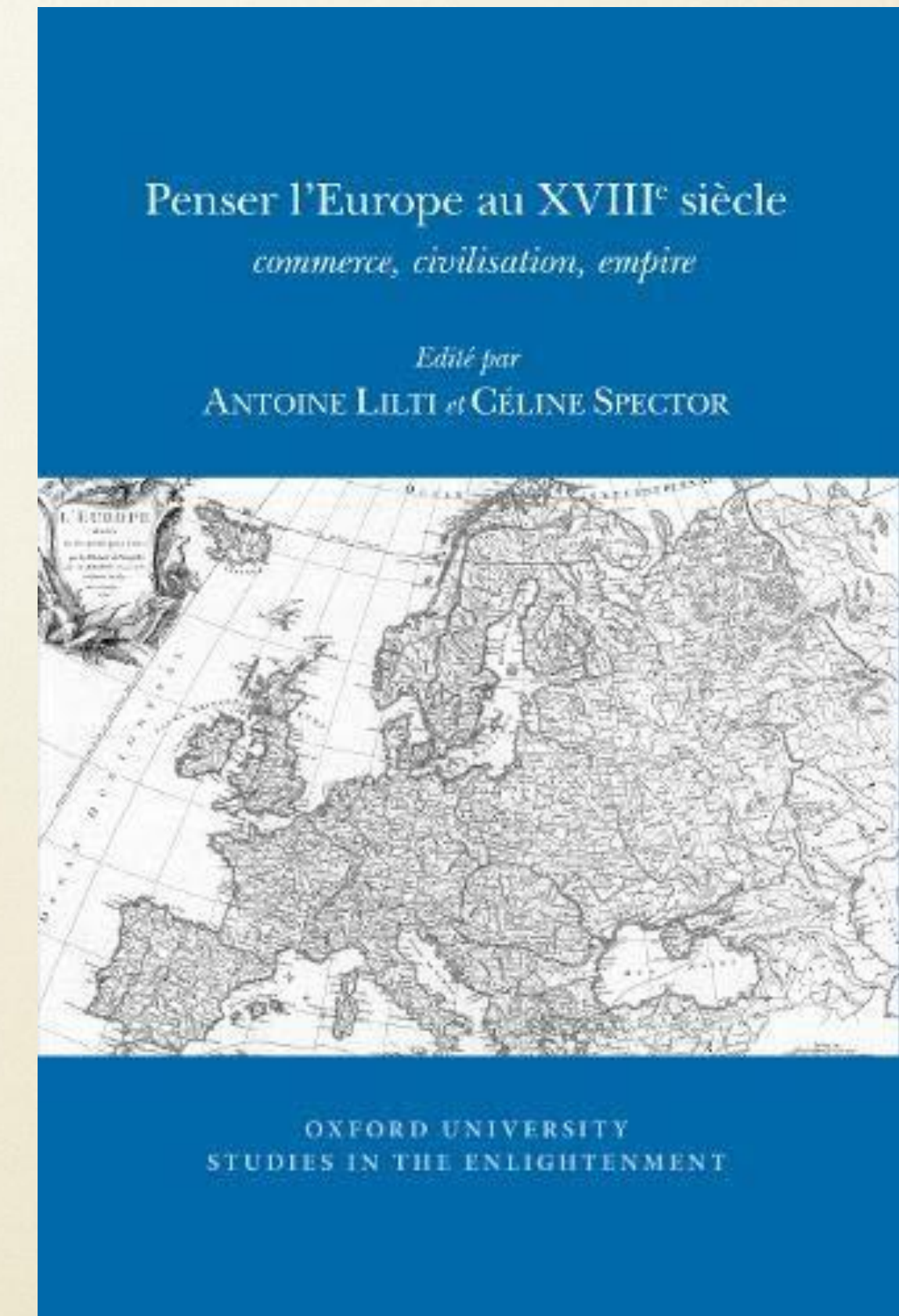


Whose sovereignty? Democracy and the People in the EU

Céline Spector

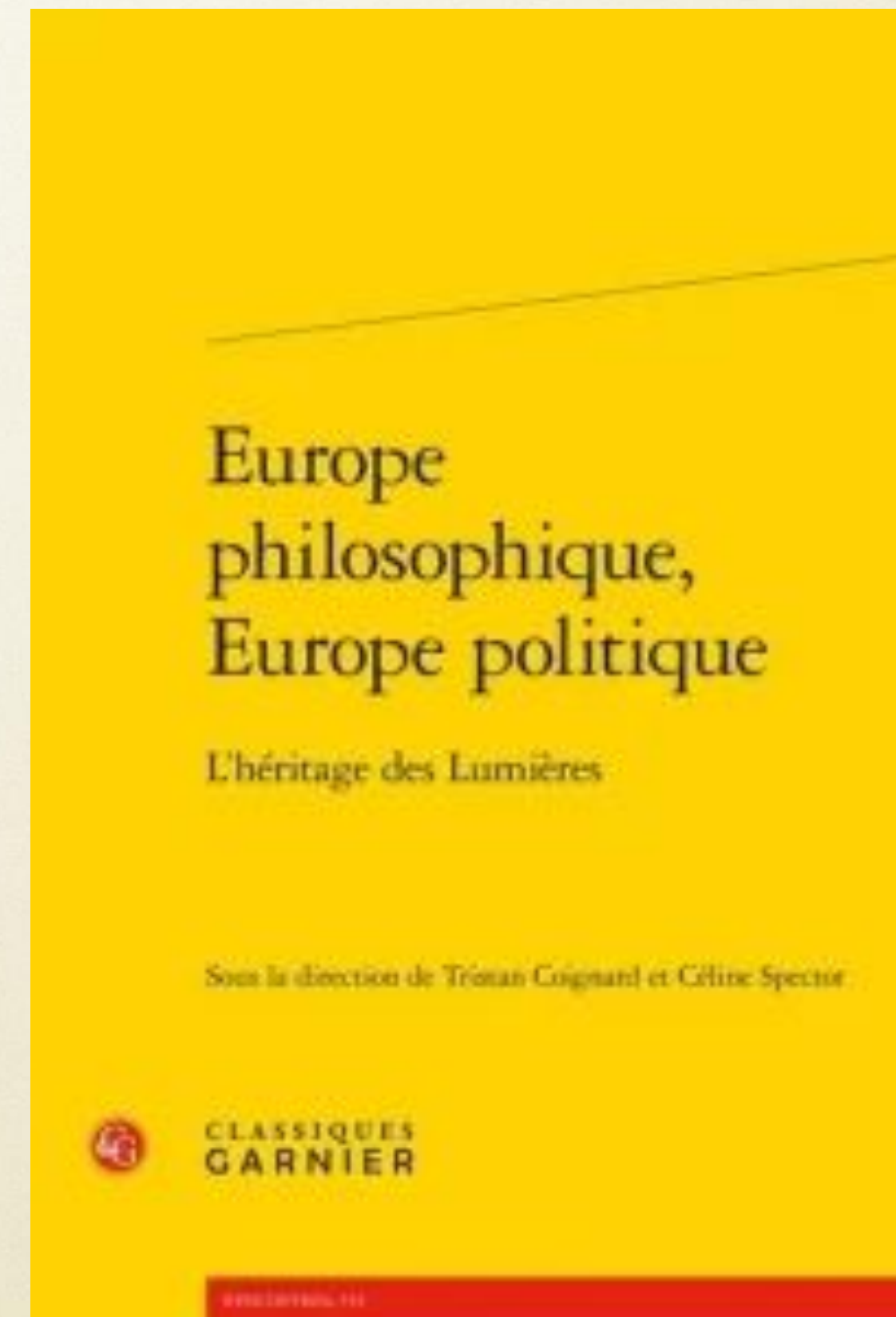
The Legacy of the Enlightenment

- With Antoine Lilti, *Penser l'Europe au XVIII^e siècle. Commerce, Civilisation, Empire* (Oxford, 2015).



From political theory to politics

- With Tristan Coignard (Classiques Garnier, 2022).



No demos?

- Seuil, « L'ordre philosophique », 2021.
- Points Seuil, 2026.



The sovereigntist critique : the “No Demos” Thesis

- The constitutionalization of a political and economic (neoliberal) model;
- The apolitical dimension of the Commission, ECB, ECJ
- The growing distance between the European Parliament and citizens.

