic citizen.

A democratic citizen is at once open to new experiences, must seek to understand others and learn from them, create opportunities for these others yet also realize not all experiences are equal. Democratic citizen opinions must be informed by multiple sources, and consequently these citizens must revisit and be willing to revise their opinions. Finally, democratic citizens must question their own deeply held beliefs, know there are fundamental moral truths of right and wrong, and realize they themselves could be wrong in their worldviews.

Psychology needs more visionaries like Moghaddam. But idealized theoretical abstractions also need to be grounded in everyday lived realities. The meaning and realization of any actualized democracy is

forever linked to the past. This is because people use the past to make sense of the present and orient towards imagined futures (Bartlett, 1923; Halbwachs 1925/1992; Power, 2016; Wagoner, forthcoming). One consequence of this for generating an actualized democracy is acknowledging there are many potential forms of democracy. These are informed by legal, economic, and constitutional charters, which are institutionalized within countries, and cemented by cultural, historical, social, and moral norms. And even within democracies there is no guarantee of peaceful co-existence. The majority might tyrannize minorities, as Mann's (2005) documentation of ethnic genocides in democratic countries reveals. Visions for actualized democracies are more numerous than is possible to realize. This is why Moghaddam's framework is at once necessary and incomplete.

In both Moghaddam's (this volume; 2016) and Popper's (1966) terms, EU nations can be conceptualized as relatively open democracies. This is because EU membership is predicated on each member state having stable institutions capable of supporting a localized form of democracy, the rule of law, fundamental human rights, and respect for, and protection of, minorities as outlined in the Copenhagen Criteria for EU membership (1993).

Initially, unlike some EU neighbours, the Irish initially passively accepted austerity as the economy collapsed in 2008 and harsh austerity was introduced to its citizens. Paradoxically, when economic indicators in 2014 designated Ireland as one of the fastest growing economies in Europe, there were mass protests, standoffs and clashes with the police, and the refusal of hundreds of thousands of citizens to pay a new austerity tax on the water.

Examining this paradox can inform how we comprehend EU integration. It can help us answer Kissinger's deep question about the distribution of power in a multi-state democratic union, and it can also inform our understanding of attempts to actualize democracy in relatively open societies in Western Europe.

#### Eurozone crisis & the Irish reactions

Ireland benefitted greatly from joining the European Community in 1972. The modernization of the country since the 1970's culminated in an unprecedented economic boom during the late 1990's and in to the 2000's known as The Celtic Tiger. Yet, in the context of the global economic downturn in 2007-2008, the Irish financial downturn was particularly dramatic.

Economists give various explanations for the causes of the 2008 economic crisis—easy availability of credit, property bubbles, poor regulation, unscrupulous banking practices, people manipulating the system—but find it harder to explain the varying reactions to the crisis. The economies of Spain, Greece, and Ireland collapsed, but their residents reacted very differently to the outset of non-uniform austerity policies. In the first two countries, austerity measures were met with large-scale demonstrations and riots. In contrast, the residents of Ireland did not take to the streets. As such, the Irish case, on a surface level at least, proves to be different from some EU neighbours and warrants closer attention.

Understanding how Irish people responded to this economic crisis, and associated austerity, provides an opportunity to comprehend more broadly how people understand and experience societal phenomena from their unique socio-cultural and moral perspectives. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to explore the ways in which there are similarities and divergences in the types of explanations, moral reasons, and justifications people give to explain such crises. As such, exploring the Irish case has implications for understanding larger issues, such as the continued (dis)integration of the EU. The Irish case highlights, for example, the ways in which people do, and do not engage, in democratic activities; how they orient towards their government, agents of the State, and other social groups within the nation.

Actual democracy occurs in pre-existing contexts, informed by the weight of historical, social, cultural, moral, legal, economic, and political norms. To begin the task of understanding the pathway to actualized democracies, it is important to begin in these messy contexts. It is necessary to examine the ways in

which people navigate their trajectories towards achieving democratic participation and citizenship in the actual system they are positioned within.

