To Coffee and Cigarettes
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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

SEX TRAFFICKING AND THE REPRODUCTION OF EUROPE: IDENTITIES, INTEGRATION, AND THE POLITICS OF PROTECTION

By
Jonathan D. Wadley

December 2009

Chair: J. Samuel Barkin
Cochair: Aida A Hozic
Major: Political Science

The dissertation, entitled Sex Trafficking and the Reproduction of Europe: Identities, Integration, and the Politics of Protection, examines the European Union’s evolving policies on the issue of sex trafficking. Its central argument is that those policies, and the representations they are built upon, fashion the identities of the European Union (EU), Europe, and migrant sex workers. To develop this argument, I provide first a critical evaluation of the concept of state identity in International Relations (IR) theory. I suggest that IR scholars’ reliance upon a substantialist ontology of states has left them ill-equipped to theorize processes of statecraft. By developing a process-oriented approach, this study is able to recognize both the reliance of states upon performance for the establishment of their identities, and also the essential role that gender plays in making them intelligible as subjects.

The study then applies the performative theory of gendered state identity to a case study: the EU. Within two discourses of sex trafficking, the EU is observed performing in accord with masculine norms of protection. I argue that such performances are particularly productive within the issue of sex trafficking due to the
threats that have been discursively attached to that issue: threats posed by migration, evolving sexual mores, and an uncertain relationship with the East. Sex trafficking, as a hyper-salient issue for European identity formation, is shown to possess a subtext of identity politics that has consistently influenced what has been taken to be the truth of the issue.

The final stage of the analysis consists of a consideration of EU policies that have been naturalized by the dominant representations of migrant sex workers. Of particular note is the EU’s emphasis on paternal protection for rescued victims, justified as the natural response to the hyper-masculine criminals who traffic women. Such policies, understood as EU performances, are shown to reinforce the identities to which they are applied. They are made possible by the liminal identities of both the migrant sex workers involved and the countries from which they come. These liminal identities – being at once European and non-European – stimulate articulations that establish the meanings of European and non-European and to legitimize EU intervention on behalf of the “victims.” The result of this process, on the whole, is a more masculine, more stable, and more legitimate EU.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

For such a poorly defined and inconsistently used concept, sex trafficking has spurred a flurry of action. From policies and position papers to movies and educational campaigns, the attempt to combat the phenomenon has overshot all ability to theorize it in a sophisticated and useful manner. There is good reason to doubt that it, as a single phenomenon with a single “truth,” can ever be adequately understood. Simply put, it says too much. And because it contains such an excess of meaning, it has become a ready conduit for loosely connected concerns about migration, sexuality, and the identity of Europe.

These same vagaries that surround sex trafficking have enabled the issue to be tremendously productive for the actors involved. The representations attached to the signifier sex trafficking have been powerful in their effects. Victims, protectors, abusers – these are salient identities that establish an actor’s agency and legitimacy. One finds them front and center within sex trafficking discourse. As a result of the power of the representations, sex trafficking has become an issue that, despite the good intentions of those who oppose it, is more productive of political subjects than it is of just and equitable policy. That this could occur should come as no surprise. After more than twenty years of constructivist theory in International Relations (IR), it is not uncommon to claim that the ways in which a subject is represented will affect that subject’s identity, and do so on a deep level. For example, if a person is consistently portrayed as a threat, it may matter little whether that actor could ever cause harm. The way the state (or other political body) performs in response to the perceived threat will be based on representation and on the knowledge that such representations produce, rather than on
any objective truth. The person will be represented and acted upon as a threat, and that may occur to the point where it is through the association with threat that the person becomes intelligible as a political subject. What is less intuitive, and what is much more the focus of this study, is that such representations can produce identities for political bodies, as well. Indeed, they are what make political bodies intelligible in the first place. And if that statement is true, then an issue like sex trafficking, with such violent, prurient, and powerful representations, would be a place where one would expect such identities to be produced.

This study explores the production of identities that occurs, for both humans and polities, within the debate over sex trafficking. It is a debate that is had predominately within and across two discourses. Each discourse offers a different understanding of the issue and draws upon different representations of the actors involved (or, at times, upon different interpretations of the same representations). Of particular interest in this study is the effect that sex trafficking discourses have upon the identity of the European Union (EU). The main question posed on this front is twofold: How is the EU being substantiated through its role in the sex trafficking debate, and what kind of EU is being created. An answer to those questions would be of use beyond the context of sex trafficking. It would provide scholars with more information about an important way in which the EU is able to produce and legitimize itself. And if the processes through which that occurs are similar to those undergone by states, then the applicability of any insight gained into how the EU produces and legitimizes itself would be applicable to states, as well.
In addition to revealing some important things about the construction of EU identity, the analysis offered in this study hopes to provide a critical understanding of the relationship between identity and policy. It does this not through an in-depth appraisal of the EU’s policies toward sex trafficking, but by examining how current policies have been enabled by the representations upon which they rely. How does policy, in general, reflect the “truths” about sex trafficking that have been established, and how are both of these – the policies and the “truths” – shaped by macro-level identity politics?

Before describing how the study proceeds to answer these questions, more should be said about sex trafficking. What follows is a brief description of efforts to define and combat it. Then, consideration is given to the processes that have produced the sex trafficking debate. These are processes that operate prior to, and outside of, the representational frameworks that are examined throughout the rest of the study. This can be done only in very general terms, as it amounts to a description of sex trafficking “outside” of the discursive universe of the issue. In appropriately general terms, then, the discussion below posits economic pressure and sexual control as forces that exist outside the EU’s discourse on trafficking. And it uses the concept of patriarchy (very broadly defined) to make sense of the EU’s reaction, as well as to provide a common set of conditions against which the logic and effects of the EU’s discursive moves can be theorized.

**Sex Trafficking: An Essentially Contested Concept**

While there has been much written about the phenomenon that has come to be called “sex trafficking,” there is very little knowledge about it that is uncontested. Even the scale of the issue is unclear. The EU’s Justice and Home Affairs Commissioner has estimated that 500,000 women and children are trafficked into the EU on a yearly basis
for the purposes of sexual exploitation (The Press Association Limited 2005). But that number probably obscures more than it reveals. Attempts to estimate the extent of sex trafficking into the EU are impeded by a number of obstacles. First, the clandestine nature of both trafficking and sex work do not lend themselves well to empirical analysis. Second, definitions of trafficking vary wildly, capturing with one term a broad array of practices that include illegal entry, illegal entry accompanied by the assistance of another (or what is often termed “smuggling”), illegal entry coupled with sexual exploitation, and illegal entry coupled with non-sexual labor exploitation. Third, processes of determining whether a woman’s experience fits one of these definitions (that is, whether or not she was trafficked) is fraught with hazard. Together, these problems have resulted in a marked absence of agreed upon standards for definitions and methods, and an ability to implement those standards and definitions in a way that overcomes the interpretive biases of the researcher, policeman, social worker, or other observer. Given the extent of these impediments, it was not a stretch for Anti-Slavery International to plainly claim, “It is impossible to know how many victims of trafficking there are” (quoted in Wylie 2006, 70). In the absence of reliable estimates, the acceptance of statistics on sex trafficking seem to reflect less their accuracy than the political clout of the citer and the frequency with which a set of numbers has been repeated (Wylie 2006).

Given the inconsistency in definitions and methods, it is not surprising that there is considerable disagreement on the question of why women from abroad are moving into the European sex industry. Within the dominant discourse, they are tricked or kidnapped by traffickers, who themselves are members of transnational organized crime.
syndicates. Women are then cowed, enslaved, and subjected to torturous sexual acts that bring great profits to their captors. This is the understanding of trafficking that is most consistently expressed by the EU. An alternative understanding of the causes holds that most of the “trafficking victims” are, in actuality, economic migrants. Some of these women have paid men (“traffickers”) to get them into the EU and find them employment, and some are even content with their conditions of exploitation, as those conditions are preferable to the ones found in their home country. The political stakes in this struggle between the “trafficking as violence against women” and “trafficking as migration” camps are high. The way the EU views sex workers from abroad has strong ramifications for the policies it offers them and for the EU’s ability to legitimize its own role as protector. Neither of these discourses on sex trafficking have been (or can be) empirically invalidated, for as mentioned above, so much depends upon one’s interpretation of concepts like “trafficked” and “exploited.” Indeed, it is questionable that the “true causes” of trafficking (itself an essentially contested political concept) can ever be stated. Some generalizations can be made, but only with reservation. From much of the literature on sex trafficking, including the testimonials of the subjects themselves and the reports of NGOs “on the ground,” it is fair to say that some women may be described best as economic migrants and some women may be described best as subjects of abuse.

**Beyond Discourse: Patriarchal Forces**

So that the entirety of this study does not collapse within an economy of representation, it is helpful to examine first what forces have spurred the development of sex trafficking discourse. It may be said that there are two pre-discursive forces that act upon women and influences their movement westward into the Member States of
the EU. These basic forces can be usefully understood as patriarchal: a capitalistic patriarchy that disproportionally harms women in developing countries and a sex-right patriarchy that grants certain men control over the sexual decisions of women. The first of these, capitalistic patriarchy, has been felt strongly by women living in the poor economic environment that characterizes all of Europe’s Eastern neighbors. It is a distinctly modern form of patriarchy and is a product of the very same economic programs that the EU has championed (and gained legitimacy from championing). Sex-right patriarchy manifests itself as women from these regions have access to their sexuality appropriated by men, through either physical force or coercion. These two forces have continued to act upon them in their decisions to migrate. They are patriarchal to the degree that they are systematic (“not dependent on individual cases alone”) and constitutive of a relationship of dominance between women and men. Such a broad conceptualization is useful for capturing the wide range of situations that characterize trafficking. It is inclusive of cases where women are forced to move, where women move voluntarily, where women move voluntarily but are exploited in the process, and so on. The consequence of these two forces for Europe has been an unwelcome problem of female migration and a crisis in the sexual order. It is worthwhile to examine each in more depth.

**Capitalist Patriarchy**

In the most abusive instances of trafficking for sex work, the connection between patriarchy and capitalism is readily apparent. Women contract themselves into slavery by agreeing to migrate and work in conditions over which they have little to no control. If they know that they will be working in the sex industry, then they are agreeing to labor for the pleasure of men (often referred to as “selling their bodies”), and to do so under
conditions that disproportionately benefit the men who control their labor. Even before migrant women reach their destination, they are put at a disadvantage by the forces of the market. To be trafficked into Europe, women must often pay exorbitant fees. These fees are a product of the risks created by the EU’s efforts to police its external borders and to prosecute traffickers, which it understands to be transnational criminal organizations.

To understand how the connection between patriarchy and capitalism can cause female migration, in addition to structuring the process of it, one must examine the detrimental effects that neoliberal economic policies have had upon most women in the “transition economies” of Post-Soviet countries. While such effects have not been felt by women in these regions alone, there is little doubt that there they have been amplified. The UN recently noted, “Although the unemployment rates for women [in Europe] are not especially higher than those of men, their participation rates especially in the transition economies are lower as opportunities for women in higher paying jobs are limited and there is a significant pay gap for equivalent work.” Caldwell et. al. (1999) presented the situation for women in Russia, a major source country of migrant and trafficked women, when the mass westward movement of women began in the 1990s. They found that women at that time accounted for two-thirds of the unemployed nationwide and up to ninety percent of the unemployed in some regions. Literacy and education were of little help to them, as they lacked the connections necessary to overcome what Elena Gapova described as the “widespread employment discrimination that is practiced, condoned, and tolerated by the government” (quoted in Caldwell et. al. 1999, 49). Sexual harassment was also normalized within Russian capitalist relations,
providing further incentive for women to seek better employment opportunities abroad. Such structural subordination, often described as “the feminization of poverty,” increases the appeal of emigration for women. Seemingly legitimate offers of employment from Europe (including offers for sex work) become attractive (Goodey 2003). The obstacles toward finding employment in formal labor sectors guide many women into employment in the informal and unregulated labor market. Operating outside the formal labor market compounds the difficulties women have in migrating. Traffickers then become necessary resources due to a severe lack of legal labor migration opportunities for women from developing countries.

It is apparent that the majority of those women are indeed, “looking for a better way to make a living” (Wijers 1998, 70) and that this is due to deteriorated economic conditions in their home country. It is important to stress, however, that harsh economic conditions do not force women to migrate. As Laura Agustín (2003, 32) rightfully points out, most women subjected to similar pressures by economic restructuring choose not to migrate. To conceive of migrant sex workers only “as being acted upon, leaving little room for more subtle issues of desire, aspiration, frustration, anxiety or myriad other states of the soul” risks reproducing colonial representations that deny agency to women from developing countries by reducing them to objects caught in a stream of “push-pull factors.” But while these concerns are well-founded, it would be intellectually dishonest to deny that the decisions that women make to migrate occur outside of the structural inequalities that shape their lives (even if those inequalities shape them in different ways and to different degrees). To suggest that neoliberal economic policies have disadvantaged women and that this increased burden has produced pressure for
women to migrate to the EU is not to deny the range of other experiences and motivations that play into the decision.

**Sex-Right Patriarchy**

In response to the economic conditions that disproportionately affect women, as well as the denial of legal channels of migration, smugglers and traffickers provide women with opportunities to migrate into the EU. Whether a woman is a willing participant in her own migration or an enslaved victim of trafficking, or something in between, the opportunity created is a product of societal pressures that assure men access to women’s bodies. This access is what Carol Pateman (1998) terms sex-right. According to Pateman, sex-right underwrites all political orders. In her recasting of the stories of social contract, Pateman argues that classical theorists’ understandings of the origins of the civil order render invisible the prerequisite subjugation of women. Their subjugation is relegated to the private realm of social life and, thus, marked non-political. Pateman observes that even in today’s liberal democracies, sex-right still structures political relations. Prostitution is held to be a revealing example of how this works: “The general display of women’s bodies and sexual parts, either in representation or as live bodies, is central to the sex industry and continually reminds men – and women – that men exercise the law of male sex-right, that they have patriarchal right of access to women’s bodies” (1998, 199).

One can take from Pateman this idea of sex-right while denying the conceptual inflexibility she grants it. Pateman’s theorizing of the sexual contract is best understood as a critique of the origin stories of civil society. As such, it demonstrates logically the lack of freedom inherent in the contracts that underlie liberal democracies. And because it remains an abstract work of political theory with an eye toward uncovering
the logical flaws of contract theorists, her ideas enjoy a degree of immunity from empirical refutation. This is true especially of the concept that does the most work in her analysis: sex-right. But Pateman’s concept of sex-right loses this immunity when she writes of prostitution (chapter 7). This is because she presents prostitution as a daily renewal of the original gendered contract, conferring upon it a universal definition and meaning (O’Connell Davidson 1998). By presenting prostitution in such a way, she exposes it to counter-evidence provided by both the differing degrees of sexual access enjoyed by men and the diverse lived experiences of sex workers. In the European context, counter-evidence to her generalizations is abundant. The sexual access that men have over women varies considerably. By Pateman’s account, every customer acquires “unilateral right of direct sexual use of a woman’s body” (1998, 204). Such a description, presented as a universal truth about prostitution, does not do justice to the variety of contractual arrangements that characterizes prostitution in Europe. While that description provides a suitable description of sex workers confined to a brothel and without any control over the terms of their trade, it leaves no room for sex workers who operate with a far greater degree of agency. These sex workers include, for example, entrepreneurial sex workers and independent street prostitutes. These types of sex workers retain significant control over what kinds of service they will provide, how long they will provide them, and how much they will cost (O’Connell Davidson 1998). Moreover, Pateman’s assumption of universal access denies the degree to which the meaning of that access may differ. Sexual access means something different in Sweden, which punishes men who are caught soliciting a prostitute, than it does in Germany, which has normalized men’s access to prostitutes. The wide range of
policies relating to prostitution grant the activity a degree of social condoning not appreciated in Pateman’s book.

Once a nuanced understanding of prostitution is accepted, Pateman’s concept of sex-right can be put to work. While the concept may be broad, it is still valuable. Clearly, there are systemic pressures for men to have sexual access to women and for women to be sexually available for men. If not, then it is hard to account for the fact that nearly all sex workers are women. This demand for sexual access provides both incentives for women to migrate and for traffickers to force them to do so. The sexual access that customers are granted, however, does not establish such predictable relations of dominance and subordination as Pateman would suggest. That is to say, sex-right patriarchy is not reproduced every time a man visits a prostitute. Instead, such relations are only being affirmed to the degree that violence or abuse of the sex worker characterizes the activity. Violence and abuse of sex workers is indeed common, and they carry with them the extra meaning conferred by uninvited sexual dominance. But by no means does it characterize the experience of all sex workers in all transactions.

Sex-right patriarchy is most visible when it is manifest as the abuse that trafficked women withstand at the hands of their traffickers. Though the frequency of rape is impossible to quantify, it is clear from the accounts of many trafficked women that it occurs as a part of the trafficking process, often as a strategy of “breaking in” a new woman. In these cases, men’s access to women’s sexuality is absolute and explicit. And the motivation behind it is unambiguously the establishment of relations of dominance and subordination. Here, the sex-right that men claim over women is a
force acting upon an uncertain number of women who are moving into the European sex industry.

Through the commonplace violence and abuse of sex workers at the hands of customers and traffickers, sex-right patriarchy remains a relevant concept. Thinking of it in this way, rather than as a form of dominance and subordination born of all transactions that occur within the sex industry, retains the usefulness of the concept while preventing it from over-determining the movement of women into Europe. It allows for the social fact that sex work is not always “a job like any other” but, because it has implications for the broader sexual order of European society, is more constitutive of relations between men and women than is trafficking for work in other industries. Access to a woman’s sexuality is different in its constitutive effects than access to non-sexual forms of labor, and Pateman’s concept embodies this idea.

Outline of the Project

It is into the context outlined above that the EU assumes its role. And it is through its performances within that context that the EU achieves greater constancy and meaning. To get to a point where one can link the patterns and processes described above to the construction of the EU as a legitimate political actor, several theoretical moves must be made. A number of complementary ideas must be introduced and synthesized. Accordingly, this study draws from work that has been done on statecraft, European integration, identity politics, and gender. Synthesizing these topics is a heavy task, as the major ideas of these programs do not intermingle frequently in scholarly texts. Yet, to understand how discourses of sex trafficking coalesce, how they link to specific policies, and how they are productive of collective identities, ideas from complimentary disciplines must be imported. A patient reader will find that, despite the
fragmented scholarly universe from which they are drawn, the ideas, when combined, provide holistic understanding of an important process. And because of the reflective nature of that process, in which all the identities involved are mutually constitutive, the process cannot be disaggregated. In the search for an understanding that does justice to the complexity of the process, the hope for a parsimonious explanation must be lost.

To make the argument presented as clear as possible, the reader will find that this study is organized from the macro-level to the micro-level. It is structured in such a way that each subsequent chapter takes the reader toward increasingly tangible subjects. Thus, it begins with a rather broad analysis of how states become actors and how the EU can become an actor through its place within discourse. The, it zooms in to the discourses on trafficking, which serve as a salient site for processes of EU identity formation. From there, the focus is sharpened further as the role of liminal subjects within trafficking discourse is examined. Ukrainian sex workers, in particular, fill this role, and in so doing, provide a forum for the production of a number of broader collective identities. Finally, attention is given to the policies that are enabled by the identities that have been created. The policies considered have been chosen illustratively, rather than systematically, to show how policies can fuel the perpetuation of the identity politics that lie at the heart of the debate.

What is offered, then, is a study of three mutually-constitutive things: identities, understandings of sex trafficking, and policies. They represent three levels of a discursive structure that enframes the issue. Not one of them can be understood, however, without a prominent focus on gender. Gender is omnipresent in the structure, infused through each of the three levels, and essential to any analysis of it. Gender
explains why sex trafficking is such a powerful issue. It characterizes the identities that are formed, both for individual subjects and for polities like the EU. It gives meaning to the EU’s performances on the issue. And it influences greatly the subject positions carved out for the men and women involved in sex trafficking.

The study begins by examining what is known about statecraft within IR. Explorations of macro-identity formation through discourse are not very prevalent in the field of European Integration Studies (EIS), so it is necessary to begin outside of that field. Chapter two does this by posing a question that lies at the heart of statecraft: How does a state become a person in the minds of its observers? At root is the anthropological assumption that dominates thinking about states. The chapter argues that that assumption can be held up to scrutiny through a process-oriented approach to state identity. When that is done, it becomes clear that a state becomes an anthropomorphized subject in much the same way that a person becomes a subject, through a yoking of the boundaries created by its performances. This is a performative theory of identity, one that has been developed by Judith Butler and rarely applied to states. When that theory is applied to statecraft, an additional and profound idea emerges: Much like people, states can achieve greater constancy by performing in accord with gender norms. In particular, states can gain an ontological cohesiveness by performing in line with masculine-coded notions of protection.

Having made the case for a performative theory of state identity, and having reasoned that gender is central to that process, the study proceeds to describe how one would operationalize such an approach to produce insight into EU identity formation. Chapter 3 looks first to how this has been done by other scholars within EIS. It finds
that some EIS scholars employ an ontology of constructivism, and a few even adopt an explicitly discursive approach. Overall, however, approaches like that provided here are rare. Yet, a performative theory of the EU can be developed, and a useful way to do so would be through examining the EU’s performances within a given discourse. That way, one can discern the meanings referenced and produced by the performances. To that end, sex trafficking discourse provides a valuable case study. As chapter 4 explains, the discursive connection of sex trafficking to other salient threats renders it a productive realm for both macro- and micro-identity formation. Sex trafficking not only enables, but demands, that the EU perform in ways that reference and reinforce the distinctions between Europe, non-Europe, and what may be termed almost-Europe. This yoking of boundaries occurs through the gendered representations present in the discourse.

Chapter 5 examines this process as it is experienced by liminal European subjects. To understand trafficking discourse, it is necessary to understand the significance of Europe’s East as “almost European.” Chief among the liminal actors present in the sex trafficking discourses is Ukraine, on the macro-level, and migrant Ukrainian sex workers, on the micro-level. The liminal status of both sets of actors is shown to be mutually-legitimizing, so that representations of the one impact the other. Their liminalities are sustained by a host of policies, which themselves serve as articulations fixing the identity of the actors. And as a result of their status as almost-European, the EU is called upon to apply “European values” to both. It is given a policy space into which it can present a masculinized “European response.” In so doing, it is enabled to performatively establish its own identity vis-à-vis the liminal subjects.
Turning more explicitly to the performances enabled by such representations, chapter 6 analyzes the trend in EU policy toward sex trafficking. It finds that the policies, regardless of which discourse they are built upon, have a common denominator in the form of protection. This is significant because of the masculine norms through which such protection is interpreted. As revealed by the initial discussion of gender and protection in chapter two, political bodies can gain a stable and legitimate subject-hood by performing in accordance with dominant masculine norms. It follows that by performing as a masculine protector, the EU is better able to position itself as a substantial actor.
CHAPTER 2
GENDERING THE STATE

Performativity and Protection in International Security

For analytical purposes, scholars of International Relations tend to treat the state as if it were a person. It is assumed to have “interests” and “intentions,” said to “act” (and often, to “act rationally”), even allowed to experience “death.” In the most extreme cases of anthropomorphization, the state is explicitly given “a body” and “a life.” For most scholars, it seems perfectly natural – common sense, even – to speak of the state in this way. Indeed, so commonplace is the attribution of personhood that it is hard to think of the state without appropriating the language used to describe the beliefs, emotions, motivations, and actions of individual human beings. Such naturalness is reflected in the fact that metaphors of personhood are not restricted to one or two subfields, but characterize the discipline as a whole, so much so that “in a field in which almost everything is contested, this seems to be one thing on which almost all of us agree” (Wendt 2004, 289). And yet, despite the stubbornness of these metaphors and the consistency with which they are used, rarely are they reflected upon. Surprisingly few studies have considered explicitly the ontological status of the state and the degree to which it may be said to exist as if it were a person. Even fewer scholars have looked at this foundational assumption through a gender lens.¹ When one does, one thing becomes abundantly clear: The state, though understood as a person, remains a strangely ungendered being.

¹ See Kantola 2007; Weber 1998. For what it means to study world politics through a “gender lens” (alternatively, a “gender-sensitive lens” or “feminist lens”), see Peterson and Runyan 1993; Steans 1998.
For anyone who wishes to bring a more thorough consideration of gender into the study of international relations, this should set off alarm bells. Feminists have shown that it is problematic to study actors as if they are genderless things. Ignoring gender too often means elevating the masculine subject to universal status, leading to the production of theories that not only are partial, but that mask their partiality through claims to universality. In IR, ignoring gender means not recognizing the ways in which key actors are defined and differentiated by their relationship to norms of masculinity and femininity. Leaders, states, international organizations – all of these act in accord with gender norms, albeit in different ways at different times. Additionally, by ignoring gender, the analyst remains blind to processes through which these gendered identities are produced – processes that are in many ways central to the operation of world politics. The arenas in which the actors engage each other are saturated with gendered meaning and it is this fact that enables, for example, a state to “act like a man” or “act like a woman.” Thus, gender, which Laura Sjoberg (2009) has defined as “a system of symbolic meaning that creates social hierarchies based on perceived association with masculine and feminine characteristics,” is not simply an attribute possessed by certain actors, but a system through which those actors are constituted and positioned relative to each other. A great contribution of feminist IR has been to draw the attention of other IR scholars to these arguments, despite the reluctance of “conventional” theorists to incorporate gender into the processes they are attempting to explain. Given the work that has been done to demonstrate the dangers of theorizing without gender, it is highly questionable for the bulk of IR scholars to write about the state as if it is not gendered, especially when it is understood, conceptually, to exist and act as if it were a person.
Failing to consider the role of gender does not make one’s theory gender neutral, and conceptualizing the state as a generic, non-gendered actor does not make it so.

Yet, the field has been slow to incorporate the study of gender, even though almost twenty years have passed since J. Ann Tickner (1992) criticized its dominant paradigm for projecting the “values associated with hegemonic masculinity” onto the international behavior of states. Within realism, she argued, the state has been conceptualized through an historical worldview that privileges the experiences of men. Other approaches can be, and have been, criticized on the same grounds, offering similarly partial theories owing to their common reliance upon “the Western political and philosophical tradition,” which has produced “a foundation of political concepts” that assumes the political actor is a man. The proliferation of constructivist and post-structuralist scholarship over the last twenty years has, despite much promise, brought little help, largely sidestepping questions of gender. Nonetheless, the epistemological pluralism of IR today means that the field is much more amenable to approaches that incorporate gender, and that incorporate it in new ways, than it was at the time when feminists within IR first raised these concerns. The argument that states are produced within, and not outside of, their environment is no longer esoteric. Security and insecurity are understood by many to be interpretations made within an intersubjective realm of interaction among states, rather than the absence or presence of objective threats (Lipschutz 1995). And the role of representation, speech acts, and discursive structures in outlining the parameters of security practices and giving them meaning is
better appreciated, as well.\textsuperscript{2} As a result of these developments, IR scholars are better-positioned to theorize the role of gender in innovative ways.

The analysis presented here challenges the discipline’s tendency to treat states as genderless persons by exploring the role of gender in the performances of states. In so doing, it draws upon the concept of performativity – the idea that, in the words of Judith Butler (1999, 33), “identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results.” It argues that the performances of states, much like performances within the daily lives of people, carry no intrinsic meaning, but must be made sense of through “a system of symbolic meaning” that cannot be but gendered. Through such performances, identities become salient, and masculine and feminine subjects are created. While this process is less palpable for states than it is for humans, it is nonetheless observable in broad patterns. States can be observed reifying themselves, nowhere better than through those performances that establish them as stable and masculine protectors. Recent work on the politics of protection, particularly that done by Didier Bigo (2006), suggests the constitutive effects that protection has upon both providers and recipients. It stops short, however, of recognizing that these effects may be enabled by the gendered meaning that different forms of protection carry. When such meanings are considered, it becomes evident that by “being” masculine protectors, states can position themselves favorably in relation to other international actors and gain legitimacy from their domestic audiences.

This means that states are gendered, and are gendered in much the same way as people are: through repeated performances. When state identity is viewed in this

light, the anthropomorphic assumption, as it is commonly used, appears woefully inadequate. To be clear, it is not being suggested that drawing parallels between human subjects and state subjects is bad in-and-of-itself. Indeed, useful parallels can be drawn, despite (or, perhaps, because of) the notion that “both states and persons are fuzzy sets” (Neumann 2004, 265). The trouble lies in assuming that states, or people, are constituted outside processes of interaction, and that either can be made sense of without considering the relational identities they take on through the systems of symbolic meaning through which they operate. Anthropomorphic assumptions tend to treat the state as a genderless, unitary actor – often, one that is ontologically primitive to its interactions – while neglecting the ways that the “actor-ness” and “unity” of the state is an effect of iterated, gendered performances. By viewing state performances with an eye towards their constitutive effects, and by moving gender to the center of that analysis, one gains not only a richer understanding of how states reproduce themselves (i.e. where their person-like “identities” come from), but a clearer picture of the hierarchical relations that exist among states and between states and domestic populations.