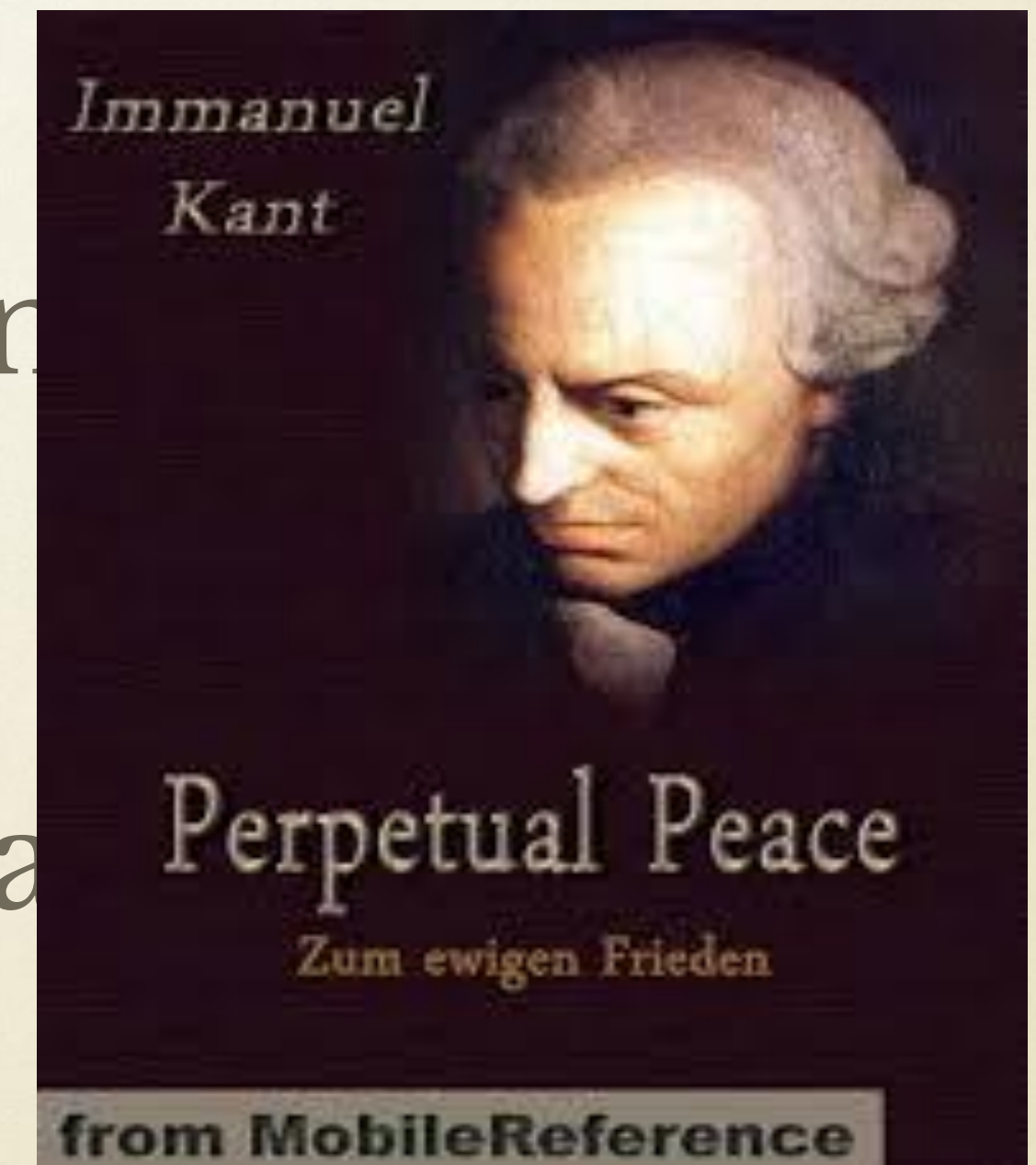


The Sovereigntist

- Gives absolute priority to national sovereignty over supranational institutions
- Sacralizes the autonomy of the nation-state
- Is committed to a monolithic conception of sovereignty.

The Cosmopolitan critique

- The Kantian way (Jürgen Habermas, Jean-François Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion, Jean-Luc Ferry...)
- Yet the EU is NOT moving towards global justice



Structure of the Book: The Six Sovereignist Objections

- Democracy is impossible on a large territorial scale; for modern peoples, it can only exist within the nation-state (Chapter 1);
- Federalism in Europe would destroy national sovereignties (Chapter 2);
- Sovereignty cannot be shared (Chapter 3);

- There is no European citizenship beyond market citizenship (Chapter 4);
- The European demos cannot be found (Chapter 5);
- Social Europe will never happen (Chapter 6).