The axiomatic assumption is that culture matters in understanding these processes. Particularly important to the Eurozone crisis, and the Irish case especially, is a way to comprehend the relationships between culture and economics.

#### Cultural values and economic development

An extensive body of research has highlighted the importance of history and culture to economic development (Banfield, 1958; Harrison & Huntington, 2000; Landes, 1999; Putnam, 2007). The idea that culture matters in economics is not new. More than a century ago, Max Weber, the German economist and sociologist, documented in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* the impact of religious values on economic prosperity (1905/2009). He examined how the Calvinist belief in predestination shaped attitudes to work, arguing that economic prosperity for believers signaled that they were predestined for heaven. For Weber, this new type of worker—hardworking, thrifty, honest—was the basis of modern capitalism. Over time, belief in predestination faded, but the spirit of capitalism was maintained.

There is also a long history of social scientists and economists dismissing culture's importance to understanding economics. When Lawrence Harrison, a former United States Agency for International Development mission chief in Central America, argued in his 1985 book, *Underdevelopment is a State of Mind*, that cultural values have hindered economic development in Latin America, Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University responded that "the cultural explanations of economic performance may be helpful in some circumstances, especially in accounting for resistance to capitalism in the nineteenth century, but such explanations should also be tested against a framework that allows for other dimensions of society (geography, politics, economics) to play their role. Controlling for such variables sharply reduces the scope for an important independent role of culture."

Summarizing the debate, the political scientist Samuel Huntington (a co-author with Harrison and himself a strong proponent of the importance of culture) later wrote, "The battle has thus been joined by those who see culture as a major, but not the only, influence on social, political and economic behavior and those who adhere to universal explanations, such as devotees of material self-interest among economists, of 'rational choice' among political scientists and of neorealism among scholars of international relations."

The debate endures: similar divisions are evident in the analysis of the Eurozone crisis. Cultural values and beliefs are often either totally neglected or treated as a variable, without in-depth understanding of their historical and moral roots, and the importance of such beliefs. But cultural beliefs help explain important differences in how countries responded to the recent global economic downturn. And by understanding the diverse ways culture informs how people orientate towards, and experience, economic realities, it also helps explain unfolding democratic participation in the form of civic unrest, protest, and voting in of new governments.

#### Ireland's response to austerity

In Moghaddam's model, the global financial collapse of 2008 can be conceptualized as first order change. A drastic downturn in many economies was not directly caused by stark formal changes in law or social and behavioral norms. These macro-level changes did not have a direct effect on how people engaged in democratic activities, such as protest and voting, but have been an important abstraction that frames later behaviour observed in a localized Irish context.

As a result of the global financial downturn, the economies of Greece, Ireland, and Spain all collapsed in 2008. So why did residents of Ireland, unlike those in Greece and Spain, passively accept austerity

measures for six years before finally protesting in late 2014, especially given Ireland's long history of rebellion against authority?

Examining the second order change – a change of formal law in Ireland – can help contextualize the Irish political response to the unfolding of the global financial crisis. On Monday, September 29<sup>th</sup> 2008, the then Irish government made the controversial decision to safeguard all deposits, bonds and debts in the six failing Irish banks at the expense of the taxpayer. This decision set in motion a series of societal and cultural changes that continue to be felt today. An investigation of these individual and collective social and cultural activities – third order change in Moghaddam's model – are explored in greater depth in the next section of this essay.

It is by exploring the connection between the global financial crisis (first order change), and bailing out of the Irish banks (second order change) that leads to democratic engagement in Ireland in the form of demonstrations, both in the streets, and at the ballot box (third order change).

My analysis of data obtained from the European Social Survey—which includes representative data from 28 European countries regarding social issues in two-year waves from 2006 to 2012—illustrates differences between Greece, Ireland, and Spain on several relevant issues. The broad financial constraints experienced by the three EU members were similar, but the responses to austerity measures were different. A cultural analysis can help account for these differences.

