DRAFT: COMMENTS WELCOME!

Regionalism and Collective Identities: The European Experience

by

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1.   **Introduction**[1]

An effectively functioning polity requires that its members attach legitimacy to it. Political systems need the diffuse support of their members in order to be able to carry out and implement authoritative decisions which might otherwise meet resistance. Efforts at regional integration whereby member states pool, share or transfer parts of their national sovereignty to supranational institutions, are no exception. The question then becomes how much collective identification with these supranational entities and integration is required in order to sustain such efforts. Do ordinary *Argentinos* have to identify with *MERCOSUR* and feel attached to their fellow Latin Americans in order for political and economic elites to be able to promote regional integration? Of course, the answer varies with the degree and extent of regional integration. A customs union probably requires less collective identification than a common market, while a single currency such as the Euro or the development of a common security and defense policy with an integrated army are altogether different matters. In the latter cases, the regional organization gains more and more competences which have so far been properties of the nation-state.

This paper concentrates on the European experience. First, the European integration effort so far spans over five decades and, thus, one would expect some impact on collective identification processes. Second, compared to other regional integration processes, the EU is by far the deepest and most developed regional organization which has acquired already many features of a federation. Competences are shared among various levels of governance (supranational, national, subnational) in almost all issue-areas of political life – from agriculture all the way to social policies. It would be interesting to compare the European with the Latin American experience, but I leave this to the conference participants, given my lack of knowledge of *MERCOSUR* and other attempts at regional cooperation.

Those theorizing about an emerging European polity have always been interested in questions of collective identity formation. The founding fathers of regional integration theory such as Haas and Deutsch were also pioneers of the literature on nation-building and nationalism (Deutsch 1957, 5-6, 129; Haas 1958). "Euro-pessimists" challenge the evolutionary logic of European integration on

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precisely these grounds. They argue that a European polity is impossible, because integration in terms of collective identity cannot be achieved (see Kielmansegg 1996; Smith 1992). After more than forty years of European integration, we still know very little about how the ongoing processes of Europeanization and the gradual emergence of a European polity have affected collective identities on the various levels of subjective affiliations. Survey data such as the Eurobarometer opinion polls which are conducted twice a year in all fifteen EU member states with identical questionnaires tell us relatively little, even though they include questions on social identities for the last ten years. These data essentially suggest that Europeans' identification with "Europe" is consistently lower than identification with their nation-states and their local regions. But what does that mean?

To begin with, the concept of European identity is rather elusive. Do people – social groups and in-
tify with Europe and, if so, what does this mean for their national, subnational, gender or other cultures? Does "European identity" mean that you have to give up your national identities or other subjective affiliations? I do not think so and I argue that setting up "European identity" in contrast to national or regional identities already frames the issue in a questionable way. Rather, I argue that individuals and social groups hold multiple identities and the real question to be asked concerns, therefore, how much space there is for "Europe" in given collective identities. I also claim that ideas about Europe and European order resonate in differential ways with given political cultures and national identities.

This paper proceeds in the following steps. First, I try to clarify the concept of "collective identity" and suggest three ways to think about the relationship between supranational and other identities which peoplel hold. Second, I present findings from a research project examining the identity constructions of political elites in three European countries. In the *British* case, notions of "Englishness" have been largely constructed as distinct from "Europe" and have remained so since the 1950s. The prevailing English nation-state identity still perceives Europe as the (friendly) "other," and this remains incompatible with federalist or supranationalist visions of European political order, as Tony Blair experiences every day when he tries to move Britain further toward the Euro zone. In contrast, the (West) *German* nation-state identity was thoroughly reconstructed during the 1950s when purely nationalist visions were less and less available after the catastrophe of Nazi Germany and World War II. A "European Germany" was seen as overcoming the German nationalist past. The European German nation-state identity survived the end of the Cold War and German unification and explains why German political elites – whether Christian Democrats or Social Democrats – have supported further steps toward European integration. While Britain and Germany are, thus, cases of continuity

since at least the late 1950s, there have been substantial changes in the *French* collective nation-state identities. A distinct nationalist vision of French nation-state identity carried the day in the late 1950s. President de Gaulle's Fifth Republic combined the French history of a centralized state, of enlightenment, and of Republicanism in a vision of *grandeur* and *indépendence*. De Gaulle's successors found out, however, that these visions of France were increasingly inconsistent with the reality of European integration. As a result, the political elites – starting with the center-left during the 1980s and continuing on the center-right – incorporated "Europe" into the French collective identity by adopting a vision of Europe as the French nation-state writ large.