This chapter begins with a consideration of how the state has been conceived of as a person throughout the discipline, arguing that such practices almost always import an inadequate understanding of how people are constituted. In both cases – conceptualizing states and conceptualizing humans – this is a result, largely, of substance-oriented, as opposed to process-oriented, approaches. It argues that by making processes, rather than substances, the core of research, scholars will be able to more fully explain how states reproduce themselves as actors in world politics, how they
garner power for themselves (in relation to other international actors, particularly states), and how they gain legitimacy from their subjects. Following that, the chapter argues that a theory of performativity can fill this need, especially in the realm of security studies, in which sex trafficking is often placed. Moreover, such a theory would facilitate the study of gender within these processes and shed light on the incentives states have to behave as masculine actors. The final section of the chapter offers, tentatively, a way forward for scholars who wish to bring empirical research to bear on the theoretical sketches presented here. It submits that “the rational protector model” may be examined as a type of dominant masculinity for states, one which allows them to “do” security in ways that cast them as unitary, masculine actors. It is this model that will be applied in subsequent chapters to interpret the performances of the European Union in the realm of sex trafficking.

The State as a (Genderless) Person

Most IR scholars have not understood states to be gendered – presumably because they have not been focused on how states are made and how gender works. The state is typically believed to posses its core identity prior to interaction with others. Gender is, therefore, given no room within the theory to have a constitutive relationship with that identity. As a result, the state “body” and “life” are written about without reference to gender, or to any other systems of meaning that can code a state’s performances. This happens largely because most scholars adhere, in Patrick Jackson’s and Daniel Nexon’s (1999, 291) typology, to some form of substantialism. “Substantialism,” they explain, “maintains that the ontological primitives of analysis are ‘things’ or entities – entities exist before interaction and all relations should be
conceived as relations between entities. Substantialism ranges from the belief that states possess internally generated interests or ideas and are, as a result, self-motivated (which Jackson and Nexon label “self-action substantialism”) to the more common view that interaction changes the variable attributes of states, but not the states themselves (termed “inter-action substantialism”). So wide is this range of beliefs that substantialism characterizes approaches as seemingly incompatible as rational choice, which fits under the self-action label, and constructivism, which is a form of inter-action substantialism. Common to both approaches, however, is a belief that states are “substances” that have “invariant characteristics,” which is to say that interaction does not change those qualities which make a state, a state (Jackson and Nexon 1999, 297). As for why this belief covers such a broad theoretical terrain in IR, Jackson and Nexon offer three reasons. First, substantialism has been a central part of the Western philosophy from which IR theories are derived. Social entities have been granted essences since ancient Greece, and this practice has been reproduced in the self-other boundaries that have organized social thought since Descartes. Second, everyday language contains biases toward reification (as epitomized by the phrase, “The wind is blowing,” which transforms a process, wind, into an entity). Third, the prevalent spacio-temporal ordering of the world has been to view societies and states as containers, each possessing different norms, rules, and structures (Jackson and Nexon 1999, 299-300).

The anthropomorphic assumption in IR goes hand in hand with the substantialist assumption. The antecedent of the anthropomorphic assumption may be traced back to

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3 Jackson and Nexon are paraphrasing a definition offered in Mustafa Emirbayer 1997.
antiquity, where one finds an association of the citizen-warrior with the public realm of the Greek city-state. This association continues today, so that “in times of war, the state itself becomes a citizen-warrior: military commanders refer to the enemy as a singular ‘he’” (Tickner 1992, 41). More directly, the anthropomorphic assumption is a product of Medieval Christian theology and its lasting effects upon the political imaginary of dynastic subjects. But this leaves unanswered an important question: Why has this anthropomorphic form maintained its currency in our modern day, when, unlike in the dynastic era, no measure of the state’s existence may be traced to the body of a single man? No doubt, the frequent recourse of IR theory to state of nature theorizing has played a role. Theorists of all stripes have extended descriptions of the conditions of society at the time of state formation to the international realm. Often treating the narratives of Hobbes and Locke as analogies, they have cast states into the role of men acting absent an overarching sovereign power.

According to Iver Neumann (2004, 265-6), it is not the humanness of the metaphors that are so appealing, but their organicism. Viewing the state as an organism, human or not, presents a conveniently dualistic ontology. A clear “inside” and “outside” are given, and the relevant “stuff” of international relations may be said to belong either to the organism or to the realm external to it. The state becomes a container, of a sort, and as a result the world becomes much more categorizable. Also, such metaphors give the state a telos (survival and adaptation) and the state system a mode (evolution), which corresponds well with prominent social thought in other

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4 See also Grant 1991. V. Spike Peterson (1992) points out that the consolidation of the state and the gendering of the state were concomitant processes. That argument parallels closely the one made here. The anthropomorphization of the state is tied inextricably to these processes, simultaneously reinforcing them and resulting from them. Given that, the personhood of the state should be investigated rather than assumed.
disciplines (e.g. with Durkheimian frameworks). Neumann does not explain why states are so consistently thought of as *humans*, nor does he try to, but his observations raise an important point: There is no necessary connection between substantialist ontologies and the *person*hood of the state. One could theorize the state as a unitary actor possessing a pre-social identity without imagining it to be analogous to a person. Other metaphors, organic or not, could be used. Additionally, there is no necessary connection between anthropomorphization and substantialism because one could anthropomorphize the state without recourse to substantialist beliefs. This would be accomplished by adopting a performative or purely structural theory of human identity, in which the latter is an *effect*, and then transferring that theory onto the state. Recasting identity as, before all else, an effect, breaks the connection between substantialism and anthropomorphization, enabling one to view the state as a person, while viewing neither as a preformed entity.

Still, these beliefs appear to be mutually reinforcing. Viewing the state as a person transfers the habit of seeing people as unitary, already-formed actors onto one’s understanding of states. And conversely, theorizing the state as an entity facilitates (even if it does not *necessitate*) the analogy of personhood by making it possible for a state to have a “body” and a “life.” The conflation of substantialism and anthropomorphization is clearest in Alexander Wendt’s *Social Theory of International Politics* (1999a). Wendt, more than anyone else in the discipline, has brought the ontological status of the state to center stage and has done much to draw attention to relational components of state identity. His theory, however, strongly reinforces the connection between substantialism and anthropomorphization, going so far as to build
an argument for the former upon the “reality” of the latter. “States are people too,” he claims, and the ramification of this claim is that they may be treated as ontologically primitive entities (as humans most often are)(Wendt 1999a, 194). Every state has, by definition, a “body” and a “life,” and in much more than the metaphorical sense. Although Wendt places the terms “body” and “life” in quotations, he takes state personhood to be real. As he explains, “I argue that states are real actors to which we can legitimately attribute anthropomorphic qualities like desires, beliefs, and intentionality” (Wendt 1999a, 197).\(^5\)

Wendt’s goal in positing the existence of a state “body” (anthropomorphization) is to advance the argument that states are ontologically prior to the state system (substantialism), which, in turn, allows him to perform the systemic level analysis that is common to the discipline. To posit the state “body” as an “exogenously given, relatively stable platform,” (Wendt 1999a, 198) he attributes to it five properties, or parts of the “body:” “(1) an institutional-legal order, (2) an organization claiming a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence, (3) an organization with sovereignty, (4) a society, and (5) territory” (Wendt 1999a, 202). Together, these parts compose the state’s personal, or corporate, identity. This is not the only identity that states have, but is the precursor to other, more social identities. Once these social identities are stripped away, it is what remains. Wendt (1999b, 86) elaborates:

Two things are left if we strip away those properties of the self which presuppose interaction with others. The first is the material substrate of agency, including its intrinsic capabilities. For human beings, this is the body; for states, it is an

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5 Others, too, have found Wendt’s use of quotations puzzling. Iver Neumann (2004, 261) exclaims, “The inverted commas [quotations] must be lapses, for he insists that he is not discussing the state as if it had a body and a life…the metaphorical distance implied by the use of inverted commas is explicitly done away with, and it should therefore be a correlate that Wendt should have done away with the inverted commas as well.”
organizational apparatus of governance. In effect, I am suggesting for rhetorical purposes that the raw material out of which members of the state system are constituted is created by domestic society before states enter the constitutive process of international society, although this process implies neither stable territoriality nor sovereignty, which are internationally negotiated terms of individuality. The second is a desire to preserve this material substrate, to survive.

The "desire to preserve this material substrate" is the "life" of the state – the "intrinsic motivational dispositions" that are more commonly captured by the term "the national interest" (Wendt 1999a, 197).

The problem is not so much that Wendt is attempting to operationalize the analogy, but that he is attempting to do so in regards to the actors rather than the process. Contrast this with David Campbell’s (1992, 8) formulation, in which the same analogy is made, but arrived at from the similarity of the processes in which states engage: "Whether we are talking of ‘the body’ or ‘the state,’ or particular bodies and states, the identity of each is performatively constituted. Moreover, the constitution of identity is achieved through the inscription of boundaries which serve to demarcate an ‘inside’ from an ‘outside,’ a ‘self’ from an ‘other,’ a ‘domestic' from a ‘foreign.’"

Ultimately, the inscriptions and demarcations are the result of ongoing political processes, ones that states have great interest in successfully reproducing. For those who study statecraft – “the practices and activities that engender the effect called the sovereign state” (Berman 2003, 59) – this is a familiar point. It is through statecraft that the state’s body, taken to be pre-social in substantialist accounts, is carved out and reified. If the state is posited as a person (metaphorical or not) who exists in some meaningful sense prior to social interaction, then much of this is missed. One may still recognize the state to be a partially-socialized entity, as Wendt does, but many of those processes which construct the state as a subject will be left out of the analysis.
The State as a (Gendered) Process

Drawing on the scholarship within feminist IR, one sees quickly how the story could be different. Viewing Wendt’s theory through a gender lens reveals each of its components to be gendered in some way, and to become so through security performances undertaken by the state. Society, for instance, is often reconstituted in gendered terms through war, which has long been viewed as a means of masculinizing a people. Through war, power is valorized and identified with a heroic kind of masculinity (Tickner 2001). Kristen Hoganson’s work shows that Theodore Roosevelt saw the Spanish American War as a way to re-masculinize America’s young men, who were otherwise at risk of succumbing to the “sedentary life” (1998, 144-5). Jean Bethke Elshtain (1992) demonstrates that the will-to-sacrifice is constitutive of an individual’s selfhood, and that this will is most fully recognized in war. War – a means through which states and individuals are crafted together – can impart upon its performers a masculinity that cannot be accomplished through other means. This is what Ralph Pettman (1998, 174) means when he claims, “Statemaking and warmaking are cognate activities and warmaking has long been a way of defining and demonstrating a range of stereotypically masculinist traits.” Finally, David Campbell (1992, 91), whose work contains little discussion on gender, observes nevertheless that societies have a history of being viewed in feminine terms in relation to the masculine leaders who control them: “The body of the body politic is taken to have a ‘female’ identity to which the head (the ‘male’ ruler) is married.”

6 Importantly, Elshtain notes that both masculine and feminine gender roles are created and reinforced in the sacrifices of war.
War has the ability to masculinize leaders, as well. It helped George H.W. Bush overcome the “wimp factor.” The Iranian hostage crisis even turned Jimmy Carter into a man (at least temporarily). Likewise, George W. Bush appears to have been rescued from a less-heroic corporate masculinity (suited to the managerial duties of, say, a global CEO) by the events of September 11th (Scott 2002). This phenomenon is relatively easy to understand: War is, to a significant degree, performed by the leaders who participate in it. War provides for a leader the opportunity to perform in ways that are in accordance with recurring masculine ideas. He may do so through a number of means, such as associating himself with the men who are fighting the war or simply by demonstrating traits characterized as masculine (such as decisiveness, an embrace of violence, or a willingness to protect his “vulnerable” subjects). Bruce Curtis describes these masculine traits being performed “through action, often violent, to protect women, children, and country, and by the use of willpower, strength, and firepower” (quoted in Scott 2002).

Though it is beyond the bounds of this study to submit each possible component of the state’s corporate identity to a gendered analysis, there is enough work within feminism and feminist IR to indicate that this could be done. Territory may be gendered, as is evident when one considers the shared symbolism of intervention and rape. As Cynthia Weber (1995, 125) explains, intervention, like any violation of a state’s territory, redraws the boundaries of sovereignty, which then “produces, represents or writes the state.” The institutional-legal order that Wendt considers to be a component of the state “body” may be gendered, as well. It has been observed regularly that this order constitutes a public realm that marginalizes women (by relegating them to the
private realm of the family), establishes men as the political and civil subjects, and orients subjects “toward autonomy, autarky, and individual power” – all generally considered to be masculine qualities (Brown 1995, 183).\(^7\) Sovereignty – a third component of the state “body” – has proven equally problematic when viewed through a gender lens. The idea that sovereignty is an ordered realm, set apart from the dangers of the state system, has been called into question by the particular vulnerabilities of women within states, and the connection between those vulnerabilities and the wider power relations that extend into the international realm (Tickner 1992). Instead, some scholars have argued that the state project, operating within and beyond borders, makes possible the inside/outside, order/anarchy distinction, which then produces the “effect” of the state.\(^8\) The final component of the state “body” – an organization claiming a monopoly on the legitimate use of organized violence – may be usefully examined as an effect, thereby denaturalizing its presumed status as a pre-social characteristic of states. By studying how performances of protection in international relations reestablish the prerogative power, or claim to violence, of the state, this component of the state body can be embedded in processes that it has been posited to proceed.

All this points to the idea that the creation of the state as a unitary, person-like actor in international relations is an ongoing process, rather than something that has been accomplished before international relations begin. Such an observation need not devalue the work done within feminism on the domestic structures or the internal organization of the state.\(^9\) Indeed, as much research shows, these are important

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\(^7\) See also MacKinnon 1989 and Pateman 1988).

\(^8\) Most notably, see Walker 1993.

\(^9\) Valuable contributions include Brown 1995; Grant 1991; Niva 1998.
sources of masculinism and patriarchy. But it does remove the assumptions that reify
the state, abstract it from the processes of its own reproduction, and obscure the
contestation over its meaning. It does this by foregrounding the processes through
which those structures are given meaning as domestic structures – processes that
simultaneously carve out the space for the state that is said to contain them. And it is
consistent with a belief recurrent in much feminist work, that a more complete
understanding of the forces perpetuating the hierarchical relations between masculine
and feminine subjects must incorporate those processes that transcend (and produce)
the context of the state.\footnote{This approach requires, however, moving from “why”
questions to “how” questions, and abandoning causal theory in favor of constitutive
theory. See Doty 1996.}

To replace essentialist ontologies, Jackson and Nexon (1999) propose a
\textit{processual relational} approach to international relations. In contrast to substantialism,
in which some aspects of the state’s identity is held outside of process and relation,
processual relationalism treats states (and all other entities) as entirely embedded.
Social interaction, rather than the entities doing the interacting, becomes the starting
point of analysis. Within that interaction, the state appears as a particular pattern of ties
or processes – or, as Jackson and Nexon label it, a \textit{project}. At that level, the state may
be thought of as “an aggregation of processes,” but is not yet the purposeful actor that
exists in the minds of most people. It is through an additional process, termed \textit{yoking},
that the state achieves such status. Through yoking, the myriad sites of difference (i.e.
the boundaries) among projects within the patterns of processes are connected, then
rationalized (in the Weberian sense of being made more formal and abstract), resulting
in entity-formation. Jackson and Nexon draw two important implications from this
process of state formation. First, the process of yoking, which is necessary for the state
to appear as a substance, implies that the production and reproduction of boundaries is
necessary for the creation of the state. Secondly, the coming into “being” of the state
does not happen randomly – the connections formed through yoking must be
intersubjectively meaningful; they must cohere in the eyes of the audience, thus giving
meaning to the various activities that produce the state. The effect is the appearance of
a distinct, unitary actor, possessing purpose and capable of exercising agency – in
common usage, a state.

This view of how states are made has much in common with Judith Butler’s
(1999) theory of how human subjects are made. For her, neither subjects nor their
bodies exist pre-socially in any meaningful sense. Instead, they are constituted and
reconstituted performatively within broader matrices of relations, prominent among
which is gender. “It would be wrong,” Butler (1999, 22) explains, “to think that the
discussion of ‘identity’ ought to proceed prior to a discussion of gender identity for the
simple reason that ‘persons’ only become intelligible through becoming gendered in
conformity with recognizable standards of gender intelligibility.” There is no subject,
then, that is not already gendered. This runs counter to common conceptions of the
relationship between the subject and gender, in which the former is assumed to exist (in
the form of a sexed body) before the latter is acquired (through socialization). In
Butler’s theory, the subject cannot pre-exist gendering processes, nor can the gender
that the subject is said to have be the cultural expression of “its biological sex,” for
neither the subject nor “its sex” can be conceptualized pre-culturally. On this point there
is much convergence with the processual relational approach described above. Much
as the “sexed body” loses its foundational status within Butler’s theory, the “state body” (to use Wendt’s term) loses its foundational status within a processual relational approach. The focus, then, turns to the processes through which the subject (human or state) is constituted.\textsuperscript{11}

Butler (1993, 2) terms this process \textit{performativity}. It is much more than “a performance” of gender, which would imply, mistakenly, that the action is done by a preexisting actor. Butler’s point is that the action produces the actor. Performativity is conceptualized, then, as repetitive imitations of a subject, a “reiterative and citational practice,” through which the subject is produced discursively. Butler (1999, 33), in modifying a quote from Friedrich Nietzsche, sums up the ontological commitment this theory entails: “There is no gender identity behind expressions of gender… identity is performatively constituted by the very ‘expressions’ that are said to be its results.” Yet, despite being a performatively-generated effect, the actor maintains the appearance of continuity and solidity. This is not due to any essential characteristics the actor possesses; rather, “continuity” and “solidarity” appear as iterated performances are read through “socially instituted and maintained norms of intelligibility” (Butler 1999, 23). For instance, within the dominant heterosexual matrix and the norms of intelligibility it encompasses, acting “like a man” constitutes the subject as “a man.” Additionally, acting “like a man” constitutes the subject as one who was “a man” before “he acted.”

Again, the similarities between a theory of performativity for humans and a processual relational approach for states are apparent. For a state to emerge out of a

\textsuperscript{11} It is worth noting that the shared ontologies of Butler and Jackson/Nexon come despite differences in their beliefs over the role of theory. Whereas Butler employs theory as a political tool for destabilizing dichotomous identities and promoting new, hybrid ones, Jackson and Nexon approach theory as “explanatory through ideal-typifying moral and ethical commitments.” For this point, the author is indebted to Patrick Thaddeus Jackson.
web of relations, it must follow a process that is intersubjectively meaningful to its audience.\textsuperscript{12} For this reason, the boundaries that are drawn in the yoking process are necessarily drawn according to some “generic plan” that “lend[s] interpretive coherence to the various actions which make up the project” (Jackson and Nexon 1999, 316).\textsuperscript{13} There is, in other words, a “recipe” for making a state – “‘instructions for ‘stateness’” without which the process lacks unity and the state cannot gain the appearance of being an entity (Jackson and Nexon 1999, 316). Thus, boundaries must be drawn in meaningful ways for the state to become intelligible as a subject. This is quite compatible with Butler’s theory of performativity, which, too, suggests that a “recipe” for intelligible subjects exists. That recipe, however, includes gender (among other, related constructions like race) as it is regulated by a compulsory, naturalized, and normative heterosexuality. The cultural grid of heterosexuality structures the meanings that gender performances must assume to make sense. As a result, a subject must be performatively constituted as a heterosexual masculine subject or a heterosexual feminine subject to be intelligible within the heterosexual matrix. But whether the cultural grid serves heterosexuality, in Butler’s theory, or something else (perhaps, in international relations, sovereignty), the point is that the subject can only be constituted through its relations to those norms.

Given these similarities, the application of Butler’s theory of performativity to the constitution of states in international relations can be helpful. If states are intelligible as people, then her theory, which explains how people become intelligible, can be used to

\textsuperscript{12} “The audience” may be either what comes to be labeled “domestic” or “foreign.” The distinction itself is an outcome of the process; the creation of the audience is intrinsic to the process of state formation.

\textsuperscript{13} With this point, the authors are drawing upon Nicholas Rescher 1996.
better understand states. It can shed light not only on the processes through which states are naturalized, but also on the unacknowledged relationships that exist among states by virtue of the norms through which they become intelligible. Gender must be counted among these norms. To apply Butler’s theory of performativity, without attempting to abstract gender from it, is to argue that states are gendered, and that their gendering is no more metaphorical than is the gendering of humans. Because both Butler’s work and the approach advocated by Jackson and Nexon are process-oriented, both forms of subjects – humans and states – can be studied as discursively-constituted effects, formed within a cultural grid that contains ideas about gender and that structures the meanings of the subjects’ performances. Ontologically, both are productions, performatively established in relation to gender norms of intelligibility, though seldom recognized as such.

This assumes, of course, that there are norms of intelligibility shaping the conceptualization of the state. On the one hand, the pervasiveness of the anthropomorphic assumption within IR implies that there must be. If people cannot be conceptualized without gender, and states are conceived of as people, then that conception must contain gender within it, even if implicitly so. The details of such a conceptualization, and the norms of gender upon which it draws, will vary by local context. Specific, interrelated discourses of gender and statehood will determine the ways in which the state is gendered. Meanwhile, the pervasiveness of those discourses will determine who shares that conception. There is valuable work that has been done by examining how states become gendered within specific discourses. Cynthia Weber (1999) has gone farther down this road than anyone else, applying Butler’s theory of
performativity to US-Caribbean relations. She argues that within discourses on the US role vis-à-vis Caribbean countries, US foreign policy has been geared toward the production of a straight, masculine, hegemonic identity where one no longer exists. Within some of the same discourses, Jutta Weldes (1999, 211) considers briefly how, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, the fear of appearing effeminate meant that “the United States not only had to be strong, courageous, determined, and firm, it also had repeatedly to reenact these characteristics.” Iris Marion Young (2003) examines performances of the US security state within post-9/11 discourses of danger and finds that they masculinize the state while feminizing the population. By approaching the idea of gendered states within the confines of specific discourses, these works reflect well upon the sentiment that “the relations between gender and the state cannot be studied in general terms… instead, attention must be on the construction of gender within specific state discourses and practices” (Kantola 2007, 278).

**Masculinity and Protection**

But can it be said that states are gendered in recognizable ways, *in general*? If so, then through what kind of performances, and through what gendered norms of intelligibility? The rest of this chapter offers a preliminary answer to these questions by suggesting that certain security performances gender the state through the widely-held norm of masculine protection. While the precise forms that this protection takes, and the meaning that it “writes” upon the state, will vary, the norms through which the performances are read are culturally pervasive enough to be theorized as masculinizing.

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14 On applying Butler’s theory of performativity to International Relations, in general, and to the concept of sovereignty in particular, see Weber (1998).
or feminizing. R.W. Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity can help observers find a benchmark for the meaning of such performances. And while one must be careful not to homogenize state identities when viewing them in relation to system-wide norms, a project focused on the masculinizing effects of performances of protection can elucidate how states naturalize their status and improve their standing among other states.

In applying society-level theories, like those offered by Butler and Connell, to the global scale, one problem is immediately apparent: the “cultural grid” that structures gender norms is much thinner there than it is within local contexts. But this does not render those norms ineffectual. The qualities that compose them account for some of the basic, relational identities that recur in the international realm. Although a more complete understanding of those identities requires situating them within local discourses, they may be observed – relationally and in broad terms – to connect to more global discourses on gender. Connell (1998), for instance, proposes that a model of “transnational business masculinity” has been developing in response to globalization. As a global model, it does not supplant local and regional masculinities. Instead, it reveals some broad, gendered qualities that are in play. These qualities can then be studied with attention to how models of masculinity are articulated through each other across levels.

Often, the qualities of gender norms are structured as dichotomous pairs. As signifiers of identity, they establish hierarchy among the actors upon which they are

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15 To avoid sacrificing a key component of Butler’s theory of performativity, it should be noted that there are other ways in which these performances may be read, so that a state can perform in ways that complicates its identity to norms of masculinity and femininity.
“written.” They include, among other things: rationality/irrationality, civilized/barbaric, autonomous/dependent, active/passive, and powerful/weak – all of which map onto the dominant signifier pair of masculine/feminine. The examination of gender dichotomies such as these has been helpful in accounting for how unequal, relational identities have been maintained and how they have privileged some actors and marginalized others. However, there are limits to this kind of analysis. By viewing relational gender identities in dichotomous terms, one risks neglecting the variation that exists within those categories. Simply put, there are different and unequal types of masculinity and femininity. Within the range of masculinities, there are dominant and subordinate types. There is often a dominant model of masculinity that exercises a normative effect upon all other actors and through Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity, one can study it. A hegemonic masculinity is an idealized, relational, and historical model of masculinity – one to which other forms of masculinity are subordinate. Although the qualities associated with it characterize a small percentage of masculine actors, its idealization and cultural pervasiveness require other actors to position themselves in relation to it (Connell 2005). And while it is continually evolving, incorporating other forms of masculinity even as it subordinates them, it remains identifiable. Charlotte Hooper (2001, 62) explains:

16 Of course, masculine/feminine is not the only binary oppositional pair established among states. Others can include parent/child, white/colored, and Western/non-Western. See Connell 1987; Hunt 1987; Said 1979.

17 Additionally, one risks reinforcing stereotypes of “masculine” and “feminine.”

18 In Connell’s formulation, hegemonic masculinity is more than a cultural norm. Like gender relations more broadly, it is multidimensional and is present in “nondiscursive practices.” This study, in keeping with Butler’s approach, is skeptical that meaning can be given, and identities established, outside of discourse. For elaboration on the concept of hegemonic masculinity, see Maruska 2009.
Hegemonic masculinity can then be seen not as a fixed set of dominant traits but as a constantly negotiated construct that draws on a pool of available characteristics, which, although they may be mutually contradictory can be put together in different combinations depending on circumstances. Different pools of characteristics may be available at different times and in different cultures... The pool of available characteristics is also subject to gradual change over time, and characteristics of subordinate masculinities can be plundered to reinvigorate hegemonic masculinity, while previously hegemonic characteristics can be dropped or devalued.

By performing in accordance with a dominant model of masculinity, states can constitute (and thus, position) themselves relationally as powerful subjects. For Connell (2005, 841), this kind of positioning is at the heart of the concept of masculinity, to such a degree that the term “represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices.” Cynthia Enloe argues similarly that patriarchy is perpetuated by “men who are recognized and claim a certain form of masculinity, for the sake of being more valued, more ‘serious,’ and ‘the protectors of/and controllers of those people who are less masculine’” (Cohn and Enloe 2003, 1192). While few can live up to the hegemonic ideal, their position to it vis-à-vis other actors is nonetheless an important component of their power. A comparable process occurs among states. As with men, the more that states are able to constitute themselves in alliance with the norms of the hegemonic masculinity, the more they will improve their position and boost their credibility (1998, 46). Thus, states have constant incentives to perform in ways that not only are masculine, but that constitute them as a certain form of masculine actor, one who embodies the elements of the hegemonic masculinity.

Performances that masculinize states by positioning them closer to the ideal of the hegemonic masculinity are likely to be most effective in the realm of security. This is because security performances are central to the production of the state as a unitary
subject and because, so often, security performances are rendered intelligible by highly pronounced ideas about masculinity and femininity. War, in particular, demonstrates this claim. Long ago, Kenneth Waltz observed that in times of war the state is united (and, therefore, a single entity) to a greater degree than at any other time (Waltz 2001, 179).19 Tickner (2001, 41) makes a similar observation but concludes that gender plays a big role in producing state unity: the state becomes a citizen-warrior in times of war. Jean Bethke Elshtain (1992) and Susan Jeffords (1989) go one step further, arguing that collective identities are constructed through the types of men and women that war creates or brings out. But absent war, security performances are still crucial for state production and reproduction.20 By taking dangers, threats, and other signs of insecurity to be their objects, security performances reproduce the boundaries between a secure self and a dangerous other. Boundary reproduction is central to processes of statecraft, and security performances occur where the integrity of the state’s boundaries are discursively challenged, often in an explicit manner. Whether such threats are internal or external, the effect is the same. Indeed, the distinction often collapses.

One effect of successful performances, then, is the appearance of the state as a unitary, continuous actor, and one who can claim legitimacy over those “internal” to it. An additional effect of successful performances is the constitution of the state as an actor who is hierarchically dominant to certain other international actors, frequently states. Both of these can be accomplished by performing security in accord with the

19 Of course, Waltz does not view this unity as an effect of the representational practices enabled by the discursive context of war.