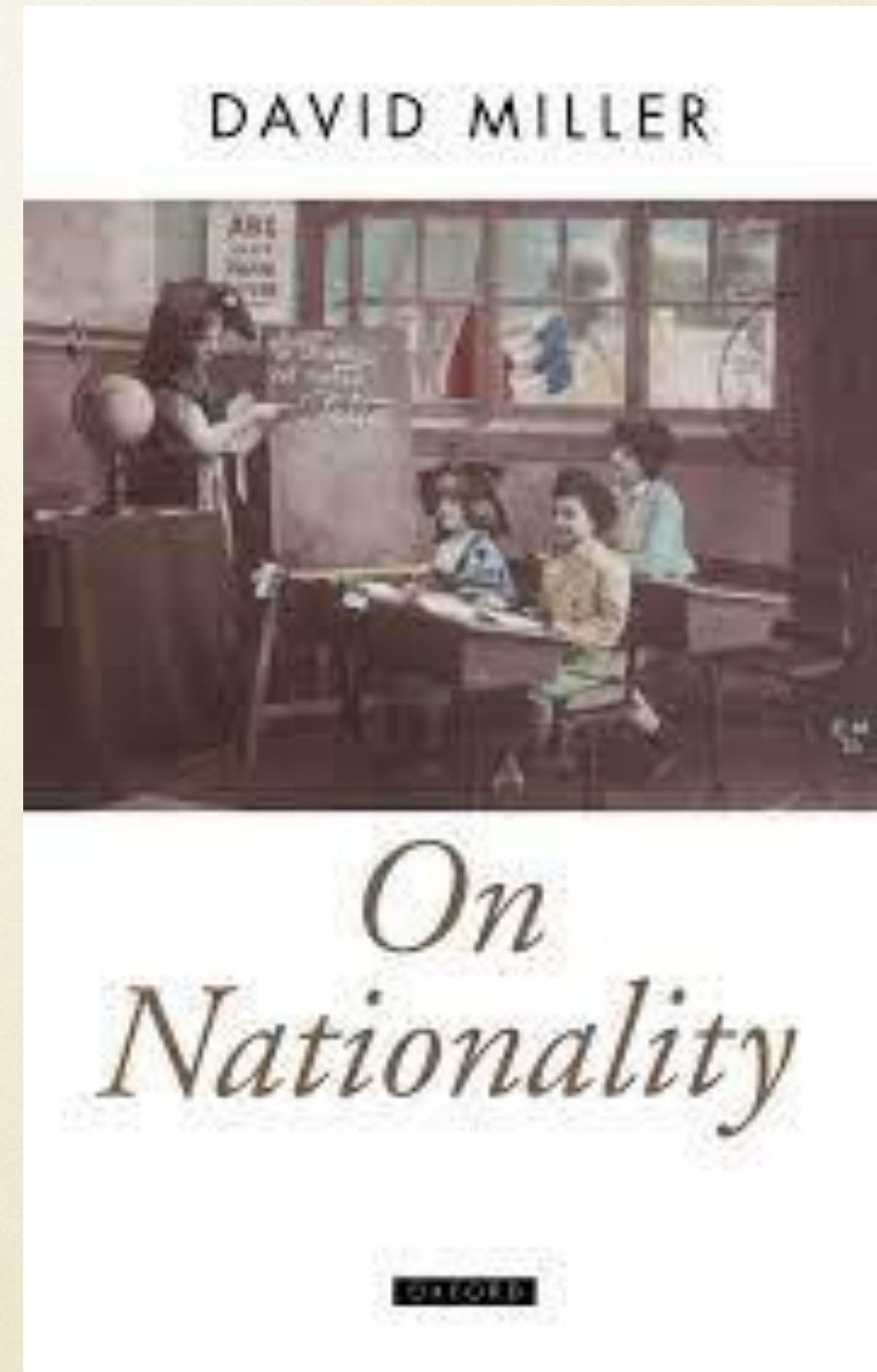
The Scale of Democracy and the Role of Nations