2.   What Is Collective Identity and How Can We Think About Supranational Identities?

For the purposes of this paper, I use social identity and self-categorization theories to clarify the concept of collective identity (see Abrams and Hogg 1990; Turner 1987; Oakes, Haslam, and Turner 1994; Tajfel 1981). I emphasize the term "collective" here in the sense of inter-subjectively shared understandings of identity which have become consensual among social groups. While political elites are almost constantly in the business of identity constructions, only some of these constructions are consensual at any given point in time. Social identities contain, first, ideas describing and categorizing an individual's membership in a social group including emotional, affective, and evaluative components. Groups of individuals perceive that they have something in common on the basis of which they form an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991). Second, this commonness is accentuated by a sense of difference with regard to other communities. Individuals frequently tend to view the group with which they identify in a more positive way than the "out-group." This does not mean, however, that the perceived differences between the "in-group" and the "out-group" are necessarily based on value judgements and that the "other" is usually looked down at (Eisenstadt and Giesen 1995). Third, *national* identities construct the "imagined communities" of – mostly territorially de
nation states and are, therefore, closely linked to ideas about sovereignty and statehood (Bloom 1990). National identities often contain visions of just political and social orders. Fourth, social identities are context-bound (Oakes, Haslam, and Turner 1994, 100). The context-boundedness of national identities means that different components of national identities are invoked depending on the policy-area in question. "National identities" with regard to citizenship rules might look different from "national identities" concerning understandings of the state and political order. This paper is concerned with the latter rather than with the former as a result of which I will use the term *"nation-state identity"* in the following to delineate the differences to other components of national collective

identities. The context-boundedness and contestedness of collective identities has led many authors to conclude that social identities are fluid and subject to frequent changes (for example, Neumann 1996). But the latter does not follow from the former. Cognitive psychology and self-categorization theory argue that self/other categorizations change the more gradually, the more they are incorporated in institutions, myths and symbols, as well as cultural understandings (Fiske and Taylor 1984; Oakes, Haslam, and Turner 1994). This should be particularly relevant for collective identities pertaining to the nation-state which usually take quite some time and effort to construct and are then embedded in institutions and a country's political culture.

We can now distinguish among at least three ways of conceptualizing how supranational identities relate to other identities constituting social groups. First, there is the "zero sum model" of collective identity. Here, identification with one social group comes at the expense of identifying with other groups. The more you identify with Latin America, the less you identify with Argentina. European-ness gradually and increasingly replaces national, subnational, or other identities relating to territorial spaces. The founding fathers (there are few mothers, unfortunately) of European integration theory thought, for example, that those political, economic, and social elites who benefit most from European integration, would increasingly identify with Europe and, as a result, overcome their na-tional identities (e.g. Haas 1958, 16). The emerging European polity would increasingly command the loyalty of the European people, starting with the elite level. A quick look at the empirical evi-dence disconfirms this argument thoroughly. Social groups such as farmers who arguably benefit most from European integration in economic terms, are not particularly known for expressing much affection for Brussels and the European Union (EU). Moreover, the theoretical foundations of this concept of collective identification is flawed. It is problematic to assume that individuals have only some limited space available for identifying with collectivities and that the more you identify with Europe, the less you can feel loyalty for your nation-state, your region, or your locality. Such a zero sum view of collective identities is rather questionable.

We know from both social psychology and from sociology that individuals hold multiple identities which are invoked depending on the social context (see, e.g. Abrams and Hogg 1990; Eisenstadt and Giesen 1995; Giesen 1999). Social psychologists have developed the concept of "entativity" (QUOTE CASTANO) suggesting that the more salient a social context becomes, the more people identify with the respective social group (or strongly reject it). This leads to the proposition that lev-els of identification with or conscious rejection of Europe should increase, the more important the

EU becomes in peoples' lifes. Thus, we should expect a jump in identification or rejection rates with the introduction of the Euro as money in peoples' pockets in 2002.

Such an understanding of multiple and context-dependent identities leads to a second concept of thinking about collective identities which could be called the "layer cake" model. Accordingly, people and social groups hold multiple identities and these social identities are layered. It then depends on the social context of interaction which of these multiple identities are invoked and become salient. Two examples: A *Porteño* might strongly feel loyalty to Buenos Aires when visiting the Argentine provinces, but identifies with Argentina when visiting Brazil. A leather-hosen wearing Bavarian German European might strongly feel Bavarian when he goes to "Prussian" Berlin, while he might strongly feel his Germanness when complaining about the inefficiency of Italian air traffic control when he gets stuck at the Bologna airport. Yet, when this Bavarian German visits a bar in the American midwest, he might quickly identify with some other fellow Europeans feeling strongly about their Europeanness, since they cannot find either decent beer or decent wine (I am not suggesting here that European identity only concerns food and drinks, though). This notion of multiple idenitification processes is by now fairly common in studies about European identities. Most scholars no longer think that European and national identities constitute "either-or" propositions.