20 The term “security performances” is not intended to imply that any performance is inherently “about” security. Rather, a performance becomes a security performance only if it is interpreted as such, which will depend upon the discourses through which the performance is interpreted.
norms of the hegemonic masculinity. The relational quality of gender ensures that any performances that give the state the appearance of personhood will necessarily position its personhood in relation to other states. Any gendered construction of the state, even if it does not live up to masculine ideals, will be “socially defined in contradistinction from some model (whether real or imaginary) of femininity” (Connell 2005, 848); thus, the gender norms that make a state intelligible as a subject also situate it relationally to other actors.

This argument may be operationalized by first determining the dominant form of masculinity that operates among states, and then observing states’ efforts to perform in ways that align with it. For the first step, there is good reason to believe that a model of masculinity centered on protection has achieved dominant, if not hegemonic, status. While the question of its hegemonic status will have to be settled empirically, protection appears to be both clearly masculine and sufficiently widespread. And although studies of the idea of protection are rare within IR, there is enough work that has been done on its normative force, evolving meaning, and the growing range of performances that it regulates to merit consideration. Work on these different aspects of protection could be usefully combined to reveal an overarching process – one through which scholars can study the gendering of the state that takes place at the systemic level.

Over the last few decades, only a few feminist scholars have theorized protection as a masculinizing performance. Judith Stiehm (1982) and Iris Marion Young (2003), in particular, have offered important formulations of its logic and effects.21 From these works, protection emerges as a pervasive model of masculinity. Although they are not

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21 See also Peterson 1992.
cast in the language of performativity, these works take performances that embody this ideal (i.e. the giving of protection) to be constitutive of relational identities that privilege masculine subjects and subordinate feminine subjects. Stiehm focuses principally on protection at the hands of male-dominated militaries, and her conceptualization of the protector and the protected remains mostly at the level of individuals (officials, soldiers, and so on). Her central argument is that men have reserved the role of protector for themselves, relegating women to the status of dependents – a move that not only subordinates women but leaves them vulnerable to the dangers posed by masculine protectors. Building upon Stiehm’s analysis, Young (2003, 2) uses the same logic to characterize the security state as the protector and the citizenry as the protected. Importantly, she maintains that these roles are naturalized through their connection to the protector/protected relationship that defines the patriarchal household. In her words:

An exposition of the gendered logic of the masculine role of protector in relation to women and children illuminates the meaning and effective appeal of a security state that wages war abroad and expects obedience and loyalty at home. In this patriarchal logic, the role of the masculine protector puts those protected, paradigmatically women and children, in a subordinate position of dependence and obedience. To the extent that citizens of a democratic state allow their leaders to adopt a stance of protectors toward them, these citizens come to occupy a subordinate status like that of women in the patriarchal household. We are to accept a more authoritarian and paternalistic state power, which gets its support partly from the unity a threat produces and our gratitude for protection.

The strength of both these models is that they allow for an analysis of protection that transverses conventional levels of analysis and highlights the variety of arenas in which protection is performed. Moreover, they capture performances that occur in myriad sites throughout the world, yet are united by a common logic. As Young claims, every state is at least partially a security state, and the legitimacy it derives from performances
of protection can be explained by the fact that the same logic legitimates unequal relationships in the personal lives of men and women everywhere.

In this formulation, protection does not have any essential meaning. In fact, both authors emphasize that the protection offered, while beneficial in specific instances, is a bad arrangement for the protected. Protection is, therefore, less about what is provided than it is about the effects of the performances undertaken in its name. This is evident today as states form policies for the protection of trafficked women. On that issue, protection may entail practices as divergent as temporary asylum, abolitionist policies towards sex work, educational campaigns, operations targeting transnational organized criminal networks, border control, and deportation. A significant effect of the performances, regardless of what forms they take, is the production of unequal, gendered identities in the form of protector and protected.\textsuperscript{22} With protection stripped of its essentialized meaning, it follows that the identities of protector and protected do not describe accurately any traits possessed by the state or the citizens. Instead, the identities are relational, established by the performances of protection even though they appear to precede those performances. “What matters,” Young (2003, 13) explains, “is the gendered meaning of the positions and the association of familial caring they carry for people.”

Protection does not have an essential meaning, but it does have a political rationality, a plan that provides overall coherence to the various forms that protection takes and the meanings that it acquires. Didier Bigo’s (2000; 2006) work has sought to

\textsuperscript{22} Even when protection is rejected, the process is constitutive. For example, a woman who rejects the bargain offered by the security state becomes a “bad woman.” The state, in that case, often becomes a “threat.”
understand this rationality, as well as the different meanings of protection and the technologies of governance that are guided by it. To accomplish this, he proposes studying protection at the point of application, namely within the field of security professionals. In so doing, he finds three etymologies of protection to be informing the technologies in use. His etymologies of protection serve as ideal-types, and though Bigo fails to observe it, each gathers its meaning (at least partially) through a connection to gender. The first of these etymologies, *tegere*, represents a non-passive form of protection, one in which the protected both desires protection and maintains her/his sovereignty as an active subject. The protector acts out of a “sacred duty;” the subject is grateful for the protection she/he receives. Within the other etymologies, *praesidere* and *tutore*, the asymmetry is more pronounced. *Praesidere* invokes the guaranteeing of security and survival by someone else. This is a meaning of protection that is familiar to security scholars in IR, as it is often reflected in understandings of sovereignty, security, and borders. It is also the kind of protection that the military provides within Stiehm’s framework. *Tutore* is a form of protection that is carried out through profiling: monitoring and surveillance, the identification of risks, the obedience of the protected. The protector operates not out of obligation, as in *tegere*, but out of love. Young, in observing the internal surveillance that characterizes the protection offered by the security state, references implicitly this etymology of protection. It merits mention that each of these meanings that protection can acquire is dependent upon an asymmetric relationship between the protector and the protected. Among these, *tegere* characterizes those performances of protection that are the least constitutive of unequal relations – the best case scenario for protection. Within Bigo’s analysis, however,
tegere appears also as the least relevant for the contemporary forms that protection takes. Instead, protection tends to take on less desirable forms, where “the protected has difficulty overcoming the relation to regain voice and the capacity of acting politically” (2006, 93).

Bigo does not consider that the rationality of protection may be better understood if it is posited in relation to gender norms. Following Young’s argument, one could deduce that rationality to be the reproduction of gendered identities through the unequal relations that produce them. Bigo’s silence on gender is a missed opportunity. If his work explored how technologies of security, reflecting the different meanings that protection can take, establish gendered identities in the form of protector and protected, Bigo’s analysis would have a more complete picture of the systemic incentives that perpetuate these performances, as well as the identities that are at stake in the outcome.

That such analysis would be worthwhile is underscored by the similarities between the meanings of protection that Bigo provides and the qualities reflected in the models of masculinity described by Charlotte Hooper (2001). The Judeo-Christian ideal of masculinity, which centers on responsibility, ownership, and paternal authority, is featured prominently in protection when protection is performed as either praesidere or tutore. The silencing of agency, the restriction on movement, the claiming of knowledge about threats that the protected does not possess – when viewed in relation to dominant forms of masculinity, it is apparent that such performances establish not only asymmetric relations, but relations that are asymmetric because of their relations to gender norms. Additionally, the bourgeois rationalist model, recognizable as the
dominant model of the modern era, is manifest in Bigo’s characterization of *tutore*. With its idealization of “calculative rationality in public life,” that model of masculinity lends gendered meaning to those performances of protection that occur through the profiling of risk. These similarities suggest that a newly hegemonic masculinity may be operating as the regulative ideal of security performances. Combining elements of earlier hegemonies, it appears not as a rupture in the symbolic structure of gendered meaning, but as a continuation of that structure. Reflecting its continuation with earlier models, it may be best termed a “rational protector” model. If such a model is now dominant, then those wishing to examine the masculinizing performances of states can start with the assumption that states have strong motivation to perform security in ways that approximate this ideal. As performances of protection increasingly come to characterize the way a state “does” security, the connection of those performances to dominant masculine ideals must be taken into account. As chapter 6 will show, a rational protector model of masculinity is useful for understanding EU performances on the issue of sex trafficking. Before then, however, it is necessary to establish the applicability of the observations made here to the EU, the value of sex trafficking discourse for observing such performances, and the existence of feminized subjects who “require” protection.
CHAPTER 3
PERFORMING THE EUROPEAN UNION

Introduction

This chapter will focus on one particular subject that is being constituted through
gendered performances: The European Union. Though the EU is seldom viewed as a
gendered entity, its identity is established nonetheless through performances that
resonate with masculine and feminine norms. As the previous chapter suggested, a
substantialist approach to identity can offer, at best, only a partial explanation of how
the EU is becoming an actor. To account for more than the variable attributes of the EU –
that is, to explain how the EU becomes an anthropomorphized entity in the first place –
more is needed. A process-oriented approach is useful for that purpose. The
previous chapter argued, too, that a process-oriented approach can be of greater value
if it is coupled not with a “gender-neutral” examination of actors, but with one that
assumes the constitutive role of gender. The usefulness of such an assumption about
gender is two-fold. In addition to orienting the researcher towards EU performances
that a “gender-neutral” study would underplay, a study that foregrounds the constitutive
force of gender will be able to offer a framework for understanding how those
performances embody and gender the EU. In other words, studying the EU through a
gender lens suggests not only where to look, but also the significance of what one finds
there. In sum, to understand how the EU establishes itself as an actor, it is helpful to do
two things. First, one should develop a process-oriented approach to studying the EU
and, second, one should theorize with an appreciation of “the system of symbolic
meaning” that is gender.
The gendered effects of the EU’s performances will be left to the next chapter, where it will be argued that the EU genders itself by performing as a masculine protector within the issue area of trafficking in women. Before those performances are considered, the EU must be situated first within the process-oriented framework that has been established. It is not automatically clear that the processes of identity formation considered so far would apply to the EU. And if they do apply, it is not obvious how compatible they would be with existing research on the EU. The following sections address this matter by situating the process-oriented approach within the field of European Integration Studies (EIS). They will demonstrate that while processual approaches flow outside of the mainstream of the field, they do not lie in uncharted territory. Existing studies that adopt an ontology of critical constructivism are quite compatible with them and, thus, with the research provided here. Furthermore, the operationalization of a constructivist ontology through the method of discourse analysis, as performed by some EIS scholars, suggests a useful way to bring a process-oriented approach to the field.

**The Applicability of Statecraft to the European Union**

The process-oriented approach implemented in this study has been derived largely from state-centered scholarship. Many of the IR scholars who have been, and will be, considered here have focused on the processes of creating states, and on the particular kinds of states born from those processes. This point raises immediately some concern over typological error. Can theories of statecraft be applied to the EU? After all, regardless of how one categorizes the EU, very rarely is it called a state. If the conceptualizations of statecraft developed by IR scholars are to reveal anything about
the EU, it can be only because the EU undergoes a set of processes similar to those undergone by states.

It is important to note that while most of the authors considered here are analyzing states, they are all, to varying degrees, redefining what a state is. James Caporaso does this by breaking down the concept of the state into three stylized forms (the Westphalian state, the regulatory state, and the postmodern state) and arguing that the EU is a combination of each. One of these dimensions, the postmodern one, appears to be process-oriented. Caporaso (1996, 34) characterizes it as a form of governance (as opposed to government) that is “fractured, decentered, and often lacking in clear spatial (geographical) as well as functional (issue area) lines of authority.” The Westphalian and regulatory dimensions may be categorized as substantialist; that is, they define the EU as a thing with attributes both in-line and out-of-line with those of states, traditionally understood. His claim, then, is that the EU is like a state, but that “state” means at least three different things. This is a moderate and useful way of bringing a processual, state-oriented approach into one’s study of the EU, and it starts by complicating the concept of the state. Efforts like that are taken further by EU scholars like Jacqueline Berman and Elizabeth Prügl, who see the EU as a kind of international state, one that produces certain kinds of citizens (trafficking victims and women, respectively) and, in so doing, reproduces its own identity (as either integrated or patriarchal). Similar reconceptualizations of the state have been offered, outside the context of EIS, by scholars such as Patrick Jackson and Daniel Nexon, Cynthia Weber, and David Campbell. Though writing about states, each abandons the substantialist foundation that ties the state to objective characteristics, like territory or an institutional-
legal order. They posit “the body” of the state as endogenous to social interaction, treating it not as an objective, prediscursive fact but as an intersubjectively generated effect. Given that reformulation, one can apply the approach to more than just states. Indeed, the work of these scholars cannot apply only to states, as the state has been detached from its positivist moorings. With the barriers between categories no longer absolute, one is left with an empirical question: Are similar processes of construction underway between states and the EU, and do they have similar effects? This project argues that the answer is yes on both counts. The EU, like any given state, is an anthropomorphized and, thus, gendered entity, and it becomes so through performance. But regardless of whether the reader finds the evidence convincing, it is important to observe that the examination of the EU through process-oriented theories of statecraft is not rendered moot at the outset by any conceptual distinctions between the states and the EU.

Indeed, a related set of conceptual distinctions has been problematized already in this study. In the previous chapter, it was shown that, in ways significant for our understanding of identity, states and people come into being in much the same fashion. This was done by joining Judith Butler’s ideas on the construction of human subjects with Jackson and Nexon’s ideas on the construction of states. Through this marriage of process-oriented theories, it could be explained how levels of analysis collapse on an intersubjective, and largely unacknowledged, level. As a result, states come to be seen as persons, they come to be seen as particular types of persons (masculine or feminine), and their agency, legitimacy, and naturalness are affected. The collapse of the distinction can be explained by the existence of a shared process at the heart of
identity formation for both people and states: yoking. Yoking, which refers to the connection and rationalization of sites of difference to produce the appearance of substance, is necessary for the creation of both kinds of subjects. And subjects remain bounded and sustained only to the degree that they successfully recreate meaning around those sites of difference. While the term yoking is not found in the popular lexicon of IR, what it describes is. The assignation of meaning to difference and, through that, the production of unity is a theme that has been around in IR for quite some time. Significantly, it has been used to make sense of identity formation not just of states, but of suprastate and nonstate entities. For example, Bradley Klein (1990), Roxanne Doty (1996), and Patrick Jackson (2003) have illustrated the substantiation of NATO and, even more abstractly, “the West,” through a yoking-like process of identity formation.

The claim that process-oriented theories, which have been developed in context of states, can be used to understand the identity-formation of the EU is made credible by the EU’s actions. Leaders of the EU have recognized for a long time that identity-building measures similar to those used by states could comprise an effective strategy for establishing the EU as a political entity and endowing it with legitimacy and authority. Thus, EU elites have attempted to “invent” Europe through cultural policy. Cris Shore (2000) identifies four sites where this has been attempted: the creation of new (European) symbols, the marketing of the “European brand,” the rewriting of history to Europeanize higher education, and the representation of women. His research reveals a wide range of proposals that EU elites have offered – ways of “performing Europe” on the level of everyday life. Some of these, such as the European emblem and flag, have
been adopted. Other proposals have included the creation of European passports, stamps, birth certificates, holidays, and Europe-focused university courses.

Throughout these efforts, gender persists. It manifests its role in the EU’s identity-building efforts in direct and indirect ways. At times, the EU acts directly upon women and upon the image of “European women.” This type of performance is found in major policy areas, such as the EU’s response to sex trafficking, but also in more mundane cultural realms. An example of EU efforts in the latter is the Women of Europe Award, which since 1987 has sought to “honour a woman from each Member State who, in the previous two years, has helped to increase European integration among the citizens of the European Union” (quoted in Shore, 2000: 60). The winners represent the archetypal “European woman.” Shore (2000, 61) describes Marit Paulsen, the 1996 winner, thusly:

…a down-to-earth ‘woman of the people’; a mother figure whose birth and childhood symbolise reconciliation between nations divided by nationalism and war – arguably the strongest, most enduring of the shared emotions that underlie popular pro-Europeanism. She is also a transnational European worker who has taken up permanent residence in another member state; a farmer whose work experience symbolically traverses each of the major areas of common policy (fishing, iron ore and agriculture) that lie at the heart of the integration project, a champion of good causes, including closer European integration….

Even when the European Commission is not strategically targeting women, its identity-building project may incorporate gender indirectly. For example, one may consider the Commission’s 1993 De Clercq Report, which sought to uncover a more effective branding strategy for the EU. The recommendations of the report seem to rely upon a feminine view of Europe, suggesting an image that is “sympathetic, warm and caring” and that “appeal[s] for togetherness.” At times, the report’s reliance upon gendered discourse is explicit, as when it concludes, “the institutions responsible for European
construction ‘must be brought close to the people, implicitly evoking the maternal, nurturing care of ‘Europa’ for all her children” (quoted in Shore, 2000, 55).

Efforts like those made by the European Commission seek to replicate the top-down nation-building ventures that political elites have been engaged in for centuries. This strategy has met, however, with mixed results. It has not been as effective as its designers intended and the EU has fallen well short of attaining a prominent place in the minds of the public. Nonetheless, the adoption of such measures indicates an explicit recognition on the part of the EU that gendered performances matter, and a belief that they matter for the EU in much the same way as they do for states.

Is There Room for Constructivism?

To study the effectiveness of efforts like those described above, it is helpful to make a few assumptions. First, one can adopt an ontology of social constructivism. Doing so would provide room to examine the constitutive power of ideas and representations. Second, one can posit the existence of a discursive structure, which provides specific articulations with meaning and, thus, enables the audience to construct a shared understanding of reality. By mapping the structure of the relevant discourses, one could then explain what meaning specific articulations would have. To clarify these points, it may be useful to apply them to the cultural measures described above. A constructivist ontology would allow that those policy proposals may serve to produce and reproduce the very body (first the European Community and now the

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1 This feminine Europe, which the Commission is promoting for the purpose of ensuring that the EU is embraced by citizens of the Member States, will stand in stark contrast to the masculine Europe one finds in the realm of trafficking. There, Europe seeks to protect its “children” from the threat posed by outsiders from the East.
European Union) that is understood to have authored them. And, as this chapter will later explain, they may do this in a somewhat indirect manner by producing and reproducing "Europe," more broadly. Meanwhile, a study of the discursive structure of meaning in which Europe and the EU are embedded would suggest how the audience is likely to receive these policies, as well as the particular effects on the author’s identity they are likely to have. So while a constructivist ontology would claim that representations matter and, thus, symbolic performances can create Europe and the EU, a discursive approach would suggest what type of Europe and what type of EU they would create.

Process-oriented approaches fit well into this framework. They rest upon an ontology of social constructivism and can be operationalized by the study of discourse. Nonetheless, the “processual relationalism” of Jackson and Nexon (1999) has not been adopted by scholars of European Integration Studies. To get an idea of where it would fit in the field, as well as what EU-centered research might look like if it adopted such an approach, one does best to look at the track record of social constructivism and discourse analysis in EIS. Thus, to gauge the potential of process-oriented approaches to shape future contributions to the field, it is useful to first situate social constructivism and discourse analysis among other approaches that have tried to make sense of the EU.

Social constructivism entered EIS in the 1990s, representing something of a paradigmatic transfusion from International Relations. The so-called ‘constructivist turn’ in IR had introduced a fresh set of ontological (and in some cases, epistemological) assumptions into political science. Its resultant “spill-over” into EIS similarly re-
orientated that program. But while the arrival of social constructivism is a recent development, it follows an established trend: since the end of World War II, theories of integration have reflected the evolution of their subject (Diez 2004). After decades spent probing “the nature of the beast,” scholars of European institutions began to realize that not only was “the beast” there to stay, but that its trajectory was deserving of criticism. As a result, the field opened more broadly to the normative concerns found in critical theory (Diez 2004). And as the political institutions became more firmly established, there was a shift toward approaching European integration through the models of Comparative Politics. Theories of multi-level systems (e.g. Marks et. al. 1996), network governance (Jachtenfuchs 2001) and various brands of institutionalism proliferated, developing sophisticated research programs that have continued up to the present day. Additionally, new theories of how integration and governance could be conceptualized gained prominence (Jachtenfuchs 2001), specifically built around sociological models of interaction.

Because the advent of social constructivism marks a relatively new direction in EIS, it is worth contrasting it to some of the more “conventional” approaches. Two of the most influential approaches, intergovernmentalism and neofunctionalism, have been prominent since the early stages of integration. Intergovernmentalism, like its realist forbearer in IR, has acted as the centerpiece in debates over the merits and costs of rationalist theory. Its rationalist ontology and positivist epistemology have been decried frequently by those favoring a more sociological framework for explaining integration. Certainly, it has made itself an easy target. In its first incarnation, intergovernmentalism (Hoffman 1966) reduced integration to the output of the preference functions of member
states. Assuming the identities and interests of member states to be exogenous to interaction and stable over time, the integration process became one of strategic bargaining, driven solely by state interests and power. European institutions served as the instruments of states, designed for the pursuance of predefined interests and having no role in constraining the capacities of their creators. In the early 1990s, this model made a significant advancement with the evolution of liberal intergovernmentalism. While maintaining many of the core assumptions of (realist) intergovernmentalism, liberal intergovernmentalism adds, in the words of Frank Schimmelfennig (2004, 75), “a much more sophisticated and rigorous theoretical underpinning” and a “substantive refinement.” The key difference is that where (realist) intergovernmentalism lacked a theory of state interests, liberal intergovernmentalism endogenizes interest formation to within the member states. Domestic groups, which had little inclusion in the original intergovernmentalist approach, are included as the source of member states’ foreign policy goals. Once these goals are formulated, the state-centric model kicks in. Interstate bargaining is carried out among states who know what they want. The bargaining occurs through the European institutions they create, with no independent (or necessary) role for the domestic social groups on the international stage. Domestic social groups remain relevant players, however, as their interests may shift. Those shifts are reflected themselves in the shifting preference orderings of the member states. Liberal intergovernmentalism, then, embodies the marriage of “a liberal theory of national preference formation and an intergovernmentalist analysis of interstate bargaining and institutional creation” (Moravscik 1993, 480). It is a marriage that has enabled intergovernmentalism to achieve a high station within EIS.
A second rationalist approach to European integration, and one that was less cemented when social constructivism arrived, is neofunctionalism. Developed by Ernst Haas in the 1950s, neofunctionalism offered a prolonged challenge to intergovernmentalism, particularly on the possibility of transformative change. Contrary to the rather static vision of integration offered by intergovernmentalism (where the same game of power politics continues among rational-unitary actors), and free of the federalists’ reliance upon “great events” to bring about change, neofunctionalism provides a theory of gradual transformation (Schmitter 2004). The possibility of transformation is rooted in the different ontological assumptions that neofunctionalism makes about states. Contrary to the materialist ontology of intergovernmentalism, neofunctionalism theorizes states as deriving their interests from values (which can include a value for material interests). While these values are themselves a product of domestic contestation, they are subject to being reshaped in the course of interaction. This ontology of “soft” rational choice (Haas 2001) represents the most significant point of contention between neofunctionalism and intergovernmentalism. As a result of the belief in the transformative effects of interaction, neofunctionalism grants considerably more stature to the role of organizations in the process of integration. Furthermore, its “soft” rationalism permitted an explanation of why states were willing to cede more authority to more organizations as the decades unfolded: The coordination occurring on issue areas of “low politics,” to which states initially ceded authority, produced pressures for further integration to resolve any tensions that arose from that process. Thus, after

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2 It was indeed a theory, as efforts began in the 1970s to apply it to regional integration outside of the European context. This forced concessions to be made with regards to the “path dependency” of the original approach, to the degree that integration was no longer a given (Haas 2001).
setting the terms of the initial interaction, states found control of the process shifting incrementally towards regional organizations, which were better equipped to resolve the tensions among functionally interconnected policy areas. A wide spectrum of actors, led by those operating at the regional level, could be expected to shift their allegiances to the European level, resulting in an ever-growing degree of Europeanization.

Unlike the rival intergovernmentalism, neofunctionalism gave prominence to the role of ideas and values and recognized the constraining power of European institutions. For these reasons alone, Haas (2001) has stated its compatibility with the ‘soft rationalist’ school of constructivism. Other forms of constructivism, as Haas rightly points out, are quite incompatible with neofunctionalism, due mostly to the latter’s depiction of actors as pragmatic instrumentalists. Social constructivism, then, can be considered an approach to European integration only in a loose sense of the term. More accurately, it is a broad theoretical orientation, which, depending upon the assumptions of a particular scholar, will be more or less compatible with other approaches. It is best, then, to disaggregate the concept of social constructivism, as scholars in IR have done, so as to better distinguish among those theories that maintain a minimalist foundation, and those that maintain no foundation. Whichever way one parses it, though, constructivism cannot offer a theory of European integration, as it makes no substantive claims about the process (Risse 2004).

Constructivism does, however, offer a fairly consistent set of assumptions that can guide research in EIS. First, constructivism assumes a social ontology. In its simplest terms, a social ontology means that actors (whether humans or states) exist within an environment that shapes their identities and interests. This is in direct contrast to
approaches that rely upon methodological individualism, such as intergovernmentalism, which sees identities and interests as fixed prior to, or outside of, interaction. The next major assumption of constructivism builds from its social ontology. If the realm of social interaction shapes the identities and interests of actors, then it follows logically that rules and norms have more than a constraining effect. Thus, for many constructivists, rules and norms are assumed to regulate the behavior of the actors to a much greater degree than rationalist approaches would allow. At minimum, they help actors to determine what action is appropriate for a given situation (March and Olsen 1998; Risse 2000). The significance of rules and norms may extend even further, however, to such a degree that they are constitutive of the actors involved (Onuf 1989; Kratochwil 1989). If that is the case, they define the actors. This idea is most evident, perhaps, in the norm of sovereignty. Not only does the norm of sovereignty regulate the behavior of states, but it is constitutive of statehood itself (Risse 2004, 163). Finally, constructivism makes a third assumption in recognizing the mutual constitution of agents and structures. This move follows the development of structuration theory by Anthony Giddons (1984).

Thomas Risse (2004, 161) explains:

The social environment in which we find ourselves, defines (‗constitutes‘) who we are, our identities as social beings. ‘We‘ are social beings, embedded in various relevant social communities. At the same time, human agency creates, reproduces, and changes culture through our daily practice. Thus, social constructivism occupies a - sometimes uneasy - ontological middleground between individualism and structuralism by claiming that there are properties of structures and of agents that cannot be collapsed into each other.3

Constructivism’s “structurational” assumption distinguishes it sharply from positivist approaches, which do not problematize the idea that there are “real agents out there”

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3 See also Wendt 1988.
These assumptions can provide new ways of answering the common questions of integration studies and suggest new questions, as well. But while these three assumptions are present in most work that identifies itself as constructivist, there is disagreement over how much these assumptions matter and how they should be incorporated into the study of politics. The latter point is epistemological, and rests on the question of whether it is possible to create explanatory theories while recognizing the importance of ideational factors. Those who would answer “yes” believe that constructivist insight is a valuable tool for bringing interpretation into the scientific enterprise (Adler 1997, 328). And they believe that (political) science benefits greatly from that move. While explanation, in the strict sense of the term, may be possible only through a positivist framework, it hits a wall when accounting for those elements of reality (such as interests) that are determined intersubjectively. Constructivism can help in such cases by unveiling how the actors themselves view their social environment. 4 Knowledge of the actors’ views can be used to deduce the reasons behind the behavior. The reasons may then be incorporated into the explanatory model by being granted causal significance. For example, Jeffrey Checkel (1999) argues that the socialization of domestic level actors (or “learning”) shapes the strategic bargaining processes that characterize the European integration process. Understanding how those actors view the relationships in which they are embedded can help researchers explain their behavior.

4 This idea comes from Max Weber’s notion of Verstehen.
When constructivism is granted this “minimal foundationalism” (Hoffman 1991, 170, quoted in Hopf 1998, 183), it embodies the hopes of many that it may serve as a way of reconciling the contradictory assumptions of positivism and reflectivism. In this spirit, it has been termed "a philosophically principled middle way" (Wendt 1999a, 2) and “the middle ground” (Adler 1997). Work employing this version of constructivism (Dessler 1989; Wendt 1992; Finnemore 1996; Adler 1997; Checkel 1998; Katzenstein 1996) adds sociological insight to conventional ontologies while maintaining an epistemology that, while falling short of the aspirations of positivism, at least allows for a range of “mid-level theorizing.” Within EIS, this strand of constructivism has been represented in studies that cover a range of substantive issues, including the relationship between national mindsets and integration (Larsen 1997; Laursen 1997; Jachtenfuchs, Diez, and Jung 1998; Marcussen et al. 2001) and new ways of conceptualizing European governance (Christiansen 1997; Jachtenfuchs 1997; Koslowski 2001). As mentioned above, the willingness of these scholars to adopt a minimally-confrontational approach to positivism has left their work fairly compatible with neofunctionalism. But their approach provides a deeper understanding of “Europeanization” than does neofunctionalism, and it provides a more careful consideration of how integration transforms the actors involved (Risse 2004, 165). It is, in other words, better situated to study integration as a process. Its ability to explain

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5 What this study terms reflectivism is alternately referred to as post-positivism, postmodernism, poststructuralism, and (inaccurately) critical theory. Its use here, however, is distinguishable from how Robert Keohane (1988) used the term, as a blanket label for all non-rationalist theory (including constructivism).

