Identity Politics, Core State Powers, and Regional Integration: Europe and Beyond

by

Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse
(Freie Universität Berlin, Germany)

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This special issue explores the relationship between political identities with a territorial dimension, on the one hand, and the transfer of core state powers to the EU and other regional institutions, on the other hand (see introductory essay by Theresa Kuhn and Francesco Nicoli, this special issue).[1] On a purely theoretical level, it is hard to see how such transfers can be legitimized or sustained – at least in democratic polities – without some sense of community and, thus, collective identification among the citizens, irrespective which definition of core state powers we follow (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs, 2016). Integration is about the transfer of state authority to the supranational level – through pooling or delegation (Hooghe and Marks, 2015). States thereby voluntarily accept intrusions in their "Westphalian" sovereignty-, i.e., deep interferences into what used to be their domestic affairs, be it policy areas or power resources. Two "fathers" of integration theories – Karl W. Deutsch and Ernst Haas –suggested that deep integration and community-building go together. Haas defined integration as the transfer of loyalties to a new supranational center (Haas, 1958, 16). Deutsch's transactionalist approach saw security communities as bound by a mutual sense of community (Deutsch et al., 1957; for a more recent treatment see Kuhn, 2015; Hooghe, Lenz and Marks, 2019).

Yet, the direction of causal arrows from identity to integration (or vice versa) is less clear in these early statements. Does regional integration lead to collective identification, is community-building a pre-condition for regional integration, or do we observe mutually reinforcing processes of integration and identification? In this contribution, we concentrate on the pathway from collective identities to the integration of core state powers. We focus on identity politics, i.e., the employment of identity narratives for various political purposes and in the political process. We argue that – irrespective of functional needs for cooperation and integration – elite efforts at community-building are crucial for successful integration, in at least two ways. First, collective identification and mutual trust among (political) elites enables them to overcome the collective action problems associated with political integration at the regional level and the transfer of authority to supranational institutions. Second, elite identity narratives linking the nation-state to region-building need to resonate with mass public opinion in order to generate diffuse support (Easton, 1965) for regional integration. At the same time, exclusive nationalist

[1] We thank the participants of the workshop on "Collective Identities and Integration of Core State Powers," Amsterdam Centre for European Studies Annual Conference, December 12-14, 2018. In particular, we are grateful to Theresa Kuhn, Francesco Nicoli, and Larissa Versloot for their detailed comments on the draft of this article.

identities can also be mobilized against regional integration, as we are currently witnessing in Europe and in other parts of the world.

The contribution proceeds in two steps. First, we concentrate on the European experience. We argue that historically embedded elite identities have been crucial for the evolution of European integration, from the beginnings during the 1950s to the Maastricht treaties. With regard to mass public opinion, European integration has been enabled by the permissive consensus of EU citizens with inclusive national identities (Europe as a secondary identity). Most recently, however, the politicization of EU affairs in many member states from the Euro crisis on has been driven by (mostly right-wing) populist forces, which have been mobilizing the considerable minorities in mass public opinion holding exclusive nationalist identities. Thus, identity politics can also work against regional integration. The mobilization of exclusive national identities maps unto a re-alignment of political forces alongside a cultural cleavage of "cosmopolitan vs. exclusive nationalist" attitudes, which is discernible across Europe.

Second, we discuss the extent to which insights from Europe travel to other regions of the world (see also Checkel, 2016). Here, the empirical evidence concerning the relationship between community- and region-building is still scant. However, and comparable to the European experience, elites involved in region-building in Latin America, the Middle East, and Sub-Saharan Africa (less so in North America) almost always develop identity narratives linking their national experience to the respective regions. Moreover, evidence from – primarily – the World Value Surveys suggests that the difference between inclusive national identities (allowing for secondary regional identities), on the one hand, and exclusive nationalist identifications, on the other hand, travels beyond Europe. What is more, the latter have recently been mobilized by the likes of Donald Trump in the U.S., Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines, and now Jair Bolsonaro in Brazil. This suggests that the cultural cleavage structure underlying these mobilization strategies might also be valid in other world regions. We conclude with some suggestions for further research.