Third, there is a concept of collective identities which one could call the "marble cake" model. This concept agrees that people hold multiple identities and that these identities are invoked in a context-dependent way. However, the idea here is that identities are not ordered and layered in such a neat way as the example of the Bavarian German European or of the Argentine *Porteño* suggests. Rather, the "marble cake" model suggests that collective identities enmesh and flow into each other, that there are no clearly defined boundaries between, say, one's Italianness and one's Europeanness. The idea is that multiple identities are nested or embedded rather than neatly layered. Maybe, one cannot even describe what it means to be Greek (or Italian or German or …) without also talking about Europe and Europeanness. A nation's history and cultural heritage might be so enmeshed with European history and cultural heritage that it becomes very difficult to disentangle the two when describing one's national collective identity. The same might be true for strong regional identities – from Sicily to the Rhineland.

Two conclusions follow from this conceptualization. First, there might be much more Europeanness enshrined in national cultures and, hence, a much stronger collective European identity than is usually assumed. This identification process might encompass a much longer – and probably also more

contested – history than the forty years of European integration. Second, however, it becomes very unclear whether Greeks, Italians, French, or Germans mean the same when they talk about their "Europeanness." The French notion of "mission civilisatrice," e.g., might translate into a European civilizing mission these days. But Germans would probably not feel very comfortable when confronted with such an interpretation of Europeanness. Again, insights from social psychological research suggest that increasing European identities among Italians, Germans, and French might actually lead to less positive evaluations of Italians, Germans, and French vis-à-vis each other. If people simply transfer the positive values and identity components of their in-group to a larger collectivity, the stronger they might distance themselves from out-groups belonging to the lower-level category (QUOTE MUMMENDEY!). If Germans strongly identify with Europe, but "Europe" is simply Germany writ large, the social distance they feel to Italy might actually increase. This is a rather disturbing and counter-intuitive insight from recent social psychological research suggesting that social tolerance in Europe might decrease with stronger feelings of European identity.

In sum then, the "marble cake" concept claims, on the one hand, that there is much more Europeanness embedded in national, regional, or other collective identities than is usually assumed. On the other hand, the meaning of "Europe" might differ profoundly in the various national, subnational, and other contexts. We can then reformulate the question of European identity into one of whether the different meanings of Europe show some overlap and whether there are nevertheless some common understandings of Europeanness, even though their historical and cultural embeddedness differs profoundly. To provide an example: Athenians might relate their understanding of European democracy to ancient Greece. French Europeanness also encompasses liberal values, but they are related to a Europeanized version of French enlightenment and republicanism values.

In the following, I use the "marble cake" concept of collective identies to explore how Europeanization has influenced nation-state identities in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom over the last fifty years. I concentrate empirically on discourses among political elites, in particular the major political parties of the three countries. The identity constructions can be distinguished along two dimensions, first, ideas about how "Europe" relates to given nation-state identities, second, visions about European political and economic order. The degree to which these identity constructions were represented in the political discourses in the three countries varied considerably. Moreover, different identity constructions carried the day and became consensual.

3.   **Europe and the Evolution of Nation-State Identities in Britain, Germany, and France**

3.1   <u>Europe as Britain's "Other"</u>

The probably most remarkable feature of British elite attitudes toward European integration is their stability and lack of change (for the following see Knopf 1997). The fundamental orientations toward the European Community have remained essentially the same since the end of World War II and have survived the ups and downs in British policies toward the EC/EU. More than twenty years after entry into the European Community, Britain is still regarded as "of rather than in" Europe; it remains the "awkward partner" and "semi-detached" from Europe (Bailey 1983; George 1994). This general attitude has not changed since the 1950s: "Where do we stand? We are not members of the European Defence Community, nor do we intend to be merged in a Federal European system. We feel we have a special relation to both. This can be expressed by prepositions, by the preposition 'with' but not 'of' – we are with them, but not of them. We have our own Commonwealth and Empire" (Churchill 1953).