6 Typologies of constructivism grant this style a variety of names: naturalistic (Ruggie 1998), conventional (Hopf 1998; Katzenstein, Keohane and Krasner 1998), modernist (Wendt 1999), and sociological (Christiansen, Jørgensen and Wiener 1999). When it is referenced in this study, the term conventional will be used.
change gives it an advantage over some other theories, since “intergovernmentalism assumes there is no fundamental change and comparativists assume that the fundamental change has already occurred” (Christiansen, Jørgensen, and Wiener 1999, 537).

Critics like Steve Smith (2001, 191) see this version of constructivism as less of a middle way and more an extension of the rationalist paradigm. The more significance that one grants to ideas and interaction, and the more one chooses to focus on the process of identity construction (rather than what those identities do once they are constructed), the further away one gets from the mid-level theorizing of conventional constructivism. According to some authors, the abandonment of the traces of positivism marks the boundary of constructivism (e.g. Hix 1998). Anything beyond is termed “interpretivism” or “reflectivism.” For others, this leads to another branch of constructivism. Scholars working from the direction of this “critical constructivism” (Der Derian 1987; Ashley and Walker 1990; Connolly 1991; Shapiro 1992; Campbell 1992; Walker 1995; Weber 1995; Doty 1996) draw attention to the constitution of meaning and identities, with special emphasis on the context of interaction, the role of representation, and the inherent instability of identities and categorizations.

Discourse and the Meaning of Performance

It is within critical constructivism that process-oriented theories, like that offered by Jackson and Nexon, belong. The ontological claims of critical constructivism make it a

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7 This style, too, has been given a number of monikers: postmodernist (Adler 1997; Katzenstein Keohane and Krasner 1998; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999), Wittgensteinian (Christiansen, Jørgensen and Wiener 1999), and critical (Hopf 1998). When it is referenced in this study, the term critical will be used.

necessary choice for studying the performative component of the EU’s identity. To assume a minimal foundation, as conventional constructivism does, amounts to holding the EU’s body outside of discourse. Doing so limits unjustly the role that gender (or any other construct through which bodies become intelligible) can play in the construction of the subject. On questions of identity-formation, then, critical constructivism is invaluable. Alternatively, conventional constructivism may be useful for related or subsequent research questions. If the identity of the EU has achieved a sufficient level of fixity, and if the researcher wishes to shift his or her focus onto the actions that the EU’s identity (however contingent and unstable) might account for, then the minimal foundationalism of conventional constructivism may be of good use. But on the question of substantiation it is less useful, assuming what first must be explained.

While critical constructivism offers a framework for understanding how the EU’s (gendered) identity is formed, it requires content to become operational. That content, which can be described as discourse, has been the subject of much feminist work discussed already. In Judith Butler’s framework, it is the cultural grid through which gender norms give meaning to action. In R.W. Connell’s research, it is a set of hierarchical masculine ideals against which an individual’s performances are measured and his identity is derived. And for Charlotte Hooper, whose work was shown to be important for understanding the relevance and meaning of protection, it is found within various ideal types of masculinity. Within EIS, there are a small number of scholars employing discursive approaches to examine discourses that affect integration. It is
through these discursive approaches that the ongoing construction process of the EU can be understood best.⁹

Discursive approaches are comparatively new to EIS. They arrived alongside social constructivism and, to this day, maintain a rather unclear relationship to it. Like constructivism itself, discursive approaches do not meet commonly held criteria for theories. And despite Jennifer Milliken’s (1999, 226) highlighting of the “paradigmatic elements” of those approaches using discourse analysis, they share with constructivism a lack of substantive content. As a result, discursive approaches are best categorized as exactly that: approaches.¹⁰ Some definitional clarity is needed, though, as the terms “discursive approaches” and “discourse analysis” are often conflated. To minimize confusion, this study will use the term discursive approaches when referring to the theoretical orientation that discourse matters and that studying it is sometimes necessary for a more complete understanding of politics. That term is used here also to reference the group of scholars who study discourse and theorize its operation and effects. Discourse analysis, on the other hand, denotes the method of mapping discourses. There is, naturally, a firm connection between theory and method in this matter, between discursive approaches and discourse analysis (Diez 2001, 18). Any analysis of discourse is going to be strongly influenced by how the researcher believes

⁹ While most discourse analysis done in IR and EIS is based upon the assumptions found in “critical constructivism,” some of it is not. Ole Waever (2004, 213) suggests that discourse analysis is compatible with some work in intergovernmentalism, as well as in the legal and constitutional debates within EIS. It is used in some of the works that fall under the heading, “multi-level governance.” Within IR, works employing discourse analysis (Cohn 1987; Doty 1996; Weber 1999; Weldes 1999; Skonieczny 2001; Hall 2003) have branched across postmodernism, constructivism, feminism, and critical theory (Milliken 1999, 225). The broadest “contact zone,” however, remains with constructivism.

¹⁰ The observations here apply to what are collectively termed, “discursive approaches.” A discourse, in contrast, contains substantive content, by definition.
discourses function. And, of course, nobody is going to employ discourse analysis if he or she does not believe that discourses are important for understanding or explaining some relevant political event.\textsuperscript{11}

Discursive approaches are joined by a shared understanding among practitioners of what, in its broadest sense, a discourse is. Building principally upon the work of Michel Foucault (1973), Jacques Derrida (1978), and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001), a discourse is commonly understood as a structure through which meaning is constituted and statements are regulated within a given context. While it does not rise to the level of a theory, a discourse is nonetheless much more than a worldview or a series of representations. It is, in the words of Laclau and Mouffe (2001, 105), “a structured totality”, a multi-leveled system of meaning in which texts, ideas, representations, and performances – acting collectively as articulations – exist in a web of relations. Through relations to each other, each discursive component derives its meaning. Outside of this web of relations, it loses that meaning (though it possibly gains a new meaning if it is incorporated into a new set of relations). Put simply, an articulation does not make sense outside of a discourse. For example, a woman’s movement from a non-EU member state into an EU member state for work in the sex industry has little meaning as a social phenomenon in and of itself. But once this movement is linked with testimonials of rape and descriptions of deception, then the seeds of a discourse have been planted: specifically, a discourse of trafficking as violence against women. Alternately, the same event – a woman’s travel into the EU for work in the sex industry – can be connected to another set of actions, such as

\textsuperscript{11} Ole Wæver makes a similar distinction (2004: 197).
cost/benefit calculations and harassment by the police. If that occurs, then the structure of meaning established will make trafficking understandable as migration instead of violence. The discourse into which the established set of relations grows – in this example, trafficking as violence or trafficking as migration – will be a product of the repetition of the necessity of the relations among its components (rather than, say, a product of its inherent logic) (Foucault 1973).

The performances of the EU, or any particular political body, may be understood in this way. They are articulations that make sense only because of the structure of meaning into which they are born. Therefore, through the study of discursive structures, performances can be understood as articulations, and the meanings afforded to them can be discovered. This is not to claim that the EU’s performances have no reality. It is to claim, however, that the reality cannot be understood and addressed without being implanted first into a relational field of differences, thus limiting its meaning to a specific thing. Laclau and Mouffe explain: "The fact that every object is constituted as an object of discourse has nothing to do with whether there is a world external to thought, or with the realism/idealism opposition...What is denied is not that such objects exist externally to thought, but the rather different assertion that they could constitute themselves as objects outside any discursive condition of emergence" (2001, 108; emphasis in original).

Despite some level of inertia, all discourses are inherently unstable and subject to change. That is because discourses, while limiting the range of meanings an articulation can assume, cannot close off that range completely. There is always a surplus of meaning, a number of alternative meanings that an articulation can have
All discourses exist contingently, open-ended and exposed to the possibility of change by the surplus of meaning they cannot contain. And thus, discourses are always shifting and evolving. Even articulations that further fix the meaning of a discourse transform it to some small degree (Diez 2001, 26).

Meanwhile, “outside articulations” challenge the hegemony of a discourse and, more broadly, the discursive economy as a whole. To say this another way: The yoking process is never final or absolute, and it is threatened and undermined at all times by its inability to fix meaning once and for all.

It is possible, then, to change a discourse by re-establishing the meaning and relations within it through articulatory practice (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 111). To understand how this can be done, it is useful to consider Laclau and Mouffe’s explanation of how a discourse becomes partially fixed in the first place. They use the term nodal points to describe the “privileged discursive points” that attempt to fix the discourse by restricting the range of relationships that the components of a discourse can have with each other. Nodal points create a temporary center to the discourse, organizing the components into a set of relations that gives the discourse coherence. Additionally, the connections each discourse forms to outside discourses are important for establishing its partial fixity. In the early stages of discourse formation, such linkages are particularly important, as the necessity of the relations within the discourse

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12 Others have termed this the play of practice (Ashley 1989). The phrase “discursive economy” is used by Foucault (1978/1990, 68-9) in reference to all that determines the composition of discourses, specifically, “their intrinsic technology, the necessities of their operation, the tactics they employ, the effects of power which underlie them and which they transmit…”

13 This does not happen randomly but reflects the power to regulate the dispersal of representations. That power provides an actor with the ability to stabilize (or destabilize) the meaning of events.
have not been subjected to the level of repetition sufficient to ensure the discourse’s internal coherence.

**Metanarrative: The First Level of Discourse**

Through discourse, meaning is given not only to the performance, but to the performer, as well. That is why political thinking is rife with gendered *states* and not just gendered *performances* – the entity itself is given (gendered) identity through the meaning afforded its behaviors. This idea, that performances make the performer, is consistent with the ontology of critical constructivism and suggests the advantage of starting with an analysis of process, rather than the assumption of substance. But to understand the meaning that is given to the EU, as a performer, it is necessary to study its performances within a given discourse. Some discourses center around the question of EU identity itself: what the EU is and what the EU should be. But more often, the EU is not acting with explicit reference to its identity; rather, it is (re)producing its identity performatively within discourses on other issues. When this occurs, the EU’s identity exists as the deep structure, or meta-narrative, of the discourse. A meta-narrative is the broadest set of assumptions that is shared by the discourses on a given issue. When the EU’s identity serves in that role, it organizes and constrains the discourse, supplying the parameters of “what the issue is” while, oftentimes, avoiding articulation itself. The meta-narrative has strong influence over what can be said sensibly about an issue. For that reason, a far range of issues, seemingly unrelated, can be, on a deeper level, very much *about* the EU’s identity.

Following the insight of much constructivist scholarship, it is logical to assume that the most basic boundary line that gives meaning to the EU is that which exists discursively between “EU” and “non-EU.” This division is most clearly manifested in the
explicit political boundaries that separate EU members from non-EU members. The creation of a common market, a zone of unrestricted travel, and an EU-wide area of “freedom, security, and justice” have served to substantiate those boundaries and map the body of the EU onto the body of its members. It follows that to understand how the EU is performatively constituted, one should look at how EU performances (re)create these divisions. Again, this entails more than the study of those discourses that are explicitly about EU identity only; it entails the study of specific issue areas that may not, on the surface, appear to be about EU identity at all. The meaning given to the performances in those areas may be rooted in a deeper set of representations (a meta-narrative) and thus play a significant role in the (re)production of EU identity.

Sex trafficking is just such an issue area and an examination of it reveals a meta-narrative that exists along these lines. Before turning to the issue of sex trafficking, two further theoretical adjustments are necessary to operationalize a study of European identity formation. First, for reasons that will be explained in considerable depth in chapter five, one must add “would-be EU member” to the dyad outlined above. The result is a set of identity relations that consists of EU member/would-be EU member/non-EU member. Second, there are two closely related sets of identity relations that structure discourses in ways that have implications for EU identity formation. They are national/almost-national/non-national and European/almost-European/non-European. Certainly, these three triads of identity relations are not identical. But rarely can the meaning of any one of them be understood without consideration of the others. The meaning each takes, as well as the relationship among them, is itself discursively produced and maintained. It is achieved through articulations
that fix their differences. Together, they form a chain of signifiers, empty of any pre-discursive meaning and reliant upon each other to sustain a partial fixity within any given discourse.

In this study, these three triads will be considered as one whenever possible, and described often in the short-hand of *European/almost-European/non-European*. There are two reasons for doing so. First, collapsing them serves the interest of conciseness. So long as they are unpacked when necessary, their synthesis within the discourses studied here should not pose any significant theoretical problems. After all, it is not to claim that European, EU, and national identities are the same, only that they are mutually constitutive as the structuring assumptions of some discourses. For example, the identity of a Nigerian migrant living in Germany might be classified as non-European, non-citizen of the EU, and non-German; however, to a considerable and growing extent, that is but one thing. In that instance, each of those categories is deriving meaning from another, with any ultimate meaning indefinitely postponed. Given that, the arguments made in subsequent chapters will be clearer if one set of terms is used predominately.

A second reason for collapsing the three triads is that, while some precision may be lost in doing so, more problems arise in keeping them separate. No small amount of controversy surrounds the precise relations among them and, unfortunately, an answer to that puzzle is beyond the scope of this study. The nature of the relations between national identity and European identity has proven particularly elusive. Opinion is split on whether these identities are nested, cross-cutting, or separate; how researchers can reliably measure them; and whether they even matter for broader questions of
integration.\textsuperscript{14} From a discursive perspective, the difficulty in pinning down the relationship is no surprise. “European” and “British,” for example, are two floating signifiers undergoing constant efforts to fix their meanings. The tenacity of these terms is their ability to mean different things in different contexts. They have a very different relationship within, say, a discourse of economic management than they have within a discourse on European drug policy.

The convergence of “EU member” and “European” is even more pronounced. In many contexts, especially those related to enlargement, the terms are used synonymously. This reflects the degree to which the EU has achieved “identity hegemony” in defining Europe. Brigid Laffan (2004, 76) explains:

\begin{quote}
The EU, having striven for recognition, is now a powerful part of normative and cognitive structures in contemporary Europe. It is deeply embedded in political, social, and economic discourse in Europe. This has been achieved notwithstanding the reified nature of the nation-state as a social construction. Identity building has been fostered by membership, the external projection of an EU identity, the appropriation by the EU of the concept of “Europe,” and the cement provided by the founding values and the addition of EU symbols to Europe’s forest of symbols."
\end{quote}

Indeed, the Treaty of the European Union states, as one of its few explicit requirements for entry, that members must be “European.” Given the desirability of membership, that requirement has assured the EU a prominent position as the arbiter of “Europeanness.” Within the discourses on sex trafficking, the large amount of interplay between “the EU” and “Europe” is apparent, as well. Frequent invocations of European values to justify and further the EU’s involvement in anti-trafficking efforts are evidence of this, as is the ability of the EU to produce a seemingly endless number of articulations describing sex

\textsuperscript{14} For an ambitious and interdisciplinary effort to tackle these questions, see Herrmann, Risse, and Brewer 2004.
trafficking as “a European problem” that can be addressed best through EU measures. These articulations take many forms, from the grand (anti-trafficking Conventions) to the mundane (interagency memos and Expert Group reports).

Within discursive approaches, such conflations have been useful. Indeed, it is through recognition of the interplay between these categories that discursive approaches within EIS have made impressive strides. For the researcher focused on identity or integration, the point of discourse analysis is to understand how “Europe is composed as a knowable space of rule” (Walters 2002, 83). This requires a fair amount of attention to the formation of European and non-European identities, how they achieve (temporarily) stable meanings, the sites within the political realm at which they do so, and the effects they enable once they are established. The result of this line of inquiry is an increase in leverage for addressing several core questions that surround the integration process. One of these questions is how European governance is legitimized. Markus Jachtenfuchs, Thomas Diez, and Sabine Jung (1998) approached this question, examining how the identity and normative orientations of actors in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom have shaped EU integration to fit what each believes a legitimate EU polity should look like. Others have explored the discursive construction of Europe in order to explain how it has enabled one type of foreign policy and not another. Ulla Holm (1997), for example, has shown that the “discursive codes” of French political culture have regulated its foreign policies with other states on the topic

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15 In rare cases, they have considered the role of almost-European identities (see Neumann, 1999 and Rytkonen 2002).
of integration. Iver Neumann (2001) has done similar work on Norway. Finally, for many of those employing a discursive approach, the construction of Europe is assumed to occur through the establishment of a dichotomous relationship with another (Derrida 1992; Neumann 1996; Stråth 2000). Notably, that other may take the form of a threat. In a study quite compatible with this one, Ben Rosamond (2001, 168) deconstructs globalization discourse in Britain to expose its role in constructing “Europe as a valid space.” He describes how this process works:

1. the recognition of a particular problem, challenge or threat;
2. the perception of the need and/or right for there to be European level solutions (as opposed to separate national level strategies) and/or for the existing European level governance structure to undergo change to address the problem; and
3. the emergence of a consensus about a particular conception of a regional space in the minds of key actors.

This simple, three-step process identified by Rosamond illustrates nicely the necessity and advantage of recognizing the interplay between sets of signifiers. National identity, EU identity, and European identity structure simultaneously the meaning given to “a particular problem, challenge or threat,” all the while giving meaning to each other. Their relationship is summarized in Figure 3-1.

**Conclusion**

To summarize, discourses allow the observer to understand how specific performances produce specific identities. A study of discourse can operationalize the process-oriented approach discussed in the previous chapter by bringing to light a web of meaning through which performances will be read. The (re)production of the EU as a

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16 For a more thorough discussion of scholars whose work uses discourse analysis to explain foreign policy, see Wæver 2004, 205-207.

17 For a challenge to this idea, see Habermas 1992.
subject can be studied in this way, through its performances within the discourses on specific issues. And if gender is accounted for, it will be found that these performances receive their full meaning only in connection to gender norms. The result is that, for the EU, as for all subjects, subjecthood and gender come as one package.

Since discursive approaches are, by themselves, without substantive content, an issue area must be delineated so that the EU’s performances, and the effects of those performances on its identity, can be observed. For that purpose, the issue of sex trafficking provides a useful case study. The chapters that follow will examine how discourses of sex trafficking coalesce, how they link to specific policies of protection, and how all of this produces the EU as a gendered political entity. It is to that task that the effort now turns.

Figure 3-1. The discursive universe of sex trafficking in Europe: the metanarrative
CHAPTER 4  
SEX TRAFFICKING IN EUROPE

In the debate over sex trafficking, one can observe both the performative nature of the European Union’s identity and the role that gender plays in the process. This makes it a useful issue through which to study the methods of identity construction discussed so far. But it is also more than that. There is something about sex trafficking that makes it a particularly fertile site for identity politics. As with other issues that incite moral panics, what is said about sex trafficking and about those involved in it seems to run much deeper than the issue itself. This chapter, along with chapter five, offers some explanations for why that is the case. Specifically, it argues that sex trafficking lies at the nexus of a number of salient issues for (supra)state identity building, specifically gender politics, immigration, and fears of the other. Or to put it another way, sex trafficking is understood through discourses that are readily translatable into other discourses that are, themselves, structured by questions of European identity. The close connection between sex trafficking and other hot issues in identity politics makes it useful for the purposes of EU-identity building. The issue carries with it a reservoir of representations that the EU can draw upon to create and legitimate itself as an actor. If one wishes to explore the convergence of performativity, gender, and identity, one would find few better realms.

Sex trafficking, then, functions as a privileged site in the discursive production of the EU. Within that site, the EU is constructed through a self-perpetuating cycle. First, the EU, in concert with other actors, gives meaning and differential status to the women and men involved in the practice. Those meanings, in referencing “Europe,” create a European space where EU policies may be applied. Those policies rely upon a rational-
protector model of masculinity, which establishes the EU as a masculine protector. As such, it is granted legitimacy in providing meaning and differential status to the women and men involved in the practice, thus beginning the cycle again. The remainder of this study is dedicated to unraveling this complicated and mutually-constituting relationship between the EU, sex trafficking, and the women and men involved. This chapter serves that end by outlining the discursive structure of the sex trafficking issue and by revealing that its constitutive power relies in large degree upon its connection with salient representations from related issues.

**Sex Trafficking: The Second Level of Discourse**

To understand how sex trafficking operates as a discourse through which gendered subjects, including the EU, are created, it is helpful to build upon the structure outlined in chapter three. Currently, there are two discourses that, together, comprise the discursive universe of the issue: sex trafficking as violence against women and sex trafficking as migration (see Figure 4-1).

These discourses are multi-level; they are, however, most coherently fixed (and thus decipherable) on the second level. For sex trafficking in Europe, the concepts of “violence against women” and “migration” serve as nodal points of the competing discourses. Each centers the meaning of sex trafficking, organizing the relations of the components to a degree that makes it possible to understand what the issue is. Each competing discourse may be thought of as a “structured totality.” This means that the discourses, taken together, account for most of what can be said “sensibly” about the topic. Therefore, discussions of sex trafficking in

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1 It is from these two discourses that the dominant debates over prostitution and trafficking described in chapter one are derived.

2 The portrayal of discourses through a multi-level chart was done before on a different issue by Ulla Holm (1997).
Europe will tend to occur within the parameters of the discursive structures portrayed in Figure 4-1. That is not to say that it is impossible to articulate the issue from a point outside. Indeed, that is precisely what is required to change the composition of the discursive universe. But the totalized quality of discourses means that it is difficult to do so and that such articulations are unlikely to resonate with the audience.

There are two immediate implications of this. First, it will be difficult for a person who understands sex trafficking through one discourse (say, as violence against women) to learn from the articulation of somebody who understands sex trafficking through the other discourse (as migration). Second, and more pronounced, it would be difficult for either of those people to learn from the articulations of somebody who understands sex trafficking through discourses outside of the framework. Those articulations would not fit within the patterns of meaning provided by either of the discourses and, as a result, would be hard to incorporate into either structure.

Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that the concepts “violence against women” and “migration” contain only a near-monopoly, and not a complete one, over the meaning of trafficking. The experience of a woman, who, through either of the two discourses, is brought into the debate over trafficking, contains elements that have meaning beyond the reach of each individual discourse, and perhaps beyond the reach of the discursive universe presented here.

The two sex trafficking discourses, while inherently unstable, have their instability compounded by two interrelated factors. First, the two discourses on sex trafficking share a high degree of *translatability*, meaning that there is high possibility for an actor “to make sense of an articulation from a different discursive position” (Diez 2001, 26).
Many elements of sex trafficking that are understood within a migration discourse can be understood easily through a violence discourse, and vice-versa. When a news report describes how a female sex worker was forced to turn over most of the money she had earned to her controlling pimp (e.g. Synovitz 2005), this may be interpreted as either economic violence or as a typical part of the migration experience (it is likely to be decried, either way). The translatability of events like this can be explained by the lack of concrete meaning held by frequently invoked floating signifiers within the trafficking debates. Floating signifiers are those elements that have not been fixed within a discourse, and thus can be articulated outside of a single discursive chain (Laclau and Mouffe 2001, 113).

Within the sex trafficking discourses, "exploitation" serves this role, signifying too much to be attached exclusively to violence or exclusively to migration. In fact, the oversignification of “exploitation” has manifested itself in very visible ways. The negotiations over the definition of trafficking to be included in the United Nations Protocol on Trafficking in Human Beings featured an explicit debate over what, exactly, “exploitation” signified. Those who viewed trafficking within the violence discourse (represented by the umbrella organization International Human Rights Network) argued that exploitation is the movement of women into the sex industry, as the sex industry, it was argued, is built upon sexual violence. A competing bloc, represented by the Human Rights Caucus and claiming that much of what is understood as trafficking is actually migration, sought a definition of “exploitation” that linked it to the specific ways in which the migrant sex workers are treated. By those within that bloc, “exploitation” was separated from the act of migration itself. The result of the struggle over the
meaning of “exploitation” was a compromise. While the agreed-upon definition of trafficking linked “exploitation” to the treatment of sex workers after their arrival, it left the decision on what constitutes exploitation to the discretion of the signatory states (Locher 2007, 317). The resolution, in essence, assured that the signifier “exploitation” would continue to float. The implication of this example for a discursive approach to sex trafficking is that a fair amount of interplay between the two discourses may be expected. Many events will find meaning simultaneously in both discourses.

Discourses of sex trafficking are translatable not only to each other, but to structures outside of the discursive universe, as well. A brief genealogy of the dominant sex trafficking discourse, which frames trafficking as violence against women, bears out this claim. The trafficking as violence discourse, which has left a longer paper trail, connects most clearly to the human rights discourse of the mid-1990s. A key occurrence in this linkage is the connection forged between “human rights” and “women’s rights” at the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. Shortly after the Vienna Conference, trafficking “became” a human rights issue, thus enabling a wider and more intense response from the European Parliament (which made the connection explicit in two resolutions it passed in 1993 and 1994) (Locher 2007). Because trafficking could be translated into a discourse on human rights, it was able to assume a meaning that demanded action. Those at the forefront of the anti-trafficking efforts found even more success following the Fourth World Conference on Human Rights in Beijing. “Violence against women” emerged as a metanarrative that lent conceptual clarity to trafficking by fixing its meaning around broad and powerful signifiers like “physical harm” and “bodily integrity” (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 171-2;
That “violence against women” was also readily translatable into human rights language only further solidified the coherence that trafficking achieved from being linked to both. Because of its connection to the “violence against women” metanarrative, trafficking could be understood through reference to the same partially fixed signifiers that centered the discourse on, for example, domestic abuse. Their translatability was enhanced by a shared metanarrative. This represents the second reason that there is a large amount of interplay between the two discourses of sex trafficking: their shared metanarrative.

The competing discourses on sex trafficking give meaning to the term by attaching it to floating signifiers like “exploitation,” and by articulating connections with other discourses outside the issue. Though the process is the same within each discourse, the resultant meanings that sex trafficking attain differ. This observation is important for understanding the contours of the debate over sex trafficking. Equally important, however, are the similarities between the different meanings of sex trafficking. Indeed, all meanings that it receives share a common denominator: European identity. They are built upon, and constrained by, partial fixations of European, almost-European, and non-European identity. These fixations constitute the deep-structure, or metanarrative,

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3 The “violence against women” metanarrative, though central to one of the trafficking discourses, is not portrayed in Figure 4-1 for two reasons. First, that metanarrative connects the discourse “trafficking as violence against women” to non-trafficking discourses, such as “genital mutilation as violence against women,” but not to the other trafficking discourse. Therefore, it falls outside of the discursive universe of sex trafficking. Second, the point of this study is to shed light upon, among other things, the reliance of all trafficking discourse upon a metanarrative of European identity. The relevance of the “violence against women” metanarrative, despite its relative absence in this study, serves nonetheless as a reminder that a discursive universe is not self-contained, but remains perpetually open to, and is thus subverted by, connections it cannot contain.

4 As explained in chapter three, European identity is increasingly appropriated by the EU through the latter’s invocation of the former in the justification of EU policies on sex trafficking. Likewise, the Europeanization of sex trafficking policies ensures that national differences are spoken for in terms of European identity, within this issue.
of the discourses. They represent the broadest set of assumptions that is shared by the discourses and as such, determine their conceptual limits.

Symbiotically, those identities that structure the meaning of sex trafficking – European, almost-European, and non-European – rely upon the issue to serve as a privileged site where they themselves may be “spoken into existence.” In other words, there is a two-way relationship between the metanarrative of European identity and the meanings of sex trafficking. Sex trafficking discourses limit the potential meanings of Europe and allow the concept to achieve some level of coherence. Sometimes these articulations on European identity are a part of the purposeful strategies of actors. Appeals to European identity can be an effective way to rouse sentiment and generate action on an issue. This has been a fairly common occurrence within the European Parliament, explicit in statements like, “such trade is a shame on our Europe, a Europe which…is increasingly less respectful of human dignity” (European Parliament 1997, quoted in Locher 2007, 285). Other times, the discourse on European identity acts silently as a structuring mechanism limiting the range of the debates over trafficking. As a result, these debates revolve around the question of whether “they” (sex workers from abroad) should have the same rights as “us” (Europeans) and around the assumption of whether “non-Europeans” have the same capacity for agency as “Europeans.”

Sex Trafficking as a Site of European Identity Formation

European identity can be expected to serve as a metanarrative for a number of issues. In that regard, sex trafficking is not unique. On any given day, there are myriad articulations, across a large number of policy areas, which bolster the EU’s identity as the legitimate actor on “European” matters. Nonetheless, there are several, interrelated reasons that account for why sex trafficking is not just another issue built upon a
difference of identities but is, instead, an extraordinarily productive site for European identity formation. These are the discursive connections that sex trafficking has with women, with migrants, and with a vaguely-defined foreign other. Each of these is potentially destabilizing of European identity and while, at first glance, each may seem to constitute a distinct threat, it is, in the end, impossible to separate them. They form a chain of signifiers, women-migrants-others, that represents an unresolved (and unresolvable) threat to European identity. Like all chains of signifiers, this one chases its tail, so that those involved in sex trafficking can be understood only by oscillating one’s mind across these terms.