Identity Politics and the European Experience

The mobilization of collective identities has been crucial throughout the history of European integration. Until about the 2000s, the primary drivers have been Europeanized elite identities supported by the permissive consensus of inclusive national identities among a majority of EU citizens. We illustrate this point with regard to the beginnings of the European integration in the early 1950s, and the Maastricht treaties of the early 1990s, which instituted the most profound deepening of European integration as yet. Over the past fifteen years, however, we observe a development from permissive consensus to constraining dissensus (Hooghe and Marks, 2009). Most recently, this has resulted in the mobilization of exclusive nationalist identities by (mostly right-wing) populist forces from the Euro crisis to the migration challenge.

The Beginnings: Integrating External Security to Overcome War and Destruction

If we start the history of European integration with the early 1950s rather than the Treaty of Rome, dominant theories of European integration such as neo-functionalism (Haas, 1958) and liberal intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik, 1998) have a hard time accounting for it. They both assume that economic interdependence serves as a major driver for regional cooperation and integration. In the case of Europe, however, economic interdependence only took off after the first steps toward integration have been taken (Börzel and Risse, in prep.). It took until the 1960s when Europe reached the level of commercial and financial interdependence that had existed at the eve of the First World War (Graph, Kennwood and Lougheed, 2013). That interdependence is not necessarily at the origins of regional integration is obvious if we start the

history of European integration with the 1951 European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) rather than the 1957 European Economic Community (EEC).

We do not wish to argue that the beginnings of the European project were exclusively identity-driven. The history of the ECSC, however, demonstrates that the sharing of a common history of destructions related to not one but two World Wars united founding fathers of the European integration project. In their pursuit of a united, peaceful and prosperous Europe, Konrad Adenauer, Alcide De Gasperi, and Robert Schuman drew on European peace initiatives promoted by the Pan-European and other movements founded in the 1920s or the European Union which the French foreign minister Aristide Briand proposed to the General Assembly of the League of Nations, supported by his German counterpart, Gustav Stresemann, in September 1929 (Stevenson, 2012; Loth, 2015: 1-19).

20 years later, French foreign minister Robert Schuman responded to German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer's proposal to mutualize heavy industry in the Ruhr with his plan for a coal and steel community as a way to prevent further war between France and Germany (Loth, 2015: 20-36; Patel, 2018: 75-76). The Schuman Plan presented on 9 May 1950 placed the Franco-German production of coal and steel under a common High Authority to "make it plain that any war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible".[2] In other words, the ECSC was not only and not primarily about fostering economic integration but to cement peace between two historic enemies. This should be achieved by a supranational framework, open to other European countries, which involved the substantial integration of core state powers in the area of foreign security policy.

The next step towards securing peace in Europe, consequently, was not a common market for goods but the European Defense Community (EDC) that would place "army, weapons, and basic production under a common sovereignty at the same time" (Monnet, 1976: 401). France hoped to put the rearmament of West Germany under the control of the EDC, which would join the ECSC under the roof of a European Political Community. Only when the ratification of the EDC failed in the French National Assembly in 1953, did integration efforts shift to the realm of low politics. Four years later, the Treaty of Rome established the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). Being less supranational than the ECSC, the EEC was to create a customs union and EURATOM would foster cooperation on nuclear power (Loth, 2015: 36-74).

In short, the beginnings of European integration were driven by attempts of inter- and post-war elites at integrating core state powers with regard to external security. Their attempts were motivated and legitimized by shared narratives of overcoming a common past of war and destruction (see also Hofmann and Merand, this special issue; Patel, 2018: 88-90). This identity construction based on othering Europe's own past has continued to shape the integration of core state powers for more than sixty years (for details see Risse, 2010: ch. 3).