British attitudes toward the European project reflect collectively held beliefs about British, particularly English identity, since "Britishness" has been identified with "Englishness" throughout most of the post-World War II era. This has only changed during the last decade or so when regional identities such as Scottish or Welsh became increasingly salient in the British political debates. Among the five ideal typical identity constructions presented above, the nationalist identity clearly prevailed in the British political discourses. There is still a feeling of "them" vs. "us" between Britain and the continent. "Europe" continues to be identified with the continent and perceived as "the other" in contrast to Englishness. The social construction of "Englishness" as the core of British nation-state identity comprises meanings attached to institutions, historical memory, and symbols. Each of these components are hard to reconcile with a vision of European political order going beyond inter-governmentalism (see Lyon 1991; Schauer 1996; Schmitz and Geserick 1996). It is not surprising that parts of English nation-state identity are often viewed as potentially threatened by European integration. Institutions such as the Parliament and the Crown form important elements of a collective nation-state identity. The identity-related meanings attached to these institutions center around a peculiar understanding of national sovereignty. The Crown symbolizes "external sovereignty" in terms of independence from Rome and the Pope as well as from the European continent since 1066. Parliamentary or "internal" sovereignty represents a most important constitutional principle relating to a 700 year old parliamentary tradition and hard-fought victories over the King. English sovereignty is, thus, directly linked to myths about a continuous history of liberal and demo-

cratic evolution and "free-born Englishmen." British objections against transferring sovereignty to European supranational institutions are usually justified on grounds of lacking democratic – meaning parliamentary – accountability. Identity-related understandings of Parliamentary sovereignty are directly linked to the prevailing visions of a European order comprising independent nation-states. This is demonstrated by the following quotes from 1950 and from the 1990s:

Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer Sir Stafford Cripps, 1950: "It does not, however, seem to us – as at present advised – either necessary or appropriate … to invest a supra-national authority of independent persons with powers for overriding Governmental and Parliamentary decisions in the participating countries. (...) Certainly this Parliament has always exercised the greatest caution as to agreeing to any removal from its own democratic control of any important element of our economic power or policy" (Cripps 1950).

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, 1990: "But – and it is a crucial but – we shall never accept the approach of those who want to see the EC as a means of removing our ability to govern ourselves as an independent nation. The British Parliament had endured for 700 years and had been a beacon of hope to the peoples of Europe in their darkest days" (Thatcher 1990).

Prime Minister John Major, 1993: "It is clear now that the Community will remain a union of sovereign national states. That is what its peoples want: to take decisions through their own Parliaments. That protects the way of life, the cultural differences, the national traditions ... It is for nations to build Europe, not for Europe to attempt to supersede nations" (Major 1993).

These and other statements show a remarkable continuity of British attitudes toward the European Union and related identity constructions from the 1950s (and earlier) until today. They also demonstrate that nation-state identities supersede ideological orientations among the two major parties. In sum, British nation-state identity seems to be hardly affected by European integration and "Europe" is still largely constructed as the, albeit friendly, "other." While the British case is one of non-adaptation to the European Union, German nation-state identity transformed toward Europe before the integration process could have left its mark. In other words, Britain is a case of strong incompatibility between Europe and the nation-state, while Europe resonates well with contemporary German nation-state identity.

3.2   The German Past as Europe's "Other": The Case of the Federal Republic

The German case is one of thorough and profound reconstruction of nation-state identity following the catastrophe of World War II (for the following see Engelmann-Martin 1998; Risse and Engelmann-Martin forthcoming). Thomas Mann's dictum that "we do not want a German Europe, but a

European Germany" quickly became the mantra of the post-war (West) German elites.[2] Since the 1950s, a fundamental consensus has emerged among the political elites and has been shared by public opinion that European integration is in Germany's vital interest (see Bulmer 1989; Katzenstein 1997a; Banchoff 1999).

After 1945, the newly founded Christian Democratic Party (CDU) immediately embraced European unification as the alternative to the nationalism of the past. As Ernst Haas put it, "in leading circles of the CDU, the triptych of self-conscious anti-Nazism, Christian values, and dedication to European unity as a means of redemption for past German sins has played a crucial ideological role" (Haas 1958, 127). Christianity, democracy, and – later on – social market economy became the three pillars on which a collective European identity was to be based. It was sharply distinguished from both the German nationalist and militarist past and – during the late 1940s and early 1950s – from Soviet communism and Marxism. In other words, Germany's own past as well as communism constituted the "others" in this identity construction.

But throughout the early 1950s, there was no elite consensus on German nation-state identity. The Social Democrats (SPD) were the main opposition party to Adenauer's policies at the time. In the inter-war period, the SPD had been the first major German party to embrace the concept of a "United States of Europe" in its 1925 Heidelberg program. When the party was forced into exile during the Nazi period, the leadership fully embraced the notion of a democratic European federation which would almost naturally become a Socialist order. As in the case of the CDU, "the 'European idea' was primarily invoked as a spiritual value in the first years of the emigration. … What Europe would be like after Hitler was a second-order question, though it was taken as self-evident that it would be socialist. In this period Europe was seen as an antithesis to Nazi Germany" (Paterson 1974, 3). Consequently, when the SPD was re-founded in 1946, its first program supported the "United States of Europe, a democratic and socialist federation of European states. [The German Social Democracy] aspires to a Socialist Germany in a Socialist Europe" (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands 1946). Thus, Europe, Germany, democracy, and socialism were perceived as identical.