Pierre Manent, Marcel Gauchet



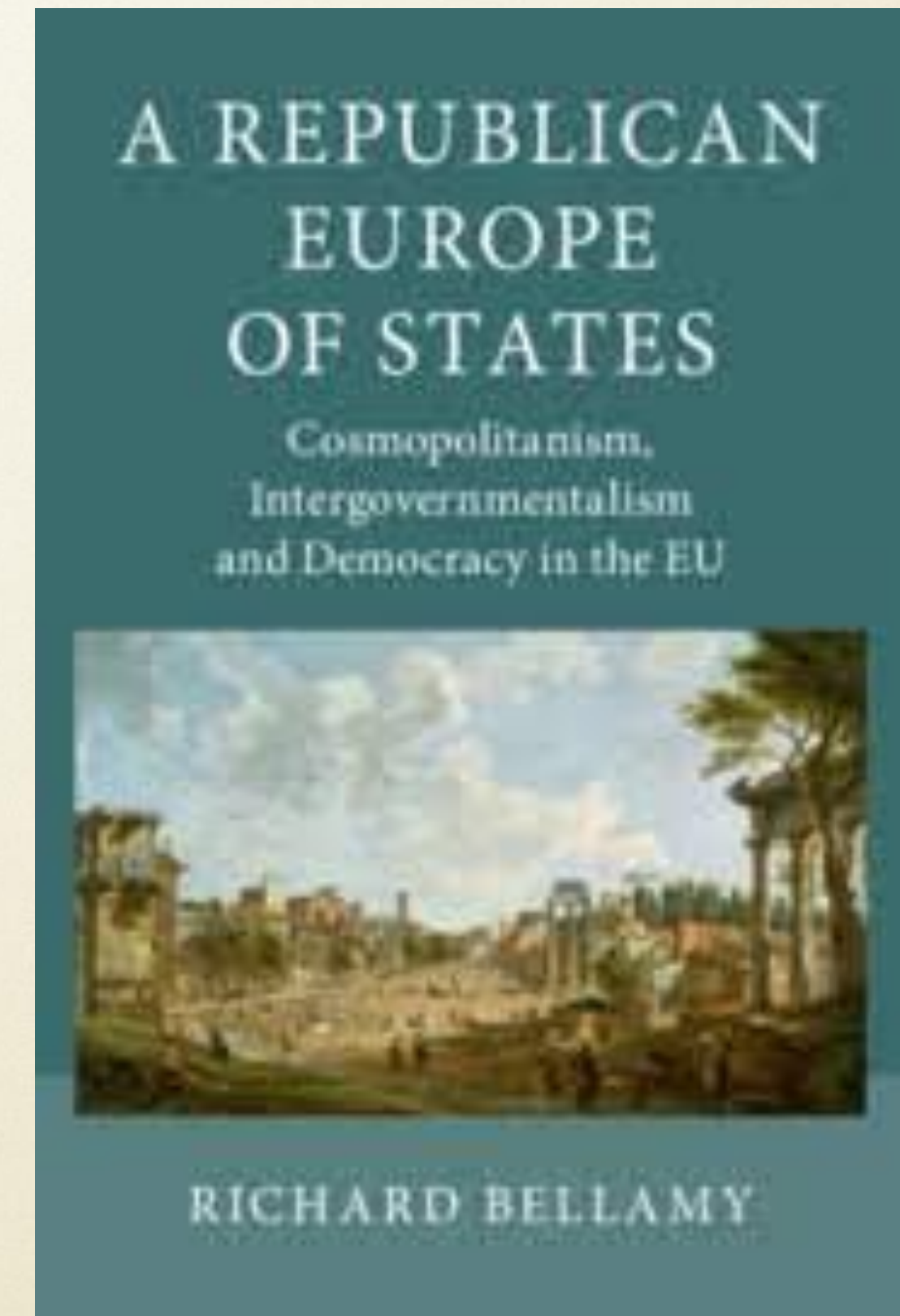
David Miller

- Shared beliefs and commitments
- Historical continuity
- Collective agency
- Territory
- Political community