For example, residents of Ireland tended to disengage from potentially productive civic activity following the economic collapse prompted by the collapse of Ireland's real-estate market in 2008. Most Irish residents did not contact their politicians, sign petitions, or attend organized protests. In contrast, residents of Greece and Spain increasingly took to the streets in demonstrations, some of which turned violent.

Intuitively the Greek and Spanish reactions make sense: residents of Greece and Spain were angry at the economic collapse, and took to the streets. However, by 2012 residents of Ireland were less satisfied with their government, the European parliament, their economy, and their politicians than were their counterparts in Greece and Spain. Yet Ireland's Fianna Fáil government did not lose power until 2011, four years after the recession hit. Despite being unsatisfied with their economic situation and their government, despite EU neighbors increasing their civic engagement to effect social change, and despite a history of occupation met with rebellion, the Irish mutely accepted their imposed austerity. Why?

My research based on a wide range of interviews with a group of public elites, reveals three interrelated reasons given by this group for the passive Irish response to austerity (Power, 2016). First, migration is a culturally legitimized and historically ingrained response to hardship for the Irish: when the going gets tough, the Irish hit the road. Second, a collective memory of the violence and social denigration in Ireland during "The Troubles" – a period of violence in Northern Ireland from 1968-1998 - serves as a reminder of the futility of violence to solve social problems for the Irish. Third, the omnipresence of the culturally informed moral foundation that "you should reap what you sow" means the Irish were thought to accept austerity as a natural consequence of having enjoyed financial excesses during the economic boom years.

When the going gets tough

When faced with financial constraints, the Irish invoke culturally informed collective memories of migration during times of hardship. Nearly 10 percent of the Irish population has migrated since 2008. My interviewees saw this as a continuation of a culturally legitimized and historically ingrained response to hardship. Many migrants are young and left Ireland due to unemployment or underemployment. Although many are former construction workers, a significant portion are young professionals. Despite their more privileged education status, migration in times of economic hardship is a fundamental part of Irish culture. As one respondent, a prominent economist and regular media commentator, said to me, "It

is an established feature of Irish economic and social history since the 19th century that Ireland has experienced high levels of outward migration. Definitely Irish people are prepared to get up and leave if the economic situation is bad enough.”

Interviews with people in the public eye reveal a collective memory of the nearly 30 years of violence during “the Troubles,” the conflict between predominantly Catholic republicans who wanted a united Ireland, and the predominantly Protestant unionists who wanted Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom. In contrast to the riots, murders, and bombings that characterized the island during those years, the Republic of Ireland is now a maturing democracy, according to interview subjects. They say this maturity is mainly reflected in voting rather than attending protests or rallying against agents of the state. The Irish citizenry did their bloodletting at the ballot box, rather than on the streets, by comprehensively voting-in the opposition parties of Fine Gael and Labour in 2011.

The idea that you should reap what you sow, echoed from Roman Catholicism, is one clear theme uniting respondents’ narratives. The Irish with whom I spoke overwhelmingly view their people as being partly responsible for the economic crash. From this viewpoint, the Irish are different than many other EU residents. Although bankers, the government, financial regulators, and the EU were vilified for the financial crisis in Ireland, so too was the Irish public. My respondents said it would be illogical for the Irish to protest, because they shared in the blame. Irish citizens must suffer austerity as a consequence of enjoying financial excesses during the boom years. As one respondent put it, “We are stuck with the world we live in. Within these confines there are lots of things we can do, and will do, and austerity is just a consequence of what we do. We suffer it with dignity, we suffer it in anger, or you suffer it in one way or another. The motivation is to whether you suffer it in silence or in rage. That is probably the key question.”