The SPD's first post-war leader, Kurt Schumacher, a survivor of Nazi concentration camps, strongly promoted a "Europe as a third force" concept for the new German nation-state identity. He argued vigorously against the politics of Western integration, since it foreclosed the prospects of rapid re-

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[2] In the following, I use "Germany" routinely for the Federal Republic including the pre-unification period.

unification of the two Germanies (Paterson 1974; Rogosch 1996). Schumacher denounced the Council of Europe and the ECSC as "un-European," as "mini-Europe" (*Kleinsteuropa*), as conservative-clericalist and capitalist. At the same time, the SPD went at great pains to argue that it did not oppose European integration as such, just this particular version.

Two major elections defeats later (1953 and 1957), the SPD changed course. There had always been an internal opposition against Schumacher's policies. These party elites supported the identity construction of a modern European Germany as part of the Western community of liberal and democratic states. By the late 1950s, this group took over the party leadership. The German Social Democrats thoroughly reformed their domestic and foreign policy program. With regard to the latter, they re-visited the 1925 Heidelberg program and became staunch supporters of European integration. The changes culminated in the 1959 Godesberg program (Bellers 1991; Rogosch 1996).

The SPD's turnaround can partly be explained by perceived instrumental interests. The party needed to attract new voters who apparently supported Adenauer's policies, while Schumacher's opposition did not pay off. The party's new ideological orientation resulted from a leadership change which brought the Europeanist and Atlanticist faction into power. Thus, instrumental interests explain that "something" had to be done. The political goals and collective identity of the new party leaders account for the content and substance of the change.

From the 1960s on, a federalist consensus ("United States of Europe") prevailed among the German political elites comprising the main parties from the center-right to the center-left. This consensus outlasted the changes in government from the CDU to the SPD in 1969, from the SPD to the CDU in 1982, and the recent change toward a coalition between the SPD and the Green party in 1998. Even more significant, German unification did not result in a re-consideration of German European policies. With the unexpected end of the East-West conflict and regained German sovereignty, a broad range of foreign policy opportunities emerged creating a situation in which the German elites could have redefined their national interests. But Germany did not re-consider its fundamental foreign policy orientations, since Germany's commitment to European integration had long outlived the context in which it had originally emerged (see Banchoff 1999; Hellmann 1996; Katzenstein 1997a). In the aftermath of unification, the German government accelerated rather than slowed down its support for further progress in European integration. German support for a single currency and for a European political union was perfectly in line with long-standing attitudes toward integration and the country's European nation-state identity.

This German federalist consensus went hand in hand with a peculiar identity construction in the aftermath of World War II. The German notion of what constitutes the "other", the non-European, is related to European and German nationalist history. German nationalism came to be viewed as authoritarianism, militarism, and anti-Semitism. Germany's nationalist and militarist past constituted the "other" in the process of "post-national" identity formation whereby Europeanness replaces traditional notions of nation-state identity. All federal governments from Konrad Adenauer onwards were determined to render the European unification process irreversible because they were convinced that the concept of a unified Europe was the most effective assurance against the renaissance of nationalism and disastrous conflicts. Nowadays, a "good German" equals a "good Euro

porting a united Europe. "Europe" in this identity construction stands for a stable peace order overcoming the continent's bloody past, for democracy and human rights (in contrast to European – and German – autocratic history), as well as for a social market economy including the welfare state (in contrast to both Soviet communism and Anglo-Saxon "laissez-faire" capitalism; see Bellers and Winking 1991; Katzenstein 1997a).

In sum and in contrast to Great Britain, the German case is one of comprehensive transformation of post-World War II nation-state identity. German Europeanness as a particular identity construction was contested throughout the 1950s, but became consensual afterwards, partly because it suited perceived instrumental interests of political elites. The European integration process did not create this identity. It rather reinforced and stabilized it by demonstrating that Germany can prosper economically and regain political clout in Europe through a policy of "self-binding" in European institutions. German Euro-patriotism deeply affected elite perceptions of the country's national interests and attitudes toward European integraiton. This Euro-patriotism remained stable despite various challenges which might otherwise have led to changes in instrumental interests.

3.3   Europe as France Writ Large and the Transformation of French Exceptionalism

In contrast to Britain and Germany, attitudes toward Europe shared by the French political elites underwent considerable changes over time (for the following see Roscher 1998). Policy-makers of the Third Republic such as Aristide Briand and Eduard Herriot were among the first who embraced a federalist vision of "*les Etats Unis d'Europe"* during the inter-war period (Bjol 1966, 172-173). However, their visions did not become consensual within their own parties until after World War II.