The Euro: Integrating Monetary Policy to Advance the Political Union

41 years after the Treaty of Paris establishing the ECSC and 35 years after the Treaty of Rome, the EU took another giant step toward further integration when the 1992 Maastricht Treaties established the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and, thus, the single currency (see Risse et al., 1999; Risse, 2003 for the following; see also Kaelberer, 2004). Germany and France were at the forefront of those promoting a single currency ever since the Single European Act had come into force. Great Britain, in contrast, remained on the sidelines and opted out of EMU at the Maastricht treaty negotiations (Moravcsik, 1998: Ch. 6; McNamara, 1998;

[2] The Schuman Declaration, retrieved from https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration_en, last access November 23, 2018.

Verdun, 2000). How is this difference in attitudes to be explained? In the following, we concentrate on Germany and the UK (for France see Risse et al., 1999).

Neither economic nor geopolitical and security reasons can account for the variation in elite attitudes toward the single currency in Britain and Germany. Why did Britain choose not to participate in the single currency, even though its economy was as integrated with the Continental European economies as the other major economies? Or why should the Germans have given up their cherished *Deutsche Mark* if it allowed them economic hegemony in Europe?

In the case of *Germany*, its government had agreed to EMU early on and stubbornly supported the Euro throughout the 1990s. The majority of the German political elite never wavered in its support for the single currency. Even more surprising was the lack of public controversy about the Euro, despite the fact that a majority of German mass public opinion rejected giving up the cherished *Deutsche Mark*. General elite support for the single currency was based on the German post-World War II European identity which was to overcome the German nationalist and militarist past once and for all. Chancellor Kohl in particular wanted to be remembered as the one who pushed through EMU and hence made a closer European Union inevitable, thus preventing a return to nationalism in Europe. Kohl framed the single currency as *the* symbol of European integration and he deeply identified his political fate with the realization of the Euro. He also labeled 1997 – the year of reference for the fulfillment of the convergence criteria – as "key year of Europe," as *existential* for further integration. He even argued that the success of EMU was a "question of war and peace."[3] In essence, Chancellor Kohl framed the issue in the German political discourse by constructing a powerful equation linking the support for the Euro to German identity based on the rejection of the German militarist and nationalist past.

This framing of the issue served as a silencing mechanism of the political discourse on EMU. It was no longer possible to argue about the pros and cons of a single currency and to weigh the policy alternatives in a neutral way. As a result, even those opposed to EMU did not dare touching the German consensus on European integration, but framed their criticism in terms of asking for a delay and/or demanding a strict application of the convergence criteria. In this case then, the Europeanization of German identity largely shaped the definition of economically defined interests.

The *British* attitude toward the single currency remained the same over two decades. At the Maastricht summit, the British government reserved the right to decide for itself whether the United Kingdom would join EMU in 1999. The Labour government under Tony Blair confirmed this position and decided that Britain would continue the "wait and see" attitude of its predecessor. While the few British proponents of the Euro used interest-based arguments to support their claims, conservative Eurosceptics routinely used identity-related statements to justify their opposition to EMU arguing that *"*… abolish the pound and you abolish Britain". Their discourse resembles closely those of the "Brexiteers" two decades later.

In sum, the discourse on the Euro in major EU member states was framed to a large degree in terms of identity politics and political visions of European order. Supporters of the project shared a common idea of European integration as a modernization project overcoming the historical divisions of the continent (Jachtenfuchs, Diez and Jung, 1998). They used the single currency as a means to get closer to this political vision. The Euro symbolized a collective European identity, while the *Deutsche Mark* was constructed as symbolic remnant of a nationalist past. In contrast, the British opposition against joining the Euro zone was also framed in identity terms, namely to preserve the British/English nation (similarly to the contemporary discourse in favour of "Brexit").

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[3] In a speech to the German *Bundestag*, see „Kohl: Bei der europäischen Währung ist Stabilität wichtiger als der Kalender," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, May 28, 1994.