Richard Bellamy

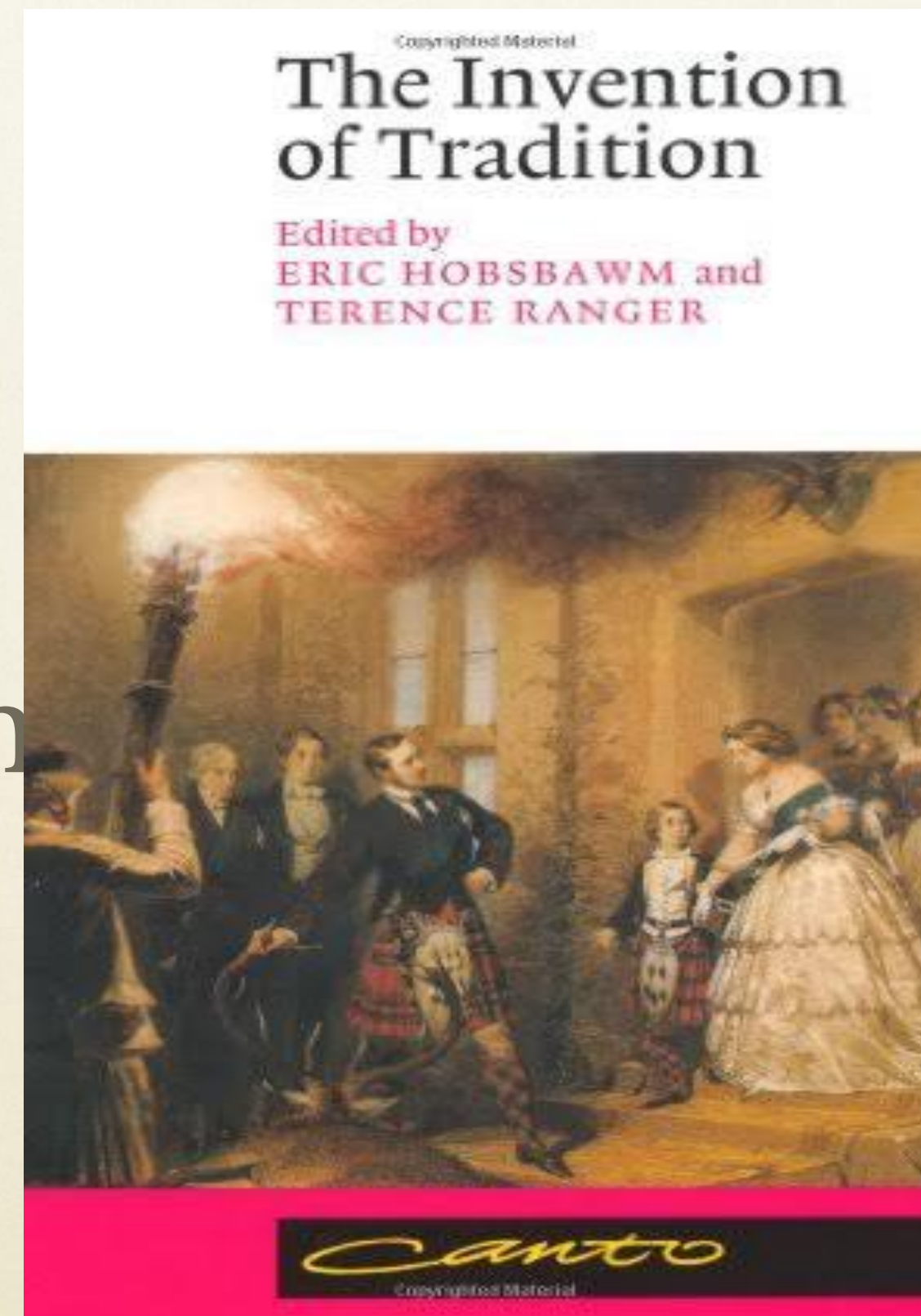
- ECJ: negative freedom
- Single market: rights without duties
- No European social contract
- No European demos.



The Instrumental Value of Nations

A social construct?

Coercive nation-building



Can Sovereignty Be Shared?