That women would be the center of such productive discourse is no surprise. Feminist research has taught us to pay attention to the unique role that women play in the establishment of collective identities. A growing number of scholars have taken notice of the tendency for women to act (and be acted on) as reproducers of national difference. Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias (1989) discuss five such ways this occurs: through women serving as biological reproducers of the nation, reproducers of normative boundaries between groups, transmitters of culture, participants in the nation’s struggles, and signifiers of national differences. This last role is the most applicable to the case considered here, and it reveals that it is not unusual for a threat centered on women to be linked to threats posed by migrants and others. Tamar Mayer (2000, 10), in an edited volume on women’s deployment in nationalist tropes, notes, “When a nation is constructed in opposition to the other there emerges a profound distinction not only between us and them but also more pointedly, between our women

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5 See also Nagel 1998.
and theirs.” In this role, women become what Fredrik Barth calls “diacritica,” the slash in the self/other dichotomy (cited in Neumann 1999, 4-5). Their group differences (or purported differences) are taken as indicatory of national differences. Whether these beliefs are empirically valid or not, they serve to constitute national identity all the same. Within the social movements literature, similar dynamics have been observed. It is well established that gender sweeps into identity movements, even ones that are not focused on women. Verta Taylor (1999, 23), for example, has written on the effectiveness of gender symbolism in mobilizing collective action. In many cases, the symbolism takes the form of the virtuous woman who represents ‘purity’ of the nation (Nagel 1998, 255-6). Increased recognition of this process may be reflected in the number of works that employ it as a theme (Enloe 1989; Ahmed 1992; Hoganson 1998; Kapur 2002).

From this body of work, one learns that it is crucial to pay attention to how “other” women are represented. Such representations reveal efforts by nations to (re)establish their own collective identities. It is telling, then, that so many representations of “other” women, including many of those that describe sex trafficking, occur within a narrative of victimhood. Chandra Mohanty (1991) calls attention to this phenomenon in her article, “Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses.” There, she explains the constitutive effects of Western representations of “the third world.” The implicit goal of such representations has been not to uncover the contextual forces that disempower specific groups of women, but to establish the “fact” of victimhood and, thus, reify “the Western woman” as a privileged actor. She explains this process:

A homogenous notion of the oppression of women as a group is assumed, which, in turn, produces the image of an “average third world woman.” This average third
world woman leads an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and her being “third world” (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, etc.). This, I suggest, is in contrast to the (implicit) self-representation of Western women as educated, as modern, as having control over their own bodies and sexualities, and the freedom to make their own decisions (56).

Third world women figure strongly in trafficking discourses, particularly through “captivity narratives.” These stories focus on “the prison-like brothel, the lured or deceived female victim, and her heroic rescuers” (Soderlund 2005, 77). They are prominent in the “violence against women” discourse of sex trafficking. Of course, their prominence is explained more by the repetition they enjoy as articulations than by any objective truth they reveal about sex trafficking. After all, brothels employ many European prostitutes. Moreover, captivity is not a state of being that is unique to third world women. Nandita Sharma (2005, 65) criticizes such rhetoric for falsely constructing “captivity and freedom as diametrically opposed states of existence,” with the former characterizing non-Europeans and the latter characterizing Europeans. One quote from a Ukrainian woman exemplifies how these captivity narratives are used to establish the image of the naïve third world woman: “Can people really buy and sell women and get away with it? Sometimes I sit here and ask myself if that really happened to me, if it can really happen at all” (Hughes 2000, 625). Other times, the victim narrative is in the headline: “Traffickers’ New Cargo: Naïve Slavic Women” (Specter 1998); “Ukrainian Women – Victims of Sex Industry” (Karpacheva 1998).

Another common way in which innocence is established is through an emphasis on the woman’s poverty. Donna Hughes (2000, 644) goes so far as to suggest that poverty leads to a psychological condition – “depression of women’s psychological state with loss of self-esteem and hope for the future” – which, in turn, leads to a loss of
agency. The net effect is that the sex worker is recast as a victim of trafficking - an innocent girl, powerless, stripped of agency and in need of rescue. As an effect, the European (non-migrant) prostitute is constituted uniquely as a subject capable of making rational, free choices.

These examples illustrate Chandra Mohanty’s argument: discourses of victimhood applied to women are key mechanisms for the (re)constitution of others. Those others are not just the women who have victimhood written upon them, but the collective identities for whom their bodies (involuntarily) speak. Because of Mohanty’s work, it has been easier to recognize how the construction of European identity can occur through the debates over sex trafficking. Articulations on sex trafficking provide a particular understanding of some of Europe’s migrants and, thus, provide an understanding of Europe itself. This is possible because both sex trafficking discourses provide symbolically rich subject positions for non-European sex workers. Attempts to fix the identities of such workers serve inevitably to fix the meaning of European, almost-European, and non-European.

Taking this logic further, sex trafficking can be understood as an issue that is about not only women, but sex, too. Therefore, the ways in which it is represented have implications for the sexual organization of European societies. The consumption of the services provided by sex workers, whether they are willing providers or not, affects not only patterns of relations among men and women, but the spatial and temporal ordering of sexuality in the city, as well. Given that, the presence of immigrant sex workers alone could produce the type of moral panic (with its attendant question of “who are we?”) that Europe has experienced. But add to that the dilemma of European depopulation,
expressed in the pronatalist policies that states are adopting to encourage procreative (rather than strictly recreational) sex, and sex trafficking becomes an issue of serious consequence to the future of Europe.

Much of the impetus for the current moral panic surrounding trafficked women can be attributed to the large-scale migration of Eastern women into EU countries. This, too, is a case of old wine in new bottles: The nineteenth century campaigns against the White Slave Trade were largely reflecting racialized fears of immigration. The speed with which the current trafficking narratives have proliferated suggest that Europe has been again experiencing what Kai Erikson has termed a “boundary crisis” (Grittner 1990, 120), brought on to a significant extent by the increased presence of migrants. Those who are women, migrants, and sex workers become a symbolically significant site for the re-inscription of boundaries, for the yoking that is necessary for the production of political subjecthood. This explains the recent commotion in Germany over the accidental granting of visas to Ukrainian “prostitutes and criminals.” In 2005, news surfaced that, a few years earlier, thousands of visa applications were approved by the German consulate in Kiev without the requisite background checks. Opposition parties hammered the government while stories ran in the German press with headlines like, “Country Invaded by East European Prostitutes.” Interestingly, this situation was brought about by Ukraine’s attempt to position itself as European by abolishing visa requirements for EU citizens. In this case, lax visa procedures on the part of Germany fed a moral panic surrounding the “Slavic beauties,” 120,000 of which “invade” Germany and other western European countries every year.
Moral panics, and the boundary crises they reflect, often result not from new people, but from new norms, especially of the sexual variety. According to Grittner (1990, 66), that tendency accounted for the paranoia surrounding the White Slave Trade in nineteenth-century Europe, as well as early twentieth-century United States. During that time, Victorian notions of “chastity, modesty, and respectability were under attack” and the campaigns against the White Slave Trade served to differentiate sexuality that was safe and appropriate from that which was dangerous and inappropriate. Over the last twenty years, new norms towards prostitution have developed, reflected in its growing normalization.\(^6\) Certainly, this is less significant a change in sexual norms than that experienced in nineteenth-century Europe, but it likely accounts for some of the intensity of the current anti-trafficking campaigns. And it partly explains why migrant sex workers are assumed to be victims within the dominant (“sex trafficking as violence”) discourse: As European sex workers are seen less as victims and more as entrepreneurs, and as the victimization of sex work itself is less assumed, then there are fewer women for state bodies to protect or to rescue. The incentives to generate a discourse centered on the victimization of migrant sex workers increases.

**Conclusion**

Articulations made within the current discourses of trafficking will draw inevitably upon European identity. To some degree, this reliance of sex trafficking upon European identity reflects the power of the inside/outside logic of political communities. It is, after all, very difficult to speak of international issues without (re)producing, and thus

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\(^6\) Of course, there has been a counter-mobilization against the normalization of sex work, evident most clearly in the Swedish government’s 1999 decision to adopt an abolitionist stance towards the practice. This stance, however, was taken largely as a response to the sex trafficking discourse, which is itself a response to changing sexual norms. As such, it antedates the growing acceptance of sex work throughout Europe.
essentializing, differences between self and other. But, as this chapter has sought to
demonstrate, sex trafficking is more than that. Because of its attachment to migration
(those who have come) and others (those who may come), it is an issue that draws
heavily from the identity distinctions that comprise its metanarrative. Because of its
attachment to women and sexuality, which are themselves important symbolic media for
the representation of differences between collective identities, articulations within the
discourses are more likely to have an effect. And because the woman-migrant-other
chain links to other discourses that signify a threat to European identity, there is an
incessant demand to know more, to say more, and to act decisively – in short, to
perform.

The EU has responded to this call for performance, producing a mountain of
research aimed at uncovering the truth about sex trafficking. In so doing, it has
engaged in a process of self-reification that better establishes itself as an actor and
Europe as a domain for its actions. Chapter six will show how some of its performances
have helped constitute it as a masculine actor. Before that, however, it is useful to look
with more depth at how sex trafficking establishes specific identities. Chapter five does
this in two ways. First, it complicates the self/other orientation common to research on
identity by introducing the concept of the liminal. That allows for a more accurate
understanding of the discursive positioning of the subjects created through sex
trafficking discourses. Second, it focuses on the parallel construction of Ukraine and
Ukrainian sex workers to show how their representation is productive of Europe and
how that representation demands masculine performances from the EU.
Figure 4-1. The discursive universe of sex trafficking in Europe: two levels
CHAPTER 5
UKRAINE AND THE ROLE OF LIMINALITY

Introduction

In Kievan Russia there was a term for those nomads who settled on the borderlands of Russian territory, became agriculturalists, and in alliance with Russian princes took part in campaigns against their own nomadic kin: they were called ‘our poganyn’ (poganyn meant ‘pagan’ as well as ‘foreign’, ‘incorrect’, ‘unclean’). The oxymoron ‘our poganyn’ epitomizes the situation of the boundary (Lotman 1990, 137).

A useful, yet unrecognized way to study the identity formation of political bodies is through the concept of liminality. The application of this concept compliments and expands the study of identity carried out thus far. The previous chapter portrayed a number of subject positions that have been carved out within sex trafficking discourse. It argued that those positions are filled not only by women, but by the collective identities for which women are proxies. Those positions can be understood using the conventional self/other dichotomy that has been prevalent in feminist and constructivist work on identity.¹ Within sex trafficking discourse, the story was shown to be much the same, with a dichotomy of agent/victim forming on the individual level and Europe/East on the collective level.

Yet, that characterization, while useful, is incomplete. The binary differentiation of those identities, while a necessary part of the process, is unnecessarily restrictive in the European context. While the repeated contrast between the Western sex worker and the Eastern sex slave is useful for the construction of Europe, there is a complimentary dynamic driving the creation of a European zone vis-à-vis the East. That dynamic centers around the ambiguous identities that exist between those binaries – identities

¹ See chapter two for more discussion of such work.
that fall between self and other. These ambiguous identities are captured by the concept of liminality. Referring to the paradoxical state of belonging simultaneously to two seemingly mutually exclusive orders, liminality is a concept that has been underappreciated by IR scholars, even those writing about the discursive construction of the nation through the dichotomous establishment of a self and an other. Challenging this neglect, the argument here will frame liminality as a central component in the constitutive process that occurs through sex trafficking discourse.

This chapter, then, is about the production of liminal identities within sex trafficking discourse. The study of liminal identities is useful for understanding the gendered production of the European Union for several reasons. First, it reveals the kind of representations that are most salient for collective identity building: representations of liminality. Second, it observes a paradox at the heart of the yoking process; specifically, that the incomplete drawing of boundaries through discourse can be more useful than a completed process. Third, the case study offered here describes the creation of Europe as a knowable space of rule. The creation of European space is crucial for the EU. Such space generates the demand for EU performance and serves as an arena in which EU performances will be self-referencing. The liminality of the subjects in whose name it performs ensures that certain kinds of performances will be prevalent – performances that are protection-oriented. Within the realm of sex trafficking, protection-oriented performances can be expected to have a masculinizing effect.

To build the argument that liminal identities are useful for the performative production of the EU, the research here draws upon the writings of Anne Norton. Norton offers a template for understanding the role that liminality plays in the
construction of collective identity. Her template will be applied to the parallel stories of two actors who have privileged roles in the process of European identity formation: Ukraine and migrant Ukrainian sex workers. Both will be discussed as liminal figures – Europe’s pagans – existing simultaneously within and outside the idea of Europe. Their prominent position in the sex trafficking discourse serves a useful function. Through the representations of them, and the performance of policies aimed at their regulation, a European space is concurrently demanded and constituted.

This function assumes greater importance when one considers the position of Europe today. Indeed, it may be said that Europe needs its pagans more than ever. Europe’s Eastern borders have lost much of their former salience, evolving into “economic junctions” to meet the capital flows of the post-Cold War world. Traditional geopolitical markers now mean less, too. Many of the countries of the Near Abroad are positioning themselves for potential EU membership, and in so doing, coming to resemble those countries which are “properly European.” As a consequence of these changes it is becoming even harder to say with any certainty where Europe ends and not-Europe begins. Where one would expect to find the traditional indicators of such a boundary – different economic systems, political allegiances, or geographical features – one finds increasing ambiguity. This has ramifications for the EU’s ability to establish a “European space” – a sphere of activity in which its operation as a political actor is naturalized. The ability of the EU to create a European space will depend to a significant extent upon the degree to which it is recognized as acting on behalf of a common people who face common threats. In keeping with the constructivist framework of this project, it is paramount then to map where and how these common
people, and the common threats they face, are being established. And so the attention turns to the ambiguous boundaries of Europe.

**Liminality and Collective Identity**

The questions surrounding the relations between Europe and its East reveal an entrenched ambiguity: Should Ukraine soon be granted membership into the EU? How far should NATO expand? Should Europe embrace Russia, or is the latter destined to return to its czarist past? For the establishment collective identities, this ambiguity serves a purpose. It represents much more than the failure to demarcate clearly the boundaries of competing political orders. Rather, when one explores this ambiguity, one finds that it creates, reproduces, and reflects the meaning of the political orders that it, at first glance, appears to complicate. It indicates a paradox, and those actors who lie at the heart of this ambiguity are similarly paradoxical. How their paradoxical existence translates into collective identity formation is the subject of this section.

The concept of liminality and its function in the social order has been popularized by the anthropological work of Victor Turner (1969, 94-130). He conceives of it as a phase in the rites of passage of all cultural groups. Subjects undergoing a transition to a higher social position pass through the liminal stage on the way to reaching their new, ascribed status. While passing through this phase, their characteristics are ambiguous – they have been separated from their stable, earlier status and they have yet to take on the characteristics appropriate to their coming state. Temporarily, they exist outside “the network of classifications that normally locate states and positions in cultural space” (95). They appear sexless and anonymous, wearing no markings of status or identity. They are submissive, silent, and often humiliated by the community. The intended effect is the destruction of their previous status and the “tempering of their essence” so
that they may be molded into their new role (103). Turner infers from his observations of this process that the existence of liminal figures is important for the construction of the social group itself. The social group consists of a balance between structure and hierarchy on the one hand, community and non-differentiation on the other. These two coexisting "'models' for human interrelatedness" are revealed in the creation of the liminal, a period during which formal rules and statuses of the group become intertwined with the egalitarian social bond that they usually subsume. During the liminal phase, that social bond, which in another context could be threatening to the hierarchical structure of the group, is expressed and contained through ritual. The result is the mutual constitution of both models: the social bond is affirmed through a process of establishing status for a subject, and status is given meaning and legitimacy through a phase characterized by non-differentiation.

Turner's ideas have been extended usefully to the turf of political science. Anne Norton has written about the special role of liminars in the construction of national identity. In her book, *Reflections on Political Identity*, she offers a concise, useful description of the meaning of the liminar: "Liminality is a threshold state 'betwixt and between' existing orders. Liminals, whether their rites of passage are ritual or revolutionary, are between identities" (1988, 53). For Norton, as for Turner, liminals play a privileged role in the construction of collective identities. However, they do so in ways different than Turner imagined. Whereas Turner defined the liminar as a transitory figure awaiting a future status that is clear and assured, Norton presents the liminar as a constantly ambiguous being. Like a fish without scales (to which she compares it), the liminal figure is not passing through a transitory stage; it simply exists
in contradiction. For the social groups, which are, in her study, nations, its anomalous coding is too useful to be resolved. She posits multiple species of liminars, three of which receive extended consideration. In each case, the liminar is recognized as bearing traits that simultaneously mark it as similar to, and different from, the nation. Territorial liminars are those who live on the geographic boundaries of the nation. Norton considers the archetype of the territorial liminal to be the frontiersman: fiercely independent, beyond the reach of the law, yet willing to sacrifice for the nation.

Intellectual liminars reject the sacred doctrines of the state. Those who fall into this category include madmen, traitors, reformers, and bohemians. Structural liminars are those who are otherwise “removed from the centers of economic, social, and political power” (74). Among these Norton counts women, the poor, and ethnic minorities. The three species (and sub-species) of liminality are not exclusive; often, the liminality of a group will be derived from several sources. For example, it is not uncommon for the territorially liminal (those living in the hinterlands) to be ethnically liminal as well (marked with traits of a competing nationality). Significantly, each of these liminars is marked by the presence of contradictory traits. Each bears the markings of competing orders and, as a result, signifies too much to be incorporated wholly into any of the competing political orders. This is a noticeable divergence from Turner’s conception of the liminal: a subject marked by the absence of all identifying traits.

It is Turner’s belief that the transition through liminality is a purposeful process. He suggests that the liminal stage in rites of passage provides the opportunity for the community to temporarily subsume its hierarchical organization and nourish the egalitarian social bond lying at the heart of the community. Likewise, Norton believes
that the central importance of the liminal stems from their role in the formation of a collective (national) identity. But the opportunity provided by the liminar is one of reflection not, as Turner believes, one of structural inversion. Their constitutive role results from the mere acknowledgment of their existence (which is the recognition of their in-between status) by the non-liminal members of the nation. In this regard, liminars are passive. Because of the liminar’s similarity to the nation, it serves as a “mirror” to that nation. The likeness reflected by the liminar provides a useful recognition of the nation’s own identity. At the same time, the difference between the two leads to reflection among the masses, recognition of what unites them, and ultimately, the founding of the nation (57). In recognizing the liminar, then, the nation is establishing a triadic relationship: consciously differentiating between itself, an object of likeness (the liminar) and an object of difference (the other) (54). This is the constitutive moment for the nation – born, as Norton observes, out of contradiction.

This process requires an act of abstraction on the part of the masses. In their recognition of the liminal, they are deciding upon those “ideal traits that henceforth define the nation” (54). Such a decision, occurring at a high degree of abstraction, is not only the foundational moment for the nation, but for the legitimacy of the ruling regime. Norton (53) explains:

The recognition of qualities that distinguish the polity from all others entails the propagation of abstract principles against which the conduct of the regime and constitution of the nation may henceforth be measured. The qualities definitive of the nation are abstracted from it and made objective. The citizens, having before them an objective principle of nationality, may thereafter determine whether the regime, or the regime’s actions, are appropriate to the nation. This is the beginning of legitimacy.

It is not, however, the final form that legitimacy takes. The initial act of abstraction, which produces the ideal image of the nation, results in the alienation of the people from
the nation. This alienation is destined to grow as the state becomes increasingly formal and rational – a process that lengthens the distance between the phenomenal and subjective experience of the nation and the ideal, objectified nation (54). In the latter, legitimacy finds its home, as it is there that the definitive characteristics of the nation have been posited. Where this leads (though it is not explored by Norton) is clear: The legitimacy of state action becomes separated from its effects upon lived experience and unaccountable to those upon whom it impinges. Instead, legitimacy is achieved through correspondence with an ideal. This ideal may shift over time; hence, the nation’s observance of the liminal is ongoing, invoking a constant appraisal and redefinition of the self. Thus, the frequent reassertion, and periodic renegotiation, of boundaries is to be expected.

This is the template that Norton provides. It is useful in foregrounding the role that liminality plays in the constitution of the nation. And it suggests a way that legitimacy follows from the constitutive act. By amending this template, much of the insight it provides can be applied to the subject of this study. Three modifications, in particular, are required. First, Norton’s discussion of liminality is built upon a different level of analysis than the one employed here. While she focuses primarily upon groups within a nation, this chapter will discuss different constellations of actors. Europe, however it is defined, does not constitute a nation; thus, the liminars discussed in this chapter (Ukraine and Ukrainian migrant sex workers) are not constituted as the liminars of a nation, but of a larger and (usually) less salient collective identity: European. Nonetheless, there does not appear to be any reason why Norton’s argument would not survive this change of context. Identity formation should proceed along the same lines
in regards to supranational identities, though one might expect the process to be less intense and complete.

Second, Norton does not consider in any depth the role of the state in the propagation of the nation’s idealized image. In general, she undervalues the power of the state in guiding the process of identity formation. Yet, if the state gains and maintains legitimacy through reference to the ideal traits of the nation and the state is in a privileged position of authorship in the representation of the traits that mark the liminal, the other, and the self, then the state is in a position to discursively reproduce itself. Any actual discrepancies between what it represents as the nation and what comprises the “real” nation are of little consequence. This idea lends great significance to the EU’s “expertise” on sex trafficking. Its ability to articulate the characteristics of the East, the qualities of the European, and the mark of the liminal, within that issue area, afford it the privilege of self-authorship.

As a final adjustment, Norton’s template can be expanded to consider the possibility that specific representations of self, liminar, and other may go beyond constituting the nation; they may themselves confer power upon the state. They do this by first masculinizing the state, discursively, and then demanding the exercise of power that such masculinity legitimizes. For example, if the other is constituted as feminine, and the liminal is recognized as androgynous, then not only is it likely that the self will be constituted as masculine, but that masculine behavior (such as the protection of “vulnerable” people) will be demanded by the citizenry. Such a demand would, as Wendy Brown (1995) has argued, confer prerogative power (and with it, legitimacy) upon the state. It would have authority to act because it is masculine. Thus, the act of
constitution, occurring through representation, is not enough to draw conclusions about the future subject-hood of the state. The identities themselves, and their gender, must be considered first. The trajectory Norton posits from recognition of the liminar to the establishment of a legitimate, naturalized, state may be too direct. But by amending Norton’s template in the three ways suggested here, a clearer picture of the connection between the representation of the liminal and the creation of embodied actors can be traced.

**A Note on Case Selection**

The remainder of this chapter is dedicated to applying the ideas of the previous section to two actors who figure prominently in the sex trafficking debate: Ukraine and migrant Ukrainian sex workers. It is worth discussing briefly why this chapter focuses on these two actors. The attention given here to Ukraine is not intended to suggest that Ukraine’s role as a European liminar has been wholly unique. Indeed, what is often ambiguously termed “Eastern Europe” may be accurately thought of as the liminal frontier of Europe. Countries like Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, and Turkey all enjoy, or have enjoyed, liminal European status in varying degrees at various times. They shift from European, to almost-European, to not-European as the need arises and new discourses are established. But such fluid possibilities for each country do not necessarily exist within a given discourse. Rather, a single discourse may constitute one country as utterly European and another country as entirely non-European. The cumulative effect of multiple discourses (that is, the ultimate relation of one of these countries to Europe) may not be so clear. So to argue that Ukraine is a liminal figure is not to preclude other countries from holding that status.
Within sex trafficking discourse, Ukraine’s liminality appears more evident than that of most other countries. Of course, each of the countries mentioned above are well-represented in this discourse. They are not, however, represented in the same way. Consider Turkey. Certainly, it maintains a liminal European status, and does so through many of the same representations that establish Ukraine as a liminal actor. Several of the characteristics and processes described below – characteristics and processes that establish Ukraine’s liminal identity – are found also in EU-Turkish relations: the inscription of territorial liminality, the schizophrenic allegiances produced by internal political divisions, the maintenance of temporal liminality through promises of future membership. The effect may be the same, as well: the establishment of European identity through the simultaneous reflection and contradiction of it. Similarly, one finds some parallels between these two countries within sex trafficking discourse. Like Ukraine, Turkey is viewed as a major transit and destination country for trafficked women (U.S. State Department 2007). Also, it is claimed that some of the dominant images of the sex trafficking narrative – specifically, the kidnapping of white women – have their origins in Turkey.

Yet, Turkey’s liminal status is less stark than that of Ukraine. While it has been occasionally considered a partially-European country, it has more often been depicted as an outright non-European body. Iver Neumann (1999, 39), arguing precisely this point, states that Turkey has been Europe’s “dominant other” throughout the history of the European state system. He continues, drawing upon the observations of Hedley Bull and Adam Watson: “Although there was interaction between the Ottoman Empire and the European powers in war and commerce, ‘it was specifically denied on both
sides that the European powers and Turkey possessed any common interests or values...and there were no common institutions, such as united the European powers, in whose working they co-operated” (Neumann 1999, 40; Bull 1977; Watson 1987). For the international society that would emerge from Western Christendom, “the Ottoman Turk” was a valuable other, fulfilling the role previously played by “the Saracen.” In more recent times, however, Neumann seems less sure of Turkey’s role. Its status as other was complicated when the moniker, “the sick man of Europe” became central to European understandings of Turkey in the mid-19th century. Neumann (1999, 55-63) mentions that this designation elevated Turkey to liminal status by suggesting that it could become European if only it could “heal itself.” Moreover, Turkey became less valuable as an other (and thus, less clearly represented as one) in the early-20th century. This was due to two events: the emergence of modernizing trends within the country and the emergence of the Soviet Union as a more significant foil for European identity. Ultimately, Neumann does not define Turkey’s current status, only reiterates that current representations are built upon past ones, and that the most powerful representations from the past have portrayed Turkey as other. Among the most prominent of these past representations that echo into the present day are the religious and cultural differences between Europe and Turkey. Debates over Turkey’s potential membership into the EU often reference this point (and when religion and culture are not discussed, they are often assumed to be an underlying explanation for the EU’s ongoing reluctance to extend membership to Turkey). From Neumann’s reading of history, one is left to conclude that Turkey has been more forcefully represented as non-European than as quasi-European.
Within current sex trafficking discourse, Turkish women do not appear as quasi-European, either. That it is to say, Turkish women do not appear as a liminal group. In fact, Turkish women do not appear much at all. Their invisibility accounts for their exclusion from the analysis in this chapter. Ultimately, the argument here is built upon the representations of women. Since Turkish women are not a part of the discourse, it may be presumed that the discourse does not provide them with a role in constructing Europe or the EU. The empirics suggest why they are absent: Turkey is not a source country. And while one must be careful when citing any figures on the nationalities of trafficking victims, competing sources suggest that there are not large numbers of Turkish women being trafficked into Europe. The US State Department (whose methodology is not reported) does not categorize Turkey as a source country (U.S. State Department 2007). Such categorization is supported by a 2002 report for the International Organization for Migration (Laczko et. al. 2002). Gathering data from NGOs that assist trafficking victims, the authors of the report provide a breakdown by nationality of trafficking victims in multiple countries and regions. For the years reported, Turkish women did not represent a significant percentage of victims in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Austria, Italy, Kosovo, or Bosnia-Herzegovina.

For Ukrainian sex workers, the situation is quite different. They appear as a significant group within each of the report’s country breakdowns, with the exception of Belgium. But it is not their presence in these charts that makes them a useful group to

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2 It is recognized that the empirical evidence of sex trafficking is itself a constitutive part of the discourse on sex trafficking and a reflection of it. They are not offered here with the intention of suggesting absolute conclusions about the scope or nature of sex trafficking.

3 It is possible that Turkish women comprise a large percentage of the categories “other” and “unknown,” the size of which varies considerably across the reports.
study. Rather, it is their presence in the stories told about sex trafficking that is revealing. Despite their presence, they do not dominate the report’s charts, never amounting to more than 16% of trafficked women assisted within any country. Yet, they appear with great regularity in the stories told about trafficked women. When trafficking is described through the story of a naïve young girl who mistakenly put her trust in traffickers who promised her a better life in Europe, that girl is often Ukrainian. The frequency with which the story of a young Ukrainian girl is reported (examples of which will be discussed later) would suggest a much greater presence of Ukrainian migrants “on the ground” than suggested by the report. The overrepresentation of Ukrainian sex workers in the discourse may be explained by any number of variables. For instance, the large Ukrainian ex-patriot community may be more effective at producing and disseminating information about their ethnic kin than other ex-patriot communities. This information would include, of course, the phenomenon of sex trafficking. Alternatively, those writing the stories may be more likely to speak Ukrainian (or Russian) than the languages of victims belonging to other nationalities. If so, they would be better able to gather some basic facts from Ukrainian victims than from, for example, Nigerian migrants, who, even though they appear to represent the largest group of trafficked women in Italy, come from a country that is, in parts, even more linguistically foreign to Europeans than Ukraine. Or, Ukrainian victims may receive more press because it is recognized by the authors that the stories they write will have a greater relevance and impact if the girl is from a country that the audience has heard of and can locate on a map. For this reason, Moldovan girls may garner less attention and empathy than Ukrainian girls.\footnote{If this is the case, then the liminality of the country itself would be a factor accounting for the production}
explanation may lie in the research partnerships Western academics have formed with Ukrainian organizations. Such a partnership accounts for Donna Hughes' influential studies of sex trafficking (Hughes 2000; Hughes and Denisova 2002). Certainly, the reason behind the overrepresentation of Ukrainian women matters for questions of intentionality, but in regards to identity formation, the effect is the same: The representations constitute Ukrainian women as liminal figures to the "European identity."