Did the identity discourse actually motivate pro-European elites in continental Europe to pursue the project of European integration as a transfer of core state powers unto the European level? Or was it merely meant to legitimize the European project, which has been pursued for other reasons? There are good functional reasons for instituting the common market followed by the 1986 Single European Act and the single market. However, the supranationalization of core state powers in the security realm and with regard to heavy industries (in the early 1950s, just six years after World War II) and concerning monetary policies in the 1990s is hard to account absent a sense of community among political elites. The British opposition to the Euro confirms the point that the UK had as many good (or bad) economic reasons to join the single currency. In this sense, the Europeanization of elite identities (and lack thereof, see below) has been crucial to move the European project forward in the realm of core state powers. Moreover, as we argue below, legitimating European integration in identity and community terms can only succeed if such discourses resonate with majorities in the larger pubic. Once again, the UK is a case in point: British pro-European elites never used identity language to justify British membership in the EU. In contrast, British opposition to the EU – from the Euro to "Brexit" has always been framed in (exclusive nationalist) identity terms (Risse, 2010: 81-86).

The Permissive Consensus and the Europeanization of Citizens' Identities

The Europeanization of elite identities served as a driver for European integration motivating political leaders to push integration forward. They have been able to use identity discourses instrumentally to legitimate moves towards an ever closer union, precisely because they resonated with mass public opinion. Up until the early 2010s, European elites routinely used identity-related arguments as silencing mechanisms to prevent major debates about European policies and European integration in general in the various national public spheres. As Milward has argued, European integration strengthened national executives by shielding policy-making in Brussels from national public scrutiny (Milward, 1992). Yet, the silencing mechanism only worked because of what has been called the "permissive consensus" in favour of European integration among the publics in most member states (Hooghe and Marks, 2009). The support of a majority of EU citizens has hinged on their Europeanized national identities whereby "Europe" is added as a secondary identification to national identities. Over the past three decades, a plurality of citizens in most member states have held Europeanized identities – except for the UK (cf. Börzel and Risse, 2018: 96). These Europeanized identities correlate strongly with other attitudes, among them support for European integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2005; McLaren, 2006; Citrin and Sides, 2004; Kuhn and Stoeckel, 2014) and "solidarity among strangers" (Habermas, 2006) in terms of the preparedness to support redistributive policies across the EU (see Kuhn, Solaz and van Elsas, 2018 for details; see also contributions by de Vries; by Kuhn, Nicoli, and Burgoon; and by Carstens, this special issue). In contrast, exclusive national identities go together with opposition to European integration as well as hostile attitudes toward migrants and foreigners.

The "Constraining Dissensus" and the Politicization of Exclusive Nationalist Identities

For the longest time, identity politics facilitated and legitimized the integration of core state powers. This started to change in the 2000s when European integration became more salient and contested in the member states. France and the Netherlands rejected the Constitutional Treaty in 2005 following negative public referenda. In other member states, too, the permissive consensus gave way to a "constraining dissensus" (Hooghe and Marks, 2009), which has prevented the further integration of core state powers in response to the Euro crisis and the challenges of mass migration.

As we have argued elsewhere in more detail (Börzel and Risse, 2018), Eurosceptical populist parties and movements, particularly on the right, have increasingly succeeded in mobilizing citizens with exclusive national identities. They have deliberately used identity politics to turn latent attitudes among citizens into manifest political behaviour. Rather than creating anti-EU sentiments or changing collective identities toward a rise of exclusive nationalism, Eurosceptical parties have tapped into and mobilized pre-existing attitudes among minorities of Europeans into protesting and voting against EU policies and institutions.