During the 1950s and in conjunction with the first efforts toward European integration, a national debate took place which concerned French identity and basic political orientations in the post-war era. World War II and the German occupation served as traumatic experiences as a result of which French nation-state identity became deeply problematic and contested. Many controversies centered around how to deal with Germany as the most significant French "other" at the time. Supporters of European integration argued in favor of a "binding" strategy, of creating supranational institutions in order to contain German power once and for all, while opponents favored traditional balance-of-power strategies to deal with the German problem:

Socialist Leader Guy Mollet 1947: "The only means to disinfect the German people from Nazism and to democratize it is to surround Germany in a democratic Europe" (Mollet 1947).

MRP Leader Alfred Coste-Floret 1952: "There is no Europe without Germany and there is no solution for the German problem without Europe" (Coste-Floret 1952).

These policy prescriptions correlated with the nation-state identity constructions prevailing in the respective parties at the time. There was no consensus among the French political elites about European integration as a solution for the German problem. The defeat of the treaty on the European Defense Community in the French National Assembly in 1954 showed the deep divisions among the political elites.

The next "critical juncture" for French nation-state identity was the war in Algeria and the ongoing crisis of the Fourth Republic. When the Fifth Republic came into being in 1958, its founding father, President Charles de Gaulle, reconstructed French nation-state identity and managed to re-unite a deeply divided nation around a common vision of the French role in the world:

"When one is the Atlantic cape of the continent, when one has planted one's flag in all parts of the world, when one spreads the ideas, and when one opens oneself to the environment, in short, when one is France, one cannot escape the grand movements on the ground." (De Gaulle 1950).

De Gaulle's identity construction related to historical myths of Frenchness and combined them in a unique way. As the leader of the French *résistance* during World War II, he overcame the trauma of the Vichy regime and related to understandings of the French nation-state which combined a specific meaning of sovereignty with the values of enlightenment and democracy (Furet, Juillard, and Rosanvallon 1988; Nicolet 1982; Saint-Etienne 1992). The notion of sovereignty – understood as national independence from outside interference together with a sense of uniqueness (*grandeur*) – was used to build a bridge between post-revolutionary Republican France and the pre-revolutionary monarchy. The understanding of the French *l'état-nation* connoted the identity of the nation and de-

mocracy as well as the identity of French society with the Republic. Finally, de Gaulle re-introduced the notion of French exceptionalism and uniqueness in terms of a civilizing mission for the world (*mission civilisatrice*) destined to spread the universal values of enlightenment and of the French revolution. None of these nation-state identity constructions were particularly new, but de Gaulle combined them in a special way and managed to use them in order to legitimize the political institutions of the Fifth Republic.

Of course, these understandings were hard to reconcile with federalist visions of European order. Rather, "*l'Europe des nations"* (Europe of nation-states) became the battle cry during de Gaulle's presidency. But the specific Gaullist nation-state identity construction only remained consensual among the political elites for about another ten years after de Gaulle's resignation. Beginning in the late 1970s, Europeanization gradually transformed French nation-state identity among the elites in conjunction with two critical junctures – the failure of President Mitterrand's economic policies in the early 1980s and the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s (Flynn 1995; Schmidt 1997).

When Mitterrand and the Socialist party came into power in 1981, they initially embarked upon a project of creating democratic socialism in France based on leftist Keynesianism. This project bitterly failed when the adverse reactions of the capital markets hit the French economy which in turn led to a severe loss of electoral support for Mitterrand's policies. In 1983, Mitterrand had practically no choice other than changing course dramatically, if he wanted to remain in power (Bauchard 1986; Uterwedde 1988). This political change led to a deep crisis within the Socialist Party which then gradually abandoned the Socialist project and moved toward ideas once derisively labeled "Social Democratic." In changing course, the party followed President François Mitterrand who had defined the construction of the European Community as a central issue of his time in office: "We are at the moment where everybody unites, our fatherland, our Europe, Europe our fatherland, the ambition to support one by the other, the excitement of our land and of the people it produces, and the certainty of a new dimension is expecting them" (Mitterrand 1986, 15, 104).