Due the overrepresentation of Ukrainian women, the choice to focus on them is justifiable. This project is a study of discourse and Ukrainian women are the most prominent figures in that discourse. Beyond that reason, focusing on Ukraine and Ukrainian women is useful for two other reasons. First, it allows this chapter to explore how the relationship between these two actors – Ukraine and its migrant sex workers – sustains the liminality of both. The production of Ukraine's liminality is assured through the representation of migrant Ukrainian sex workers just as, complementarily, the liminality of these migrant women is assured by those discourses asserting the liminal status of their "homeland." In this way, the liminal statuses of these actors are mutually reinforcing. And it is easy to see how their mutual reinforcing statuses can manifest themselves in EU policy. Every story about migrant Ukrainian "sex slaves" references, either implicitly or explicitly, the poor state of the Ukrainian economy and its inability to provide opportunities for women. This iteration makes the prospect of Ukrainian membership in the EU increasingly undesirable. Reversing this situation, one finds the same process occurring. Because Ukraine is continually represented as not-quite-

5 More accurately, it makes postponement of Ukrainian membership in the EU increasingly desirable. Given the liminal status of Ukraine reinforced by this discourse, future membership should seem quite plausible, if not inevitable.
European, the obligation of the EU to migrant Ukrainian sex workers remains low. Simply removing the not-quite-Europeans from Europe becomes an efficient solution. Either way, the EU is more clearly delineated.

The second purpose served by an emphasis on Ukraine and Ukrainian women is that it allows the analysis here to build upon feminist theories of gendered state-building. These theories have explored the ways in which political bodies are built upon representations of women’s bodies. In chapter four, it was argued that representations of Eastern sex workers conjured through the prism of sex trafficking discourse have had constitutive effects for European women and, by extension, for Europe itself. Here, through a focus on a marginalized state and the marginalized women of that state, that argument can be extended further. A more specific identity for Ukraine, built upon more specific representations of its migrant women, can be posited as evidence in support of the framework established by those feminist theorists.

This chapter turns now to the discourse surrounding these two groups of liminal actors. Exploring their liminality offers clues to how the meaning of Europe is made. In particular, two species of liminality have played roles in defining Europe: territorial and temporal. Over time, the representations establishing Europe’s liminars along these dimensions have changed and new sites for these representations have developed. The result remains the same: the liminality of Eastern bodies serves as a mirror for understandings of European identity. The net effect of these representations is to create subjects that enable the EU to act as a masculine protector and demand that it does so.
Europe and Ukraine

“Caught Between East and West” reads the title of a recent report on Ukraine’s migration problems (Malynovska 2006). The title reflects a commonly held conception of Ukraine. But what gives people impression that Ukraine is “caught between East and West”? What features inscribe it with liminality? This section considers two dimensions along which Ukraine has been represented as in between regions – two species of liminality that grant Ukraine a significant role in European identity formation. These species are territorial and temporal.

The argument of this section builds on the work of Iver Neumann. In his book *Uses of the Other: “The East” in European Identity Formation*, Neumann (1999) describes the constancy with which Europe has defined itself by differentiating itself from its neighbors (others) to the East. In his estimate, no country has played this part better than Russia. Neumann (67) finds indications as far back as the fifteenth and sixteenth century of Russia being seen as a “liminar case of European identity.” The eighteenth century saw Russia portrayed as a well-behaved barbarian on the path of self-civilization (74-78). In the nineteenth century, Neumann (95-96) reports on representations which suggest that, “as a shard of a broken Europe, Russia could be held up as a mirror in which Europe could find its way back to itself…” Conflicting representations of the time portrayed it as “in a state of transition from barbarism to civilization” (95). Through the twentieth century, Soviet Russia regressed from “Europe’s radical brother” to “an Asiatic/barbarian political power” (101-102). Weaving through this wide range of representations is a central theme: Russia’s liminal status.

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6 It is important to note that Neumann considers “the liminar” to be a form of “the other.” In this regard, Neumann’s understanding of liminality differs from that which informs the arguments of this chapter.
Russia, in each of its many discursive incarnations, has been granted a crucial ambiguity in its relation to Europe. Rather than being represented as precisely non-European, it has been seen as “irregular.” Given the possibility, at times inevitability, of being European, it has always fallen just short of that status. Neumann (110) observes: “Russia stands out for its five hundred-year history of always just having been tamed, civil, civilized; just having begun to participate in European politics; just having become part of Europe.” Thus, Russia’s ambiguity is crucial. As the boundary between Europe and “the East,” it is subject to periodic oscillations that pull Russia closer and push it away, inscribing varying degrees of Europeanness upon it. The aim, from the standpoint of European identity, is not the reconciliation of these contradictory tendencies, but the maintenance of Russia’s ambiguous status.

Strangely, Neumann does not consider Ukraine’s role as a liminar of Europe. This may be due to the conflation of Russia and Ukraine (both real and imagined) throughout European history. Or it may be explained by Neumann’s primary interest in cataloging Europe’s others, rather than its eliminars. Or it may be simply a matter of case selection. Regardless, it is hard to deny that Ukraine has played a liminal role. Even more so than Russia, Ukraine has been a key battleground in debates over European identity. Whereas Russia often slips into the role of the other, Ukraine’s liminality is more consistent. This is apparent within the dominant discourse on sex trafficking, in which sex trafficking is understood as violence against women. It is Russian mobs that “harvest the innocence” of vulnerable women. The transnational networks they establish to traffic women defy not only European order, but the sovereign state system itself. Even beyond sex trafficking discourse, whatever liminal
status Russia enjoys disappears when Ukraine is inserted into the discourse of European identity. Within the triadic relationship Russia quickly assumes the status of other, the non-European. It represents an “alternative path” tugging at the westward-leaning Ukraine from the north and the east.

**Territorial Liminality**

At issue has been Ukraine’s attempt to discursively situate itself within the region awkwardly understood as Central Europe. Since Central Europe’s boundaries are particularly fuzzy – historian Andrew Wilson (2000, 285) describes it as “a region with a west but no east” – Ukraine’s place within it is a point of open contention. According to Wilson (285), the “Ukrainian geographic imagination” places Ukraine in Central Europe. At times, this belief is expressed quite literally: Western-oriented Ukrainians often claim that the geographic center of Europe is found in the Zakarpattia region, in Southwestern Ukraine (Nynka 2002, Zarubinskyi 2005). So predominant is the belief in Ukraine's European identity that Wilson (285) claims it is “a central component of the Ukrainian national idea.” Central Europeans, on the other hand, have tended to hold a less certain view. Wilson notes Ukraine’s spotty inclusion in the concept of *Mitteleuropa* at the turn-of-the-nineteenth century. A century later, parts of Ukraine (up to the river Dnieper) were seen as *Mitteleuropish*, but the rest was relegated to *Hintereuropa*. When debates over the idea of Central Europe rekindled in the 1980s, Ukraine, still a Soviet Socialist Republic at that time, was markedly absent. Its absence from these debates was not surprising: the “re-Europeanization of Central Europe” was built upon a moral appeal to the West, one that was premised upon differentiation from its “barbarous”
Eastern neighbors (Neumann 1999, 158). The 1990s found Ukraine no less isolated. Czech president Vaclav Havel stated Ukraine’s absence more clearly than most, claiming that Ukraine’s future was as a part of the “Euro-Asian entity,” not the “Euro-Atlantic region.” Thus unable to return to a Central Europe of which it was never clearly a part, Ukraine has since been left the onerous task of redefining itself as a Central European country (Wilson 2000, 287-8).

At the forefront of efforts to redefine Ukraine is Ukraine’s president, Viktor Yushchenko. Yushchenko realizes that these efforts complement his hard, ongoing push for EU membership. In February 2007, he restated Ukraine’s intentions: “We will consistently seek integration into European institutions and will do it as soon as possible” (Itar-Tass 2007). The following day, he spoke of Europe’s vision of his country, stating, “Europe underestimates the role and place of Ukraine. This is a topic for discussion that is needed and should be prepared in the future…Europe should speak in one voice” (newKerala.com 2007). The wording of these comments is notable, as it suggests that EU membership for Ukraine would unify Europe (“speak in one voice”), rather than Europeanize a Eurasian Ukraine. For Yushchenko, Ukraine is already a European country. Other pro-European politicians have followed the same strategy of discursively writing Ukraine into Europe through statements of a similar style. Roman Shpek, the Ukrainian Ambassador to the EU, recently stated: “Let me put it very simple. There will just never be a Europe without Ukraine. Without Ukraine there will be only a half-Europe” (Shpek 2007; boldface in original).

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7 There is special significance to Ukraine’s exclusion from these debates, as they prepared the “intellectual groundwork” that allowed for the admission of Poland, Hungary, and Czech Republic into NATO and the EU (Wilson 2000, 287).
Ukraine’s efforts at Europeanization have been hindered considerably by its special relationship with Russia. Russia’s domination (real and imagined) of Ukraine has pulled the latter away from the idea of Europe, leaving it to be categorized as a hybrid, Eurasian entity. While this tendency was most marked during the lifespan of the Soviet Union, it persisted in the years following Ukrainian independence. A 1993 debate in the pages of Foreign Affairs reveals the difficulty the West has had in reading Ukraine. In that debate, Steven Miller and John Mearsheimer wrestled with the question of what Ukraine should do with the nuclear stockpile it inherited after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Miller (1993), in an article titled, “The Case Against a Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent” reasoned that Ukraine was not sufficiently independent of Russia and, thus, could not be trusted to successfully manage a nuclear arsenal. His article offers several revealing excerpts:

"Far from being geo-graphically distant and highly independent, Ukraine and Russia are neighboring states with borders still described by some in Moscow as merely ‘administrative’; and they are deeply interdependent, economically and culturally."

“…deterrence will not work well when dealing with ambiguous borders or disputed territories—a point that may be highly relevant to Russian-Ukrainian relations.”

“Ukraine may be, in the manner of the two Germanies, particularly vulnerable to espionage, given that Russia and Ukraine share both the Russian language and Slavic back-grounds, while millions of people with Russian ancestry reside with-in Ukraine's borders” (69-74).

As these excerpts suggest, Miller portrays Ukraine as a country that is not fully independent. More precisely, it is not fully differentiated from Russia (which is represented, not surprisingly, as a non-Western, potentially antagonistic actor). This paradox is not (indeed, cannot) be resolved.

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8 Yet, despite its quasi-sovereign status, Ukraine is, according to Miller (1993, 78), a European state. This paradox is not (indeed, cannot) be resolved.
rendering of Ukraine has proven to be more than a temporary effect that lingered through the disruption of the Cold War symbolic order. The perceived lack of differentiation between Ukraine and Russia has continued in the years since its reemergence on the map. Zbigniew Brzezinski, in a 2000 speech aptly titled, “Ukraine is not Russia,” claims “there is a tendency – particularly among Americans, but not just Americans – to have a rather blurred view of Ukraine, and in thinking about Ukraine’s future, in thinking about Ukraine’s current reality, to somehow or other merge it with one’s perception of Russia: to think of it, to some extent, as a seamless continuity, even if it is a separate identity.” Such perceptions persist even after the historic elections of 2004. To many, Ukraine is still a part of Russia’s “vast continental space” or is Russia’s “gateway from Asia to Europe” (Wilson 2000, 284).

Fully aware of how this link with Russia has dragged Ukraine into “‘Eurasia' or beyond,” the Ukrainian ‘Occidentalist’ tradition has sought to counter it (Wilson 2000, 283-284). One way to effectively do so has been to flip the meaning of Ukraine’s proximity to Russia. Using its territorial liminality as an asset, former Ukrainian president Leonid Kravchuk claimed that Ukraine “could become the force that defends the West from Communism” (quoted in Wilson 2000, 284). This image of Ukraine as a buffer, perhaps even as a defender, against the Russian hordes defines it as a frontier European nation. Interestingly, this is the very representation offered by John Mearsheimer (1993) in his counterpoint to Miller’s Foreign Affairs article. According to Mearsheimer, Ukraine’s most useful function would be to serve as a “key buffer” between Russia and Germany (a function that could be served only if Ukraine retained nuclear weapons). If they stick, such representations could do much to further Ukraine’s
integrationist desires. As Norton (1988, 61) observes, the territorial liminar, as the “gatekeeper” for the nation, is most zealously claimed by that nation as one of its own: “Efforts to rhetorically establish the nationality of the frontiersmen, and their liminal status – that is, their significance as the line defining the state – prompt those nearest the center to portray the frontiersman as the national par excellence.” The frontiersman is zealously claimed because of what he signifies: Incorporation into a foreign body. Due to this ever-present possibility, the liminal figure on the territorial fringes of the political order provide that order with the opportunity to extend itself, if it so desires. In the case of Ukraine, the values of the European order may be exercised to rescue the country on the frontier (and, symbolically, Europe itself) from conquest and incorporation into the other.

Of course, there is no consensus within Ukraine that the country should play such a role. The ambiguity of Ukraine’s identity is reflected in the deep societal divisions within the Ukrainian population. Indeed, Ukrainians seem to be having just as hard a time defining Ukraine’s place as everyone else. These divisions are reflected in (and, to some degree, perhaps caused by) Ukraine’s economic and political relations. In 2005, thirty-two percent of exports went to countries within the European Union; thirty-one percent went to Russia and other former Soviet republics (Bellaby 2005). Within the Ukrainian parliament, leftist parties have staunchly opposed a Europeanized Ukraine. In 2007, they refused to back the pro-Western diplomat Volodymyr Ohryzko as Ukraine’s foreign minister and turned up the pressure on Defense Minister Anatoliy Hrytsenko, an advocate of speedy accession into NATO (UkraineJournal.com 2007).

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9 Norton assumes that the nation always desires to extend itself. This reason for this assumption is unclear. Accordingly, the assumption is not incorporated into the argument of this chapter.
The Communist Party of Ukraine, which in 1994 claimed, “It is not true that we are returning to Europe” (Wilson 2000, 290) maintains considerable support for that same position today. Pan-(east) Slavism remains a very powerful force, evident in the protests in Kiev that broke out during a summit covering the issues of EU and NATO. Opposition to NATO membership is so entrenched that the pro-European faction of the government earmarked five million hryvni from the 2007 budget for campaigns to raise awareness about NATO’s activities and Ukraine’s integration with them.

Even alternative conceptions of the link between geography and identity tend to leave Ukraine in a rather liminal position. Ole Wæver’s discussion of European order is a good example (Wæver 2000). He proposes an understanding of European order as consisting of concentric circles (see Figure 7-1). The innermost circle signifies direct rule and is, not surprisingly, centered on Brussels. Moving from the center outwards, one moves from areas of dominion to areas of hegemony to independent states. He offers this conception, labeled “the integration scenario,” as a more accurate explanation of European relations after the Cold War. The alternative, Euro-skeptic conception of Europe (or fragmentation scenario) conceives of European order as characterized by four eccentric circles representing Russian, German, French, and Anglo-Saxon spheres (see Figure 7-2). In both of these scenarios, Ukraine is bisected by the lines of the circles. In the integration scenario, Ukraine’s most eastern areas fall under European hegemony, while the rest of the country is imagined as independent of European order. In the fragmentation scenario, Ukraine is crisscrossed by Russian, German, and independent orders. These illustrations speak volumes: In two competing
visions of Europe, Ukraine is unclassifiable, belonging simultaneously to different
categorical spheres.

**Temporal Liminality**

Ukraine’s temporally liminal status is revealed in the ongoing discussion over EU membership. The EU’s position has changed little from two years ago, when the EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council stated that, although the topic was not to be discussed at the time, Ukraine could apply for the bloc’s membership in the future (Mineyev 2007).

There is no shortage of statements on the part of Europe reaffirming the European orientation of Ukraine, but they are tempered in such a way as to suggest that Ukraine is *just* on the verge of joining. In 2005, the Council concluded, “The EU acknowledges Ukraine’s European aspirations and welcomes Ukraine’s European choice.” It lauded Yushchenko as a man who “clearly shares European principles and values.” Later that year, European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso added, “The future of Ukraine is in Europe, and now we are building that future with concrete steps” (Kyiv Post 2005). Through such an emphasis on the future, these statements present Ukraine as a country in a perpetual state of transition. Not only is it spatially liminal to Europe, occupying the frontier of Europe, but it is temporally liminal as well. With every passing year, it remains chronologically almost-European.\(^{10}\)

While the EU continues to promote the European orientation of Ukraine through vague assurances, it is clear that Ukraine will maintain its ambiguous status for some time yet. Despite Yushchenko’s persistent requests, the EU has refused to give Ukraine goals through which it can achieve EU membership, suggesting that perhaps

\(^{10}\) Neumann (1999, 10) observed similar representations of Russia in the five years following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.
Ukraine’s membership in the EU goes beyond the issue of economic or political indicators. In place of EU membership, the two parties continue to work within the European Neighbourhood Policy, the broad framework through which action plans are negotiated. (Reflecting its privileged status among the liminars, Ukraine has been designated as a "unique and important country" within that policy framework (quoted in Cole 2007.) Expectedly, Yushchenko’s government has been unhappy with the secondary status that the Neighbourhood Policy implies. Roman Shpek has voiced his government’s displeasure, complaining "Ukraine cannot accept to be treated in the same way as non-European countries." Indeed, the message could not be clearer: "Our country is in Europe. We are not a neighbour to Europe" (European Report 2007).

Returning to Wæver’s concentric circle framework, one finds an explanation of how the temporally liminal identity of Ukraine – and other Eastern countries, as well – can serve directly to strengthen the EU. According to Wæver (2000, 262-3), the appearance of progression is crucial to the Union’s strength and legitimacy. It will keep the EU as the “organizing factor” in the imagination of Eastern countries and it will demand that Europe actually integrates (most visibly through a healthy Franco-German partnership). However, the appearance of progression is difficult to maintain. It requires a balancing act: not expanding too fast while not slowing down too much. Progression is a temporal concept that, in this case, is destabilizing if it comes too fast and deadly if it stops altogether. Wæver argues that this balancing act is achieved through membership promises offered by the EU to its Eastern neighbors. He (263) explains:

The EU policy – which reflects the basic concentric circles pattern – is to avoid ever saying ‘no’. The answer is always ‘not yet’ or ‘yes, but’. The EU practice
towards the East is not to draw a line between those who are European and potential members and those who are not. With the possibility of drawing on the classical uncertainty about the Eastern boundary of Europe, the EU manages to place nobody as non-European but everybody as more or less European, more or less close to the centre (of Europe and of Europeanness). Applicants are layered, and although they try to produce a threat of ‘rejection shock’, the actual effect of the long queue is mostly to spur more efforts to advance. And as the first group gets closer to membership, the ‘yes, but but’ group moves up to ‘yes, but’ status (and they start to be more fully structured by the disciplining mechanism), and simultaneously the ‘yes but but but’ countries become ‘yes but but’s...in identity terms it means that ‘Europe’ is not defined negatively against (a spatial) non-Europe but temporally...membership is not denied but deferred...

If the East is in always advancing towards Europe, what is it moving away from?

Wæver’s answer is that the East is moving away from Europe’s own past, characterized by “power balancing, rivalry, and war” (279). This is Europe’s other, the “threat image” that presently constitutes Europe as an integrated, secure body. Ukraine, caught between this past and an integrated, European future, may be said to occupy a position of temporal liminality.

Broadly construed, this argument implicates the EU’s policies toward several of the Near Abroad countries in the maintenance of liminality for the purpose of the Union’s cohesion and growth. By ensuring that “the door is both shut and open” (in the words of the European Commission’s Commissioner for External Relations), the EU grants itself a future through an Eastward projection of its past (quoted in Larrabee 2005). Those lobbying for Ukrainian ascension promote this representation because of the teleological path it implies for Ukraine: If countries to the East are on the path toward Europeanization, then Ukraine is next in line. Of non-EU countries, it is the closest to the present. This image reveals itself in a theme put forward by those who wish to see a fully European Ukraine: A historically European country, Ukraine lost its way but is now ready to rejoin its ancestral kin. Oleh Zarubinskyi (2005), a Ukrainian
MP, expressed this sentiment a few years ago at an ongoing roundtable series titled “Ukraine’s Quest for Mature Nation Statehood”.\(^\text{11}\)

Kyiv-Rus was one of the most developed countries in Europe over 1000 years ago. One of the ancient trade routes crossed the territory of Ukraine. – ‘z veryag v greky’. Therefore, one should admit that Ukraine has always been a European state in terms of geography, history, and culture. Now it is time Ukraine regained its place in Europe in terms of developed institutions of democracy and political system (emphasis added).

Brzezinski (2005), citing too the central role of Kyivan Rus in early Europe, draws from it the conclusion that “[Ukraine] therefore reflects a larger European mission, a larger European trajectory, and that is all to the good.”

Through these representations one sees the reproduction of Ukraine’s liminal status. Clear articulations, in the form of historical representations and cultural sentiment, merge with performance, in the form of EU Action Plans and Neighborhood Policies, to construct a peculiar relationship between Europe and Ukraine. While Ukraine is discursively construed as “like Europe” in its “values” and “future,” it is nonetheless kept at arms length. Territorially and temporally, Ukraine defies classification, understood as belonging to competing political orders (Europe and non-Europe) and, thus, not really belonging to either. Through the application of Norton’s framework, the significance of its liminality is made clear. By having a country that is just beyond Europe, just beyond the full reach of European values, and just behind Europe in its maturity, what it means to be European is better defined. This solidifies the EU’s status by reifying the idea of Europe and outlining its boundaries. The ongoing representations and performances provide an unambiguous reiteration of the “fact” of a European identity. Also, in this case, the EU’s power to act as a stable subject is

\(^{11}\) The title itself exposes the temporal component of Ukraine’s growth towards Europe.
enhanced also through a more direct consequence. The continuous discussions with a liminal identity of future membership in the EU grant the EU desirability. Undoubtedly, Ukraine will desire the EU so long as its liminal status continues. Membership in the EU would represent its “progression” from a wayward past to a civilized future. So long as this desire is ongoing, the EU is able to script a past and a future of its own to complement its (blurry) territorial boundary line.

**Europe and Its Pagans**

The migrant sex workers who are working in Europe serve much the same function for the EU. Territorially and temporally, they too are liminal figures. Like many migrant groups, their status is ambiguous. The ambiguity provides for the effective enunciation of what it means to be European, and what it means to not be. In this way, Europe’s boundary lines cross the bodies of the migrant women who operate within it. This section explores the discourse that constitutes their liminality and, thus, establishes that boundary line. Like the discourse on Ukraine’s liminality, this parallel discourse is deciphered from a range of representations, including popular depictions, academic writings, and government policies. Together, these myriad factors constitute the migrant sex worker as a liminal European figure, straddling the line between European and non-European.

Much like the previous section, the analysis offered here is applicable to a population broader than that which is targeted. Not only do Ukrainian sex workers occupy liminal positions, but so sex workers of other nationalities, and so do migrant workers in general. Ukrainian sex workers, then, are a subset of other liminal groups. Ukraine, it was argued, is a paradigmatic case of the liminality written upon states belonging to “Eastern Europe.” It is the liminar *par excellence* that best demonstrates
the use of the ambiguous boundary for the construction of a European identity. Likewise, Ukrainian migrant sex workers are the paradigmatic case of how the sex trafficking discourse is similarly implicated in the construction of collective identity. Thus, Ukrainian sex workers are a particularly valuable group to study. Exploring how meaning is made of them can reveal much about the constitutive effects of sex trafficking discourse and the importance of their identities for establishing that of the EU.

The clarity of the Ukrainian migrant sex worker as a non-European appears as a result of her overrepresentation in the discourse. Her frequent presence in the numerous stories told about “the trafficked sex slave” would lead one to expect that many more Ukrainian sex workers are in Europe than the best sources indicate. According to the IOM study cited earlier, Ukrainian women have been found usually to represent between 5% and 15% of women assisted by governments and NGOs. From 2000-2005, the IOM assisted about 2,500 Ukrainian trafficking victims. However, many of these were not sex-related: In 2005, for example, 40% of the 446 victims aided by the IOM and subsequently repatriated to Ukraine were trafficked to work in other industries (Laczko et. al. 2002). While comprehensive, reliable statistics do not exist, it seems safe to conclude from these numbers that Ukrainian sex workers represent a relevant, but by no means pronounced or dominant, percentage of the sex workers in Europe. Yet, their appearance in the stories about trafficked sex workers is much more

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12 This statistic, coupled with the lack of stories being told about the Ukrainians who comprise that 40%, suggests the high degree to which westward migration into Europe has been sexualized.

13 According to the national coordinator for the anti-trafficking organization, LaStrada-Ukraine, Ukrainian women comprise the largest group of women who seek to be rescued from forced sexual activity. This report, from the mid-1990s, would seem to conflict with the rather unremarkable presence of Ukrainian women suggested by the later IOM report. If accurate, however, it would provide a possible explanation for why the stories Ukrainian women are so prevalent (Jarosewich1998).
pronounced. As discussed earlier in this chapter, there may be multiple explanations for why Ukrainian women appear so often. Regardless of the reason, the reiteration of the Ukrainian sex worker’s supposed status as a naïve, impoverished, kidnapped victim establishes her as the paradigmatic migrant sex worker. She is, among migrant sex workers, perhaps the most significant counterposing figure in the constitution of the European woman (and, by extension, the constitution of Europe itself).

Few scholars of sex work have approached the subject of the sex industries – prostitution, trafficking, pornography, sex tourism – with a perspective that recognizes the liminality of sex workers. Usually, when the connections between sex workers and collective identities are theorized, the sex worker is understood as the other – the abject body against which the self (whether state, city, or society) defines itself. If the words “liminal” or “marginal” appear, they are used as synonyms for “other” (see, for example, Hubbard 1999). One notable exception to that tendency is the work of Chris Ryan and C. Michael Hall. In their book, *Sex Tourism: Marginal People and Liminalities* (2001), they conceptualize prostitution as a thoroughly liminal process. Their understanding of liminality, though applied to sex work, directly adapts Turner’s framework. Both buyer (the tourist) and seller (the sex worker) perform liminal roles, with the important difference being that the seller is stigmatized by her engagement in the ritual while the buyer is not. During the transaction, the tourist and the sex worker are between “positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial” (Turner 1969, 95). Because of their in-between status, these liminal figures appear ambiguous in their relation to the established order. Indeed, their role is defined by the sanctioned disruption of the dominant order, by the “time out” they are allowed for engagement in
“socially accepted and approved activities which seem to deny or ignore the legitimacy of the institutionalized statuses, roles, norms, values, and rules of everyday, ‘ordinary life’” (Lett 1983). The remainder of the chapter will explore this disruption, and the ambiguity that results for those who partake in it, along its territorial and temporal dimensions. The first of these dimensions reveals the liminality of sex workers in Europe, broadly understood. The second underscores the pronounced role of Ukrainian migrants in the process.

**Territorial Liminality**

What kinds of spaces characterize sex work, and how significant are those spaces in constituting sex workers as liminal figures? To answer these questions, scholars must step onto the turf of political geography. From studies in that field, it quickly becomes clear that sex workers occupy the ritualistic space of the other. There is often a clear disjunction between the space of sex work and the space of “normality.” But, as this section argues, any disjunction is rendered ambiguous by the incorporation of these “other spaces” into the city. The incorporation occurs due to a number of factors that ensure easy and frequent access to these spaces, as well as the melding of their economies into the broader economy of the city. When these and other normalizing forces are considered, such spaces are rendered ambiguous in their relation to the normal spaces from which they have been banished. It follows that sex workers who inhabit these spaces become liminal figures in the city’s symbolic order.

Philip Hubbard (1999) provides a useful starting point for understanding the triadic relationship between the spaces of sex workers, the spaces of normality, and the collective identity that results. His book, *Sex and the City: Geographies of Prostitution in the Urban West*, offers an extended treatment of the reciprocal relationship between
sexuality and space. How a society represents, perceives, and understands sex shapes the geographic organization of the city (Hubbard 1999, 35). Moral orders are mapped onto specific sites, creating zones in which varying sexualities are granted different levels of appropriateness. In this way, beliefs and norms regarding sexuality lend meaning to the spaces of the city. The causal arrow may be reversed, as well: geography is a grid upon which sexual order is established and understood. Urban spaces make concrete all social processes that occur within the city, sexuality included. As a result, cities are inevitably “organizing and orienting human sexual relations in such a way as to perpetuate distinctions between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ sexual identities” (4). In short, sexual identities have “a spatial basis” (1). To understand the meaning and function of sex workers, then, it is necessary to understand the urban spaces that shape, and are shaped, by them.