The public discourses about refugees in particular were less driven by economic or political issues, but should be understood as a clash of competing (European and national) identities. While the intensive politicization might be new, debates about immigration have always been about the "other within" (Risse, 2010: 222-224) pitting "modern liberal Europe" as a pluri-cultural entity that is tolerant toward people of different religions, races, and cultural backgrounds, on the one hand, against "nationalist Europe," which is openly hostile to non-European immigrants, on the other. De Vries and Edwards have argued in this context that "extremist parties on the right tap into feelings of cultural insecurity to reject further integration and to defend national sovereignty from control from Brussels. These parties mobilize national identity considerations against the EU" (De Vries and Edwards, 2009: 9). There is ample empirical evidence that support for right-wing Eurosceptic and populist parties across Europe is driven by exclusive nationalism and culturally based anti-immigrant attitudes (see e.g. Dunn, 2015; Lucassen and Lubbers, 2012; Werts, Scheepers and Lubbers, 2013).

Thus, the discourses about migrants and refugees were largely framed with regard to the "in-group/out-group" dimension of collective identities (see introduction to special issue by Theresa Kuhn and Francesco Nicoli). What is more, there is a lot of empirical evidence that the distinction between Europeanized inclusive and exclusive national identities maps unto a cultural cleavage of "cosmopolitanism vs. (exclusive) nationalism."[4] This cultural cleavage has led to a re-alignment of political forces in Europe (and elsewhere). It is orthogonal to the conventional socio-economic cleavage ("left" vs. "right") and has replaced the religious cleavage (Catholicism vs. Protestantism) which Stein Rokkan and others explored for Western Europe of the 1950s and 1960s (Rokkan, 1970; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). For illustrative purposes, we mapped various parties and movements in EU member states (see figure 1 below). The current identity politics in Europe maps more or less on the cultural cleavage. The Europeanization of citizen identities has not changed (see above). If anything, it has increased in recent years. What has changed is the political mobilization of exclusive nationalist identities by mostly right-wing and nationalist forces (Southeastern quadrant in figure 1), while the counter-mobilization of pro-integration and cosmopolitan forces has been much slower (e.g. Macron's "En Marche" movement in France; the anti-Brexiteers in the UK; the recent rise of the Greens in Germany).

[4] The cultural cleavage is labelled differently in the literature (see Hooghe and Marks, 2017; Hutter, Grande and Kriesi, 2016; Zürn and de Wilde, 2016). We submit that they all refer to the same cultural cleavage.

Figure 1: The New Cultural Cleavage

Sources: Hooghe and Marks, 2017; Grande and Kriesi, 2015; Zürn and de Wilde, 2016.

To conclude, particularly the more recent European experience shows, first, that identity politics can be both a facilitator and inhibitor of the integration of core state powers. Identification levels with Europe among both elites and citizens have remained largely constant over the past decades. What has changed is that political elites have invoked identity constructions to sway public opinion not only in favor, but increasingly also against the transfer of national sovereignty to the European level. Second, the influence of identity politics on integration is particularly powerful if it relates to the constitutive dimension regarding the in-group/out-group distinction.

Identity Politics Beyond Europe: Is There a There There?

To what extent do identity politics help explain the transfer of core state powers to the regional levels elsewhere in the world? Of course, the EU is unique in terms of both its scope and level of supranational integration. At the same time, other regions in the world have moved forward with regard to the transfer of core state powers. Eurasia (Hancock and Libman, 2016), Sub-Saharan Africa (Hartmann, 2016), Latin America (Bianculli, 2016) as well as Southeast Asia (Jetschke and Katada, 2016) are cases in point. In contrast, North America, the Middle East, and East Asia are characterized by mostly intergovernmental regional cooperation schemes, including the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), now the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), the League of Arab States (LAS), the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), or the absence of even low-level free trade agreements (East Asia). What is the role of identity politics with regard to these various regional integration schemes as compared to the more intergovernmental cooperation? Does identity politics matter when we take a broader perspective of comparative regionalism?

One problem of establishing causal linkages between the “regionalization” of identities (similar to their Europeanization in the case of Europe, see above), on the one hand, and regional institution-building, on the other, is a lack of empirical data allowing for cross-regional comparisons. The literature is rather sketchy and, if authors address identity-related questions at all, they are often rather centered on their particular world region (for an excellent overview see Checkel, 2016).