My interviews with unemployed Irish people revealed how they internalized this idea. They often said they were partially at fault for their own negative financial and social situation. There is no motivation to protest when one feels culpable for one’s own social position. One respondent, who finished school at 18, was an unemployed former factory worker having difficulty repaying his mortgage when I interviewed him in the summer of 2014. He described how he and his wife went to a prominent Irish bank in 2006 to get a loan. The banker offered him a reasonable mortgage to buy his first home based on his salary, but Charlie lied, telling the banker that a competing financial institution was offering him a bigger loan. Fearing losing a new customer, the banker agreed to match the mortgage. In this scenario, there are several places where blame can be attributed. However, during the course of his story Charlie repeatedly illustrated the ways in which the fault lay with him. His current financial hardship, in his mind, is directly related to his lie—not to an irresponsible banker, an incompetent government, or a global financial downturn, but to his own actions. He does not protest because he feels culpable for his own situation.

Combined, these qualitative studies support the survey data suggesting the initial Irish reaction to imposed austerity was passive. The analysis reveals the nuances of the moral reasoning and cultural psychological tendencies, couched in collective memories of ways to be and to act, and made manifest in contemporary reactions to the current economic crisis. In this way, the relationship between culture and economics, and essentially how people experience and understand these relationships, informs how they feel they should act in the context of current Irish democracy. They did not riot or protest, because on a collective level they felt partially culpable for the economic situation and it is illogical to take to the streets in such a case. In Ireland, with the initial onset of austerity, migration was one way to deal with a perceived bleak future. Another was to purposely divide a violent past from a necessary peaceful present. Indeed, the Irish people voted out the government who oversaw the economic downturn, and bailed out the banks at the expense of the taxpayer, in 2011.

But that was then, and this is now

Intuitively, it might be thought that anger and protest might manifest within a stark downturn in economic fortunes, only to be relaxed when the economy rebounds. In the Irish case – and many others – the opposite is true. This presents a paradox. And an exploration of the psychological dynamics can help explain how actual democratic activities are motivated, and manifest, within this seemingly paradoxical cultural and economic context.

The Irish economy is again one of the fastest growing in Europe – with muted talk of the emergence of the “Celtic Phoenix:” a return of economic growth that created the infamous “Celtic Tiger” from the late 1990’s to the mid 2000’s. Yet there is an increasing level of protest behaviour among Irish citizens. Why, after passively enduring austerity for nearly eight years, are there now mass demonstrations in Ireland?

A dramatic shift in context, led to an observable shift in cognition and behaviour in Ireland. One effect of the 2008 global economic crisis was the introduction of harsh austerity on a number of different countries in the EU. In the Republic of Ireland, austerity measures were introduced in a specific manner, different to European neighbours. In the context of a stark upturn in the Irish economy since mid 2013, a new austerity tax was introduced (second order change). On December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Michael D. Higgins, the current President of the Republic of Ireland, signed a controversial Water Services Bill into law. For the first time in Irish history, the Irish public will have to directly pay for the water they consume. The Water Services Bill enactment has been met with strong opposition from the Irish public in the form of large-scale demonstrations, clashes with police, and a refusal of many citizens to register online to pay this new tax (third order change).

As highlighted earlier, the role of culture in understanding economic processes is heavily debated (Harrison & Huntington, 2000). Another interpretation of the different Irish response than EU neighbours lies purely in economic and political decisions. With the unfolding of austerity – the exact timing of new taxes and budgetary cuts; the rate and level of these taxes and cuts; the force and intensity they were implemented with; the baseline wealth of different groups of denizens in different EU nations; pre-existing personal and national debt; economic projections; political planning and even geographical location– matter too in explaining the dynamics of protest behaviour, civic unrest, and democratic processes in the EU. The cultural explanations do not solely account for different reactions between Ireland, Greece, and Spain. Rather, they are intertwined with these economic and political decisions that have social, cultural, historical, and moral foundations. A cultural analysis not only reveals how people discuss the unfolding financial crisis, but it can also lay bare some subjective assumptions underlying seemingly objective political and economic initiatives and policies.