The legitimacy of the dominant moral order depends upon the spatial organization of competing sexualities. It is no surprise, therefore, that sex workers (and their clients) would be situated in spaces marked by otherness. That has been the case throughout European history. In medieval times, prostitutes were seen as polluting bodies and thus spatially marginalized into certain districts. Often, those districts were outside the city. By removing prostitutes from the spaces of respectability, the city was symbolically purifying itself, purging a perceived contaminant to the dominant moral order. While this process re-affirmed the boundaries of proper sexual comportment, it also had the effect of reproducing the status of the sex worker by relocating her to areas that were themselves socially, economically, and politically marginal (Hubbard 1999, 68). In more
recent times, the red light district has served the same function.\textsuperscript{14} Hubbard (170) interprets the establishment of the red light district as the discursive creation of an immoral space, one “which imaginatively placed the immorality of prostitution in an immoral landscape psychically and physically distanced from the purified and ordered spaces of the suburb.” Like the expulsion of prostitutes, the establishment of the red light district gives meaning to the city and to its others through a strategy of spatial dislocation. But it adds a distinctively modern twist: It locates sex workers in a space that is readily subject to state surveillance. Within red light districts, sex workers may be “surveyed, compartmentalized and hierarchised” (86-87), effectively extending the power of the state over their lives. In times of moral panic, such control is particularly useful. It allows the state to readily govern the abject spaces occupied by the city’s others and calibrate the balance between the different moral orders that, together, form the city’s identity. The same conclusions may be drawn about brothels. Brothels represent spaces of alternative sexuality where prostitution remains invisible to the sanitized areas of the city. Governments maintain control over these spaces, through the surveillance that manifests itself in periodic raids, and even through the laws that governments pass to establish them. At times, city governments have been at the forefront of efforts to establish brothels so as to create a space for sex work that keeps it separated from the spaces where dominant norms of sexuality reside.

Nineteenth century London exemplifies both the spatial organization of sex work and the constitutive effects of that organization. Judith Walkowitz, a noted historian of prostitution in that milieu, shows how the boundaries of competing moral orders can be

\textsuperscript{14} This analysis applies to toleration zones and “vice areas,” as well.
policed through cautionary tales. She does so by examining the stories told about Jack the Ripper, a serial killer who murdered five prostitutes without ever being captured. Though different in detail, the imaginative, sensationalist stories that swirled in 1888 bore a clear message: “The city was a dangerous place when [women] transgressed the narrow boundary of home and hearth to enter the public space” (Walkowitz 1992, 3). The massacred prostitute, representing the consequences awaiting women in the public realm (which, not incidentally, was also the realm of the working class) served as a warning to women that certain spaces were outside the safe realm of sexualized citizenship.

In these studies, a common theme is found: European cities have been organized in a manner that consciously separates areas of sex work from the rest of the city. The disjuncture simultaneously creates and reflects different moral orders that are defined against one another. For Hubbard (1999, 99), the result is that the sex worker “thus remains an emblematic ‘other’ figure, symbolically important as a metaphor of urban and sexual disorder in the post-modern city, and, as such remains subject to an evolving range of measures designed to socially and spatially differentiate her from sexually respectable citizens.” But to end the story there, at the establishment of an unambiguous self/other dichotomy, is to risk oversimplifying the role of the sex worker in the modern city. It is to deny the processes that incorporate, legitimize, and normalize the abject bodies. Such processes complicate her relationship to the city, simultaneously attracting and repelling her from the dominant moral order. Her relationship, thus, is one of liminality. Explorations of this contradiction can lead to theories that build upon the studies of prostitution and space, while recognizing more
explicitly the central role that sex workers play in the reproduction of the city’s identity. The spaces of alterity are to be expected; this is consistent with Turner’s conception of liminality, which requires a high level of alterity for the ritualistic space it inhabits. The ritual process that establishes liminality requires the actors to exist outside the structure of the society. But the brothel or the red light district, while representing a space outside the moral order, becomes entwined with that order through the processes that comprise sex work.

Hubbard notes occasionally the geographic interconnection that exists. During the 19th century, many of those men who observed and condemned prostitution were themselves dependent upon it. Alexandre Jean Baptiste Paren-Duchatelet - one of the most influential actors in the purity campaigns - is a prime example of this. His frequent descent into the underworld, like that of numerous men, ensured that “the geography of the margins and the centre intertwined on a daily basis” (Hubbard 1999, 77). At various times, the ritualized movement to the abject spaces has enjoyed moral approval from the church and the state. In medieval France, many clergy sanctioned prostitution as an outlet for male sexual energy that would otherwise be diverted into less sanctified practices (such as rape, incest, or sodomy). Furthermore, the institution of marriage was believed to require that married men occasionally visit prostitutes; the orderly control of prostitution was the natural response to this requirement. Elsewhere, prostitution was institutionalized to awaken male desire in hope of combating declining birthrates (70). Thus, for reasons academic, sexual, health-related, and moral, the journey of men across the geographies of the moral orders has been celebrated and widely practiced.
Today, the forces most responsible for incorporating the abject spaces of prostitution into the identity of the city are economic. By the nature of market transactions, the alternative lifestyle of the sex worker is brought within the capitalist structures that dominate European society (Ryan and Hall 2001, 22). And sex work is, as a whole, a very large set of market transactions. The sex tourism industry is of special significance here: The convergence of a global economy, rising tourism, and consumerist expectations has bestowed upon sex workers a prominent place in the economy of the global city. To the degree that citizenship is, in its fullest sense, “the culmination of incorporation into a society” (Kofman 1995, 122), the globalized sex industry, while hardly granting citizenship (in its legal meaning) to sex workers, is nonetheless a powerful force of inclusion. In such a context, it is not the spaces that sex workers inhabit or the sexual norms they embody that determine their status of belonging, it is their global economic value (or, more precisely, it is their global economic value that determines the meaning of the spaces they inhabit and the sexual norms they embody). Given the inseparable links between space, norms, and identity, this means that sex workers themselves are given meaning through these processes. This follows from the observation, made by Nancy Wonders and Raymond Michalowski (2001, 564-5), that national laws governing sex work are overdetermined by global forces. The regulation of city space in regards to sex work is an ongoing response to global economic patterns.

Those economic forces, which legitimize sex work by including it into the identity of the city, simultaneously push migrant sex workers in the other direction. Faced with concerns that the market for sex work will jeopardize the “family-friendly” tourist
environment, governments face the countervailing incentive to exclude certain sex
workers from areas like Amsterdam’s Red Light District, which are increasingly
becoming hetero-normal public spaces. That set of concerns is often complemented by
fears that migrant sex workers are disrupting the market by depressing wages, avoiding
regulation, overpopulating public space, or appearing unsavory. Consequently, sex
workers in general, and migrant sex worker in particular, find themselves marked by
competing orders: one that renders them legitimate and incorporates them into the
spatial meaning of the city, and one that excludes them by spatially defining them as
“other.”

No city better encapsulates the tendency to render migrant sex workers liminal
than Amsterdam. As a global economic city, Amsterdam has been shaped indelibly by
the global forces of sex tourism. Those forces have facilitated the production and
consumption of sex tourism in the city, resulting in 20,000-25,000 prostitutes who are
readily accessible to any tourist (Wonders and Michalowski 2001). Sex tourism has
developed as a niche market for Amsterdam, a fact reflected in the image people have
of the city as a promiscuous playground. The value of sex tourism to the city is
considerable, indirectly accounting for much of the money spent by tourists. Wonders
and Michalowski (555) summarize the importance of sex tourism to Amsterdam, as well
as the guiding role of the global economy in shaping it:

As tourism directed toward Amsterdam’s cultural heritage stagnates, sex tourism
plays an increasingly important role in keeping tourism dollars – and related
tourism industry jobs – within the city. It is not the case that the Dutch government
or Amsterdam city officials openly embrace the marketing of sex tourism or
Amsterdam’s image as a liberal city, but a variety of mediating institutions,
including the tourism industry, have adjusted to global forces in ways that create
opportunities for sex tourism to expand.
For the most part, those opportunities for sex tourism to expand have been filled by migrant sex workers. Though estimates vary, it is clear that a high percentage of the sex workers in Amsterdam are migrants. Ineke Marshall estimated in 1993 that migrant sex workers comprised 60% of all sex workers in Amsterdam. A few years later, a tally by the Amsterdam police revealed that 75% of prostitutes behind windows in the Red Light District were foreigners (cited in Wonders and Michalowski 2001). Notably, a large percentage of these migrant sex workers are Ukrainian. In the mid-1990s, Ukrainians were estimated to comprise the largest national group of migrant sex workers in the Netherlands. One estimate from the Kyiv Post placed them at 33% of all sex workers in the country (cited in Hughes 2000). This number is much higher than one would expect, given the breakdown of trafficked women assisted by STV (Foundation Against Traffic in Women) (Laczko 2002). It is also called into question by a Europap survey from 1999 that found Central and Eastern European women as a whole comprised only 18% of prostitutes in the Netherlands (van der Helm 2004). Yet, if the high estimate is even remotely accurate, it suggests a pre-eminent role for Ukrainian migrants in Amsterdam.

Given the importance of migrant sex workers to the identity and economy of the city, one would expect them to be normalized within the city’s spatially constituted moral order. And indeed, a great degree of normalcy has evolved. Wonders and Michalowski (2001, 553) describe the Amsterdam’s Red Light District as resembling “an open-air shopping mall in the United States,” complete with “relatively clean streets, little

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15 The normalization of the sex work is not unique to Amsterdam. During the 1980s, “the sex industry in several European countries underwent notable development, commercialization, and legitimation through regulationist legislation” (Raymond 1998, 5; italics in original).
crime, a neon atmosphere, and windows and windows of women to choose from.” And like an American shopping mall, the Red Light District has its own “customer service” desk. The Prostitute Information Centre, located in the District, provides information about the prices to expect and steps that can be taken to ensure one’s safety. It also includes a “sample window brothel to tour” (556). Such measures are designed to ease the transition of the tourist into the District, facilitating his movement across the boundary that marks differently sexualized spaces. Rather self-consciously, the Centre seeks to blur that boundary, further normalizing what would amount to an abject space if not so economy valuable.

While efforts like this have been made to bring tourists into ritualistically other spaces, legislation hostile to migrant sex workers has sent a very different set of signals. Regulation of brothels was legalized in 2000 by the Dutch Parliament and Senate, in part to improve the “merchandising environment” of the Red Light District, which was perceived increasingly as a haven for drug-addicted migrant prostitutes (Wonders and Michalowski 2001, 557). The new brothel law prohibited the employment of women from outside the EU who did not possess residence permits. That step is part of a broader on-again, off-again effort in the Netherlands to shift the economic model of sex work from individual self-employment to industry – a move that would likely result in the expulsion of those sex workers (and their employers) who cannot afford the costs of increasing regulation (Brants 1998). Migrant sex workers have also been relocated through the city’s establishment of the Tippelzone, a space on the outskirts of town that has been set aside for cheaper, quicker transactions. Before it was shut down in 2004, the Tippelzone functioned to keep marginalized workers outside the city center.
(Wonders and Michalowski 2001, 558). A writer for Forbes magazine sums up its role: “What do you do with junkie prostitutes who parade before the best hotels picking up men? Holland’s answer is to chase such ladies out of the downtown areas and into a Tippelzone, a specially designed streetwalkers’ park” (Morais 1996). The Tippelzone, like the “brothel law” that followed, was a legislative strategy that responded directly to the global demand for migrant sex workers by paradoxically expelling those same workers from “the shopping mall” of the Red Light District.

Policies toward prostitution in Europe have tended to follow this kind of confusing pattern. It is no accident: Decisions over the spaces to be occupied by sex workers are caught up with metanarrative questions of “who we are” and “how people will see us.” As the meaning of the city, as well as the meaning of the relations that occur within it, are inextricably linked to the city’s spatial organization, the decision over where to put the prostitutes has significant ramifications. Unable to be incorporated into the moral order of the city, they cannot be completely expelled, either. The spaces they inhabit must be readily accessible to citizens, tourists, and the state. At the same time, there is a growing effort to differentiate the spaces occupied by migrant sex workers from those occupied by sex workers from the member states of the EU. (In practice, this does not always happen; despite Amsterdam’s establishment of the Tippelzone, the majority of sex workers in the Red Light District remained undocumented foreigners.) The change places pressure on local officials to differentiate between which women should be in prostitution and which women should not be. The spatial relocations that are likely to follow will further sustain the liminality of the migrant sex worker, denying her incorporation into normalized spaces of sex work.
Temporal Lliminality

Whereas territorial liminality is sustained for migrant sex workers as a group, temporal liminality is a result of discursive moves applied much more directly to Eastern European sex workers. This liminality results from representations of temporal difference between European sex workers and those migrant sex workers from Europe’s Eastern neighbors. Academic and popular writings coupled with, and reflective of, EU policy, cast the latter as the trafficked women of Europe’s past. The narratives and policies discussed in this section, while broadly applicable to Europe’s vaguely defined East, apply particularly to migrant Ukrainian sex workers due to their prominence in the discourse. Through these narratives, the Ukrainian sex worker becomes the European woman that Europe lost: immature, docile, unwillingly mobile, without agency. In other words, she becomes the European woman who has not yet enjoyed the advancements brought by second-wave feminism – advancements that are at the root of what it means to be a European woman, according to certain feminist groups that have been influential in the trafficking debate. Laura M Agustín (2003, 31) makes a similar argument about the temporal element found within the competing representations of women:

Because migrants are usually seen as people from the Third World, the positioning of so many of them as victims – of economic restructuring if not of criminal agents – harks back unsettlingly to the old category of the ‘native’. And since migrants nowadays are so often women, these natives are constituted as backward, developmentally less than First-World women. This is most overt, of course, in ‘trafficking’ discourses…

But Agustín’s argument goes too far. Ukrainian women do not appear as primitive or backward. The discursive space they occupy is not that found in colonial narratives. Nor are they understood as modern, autonomous women. They are something in
between, marked by both of these orders. It is a specific discursive space (i.e. subject position) that was filled by European women in the last decades of the nineteenth century. While excluding migrant prostitutes by representing them as lacking the agency of European prostitutes, the discourse simultaneously re-inscribes them with notions of victimization and femininity developed during the nineteenth century campaigns to end the White Slave trade. Viewing trafficking through the lenses of Victorian-era victim narratives, the story of the trafficked woman is continued, with the role of victim shifted to migrants from the East. Ukrainian prostitutes end up occupying a liminal space in Europe: they are simultaneously the nineteenth century female victim and the foil to the modern European prostitute who enters the profession with the agency of an entrepreneur. With this liminal status, Ukrainian prostitutes become “our pagans” in a temporal sense. Thus, in the same way that Ukraine has been constituted as a temporally liminal European body, and discursively located on the verge of becoming European through EU-sponsored guidance, the Ukrainian sex worker is placed on the threshold of the twentieth century. These parallel processes of establishing and sustaining liminality have the cumulative effect of delimitating the meaning of “European.”

Captivity narratives, some of which were described in the previous chapter, may be reinterpreted here not to simply “other” Eastern migrants, but to grant them liminal status. Hence, there is little to differentiate today’s stories from their 19th century incarnations. Frederick Grittner (1990, 18) describes nineteenth-century captivity narratives as follows:

Five critical elements emerge to distinguish this form of discourse: women are portrayed as moral, non-sexual, even virginal; men are amoral, hypersexual;
women are cast as victims; violence, coercion and trick are used to ensnare and enslave the woman; the stories place in opposition white women and “alien” men; and, the narrative relies on melodramatic conventions of plot, style, and characterization to convey its meaning.

Each of these elements is found in modern-day narratives of sex trafficking in Europe. The Eastern sex slave is a victim, who has been kidnapped or deceived by organized criminal networks and, through a dramatic journey, has had her sexual purity unforgivably stolen. The discursive space created for the modern trafficked woman is the same: She is “coerced, deceived, lured, trapped, kidnapped, and forced into prostitution” (Kempadoo 2005, x). The reading of the migrant sex worker as a victim is of considerable importance, for two reasons. First, it enables (indeed, demands) performances of protection aimed at affected migrants. Second, by denying the agency and subjectivity of “the trafficked woman,” it grants other actors a stronger claim to understand the trafficked woman, her motivations, and her needs (Kempadoo 2005, xxiv). The discursive construction of the migrant sex worker as victim thus assumes the expertise of the protecting political body and demands that it acts. In so doing, it generates a salient site for identity-constituting performances on the part of the state. To the degree that the construction of the victim occurs through internationally sustained representations and trans-state cooperation across Europe, the EU is the beneficiary of this process.

So dominant has this discursive construction become that there is currently little space left for alternative understandings of migrant sex workers within the debate.

Victimhood has shown to be a firm nodal point fixing the meaning of sex trafficking and

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16 For more discussion of the images of the trafficked victim, see Doezema 1998.

17 The same effect is achieved through the equation of “women” and “children” in several of the most important anti-trafficking documents (Sanghera 2005, 12).
establishing the positions of European and pre-European (almost-European) women. Ukrainian migrant sex workers, in particular, have had their position in the discourse fixed through the naturalization of their status as the “innocents deceived.” That naturalization has been achieved through iterated representations. Both organized discussions (such as the September 2004 colloquium at the Chicago Cultural Center titled “For Sale or Rent – the Captive Daughters of the Ukraine”) and newspaper reports (“Ukrainians Increasingly Vulnerable to Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation and Forced Labor” (Associated Press Newswires 2005)) have served as sites of dispersal for the image of the victimized sex slave. At times, the representations of Ukrainian migrant sex workers conflate them with “Eastern” or “Slavic” women, allowing for the qualities attributed to one to serve in the constitution of the other. In other cases, Ukrainians alone are the subject of the representational practices. Either way, a liminal identity for Ukrainian women is established.

The former pattern is exemplified by the aforementioned 1998 New York Times expose (Specter 1998). The headline, “Traffickers’ New Cargo: Naïve Slavic Women,” establishes immediately the Slavic woman as an object (“cargo”) and as immature. The first sentence of the article locates the narrative immediately in a Ukrainian village: “Irina always assumed that her beauty would somehow rescue her from the poverty and hopelessness of village life.” Already, three additional common themes have emerged. First, the Ukrainian sex worker is portrayed as beautiful. This was a common attribute of nineteenth century depictions, which fought the enslavement of, as Charlton Edholm put it, “thousands of our loveliest girls” (quoted in Grittner 1990). Grittner (1990, 46) observes that by adding this “prurient detail,” trafficking narratives invoked images of the
“pure, virtuous heroines of stage melodramas.” Second, the article describes her as a village girl. This adds a new dynamic to the narrative, allowing it to be read simultaneously as the story of a girl moving from the (Ukrainian) country to the (European) city. Country girls appeared regularly within past discourses, especially within the American variants, reflecting the broader anxieties over the urbanization of women. This was exemplified by Samuel Paynter Wilson’s popular fiction on white slavery, which portrayed rural girls as “naïve, unsophisticated, and at great risk” (Grittner 1990, 70). Finally, Irina is described as impoverished and hopeless – another common theme in accounting for the decisions of women to migrate. This representation carries two implications, both of which deny agency to Ukrainian women and establish their victimhood. First, it implies that Ukrainian women have reached an emotional state (“hopelessness” or, more often, desperation) that prevents them from acting rationally. Their choice to migrate is, in that way, not their own. Second, it suggests that economic forces, often described as “push factors,” are compelling Ukrainian women to migrate. As Agustín (2003, 32) observes, that suggestion ignores the fact that most of them choose not to migrate. Therefore, being acted upon by push factors cannot account for a woman’s decision to leave her country. Through the construction of a narrative in which it can, “women like Irina” are disempowered. Conversely, those actors who can offer to intervene to save disempowered victims are themselves empowered by the process.
Irina’s story continues, describing her journey, her rape, and her rescue. It establishes Irina as the stereotype of the trafficked woman. The stereotyping is explicit: “It happens every single day;” “Many end up like Irina.” Indeed, the creation of the stereotype is an intentional, repeated feature in stories like this, for it allows the writer to combine attention-grabbing detail with startling (mostly unreliable) statistics. To use Grittner’s term, it adds melodrama. And like many of these narratives, Irina’s story ends with the victim herself acknowledging her own defeated status. In Irina’s (mediated) words: “You can call me a fool for coming here. That’s my crime. I am stupid. A stupid girl from a little village. But can people really buy and sell women and get away with it? Sometimes I sit here and ask myself if that really happened to me, if it can really happen at all.” There is an implicit call for action in these confessions – a demand that law and order be provided to eliminate the unconscionable crimes being committed against naïve, vulnerable girls.

These narratives have been naturalized to the point where the ordeals of actual women need no longer be referenced. Consider the following story that appeared in a 2006 edition of *Ukrainian Weekly*. Written by an English professor, it contains all of the narrative devices described above. And, curiously, it is entirely made-up.

Imagine a small sleepy town in western Ukraine. The unemployment rate is high. On any given day in the town square, men old and young gather to talk; not one of them has a job. Politics is on every tongue. "We all know what needs to be done!" they cry. "Why is it not done? What is happening in our land in these democratic times?"

Imagine a young girl, Marusia, about 18 years old living in this same town. Her mother is sick, with severe diabetes, and cannot work. There has not been a

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18 In addition to Ukraine, the article occasionally mentions Russia as another country that “supplies the flesh.” Its emphasis on Ukraine is justified by the claim that it has become the “epicenter of the global business in trafficking women.”
husband at home for some years now. There are two younger siblings. This young girl cannot find any work anywhere in town. There is no money for medicines, no possibility of buying new boots for the winter to replace the worn ones. There is no way to finance books for her little brother and sister. There is hardly enough money to pay for utilities.

The family does, however, own a television. Images of the West are now regular fare on Ukrainian TV, which Marusia watches to forget her troubles.

"Ah, the opulence, the wealth, the luxuries!" said Marusia to her pals as they sit together watching a Western soap opera. "Why it's like a fairytale!"

For many nights, Marusia is unable to sleep. She says to herself: "I'll go work abroad! Mother will understand. So many are doing it now! Perhaps I can find work as a nanny. I'd be able to help everyone at home when I return."

She looks for work advertisements and sees a promising one looking for nannies in northern Germany. She goes to Lviv for the interview. Eureka! She is accepted. Several other girls are also hired. What hope! This will certainly open a door!

With the adventurous spirit of the young, Marusia sets out. She cannot conceive of what awaits her upon reaching her destination.

When Marusia reaches Berlin, her passport will be confiscated, she will be bonded, bartered and sold as chattel. And, before she can perform the job of servicing anywhere from 20 to 50 men a night, she will have to be primed. This consists of a visit into the anteroom of hell where she will have her spirit broken. She will be raped relentlessly, beaten until she will admit to anything and agree to do anything. Sometimes breaking in a girl has involved terrorizing her by making her watch another recalcitrant woman being murdered in her presence.

The above is a fictional narrative, but hundreds of thousands of young girls like Marusia are actually suffering a similar fate right now (Ponomarenko 2006).

There is a clear contrast between the sexual norms embodied by Marusia (and nineteenth-century Europeans) and those which characterize the modern European woman. The former are found in the captivity narratives; the latter, however, must be revealed through representations of today's European woman. To find these representations, it is helpful to consider the positions of the European Women's Lobby (EWL). This influential organization is a useful arbiter of the status of European women. Funded by the EU, it participates in the Advisory Committee on equal opportunities for
women and men, a committee “which assists the Commission in formulating and implementing activities aimed at promoting equality between women and men and works through preparing and delivering opinions to the Commission” (European Commission 2005, 16). In 2005, the EWL authored a lobby position paper titled “Women’s sexual rights in Europe,” which indicates what qualities define the modern European woman. The opening paragraphs reveal the central role of sexual rights in the EWL’s image of the dignified and free woman:

Women’s sexual rights include the right to control their sexuality and the provision of sexual and reproductive health-related services. They include reproductive rights where the number and spacing of children can be chosen in a free, responsible and informed way.

Today, these rights must be defended as they concern not only women’s health, but also their dignity and freedom. In this way, women’s sexuality is not solely associated with issues of responsibility or risks concerning reproduction. Sexual activity is above all an integral part of a woman’s life, of her private life and sexual enjoyment thereof. Women’s sexual rights recognise the right to sexual well being and the freedom of choice concerning partner(s), sexual orientation, sexual preferences and the choice of each woman whether or not to have sexual relations (European Women’s Lobby 2005).

The sexual norms advocated here are presented as central to the personhood of women. The EWL is claiming to speak for women worldwide, but their analysis of Europe’s success in providing sexual rights for women is telling. At times, they imply that as one moves further east, the sexual rights of women fade. That is due, primarily, to the low prevalence of contraceptive methods and high rates of unsafe abortions, which are themselves due to “a lack of information and sexuality education” (European Women’s Lobby 2005, 7). These have long been important indicators: one of the biggest factors explaining the change in sexual mores for women in Europe as they entered the twentieth century was access to contraceptive devices and methods of terminating pregnancy (Anderson and Zinsser 2000, 203). Sexual rights, as they are
articulated by the EWL, were established for European women in the period immediately following that of captivity narratives and fears of the white slave trade.

On trafficking and prostitution, the report is similarly othering. It comments, "Trafficking and prostitution are violations of women’s sexual rights, namely they undermine the right of freedom and safety of the person, the right to be protected against any act of violence and against bad treatment as well as the right to women’s bodily integrity" (European Women’s Lobby 2005, 7). The message is clear: Trafficked women lack those rights which ensure dignity and freedom for European women. The EWL is posing this argument to lobby for the extension of such rights. Few observers would object to those goals listed above or to the EWL’s broader efforts to improve the status and treatment of women. But in offering a vision of sexual rights that is central to personhood, enjoyed more by European women than by others, and excluding of sex workers who willfully ply their trade, the EWL is marginalizing many of the women from Europe’s Eastern countries. It is defining a civilized womanhood through exactly those qualities that are denied migrant sex workers by the captivity narratives – narratives that the EWL itself promotes. The victimization of sex trafficking discourse, coupled with this framework of women’s rights, ensures migrant sex workers a temporal place in the era immediately preceding modern European womanhood.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has sought to establish that both Ukraine and the migrant sex workers who come from there are liminal figures. Parallel discourses establish and sustain their liminality, making them intelligible only as figures that are almost-European. Territorially and temporally, these two groups are positioned on a boundary, marked by the characteristics of the European self and the non-European other. Each
group is engaged in, and subjected to, symbolic performances that reiterate its similarity and difference to the European political body. Such performances are key to the formation of that body’s identity. An appreciation and understanding of the performances adds two important contributions to theories of state identity formation and actor substantiation. First, it expands theories of identity formation beyond their frequent reliance upon a simple self/other dichotomy. It does so by accounting for the role of those actors who are neither self nor other, but are instead best classified as liminal. Second, it illustrates one of the many ways in which state identity relies upon representations of women. Liminal figures like the ones considered in this chapter are well positioned for assistance — the kind of assistance that will resolve their transitory state. Whether in the form of Neighbourhood Policies to Europeanize Ukraine or AENEAS-funded programs to ensure the sexual rights of Ukrainian migrant sex workers, this assistance will inevitably position the provider as the legitimate protector of European ideals. The masculinizing effect of such protectionist policies is the subject of the next chapter.

Figure 5-1. Wæver’s integration scenario
Figure 5-2. Wæver’s fragmentation scenario
CHAPTER 6
PERFORMANCE AND PROTECTION IN SEX TRAFFICKING POLICY

Introduction

So far, this study has described two levels of the sex trafficking discourses. The first level consists of the core assumption upon which the prominent understandings of sex trafficking rely. The second level is comprised of the key nodal points that (partially) fix the meaning of the phenomenon. It is a level at which rival ontologies of sex trafficking form, often through connection to other discourses. These two levels have been shown to be mutually constitutive. Representations of sex trafficking, and of those who are a part of it, are structured by broader distinctions between collective identities. Sex trafficking is, in that sense, a symptom of macro-identity politics. At the same time, the debate over sex trafficking, occurring within a discursive universe that presents two ways of comprehending the issue, (re)produces the boundaries of key actors (self, liminal, and other). It is a form of yoking that helps the European Union become a subject, as opposed to a set of processes.

Two key concepts in this study – performance and gender – have been present throughout the identity-building process described. Performances are found in everything from the dissemination of representations of “the trafficking victim” to the conflicting policies towards migrant sex workers that sustain the latter’s liminal status. Performances aimed at individuals can even run parallel to performances aimed at the political bodies to which those individuals are discursively attached, as the previous chapter showed. Gender has been inescapable in this study, as well. It accounts for much of the issue’s salience. Moreover, it is impossible to understand the subject positions of the women and men involved without consideration of sexual norms. In this
chapter, performance and its gendering effects will be considered in a slightly more explicit fashion. This is the logical end-point of analysis: If sex trafficking is a salient issue for identity-constitution (chapter four) and a “European space” has been created and filled with subjects demanding EU protection (chapter five), then it is worthwhile to see what performances result and what effect they have.