The PS's move toward Europe included an effort to reconstruct French nation-state identity. The French Socialists started highlighting the common European historical and cultural heritage. They increasingly argued that the French future was to be found in Europe. The French left started embracing the notion of a "European France", extending the vision of the French *"mission civilisatrice"* toward Europe writ large. The peculiar historical and cultural legacies of France was transferred from the "first Nation-state" in Europe to the continent as a whole, because all European states were

seen as children of enlightenment, democracy and Republicanism. France imprints its marks on Europe. This identity construction uses traditional understandings of Frenchness and the French nation-state and extends them to Europe. In contrast to English identity constructions where Europe is still the "other," this understanding incorporates Europe into one's own collective nation-state identity and its understandings about sovereignty and political order. French identity is transformed but only to the degree that ideas about Europe can be incorporated into and resonate with previous visions of the state. This change pretty much corresponds to the "marble cake" model of collective identity discussed above.

Similar changes in the prevailing visions of European order and reconstructions of French nation-state identity took place on the French right, albeit later. The heir of Charles de Gaulle's visions, the *Rassemblement pour la République* (RPR), provides another example of the French political elite changing course. The end of the Cold War was the decisive moment constituting another "critical juncture" and crisis experience for French identity. When the Berlin wall came down, Germany united, and the post-Cold War European security order was constructed, France – *la grande nation* – remained largely on the sidelines. French diplomatic efforts failed miserably. As a result, large parts of the political elite realized the grand illusion of *grandeur* and *indépendence*. The way out was Europe (see Flynn 1995). The political debates surrounding the referendum on the Maastricht treaties in 1992 represented identity-related discourses about the new role of France in Europe and the world after the end of the Cold War. As in the 1950s, fear of German power dominated the debates. Supporters of Maastricht and EMU, particularly on the French right, argued in favor of a "binding" strategy, while opponents supported a return to traditional balance of power politics. This time, supporters of European integration prevailed in all major parties.

In sum, the majority of the French political elite gradually incorporated Europe in notions of French distinctiveness and started identifying the future of France as a nation-state with European order. But a distinct minority across the political spectrum sticks to the old Gaullist concepts of French "grandeur" and "indépendence." Of the three countries considered in this paper, France is the only one in which a major reshaping and reshuffling of the elite discourse on nation-state identity took place in the last two decades. It remains to be seen, though, to what extent the identification with a "Europe" that looks like France is actually compatible with a European integration process containing strong federal features which are very different from the French state.

4.   Conclusions

Our empirical research indicates that nation-state identities are rather sticky and only slowly subject to change. In the case of the UK, Englishness is still defined in contrast to Europeanness whereby "Europe" constitutes the "other" of nation-state identity. Almost twenty years of EC/EU membership do not seem to have made much difference. In contrast, the German case is one of thorough reconstruction of nation-state identity in the post-World War II period. Once German Europeanness became consensual among the political elites in the early 1960s, this nation-state identity remained stable ever since. German Europeanness preceded rather than followed progress in European integration. But European integration made a difference in the French case in terms of transforming Gaullist nation-state identity. Since the 1980s, the French elites from the center-right to the center-left have started identifying with European rather than strictly French distinctiveness.

How can these different developments be explained? As argued in the introduction and in line with the "marble cake" model of collective identities, new ideas about political order and identity constructions have to resonate with the notions embedded in collective nation-state identities. Classic British notions of political order, for example, emphasize parliamentary democracy and external sovereignty which is why only intergovernmentalist versions of European political order resonate with internal and external sovereignty. In the French case, state-centered republicanism – the duty to promote values such as brotherhood, freedom, equality and human rights, in short, "civilization" – constitutes a continuous element in the French discourse about political order. Therefore, any European idea which resonates with French exceptionalism and which does not violate the state-centered concept of republicanism can legitimately be promoted in France, including a European rather than solely French exceptionalism. The current discussions in France on the *finalité politique* of the European Union indicate, however, that a European federation is not easily reconcilable with French notions of the nation-state (*l'état-nation*). In Germany, concepts of a social market economy, democracy and political federalism were central elements in the discourse of German exiled elites during the war and among the entire political class after World War II. Ideas about European political order which resonated with these concepts were, therefore, considered legitimate in the German political debate. In addition, militarism and Nazism had thoroughly discredited a nationalist notion of Germany. Europe provided an alternative identity construction and, thus, a way out. Given the institutional similarity between the structure of German federalism and the emerging European federation (Bulmer 1997; Katzenstein 1997b), German post-nationalist identity should have an easier time to adjust to Europe than French visions of the nation-state.

But how can we explain changes in collective identities pertaining to Europe, as experienced in Germany in the late 1950s and in France starting in the early 1980s? Perceived crises situations – "critical junctures" – in conjunction with perceived instrumental interests seem to account for these transformations. In the Federal Republic of Germany, the SPD reached their critical juncture in the mid- to late 1950s when members of the party leadership realized that Kurt Schumacher's vision of "Europe as a third force" was no longer a viable option given the realities of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the Treaty of Rome, and of two severe federal election defeats in a row. At the same time, the modern Western concept of European identity resonated well with the domestic program of the party reformers who supported liberal democracy, market economy, and the welfare state while giving up more far-reaching Socialist visions. The desire to gain political power facilitated the ideological change of the Social Democrats' party program and their thorough reconstruction of German nation-state identity.