However, there is some evidence that corroborates our arguments that

- the central relevance of pro-regional elite identities for region-building efforts,
- the use of identity narratives by elites that resonate with larger publics,
- and – most recently – the counter-mobilization of exclusive nationalist identities by (right-wing) populist forces

might also hold beyond Europe. Let us now address each point subsequently.

The Ubiquity of Elite-Driven Regional Identity Narratives

To begin with, efforts at region-building are usually accompanied by social constructions of regional identities. Yet, as Checkel points out, elite discourses establishing regional identity narratives are one thing, claiming causality between regionalized elite identities and regionalism in terms of the transfer of core state powers to regional institutions is way more demanding (Checkel, 2016: 561-564).

Acharya has probably made the strongest claims with regard to the Southeast Asian experience (Acharya, 1997, 2004, 2009; see also Katzenstein, 2005). Southeast Asian elites developed the narrative of the "Asian way" emphasizing diversity to legitimize the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The "Asian way" exemplified an elite identity construction that was explicitly set up against the European experience (as the "other") of strongly legalized as well as supranational regionalism. The strong emphasis on diversity as well as on informal networking and communication is indeed enshrined in the ASEAN institutions. Diversity was also used as an argument to tolerate various regime types, again initially since, in the meantime, ASEAN has taken on some – still rather limited – human rights instruments (Jetschke, 2015). Acharya's account is probably the closest causal argument demonstrating how collective identities have shaped ASEAN institutions. Acharya's argument is corroborated by Katzenstein and Hemmer's account on why there is no NATO in Southeast Asia (Hemmer and Katzenstein, 2003). Accordingly, the U.S. preferred multilateralism in Europe based on a strong sense of community, while it opted for bilateral security ties with Asian states during the Cold War, in the absence of collective identities. Acharya's (and Katzenstein's) claims about causality receive further support by the consistency between the elite identity discourses, on the one hand, and the institutional design of ASEAN and other regional institutions, on the other.

In the meantime, however, (neo-) functionalism has apparently taken over. The gradual evolution of ASEAN's institutional design, which emulated many parts of EU institutions and extended ASEAN's reach toward ever more policy-areas (but with limited supranationalism, for details see Jetschke and Murray, 2012; Jetschke and Katada, 2016) follows more of a (neo-) functionalist pathway and, thus, can be accounted for by standard theories. At the same time, this evolution of ASEAN does not disconfirm that elite identities mattered for its emergence. It is striking in this context how strongly the ASEAN experience resembles the European one (see above).

A similar identity-related story can be told with regard to Africa. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) was created based on a strong post-colonial elite identity emphasizing African independence and a strong non-intervention norm (Williams, 2007; Checkel, 2016: 562-563; see also contribution by Onyebuchi Eze and van der Wal, this special issue). The OAU charter already contained the catch-phrase in its preamble: "Try Africa First." There was a strong sense that postcolonial Africa needed to take its fate – both development and security problems – in its own hand. After the Somalia disaster in the early 1990s, Ghanaian economist Ayittey coined the phrase "African solutions to African problems" (Ayittey, 2010) which then became the slogan of the newly founded African Union (AU) in 2002. AU interpreted the norm of post-colonial

norm of sovereignty differently. Rather than relying on external interventions to solve its security problems, AU embraced the possibility of military intervention in its member states to deal with war crimes or coup d'états (see Williams, 2007; Tieku, 2004; Söderbaum, 2004). It is hard to see how the latter norm would have been conceivable without a strong sense of common identity among African elites.