Actual democratic activities are not idealized; they occur in shifting and seemingly contradictory contexts. In Ireland, the initial passive response to austerity gave way to civic unrest and an engagement with more extreme forms of democratic activities that were not initially considered earlier as the crisis began unfolding. This observable shift in behaviour did not occur when things were going from bad to worse. It occurred when the economy in Ireland began to soar.

#### Making sense of the paradox

Relative deprivation models, put forth by psychologists such as Thomas Pettigrew at the University of California, Santa Cruz, can help explain this situation (2016, 2015; Davies, 1971; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). The basic premise of these theories suggests that when individuals or groups compare themselves to similar individuals or groups, and they believe they are disadvantaged in comparison; this leads to the experience of angry frustration. Of course, the form and manifestation (if any) of this frustration is flavoured by the particularities of a group’s position, including the cultural, economic and socio-political contexts in which they are situated and to which they must relate. I use this theory to make sense of the contemporary anti-austerity demonstrations in the Republic of Ireland.

Data I collected for this research phase includes observations and semi-structured interviews with two

hundred protesters (balanced by gender; broad adult age; mostly working class) at a series of six national demonstrations in Dublin. I approached one in every tenth cluster of people for consent to an interview before and during the protest. I also recorded talks given by politicians, community activists, and trade unionists at post-protest rallies, along with detailed notes of my ethnographic observations, as well as conducting in-depth ethnographic work in summer and autumn, 2015, in a small Irish city. I spent substantial participant-observation time with a core group of protesters at different housing estates. I interviewed protesters individually and/or in groups, as well as members of the police force, construction workers, non-protesting residents, and occasionally members of local media. The analysis of this research reveals an interesting psychological phenomenon that is at once universal and local.

The demonstrators who were interviewed during protests were mostly aware there was an objective economic recovery occurring in Ireland. However, the protesters are not experiencing these economic improvements in their everyday lives. They are concerned about the rising prices, particularly property prices, in Ireland and the resultant emerging homeless crisis; the seemingly consistent problems with healthcare; and the perception that the Gardaí (the Irish police force) protect corporate interests and not ordinary State citizens. The protesters say they have finally awoken to these social injustices and are now motivated to take action. This manifests in demonstrations, on national and local levels, in the form of taking to the streets, refusing to pay the water tax, and voting out the government that oversaw the unequal economic recovery.

Speaking at the end of a representative national demonstration, one prominent left-wing politician summarized some of the arguments made by protesters. She stated: "Let no one be in any doubt that our demand will be an end to water charges and to Irish Water [the company set up to oversee the billing of water in Ireland], and the beginning of a society based on equality, decency, fairness and full citizenship for every single one of us, and that means a roof over every citizen's head, that means decent work, that means a decent chance, and fair taxation." It is clear the economic recovery is being felt unequally. The implication is that dramatic democratic change is needed. People are already on the streets to have their voice heard and now need to continue this momentum to vote out the government that oversaw the aggregate, but unequal, economic recovery.

Earlier in the economic downturn the moral logic that "you should reap what you sow" was interpreted as attributing a portion of the blame for the economic crash to the hands of ordinary Irish citizens. People endured austerity but expected to "reap" a better Ireland because of what they "sowed." However, citizens instead were met with a hefty tax on water, a resource often represented as a fundamental human right by my respondents, and particularly plentiful in Ireland, an island, where it often rains. People who had accepted austerity did not get their rewards. Now it is the government, elected on a mandate of economic recovery for all, who must be served their just desserts. The national demonstrations, often, but not always supported by left-wing political parties and trade unions, called for the removal of the government and the voting in of politicians who would genuinely represent the working classes. On February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016, the Irish voted out the government who oversaw the dramatic economic recovery, with independents and left-wing politicians who campaigned on abolishing water charges gaining much parliamentary power. Though the protesters were effective in getting their voice heard, the majority party who oversaw the economic recovery – Fine Gael - clings to power in an unstable and minority government.