In the French case, it was only a question of time when the French-Gaullist nation-state identity would become incompatible with the Europeanization process and the overall French support for it. While German Europeanness and European integration went hand in hand, the gap between a French nationalist nation-state identity and the reality of European integration widened over time. When President Mitterrand's economic policies bumped up against the European Monetary System in 1982-83, he was forced to choose between Europe and his French-Socialist goals. Mitterrand readily opted for Europe to remain in power, but then set in motion a process which the German Social Democrats had experienced 25 years earlier – the parallel Social Democratization and adjustment to Europe in the French socialists' nation-state identity. By the end of the decade, Frenchness and Europeanness had been reconciled among the French center-left. The French Gaullists underwent a similar process after the end of the Cold War when they gradually realized that French exceptionalism and its *mission civilisatrice* could only be preserved within a European identity construction. Thus, French Europeanness became consensual among a majority of the political elites from the center-right to the center-left during the early 1990s.

In sum, more than forty years of European integration had different effects on the collective nation-state identities in the three countries. Supranationalism remains largely incompatible with deeply entrenched notions of Englishness and concepts of British sovereignty. In contrast, the emergence of a European polity reinforced and strengthened the German post-war Europeanness. Finally, Europeanization gradually contributed to changing the French nation-state identity. Frenchness and Europe-

anness are no longer incompatible. But one should not overlook that this research pertained exclusively to the level of political elites. It is not clear at all whether the findings also apply to the level of mass publics. Survey data indicate, for example, that elite support for European integration remains extraordinarily high among the EU 15 (it only "varies" from ca. 84% [Denmark] to 98% [Germany]), while the EU is much more contested on the level of mass public opinion (variation from 27% [Austria] to 75% [Italy]). The gap concerning support levels for EU membership between the elites and the masses is almost 60% in Germany, 45% in France, and 51% in the UK (1998 Eurobarometer data, see Spence 1998, 2). While these data do not measure identities, they suggest that Europe and the EU face major legitimacy problems as far as public support is concerned.

In conclusion, I would like to address two questions: First, does it actually matter that there is more space for "Europe" in the various nation-state identities than has been previously assumed? Second, what can we learn from the European experience for other efforts at regional integration?

As to the first question, the answer is ambiguous. It is clear, for example, that there is no immediate connection between the level of elite identification with Europe and national policies toward the EU in general. For example, there seems to be little correlation between European identities among elites and the degree of compliance with EU law. Britain, for example, has among the best compliance records with EU law and regulations, while France has the second worst. Or take Italy: There are few EU member states where people – both elites and masses – seem to identify more with Europe. Yet, Italy has the worst compliance record among the member states (according to a new data base developed at the EUI; Börzel, personal communication).

Does this mean that identification is completely irrelevant when it comes to actual policies toward the EU? Are we studying some epiphenomena? One should not throw out the baby with the bathwater, though. Identification with Europe among political elites seems to matter most when it comes to treaty-making decisions. In a different paper, we argued that policies toward the single currency in the UK, France, and Germany cannot be explained on the basis of economic or geostrategic interests, but have to be understood in the context of identity politics (Risse et al. 1999). This is not too surprising, since constitutional decisions on the European order are, of course, closely related to visions about the appropriate political and social order which make up part of one's nation-state identity.

What are then the lessons to be learned from the European experience for other efforts at regional integration? The good news is that it is definitely wrong to assume that national identities have to be

overcome in favor of supranational identities and that such supranational identifications are a prerequisite for regional integration. People hold multiple identities and act on the basis of these identities in context-dependent ways. Moreover, the "marble-cake" concept of multiple identities suggests that the various levels of identification are embedded in each other. People's nation-state identity might actually encompass references to their larger part of the world. The bad news is that identification with your world region sometimes comes in very different colors. A Brazilian's identification with Latin America might look very different from the concept of Latin American identity prevailing in Argentina. As a result, the task is not necessarily easier to move toward further regional integration if the various supranational identities simply consist of one's national identity writ large. Last not least, further movement on the integration path does not necessarily strengthen identification with one's world region. Greater salience of supranational institutions in people's life might as well result in greater rejection rates which then gain in political significance. The European Union has been very much an elite-driven enterprise which is in danger of loosing the support of the European citizens. Elites in other democracies around the world who are engaged in regional integration efforts should be aware of this problem and should try not to repeat the European mistakes.

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