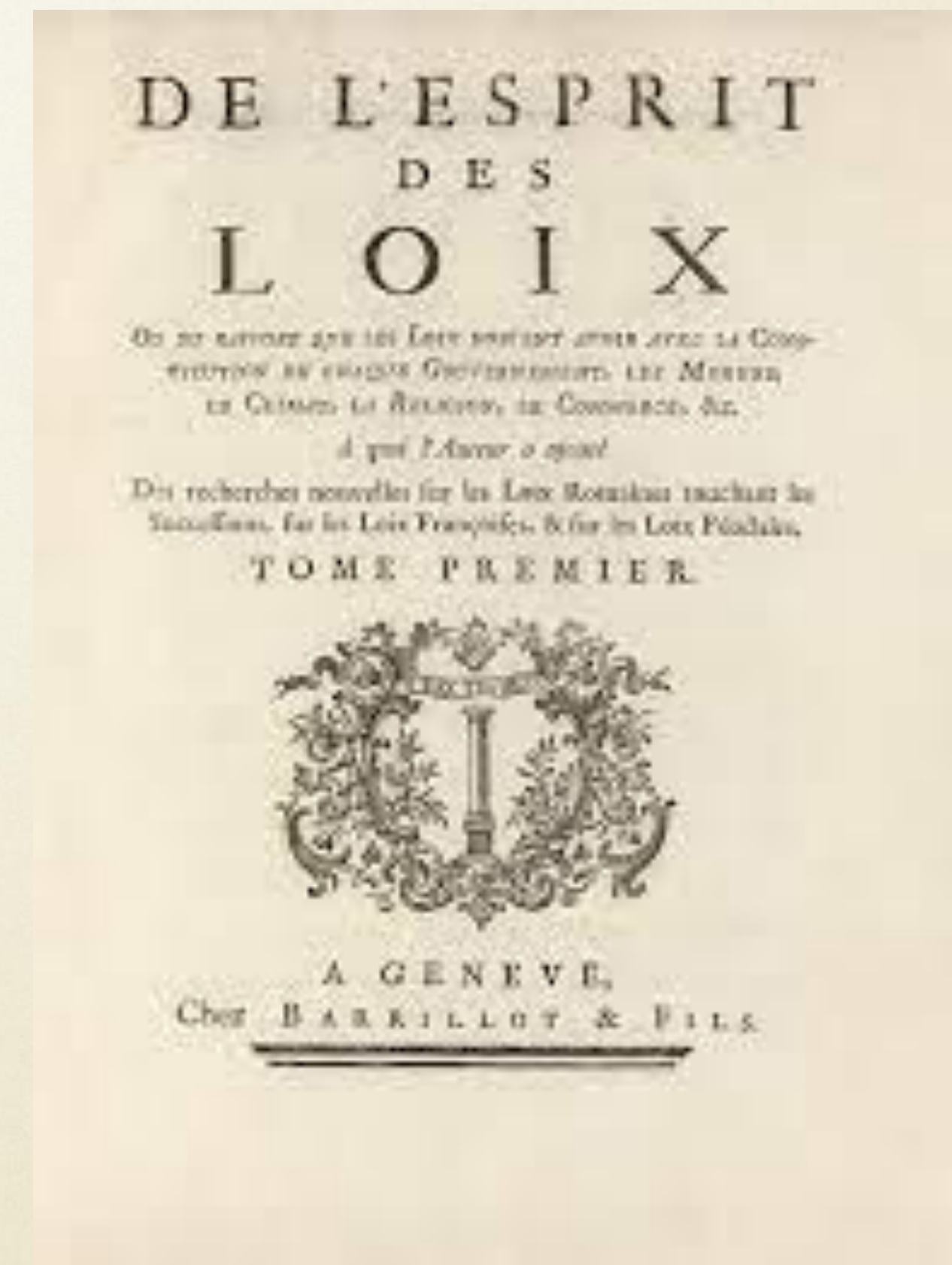
- Habermas, *The Crisis of the European Union: A Response*, Polity, 2012
- A European Social Contract; shared rule, self-rule.
- Sovereignty as a bundle of rights.

The EU as a cosmopolitan polity?

- Persistence of national sovereignty
- Unequal treatment of non Europeans
- Political heterogeneity (democracies/authoritarian regimes)