**Policies: The Third Level of Discourse**

To begin that task, it is useful to posit a third level to the discursive structure mapped thus far. It is a level that encompasses policies towards sex trafficking. As Figure 6-1 illustrates, specific policies towards sex trafficking connect to one or both of the meanings that sex trafficking carries. Much like the relationship between the first and second levels of the discursive structure, the relationship between the second and third levels is two-way. Moving upwards on Figure 6-1, the meaning that sex trafficking assumes – as “violence against women” or as “migration” – limits the range of policies that can be enacted. Which policies appear natural, logical, or even conceivable is determined by the understanding of sex trafficking framing the actor’s articulation. For example, if sex trafficking is violence against women, then the subject of sex trafficking is a subject of violence and, as a result, policies of deportation are off the table (as it would be “un-European” to jeopardize her most basic human rights). Conversely, if most of what is termed sex trafficking is understood as migration, then the subject of sex trafficking is, in some capacity, a purpose-driven agent. Combating either her means of livelihood (through counter-demand measures) or those smuggling her into the EU (through anti-transnational organized crime measures) does not follow logically from such an understanding. It is important to emphasize, however, that the second level does not determine the third in any strict sense. Discourses do not exist in the
minds of actors, nor do they determine causally how an actor will act. They, like languages, are structures of relations existing between actors. There is, thus, room for agency, for “the possibility of acting strategically in relation to discourse – both in relation to how [actors] shape a political position in relation to a given discursive position and in how they try to transform the discursive structure itself” (Wæver 2004, 199). In their regulative role, discourses makes some policies possible while precluding others, enabling the EU to pass one law but not another, to take one stance relative to migrant sex workers while eschewing others.

Policies, in addition to being enabled by the meanings established within a discursive structure, are constitutive of that structure. They are, in J.L. Austin’s terminology, performative – they create that to which they refer (1975, 6). Performance occurs at all levels of the discursive structure, operating through language to produce meanings and identities. When an NGO’s position paper refers to a trafficked woman as a “victim,” it is not only referencing the woman’s pre-existent victimhood, but carving out a subject position (“victim”) and attempting to fix its meaning. In policy, performance finds a more material medium. The performance of a policy itself is an articulation. A brothel raid, for instance, is not only the enforcement of a law but an act of (supra)statecraft, insofar as it establishes the raiding government as a legitimate protector and the rescued sex workers as protected victims. Additionally, as Michel Foucault (1977) demonstrated through his pioneering work, policies can be understood as productive of identity. In the context of sex trafficking, policies act productively upon a number of bodies. For example, it is not uncommon for “rescued women” to find their movement restricted, their bodies examined, and themselves deported. Clients of sex
workers may be surveilled, incarcerated, and re-educated. Traffickers may be imprisoned, as well. (All of which serve to purify the “European body.”) Because of the meanings these actions carry, policies are best considered a part of the discursive structure rather than solely an outcome of it.

Complicating the situation somewhat is the likelihood that any sex worker from abroad will be the subject of multiple policies. Understood as a victim of physical violence perpetrated by her traffickers, she may be pressed to testify through policy performances aimed at the elimination of transnational organized crime. After a trial, or after her refusal to testify at a trial, the same woman’s relations to Europe are likely to change. She may be understood then as a migrant, no longer victimized by the capturers from which she has been rescued, and no longer vulnerable enough to justify extended residence in that society. This shift in subject positions, while not malicious or intentional, justifies the application of seemingly irreconcilable policies to the migrant sex worker. And it underscores a precept of discourse analysis: the subject of discourse is not transcendental.

The relationship between policy and discourse, as just described, indicates the limits of discursive approaches for making causal statements about policy. Put simply, discursive structures cannot explain or predict action. Because they enable, rather than determine, they are better thought of as preconditions for action than as causes of action. Thus, they are best equipped for questions like, “What structures of meaning make deportation seem like the best policy response to sex trafficking?” and “How has it been possible for the EU to focus its resources on policing the criminals rather than assuring the rights of sex workers?” Furthermore, because discourses exist as
structures outside of the actor’s mind, they cannot reveal the “real” reasons an action was taken. It is beyond the capabilities of discourse analysis to argue that, for example, trafficking policies are window dressing for the anti-immigrant agendas of Member States. But it can suggest how understandings of non-Europeans shape the ways in which sex trafficking can be understood. Finally, because policy articulations are a part of discourse, the latter cannot be used as independent variables (Diez 2001, 24). What is left is the possibility of gaining, in Thomas Diez’s words, “a critical understanding of European policies” (Diez 2001, 30). If one wishes for policy reform on the issue of sex trafficking, then such an understanding is invaluable. Without it, one risks acting without knowledge of what is required to change the way in which the issue is understood.

The European Union’s Policies of Protection

The Dominance of a Single Discourse

The policies that the EU has enacted have been enabled by the two discourses on sex trafficking. However, those discourses have not had equal influence. The dominance of the “violence against women” discourse has resulted in policies that rest upon a particular “truth” about sex trafficking. Because that discourse has been dominant, it has oriented the EU’s efforts towards fighting physical violence rather than economic exploitation. And while this trend has been decried by those who seek a broader, more flexible, and more nuanced response to sex trafficking, it has done a lot of work for the EU. Combating violence rather than exploitation has enabled the EU to position itself against a violent and overt form of patriarchy while avoiding action on the inconvenient effects of its economic policies. And it has set the table for the EU to perform as a paternalistic protector, achieving a greater level of intelligibility and legitimacy through its efforts.
In the introductory chapter, it was explained that the EU’s representational politics are taking place in a context where women are subject to a number of patriarchal forces. The analysis provided in the subsequent chapters described how those forces have been cast within a discourse that presents them as one phenomenon with a single truth that can be known with the phrase, sex trafficking. Those forces consist of a capitalistic patriarchy that disproportionately harms women in developing countries, and a sex-right patriarchy that grants certain men control over the sexual decisions of women. The EU’s response to these problems is revealing. It has implemented policies that follow an additional patriarchal logic, that of paternalism. These policies have been designed to simultaneously counter overt manifestations of sex-right patriarchy, in the form of violence against women, but have effectively masked manifestations of capitalist patriarchy. Neither these policies nor the discourse of which they are an important part is self-consciously patriarchal. Indeed, it is the product of well-intentioned policymakers and advocates in Europe who wish to lessen the economic vulnerability and abusive sexual conditions that characterize the experience of many trafficked women. The outcome, however, has not been a direct challenge to the lack of fairness in neoliberal economic structures that sustain capitalistic patriarchy. Indeed, the prominence of the “violence against women” discourse has allowed the EU to combat sex trafficking without combating capitalist patriarchy. Because the EU achieves much of its identity as a promoter and coordinator of neoliberal economic policies, avoiding the structural inequalities and unequal relations produced by these policies means avoiding a challenge to its own identity.
Employing the Norm of Masculine Protection

The EU’s response has been to performatively reinforce a discourse that demands protection. That response has been manifest in victim-centered policies and policy statements. This is a rather new development: the protection of victims has not always been the chief norm referenced by the performances of European actors in their policies against trafficking. Only in the last six years did the protection of victims come to form the rhetorical core of what these actors (chiefly the EU and Member States) are supposed to be doing when they are “combating trafficking.” Previously, their strategies for combating trafficking consisted primarily of building thicker walls around Fortress Europe and disrupting the transnationally organized criminal syndicates held to be responsible for the activity. Jo Goodey (2003) characterizes the EU’s approach as marred by an unhelpful conflation of illegal immigration, transnational organized crime, and violent trafficking. As a result, the humanitarian aspects of combating trafficking have been buried beneath efforts to crack down on criminals, whether those criminals are in the form of the trafficker or the illegal migrant. The clearest example of how “the victim’s well-being” has taken a back seat to the policing of criminality is found in the assistance programs provided for perceived victims of trafficking. In most cases, such programs have been made contingent upon “the victim’s” willingness to testify against her traffickers. When temporary visas have been made available by states, they have lasted typically only for the duration of the trial. Once the victim’s role in assisting the state with its prosecution of traffickers has reached its conclusion, she is likely to be deported. Further reflecting these priorities is the fact that anti-trafficking policies developed initially within the EU were more successful in achieving police training, police and judicial cooperation, and the more rigorous scrutiny of visa applications.
Such strategies, which treat trafficking as a problem of illegal migration and organized crime, still structure much of what is being done to combat trafficking. But there has been a noticeable shift in policy toward a framework that stresses the urgency and necessity of safeguarding the human rights of the trafficking victim. It is a balancing of the focus on the criminal aspects of sex trafficking with a focus on the aspects of victimization. This has not been an easy balance to achieve, and it remains a work in progress. Indeed, EU policy has often reflected an incompatible mix of concerns. On the one hand, the EU’s response has revealed a concern over the perceived costs (material and existential) of unwanted immigration. Reflecting member states’ concerns for societal security, the EU has attempted to develop better ways of preventing migration and returning unwanted migrants to their home countries. On the other hand, the EU’s policies have reflected increasingly a desire to assure the safety and well-being of what are perceived to be vulnerable, violated young women and children. Overall, in the thirteen years that trafficking has been a subject for EU intervention, its policies have tilted heavily toward the former set of concerns. But this is changing.

The growth of a victim-centered approach has provided the EU with the opportunity to perform in accord with paternalistic masculine norms. That is not to say, however, that there was any nefarious intent or grand, supra-state-building designs on the part of its proponents. Rather, the early efforts were derivative of the broader global shift towards human security. With the state becoming less the referent of security practices, the logic of state protection had been displaced, at least rhetorically, by the growing recognition that human beings have inalienable rights that transcend the context of the sovereign state system. Thus, it is not surprising that anti-trafficking
efforts developing around that time focused on the victims of trafficking rather than on the violation of European borders by illegal immigrants and traffickers. Simultaneously, the attention given to the assurance of the rights of trafficking victims can be explained by the success of a group of moral entrepreneurs who were particularly active in the mid-1990s. Led by Anita Gradin, then Commissioner of Justice and Home Affairs, this group was proactive in moving sex trafficking onto the European agenda. They accomplished this goal in short time by successfully reframing sex trafficking as “violence against women” and “the modern-day form of slavery.” By providing conceptual linkages to issues for which prohibition regimes were already established, they were able to generate a “norm cascade” resulting in swift action by the EU and its member states against trafficking in women (Locher 2007). Tactically, these entrepreneurs relied upon both testimonials from victims and the use of labels, metaphors, and frames to achieve sympathy for victims of trafficking. Those tactics emphasized the experience of “the victim,” thus moving the victim toward the front of the debate. The result of those tactics was to generate momentum for the issue and solidify the “violence against women” discourse as hegemonic. The way that “the problem of sex trafficking” was constructed allowed the EU to follow a course that “prescribed remedies to trafficked persons and migrant women, and imposed them with a rigour that allows no space for intervention, disagreement or alternatives” (Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women 2007, viii). Within such a discourse, paternalist policies are naturalized as a European solution. By 2008, this process had achieved great momentum and Europe’s role as the protector of trafficked women had reached new heights. That date marked the entry into force of the Council of Europe Convention on
Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Over the next month, sixteen European states would ratify the treaty, the express purpose of which is to give protection to victims of trafficking and ensure that their rights, as victims, are recognized. This followed on the heels of the EU’s recommendation that greater efforts and coordination be put towards the assistance and protection of trafficking victims.

**Paternalism in European Union Policy**

The paternalistic nature of these policies has not gone unchallenged, as critics and organizations like the Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) have offered counter-discourses which seek to undo the EU-subject relations established by the dominant discourse. While GAATW’s criticisms fail to consider the incentives that exist for political bodies to act in accord with masculine norms, they reveal nonetheless the masculine logic of protection at work in EU policies. Specifically, this masculine logic is manifest in three ways. First, the EU’s protection establishes symbolically the role of the EU vis-à-vis trafficked women as that of a father to his daughters. Second, the discourse denies agency to trafficked women. And third, the discourse demands that the restrictions placed on the movement and sexuality of trafficked women is done out of a concern for the “victim’s” best interest.

The first of these points – the paternal nature of the EU’s response – is nowhere clearer than in its development of the Daphne Initiative and, later, the Daphne Programme. Begun in 1997 as a one-year project, Daphne’s purpose was to facilitate NGO and multisectoral action against violence against women, with anti-trafficking strategies serving a prominent role. In 2000, Daphne was turned into a four-year program with a budget of twenty million Euros. Daphne II (2004-2008) was granted a budget of fifty million Euros and Daphne III (2007-2013) has seen its budget grow to
138.2 million Euros. The vision of the Daphne policies as a vehicle for fatherly protection is clear. The European Commission’s website explains,

Why the name ‘Daphne’ at all? Because in ancient Greek mythology, Daphne was a pure, innocent young woman pursued by the god Apollo who had fallen in love with her. Desperate to fend off Apollo’s sexual advances, Daphne called upon her father, the river god Peneus, to help her. As Apollo touched her, the god turned Daphne into a laurel bush, daphne in Greek.

The program is explicit in its linking of this kind of paternalism to building a European style of governance. It continues:

Daphne is very much a European programme. From the outset, its aim was not only to promote actions that would be ‘victim-based’ -- centering on the needs of children, young people and women subject to or at risk of violence of all sorts -- but to do this in a truly ‘European’ way. But what exactly does this mean?

Candidates for funding are asked for information designed to elucidate this ‘European Added Value’; and technical monitoring visits to projects aim to contribute by putting projects in touch with each other, and suggesting more ways to achieve ‘European-ness’ in the activity and outcome.

As Daphne has developed, participating organizations have reported that they have begun to find a ‘European’ language – ways of discussing and working that cut across differing definitions, methods and approaches, cultural specificities, frameworks for action and even language barriers (European Commission, “Daphne Logo”).

Here, the Daphne Programme is creating a sense of European-ness around a logic of paternal protection. But policies do not have to accompanied by such revealing analogies as the story of Daphne to still be symbolic and constitutive in their effects (Young 2003). To elaborate on that point, it is useful to revisit the argument made by Iris Marion Young, which was discussed briefly in chapter two. Young is among the few feminist scholars who have explored how the role of “protector of women” has shaped the identity and legitimacy of political bodies. This protector role is born out of real policies that affect the freedom and movement of women, but that are simultaneously symbolic and constitutive of the state and its subjects. In her 2003 article, “The Logic of
Masculinist Protection: Reflections on the Current Security State,” Young offers a compelling treatment of this dynamic. Her inspiration is Thomas Hobbes, who she reads as having provided an early theory of state-building as “an activity grounded in fear of threat and the apparent desire for protection such fear generates” (Young 2003, 2). She adapts his story to explain how modern states gain legitimacy from activities that limit the freedom of their people in the name of protection. While her analysis focuses mainly on “security states” and “security threats” conventionally understood, her framework has value for understanding how the protection of women from traffickers can be a legitimizing exercise for the EU. After all, there is no reason why the exact identity of the external threat need be a state, so long as it is "an unpredictable aggressor against which the state needs vigilant defense" (8). Within dominant representations of “the problem of sex trafficking,” traffickers (and the ill-specified transnational organized crime syndicates that they are held to represent) fit this part quite well.

Young’s most original contribution comes from explaining how the politics of protection not only create relations of dominance and subjugation, but how those relations are both patriarchal and constitutive of gendered identities. She explains,

To the extent that citizens of a democratic state allow their leaders to adopt a stance of protectors toward them, these citizens come to occupy a subordinate status like that of women in the patriarchal household. We are to accept a more authoritarian and paternalistic state power, which gets its support partly from the unity a threat produces and our gratitude for protection (2).

In the context of the EU’s response to sex trafficking, it is notable that “the protected” are not citizens; they are immigrants. They are not, therefore, in a position to “allow” the EU to do anything. They are the daughters of the household, subject to paternal protection and the ramifications that such protection holds for their ability to
exercise agency. Likewise, their “gratitude for protection” is irrelevant to the legitimacy of that protection.

Restrictions on the movement and sexual choices of women often come as a condition for protection against sex-right patriarchy. Women who migrate into Europe must accept the role of “the protected,” with all its political ramifications, or else disappear from the discourse as a “bad” woman. As Young (2003, 13-14) explains,

…the logic of masculinist protection constitutes the “good” men who protect their women and children by relation to other “bad” men liable to attack. In this logic, virtuous masculinity depends on its constitutive relation to the presumption of evil others. Feminists have much analyzed a correlate dichotomy between the “good” woman and the “bad” woman. Simply put, a “good” woman stands under the male protection of a father or husband, submits to his judgment about what is necessary for her protection, and remains loyal to him. A “bad” woman is one who is unlucky enough not to have a man willing to protect her, or who refuses such protection by claiming the right to run her own life. In either case, the woman without a male protector is fair game for any man to dominate. There is a bargain implicit in the masculinity protector role: either submit to my governance or all the bad men out there are liable to approach you, and I will not try to stop them.

Whether a trafficked woman chooses to follow paternal restrictions on agency, sexuality, and movement, or instead “refuses such protection by claiming the right to run her own life” often determines whether she will receive the protection of the EU. The restrictions have ranged from a denial of her will to migrate to confinement in shelters or detention centers. The former is exemplified by billboards posted in those towns from which women migrate, warning them of the harm that awaits trafficked women. It is found also in popular media, such as comic books that similarly seek to deter women from entering the EU. Once “rescued” from sex work, restrictive measures have been implemented to ensure that the sex worker is not “re-victimized” (Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women 2007). Such policies are criticized for their failure to “place at the very core the voice and agency of trafficked and migrant women” (viii).
Significantly, the protection that is being offered is protection from the effects of sex-right patriarchy, not from the effects of capitalist patriarchy. While both of those sets of relations act detrimentally upon women who move into Europe for work in the sex industry, only the former is featured prominently in the discourse of protection. This is not to suggest that the EU has ignored entirely the economic conditions that act heavily upon the decisions of many women to migrate. Frequent mention is made of the need for any comprehensive solution to address the “root causes” of trafficking, understood as poverty. But the EU’s unwillingness to confront the system of capitalist patriarchy is obvious. As a part of its goal for the “long-term social inclusion” of trafficking victims, the EU has sought simply to make them better workers. To that end, it has promoted “vocational training” and the provision of “employment opportunities,” the latter of which will presumably disappear upon the inevitable deportation of the trafficking victim.

One effect of representing traffickers as the only significant threat to vulnerable women is to demonize all men who take part in moving women into Europe. Included among these are those who smuggle willing female migrants and would be more accurately described, in the words of John Morrison, as “service providers” rather than “traffickers” (cited in Goodey 2003, 418). Another effect is that female economic migrants (i.e., women who are not the victims of traffickers, at least not in the ways presumed) are not represented in the dominant discourse and are not granted protection by the EU. They are the “bad” women rendered invisible by voices demanding that the EU “rescue” the “captive daughters of Ukraine.” The invisibility of the female economic migrant is telling, and reveals that it is the exploitative movement
of women by (Eastern) men that is the cause of outrage, not the exploitation of women who choose to move.

Coupled with the disappearance of the “service provider” within the discourse, the disappearance of the willing female economic migrant masks the development of a consensual black market in migration. Such a market reveals the detrimental effects of neoliberal economic policies upon women in Europe’s East. But instead of using the existence of widespread trafficking to interrogate the structural economic inequalities between women and men, the discourse on trafficking turns it into a much simpler tale. Critiques of liberal policies are effectively swallowed up within a narrative that implies that any woman who seeks to migrate is a victim of male sex-right, and that any woman who wishes to escape conditions of exploitation must accept the paternal protection of the EU. As a promoter of neoliberal economic policies, especially in the Near Abroad, it should come as no surprise that the EU has focused its attention on the violence created by male sex-right. It has been poorly positioned to respond institutionally to this issue as if it were anything else. And, by placing itself between the trafficked victim and the violent males of the East, it is aligning itself with masculine norms of protection that have been establishing authority for centuries.

**Conclusion**

The EU’s evolving policies towards sex trafficking are significant in a number of interrelated ways. First, they are productive of the “truth” about sex trafficking. The performances they entail play a constitutive role in defining the nature of the problem. In other words, the politics of protection can themselves be considered productive of what has come to be understood as “the problem of sex trafficking.” So, while the EU’s efforts to protect victims of trafficking are a response to the discursive representation of
patriarchal forces that act negatively upon women’s lives, they are also a response that gives meaning to those forces, provides (the protector’s) interpretation of how those forces affect migrant women, and decides how they are best to be combated.

Certainly, this has considerable ramifications for the women and men involved. Through the politics of protection, power acts upon their bodies in very real ways, ranging from confinement to deportation. They become subjects, and subjects whose identities are inseparable from their genders. Beyond that, the EU’s policies are part of a process in which larger collective identities are posited, legitimized, and differentiated from others. Protection, then, is best understood as a constitutive performance, given meaning through masculine norms – a performance that, in this case, creates simultaneously “the EU” as masculine protector, “the sex trafficking victim” as the protected, “the trafficker” as the threat, and “the problem of sex trafficking” as the problem of sex-right patriarchy.
Figure 6-1. The discursive universe of sex trafficking in Europe: three levels
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

Summary of the Argument

The arguments and findings presented in this study may be summarized in the following terms: Though states appear as people in the minds of their audiences, it takes a lot of work for them to become so. A performative theory of state identity can explain how that result is achieved. By viewing such performances through their relations to gendered norms, it becomes apparent that states, like humans, are rendered intelligible through their correspondence with dominant ideas about masculinity and femininity. One dominant idea that appears to structure much state identity formation is that masculine actors provide protection for feminine, dependent subjects. Given that theoretical framework, scholars may study the gendered production of states by choosing a state, a set of performances, and a discourse (or discourses) through which the process takes place. Owing to the reciprocal effects of performances, the discourse(s) that one examines can be understood, too, as a product of the process.

The analysis that has been provided here is of the European Union. While it is not a state, theories of statecraft, including that outlined above, are applicable. Indeed, the EU’s rather overt search for stability, legitimacy, and constancy makes it an excellent subject through which to conduct a study of the processes of macro-identity formation. Because the EU’s performances require (gendered) content to have meaning, this study focused on an issue in which norms of masculinity and femininity could be deciphered and interpreted to illustrate the kind of identity that the EU has been creating. Sex trafficking was selected as the issue and it presents itself as an
ideal case study. It is a discursively-generated phenomenon, rich in powerful representations, that lies atop a number of identity-related fault lines. As a result of the Europeanization of the issue and the lead that the EU has taken in addressing it, the representations that one finds within the debate create a political space (“Europe”) that naturalizes the appropriateness of EU performance. The Europeanization of the issue means also that any conclusions drawn are likely applicable not just to the EU, but to Member States and other “European” entities. And if performance is understood broadly, as the creation of articulations within discourse, then a considerable range of policies may be considered productive of those actors.

This process, as a whole, can be observed even better by focusing on the liminal identities involved. They provide the most productive opportunities for EU performance, as their ambiguous character demands the articulation of their “place” in society. Within sex trafficking discourse, two sets of liminars are prominent: Ukraine and migrant Ukrainian sex workers. Not only are they key actors in the formation of European bodies, but the representations of one (re)inscribes the liminality of the other. The liminal identities of migrant sex workers, meanwhile, demand performance from (supra)state actors. The EU has responded with policies that amount to masculine performances of protection. Such protection ensures the continued marginality of both sex workers and the countries and regions from which they have come. Ultimately, the performances are not mere expressions of discursively-established identities, but are productive of those identities, as well. Through the performances, the EU becomes defined as a masculine actor.
The Implications of the Research

In her book, *Women and Gender in Islam*, Leila Ahmed (1992, 168) stated, “The issue is simply the humane and just treatment of women, nothing less, and nothing more.” Believing that discursive constructions have real effects upon the lives of people, it is important to interrogate them if one is to achieve that straightforward, yet ambitious, goal. This leads to the following question: If the process described in this study is accurate, what effect will it have on the abilities of governments to devise policies that ensure “the humane and just treatment of women?” Most likely, it won’t help. If the ongoing trafficking debate is a proxy war for other issues, then efforts to formulate effective policies on the issues of migration, forced labor, and prostitution could be hampered. Dragging the macro-identity issues of European politics into the trafficking debate complicates things. Symbolically, the policies come to mean too much. Moreover, migrant sex workers may find it harder to reach equal legal footing with their European counterparts. This would be the case especially for those who have entered Europe from Ukraine, or from another liminal political body.

For those larger political bodies, too, the implications are unkind. In his analysis of European-Russian relations, Iver Neumann (1998, 111-112) observed, “The representation of Europe is tied to the idea of the Russian other. Since exclusion is a necessary ingredient of integration, this is in itself no problem. The temptation remains, however, to play up the alterity of Russia in order to increase the integration of the European self” (emphasis in original). Feminist research teaches us to expect that efforts to “play up the alterity” of a country will mean playing up the alterity of the women from that country. With the EU currently emphasizing the need to concentrate on consolidation rather than expansion, this is a legitimate concern. The boundaries may
be yoked in an increasingly tight fashion, leaving less ambiguity about who is inside and who is outside. Despite the opportunities that liminal identities present for (supra)state building, migrant women and Eastern states may find themselves established even more firmly on the outside, further away from Europe, and subject to more exclusionary policies.

More optimistically, it is possible that macro-identity issues could facilitate the adoption of fair and just policies on the issues of prostitution and trafficking. The prospect of “joining Europe” could be an effective motivation for Eastern countries, like Ukraine, to better ensure the just treatment and fair living standards of its women. (Whether or not that happens in Europe is another story.) If Ukraine finds itself being written out of Europe through its women, then it may undertake efforts to make the discursively constructed dichotomy between “European woman” and “Ukrainian woman” more tenuous. One must believe it has the ability to do so. If there is one point that this study has emphasized, it is that polities will act upon the lives of women when it suits their needs.

For those interested in understanding how states establish and legitimize themselves, there are several recommendations that may be drawn from this study. First, to theorize the process of statecraft, whether for nation-states or supranational polities like the EU, it is useful to adopt a process-oriented, rather than substance-oriented, approach. Otherwise, one begins analyzing the phenomenon after much of the work has already been done. Adopting a process-oriented approach forces the scholar to theorize statecraft at the most basic level: where the state becomes a bounded and anthropomorphized subject. And, as this study has shown, it is only by
starting at such an early stage that one can observe the norms of intelligibility that enable identities to form. Patrick Jackson and Daniel Nexon provide a great, state-centric framework for IR scholars to accomplish this. It is likely, however, that further developments along these lines will require an embrace of work that originates outside IR. Though states are written about as if they are human, their identities have not been interrogated as such. Much is to be gained from listening to scholars like Judith Butler, who focus not on state subjects, but on human subjects and the process of their constitution.

A second recommendation that emerges from this study is that gender should not be neglected in the study of identity formation. Gender provides norms of intelligibility that are relevant to the formation of any subject. And until people can think of actors without reference to gendered norms, that will continue to be the case. What this means, in the field of IR, is that there are gendered states. States (re)constitute themselves in line with gender norms. Rarely is this a conscious plan; the desire to achieve a powerful, legitimate, and stable subject position, and to maintain such a position once it is established, is enough to drive the process. Because power, legitimacy, and stability have been appropriated historically by men, one would expect to find states performing more often in masculine, rather than feminine, ways. Nonetheless, there is nothing in this study that precludes states from substantiating themselves through recourse to feminine norms. Valuable work remains to be done on that front.

The call to incorporate gender has gone largely unheeded in IR. Even those scholars who are amenable to process-oriented ontologies omit gender from their
analyses. They operate with frameworks well adapted to theories of performativity, yet stop short of applying the insights of Judith Butler, Cynthia Weber, and other feminists. Those within IR whose theoretical innovations have paved the way for a processual relational account of identity – Alexander Wendt, David Campbell, Patrick Jackson and Daniel Nexon, to name a few – have provided a good starting point for others who wish to go further by considering gender as a central component of those processes. Yet, until more scholars move in this direction, there will be little recognition that the personhood of the state – its “body” and “life” – is itself a product of performances read through gendered norms of intelligibility. That is to say, there will be little recognition that the state is not a genderless being. The failure to recognize that, to remain blind to what Wendy Brown (1995) termed, “the man in the state,” may have serious implications for scholars and citizens alike. The protection offered by the state will not be interrogated and the logic separating “us” from “them” will go unchallenged. As a result, the “humane and just treatment of women” will remain a dream deferred.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jonathan Wadley was born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida. He received his diploma from Terry Parker High School. He earned bachelor’s degrees in business administration (finance) and political science at the University of Florida. His most recent work has been published by Routledge in an edited volume titled, *Gender and International Security: Feminist Perspectives.*