The Irish case study shows the interplay between the three orders of change necessary to move towards one version of an actualized democracy. The global economic collapse led to the introduction of new laws in Ireland, which in turn shifted the localized context and shaped the emergence of behaviours of democratic citizenship. A large number of Irish citizens engaged – to varying degrees - in the idealized characteristics Moghaddam argues are necessary for actualized democracies. They critically questioned the system they were in, revised their previous cognitions in light of new information that they sought out from multiple sources, including social, rather than mainstream, media; many engaged in new democratic experiences – such as refusing to pay tax and protesting; and in these contexts the vast majority of people



maintained principles of right and wrong, evidenced in overwhelmingly peaceful protests. Not all citizens engaged in this behaviour, nor did all of them engage to the same degree. But in the rupture caused by the global economic crisis, and the laws enacted by those in power, citizens responded by edging closer towards actualizing a contextualized democracy in the Republic of Ireland.

### Actualizing Democracy

Moghaddam articulated an impressive idealized theory of actualized democracy. This framework is a worthy destination for societies in the third millennium to strive towards. As Moghaddam knows, however, the pathway to these idealized societies is not inevitable. The journey towards them occurs in messy contexts, sculpted by the weight of history and the dynamics of politics, economics, law, as well as localized social, cultural, and moral reasoning. In this sense, in order to take the next steps on the journey towards actualized democracy, psychologists need to understand actual and contextualized democracy.

In this essay I have examined actual democratic activities as they have unfolded in the in the Republic of Ireland since the global financial crisis. This cultural psychological analysis of the Irish during the eurozone crisis indicates some of the ways in which economic reforms—such as harsh austerity measures—have been met with diverse and delayed responses from different EU countries. Cultural, moral, and historical values are intertwined with economic policies. To understand the complexities of the ongoing eurozone crisis, we need to analyze culture, since culture and history shape how policies are accepted, rejected, or modified.

My research on relative deprivation is informed by cultural psychological research that is sensitive to unfolding cultural, political, and moral contexts and as such, provides a more holistic account to explain the initial maintenance of peace in Ireland and the later outbreak of civic discontent. It illustrates the importance of understanding culture and morality before economic behaviour can be comprehended. Global inequality is increasing (Atkinson, 2015; Dorling, 2014; Picketty, 2014). But economic protests and riots often occur due to the perception of inequality, not from inequality itself. As Europe emerges from the worst economic crisis since WWII, EU governments need to take action to ensure their citizens experience (or perceive) economic recovery more equally. If global societies are to fully realize the Greek experiment with democracy that began 2,500 years ago, it is important to understand the interconnections between levels of change, as Moghaddam highlights so effectively (this volume; 2016). Large-scale global ruptures, such as the financial crisis, pushes second order change of formal laws and constitutions. But third level change – individual and collective psychological change – occurs over longer periods of time. European integration is a worthy goal, but to realize actual democracy means realizing the contexts in which it unfolds. The eurozone crisis, and the Irish case study, demonstrates actual democracy and the emergence of democratic responses to an ongoing crisis. A psychology for the third millennium needs culture and morality at its core if it is to help generate actual democracies.

This research also has implications beyond the EU stimulus-austerity debate. Genuine differences in culture, history, and morality undergird economic thought and must be understood if economic theory is to be translated into policies that improve lives. Knowledge gained can be applied to other emerging crises, before they escalate to the level of the Eurozone crisis (e.g. in Latin America). By comprehending the cultural and moral basis underlying opinions of, and reactions towards, economic growth or contraction, it may be possible to understand people's engagement with democratic activities. Better understanding of intergroup and intercultural differences, and national identities, will make it possible to promote intercultural dialogue in the face of new EU crises – such as the migration crisis and Britain voting to leave the union. Such dialogue and understanding is needed to promote peace, reduce violence, and create a democratically integrated EU. And perhaps there should not be an answer to the Kissinger question. When the United States calls Europe they must realize they are not calling a United States of Europe. They are calling a United Europe of States.

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