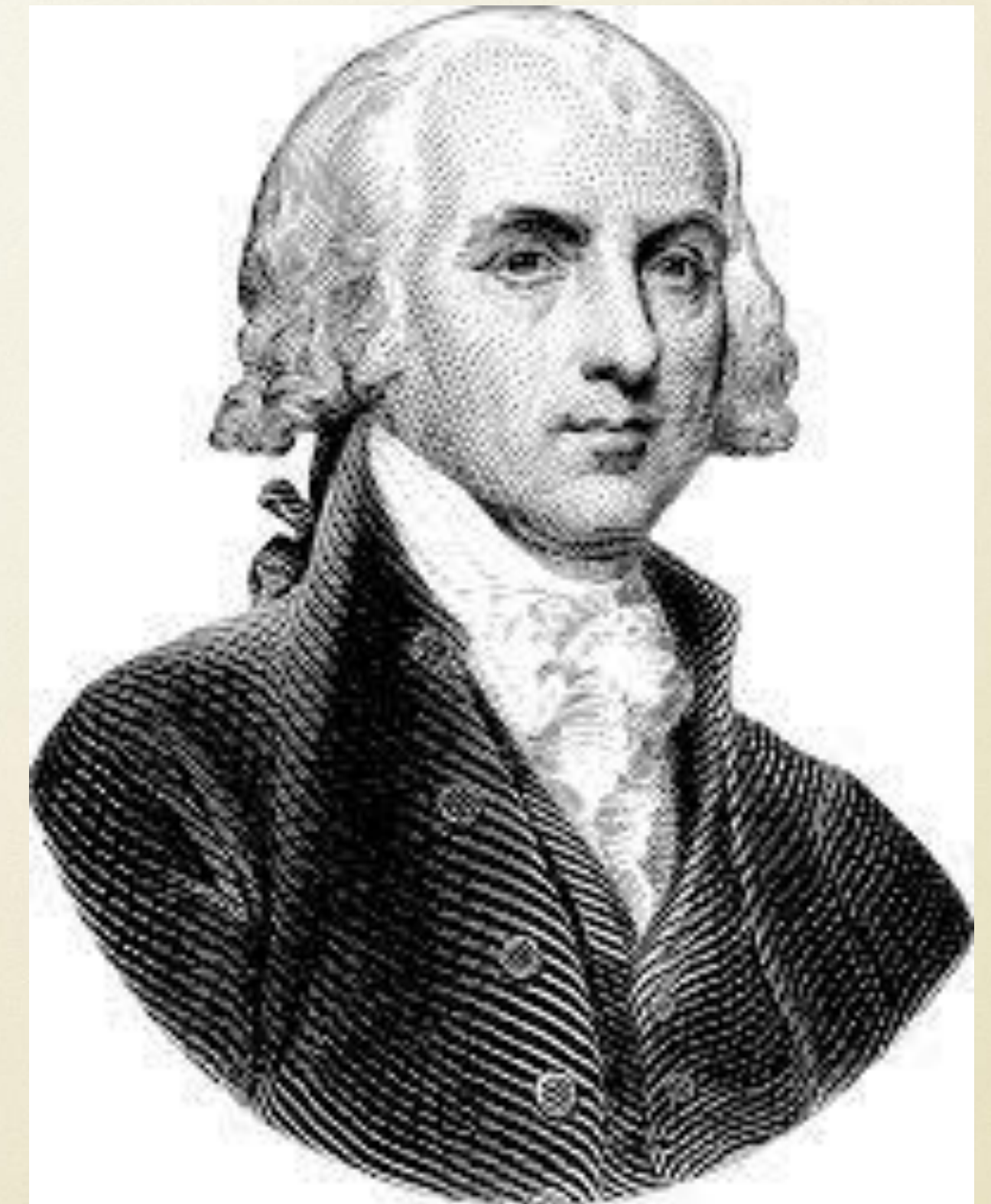
The Legacy of *The Spirit of the Laws*

- A Federative Republic (Book 9)
- A 'society of societies'.
- Internal stability & security, mutual defense, political homogeneity.



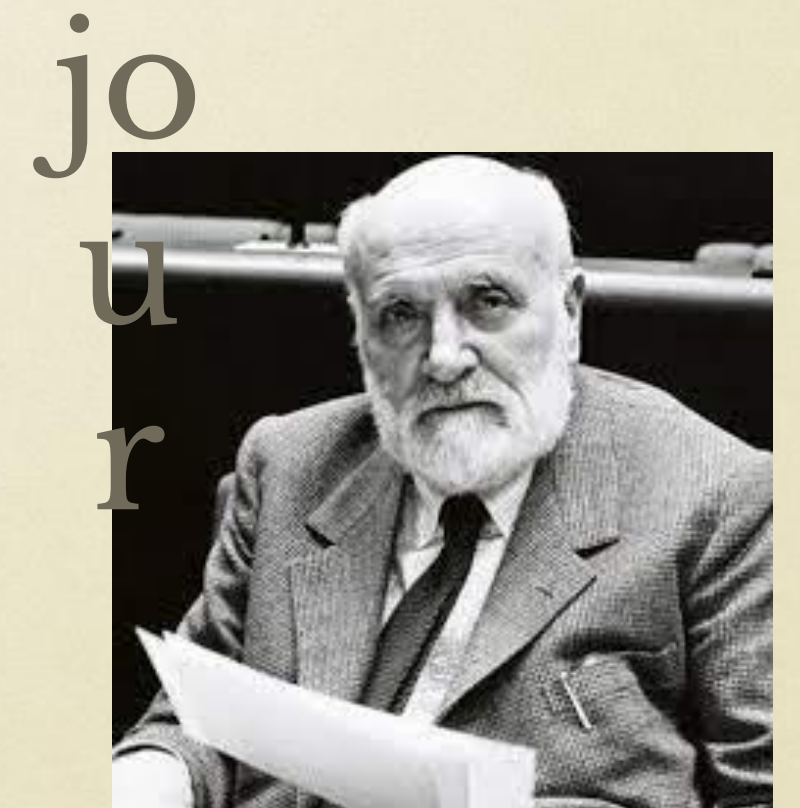
The American Federalists

- Hamilton, Federalist Papers, 9/SL, IX, 1: « corps politique » becomes « several smaller states »; « société de sociétés » « assemblage of societies ».
- « The proposed Constitution, so far from implying an abolition of the State Governments, makes them constituent parts of the national sovereignty».



The Italian Federalists

- Altiero Spinelli, Ernesto Rossi, Eugenio Colorni
- Il Manifesto di Ventotene



Conclusion

*Whose Sovereignty?
Democracy and the People
in the European Union,*
Agenda Publishing, 2026.