Post-colonial experiences also appear to have shaped the discourse surrounding the formation of the Andean Community of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru in 1969. Tussie has argued that a strong sense of "othering" – against the U.S. and the neoliberal Washington consensus – has accompanied the formation of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) in 1991 (Tussie, 2009; overview in Bianculli, 2016). Likewise, leftist elites that came into power in the 2000s promoted the Bolivian Alliance for the Americas (ALBA) and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) as post-neoliberal integration projects (Bianculli, 2016). Even the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) was legitimized in identity terms as a regional alternative to the EU (notwithstanding its copying of the EU's institutional design, see Hancock and Libman, 2016). In contrast, the lack of a collective elite identity might explain the absence of regionalism in East Asia despite high economic interdependence and a manifest security dilemma. Unsolved issues of historical justice and restitution have prevented China, Japan, and South Korea from forming a regional identity, e.g. based on a shared memory, which could have provided the necessary trust to build regional institutions (Ikenberry and Moon, 2007; Morris-Suzuki et al., 2013).

In the cases of progressive regional integration, the transfer of core state powers to regional institutions was accompanied by elite discourses establishing regional identities. Moreover, the institutional design of the regional institutions (strong supranationalism in the cases of Sub-Saharan Africa and the Andean Community, less so in the cases of ASEAN, MERCOSUR, UNASUR, and EEU) is at least consistent with the identity narratives. Last not least, as we have argued elsewhere (Börzel and Risse, 2016; Börzel and Risse, in prep.), standard theories of international cooperation and integration – whether neoliberal institutionalism (Keohane, 1989), liberal intergovernmentalism (Moravcsik, 1998), neofunctionalism (Haas, 1958) – do a rather poor job in accounting for the beginnings of regional institutional-building in Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, or Latin America. They posit a causal pathway from economic interdependence via solving likely conflicts, enabling (further) economic exchanges, and insuring credible commitments to regional institution-building (Haas, 1958; Moravcsik, 1998; Stone Sweet and Caporaso, 1998; Mattli, 1999). Yet, in Southeast Asia, Africa and Latin America, there was only limited intra-regional economic interdependence when the various regional institutions emerged. At least, we have to add security interdependence into the equation in order to make some causal leeway (Börzel, 2016). This helps account for the Sub-Saharan African experience (Hartmann, 2016) and partially for the Southeast Asian one (Nesadurai, 2008). Security issues also assumed front and center at the inception of the European integration project (Börzel and Risse, in prep.).

Yet, there are two exceptions to our argument. First, when NAFTA was set up in North America in the early 1990s, there was little identity discourse among the elites to begin with (Duina, 2016). NAFTA has been a free trade agreement and involved very little in terms of transfer of core state powers to the regional level. Second, the real exception appears to be the Middle East. The League of Arab States (LAS) was built around a sense of shared Pan-Arabic identity (Barnett, 1998; Valbjorn, 2016). Yet, pan-Arabism has been rather inconsequential. Like NAFTA, LAS has remained largely intergovernmental. In this case then, elite discourses appeared to have been just "cheap talk".

In other parts of the world, we do observe identity discourses referring to particular regional experiences and histories in almost every instance of regional cooperation and integration – from Europe to Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. We grant that the

causal link between elite discourses and region-building is sometimes hard to establish and has to rely on correlational evidence as well as the rejection of alternative explanations (interdependence). However, and similar to the European experience, regional elites and leaders appear to believe that their identity narratives resonate with citizens. Otherwise, they could simply justify their decisions on economic (fostering economic interdependence) or security grounds (dealing with negative externalities of violent conflict, e.g. in Sub-Saharan Africa). In this context, it is also interesting to observe that elite identity narratives with regard to region-building are established irrespective of regime type. Democratic and authoritarian leaders alike have invoked pan-Africanism, pan-Arabism, the "Asian way" or Eurasian identity discourses.

Regional Identities and Mass Public Opinion

But is there any evidence that the elite discourses resonate with ordinary citizens and mass publics? What about a sense of regional community among citizens? Unfortunately, we lack the sort of sophisticated data for other regions that we now have with regard to Europeanized identities among citizens in the EU. This is a huge lacuna for further research. In the meantime, we would like to point to at least some studies suggesting that Europe and the EU are not that special after all.

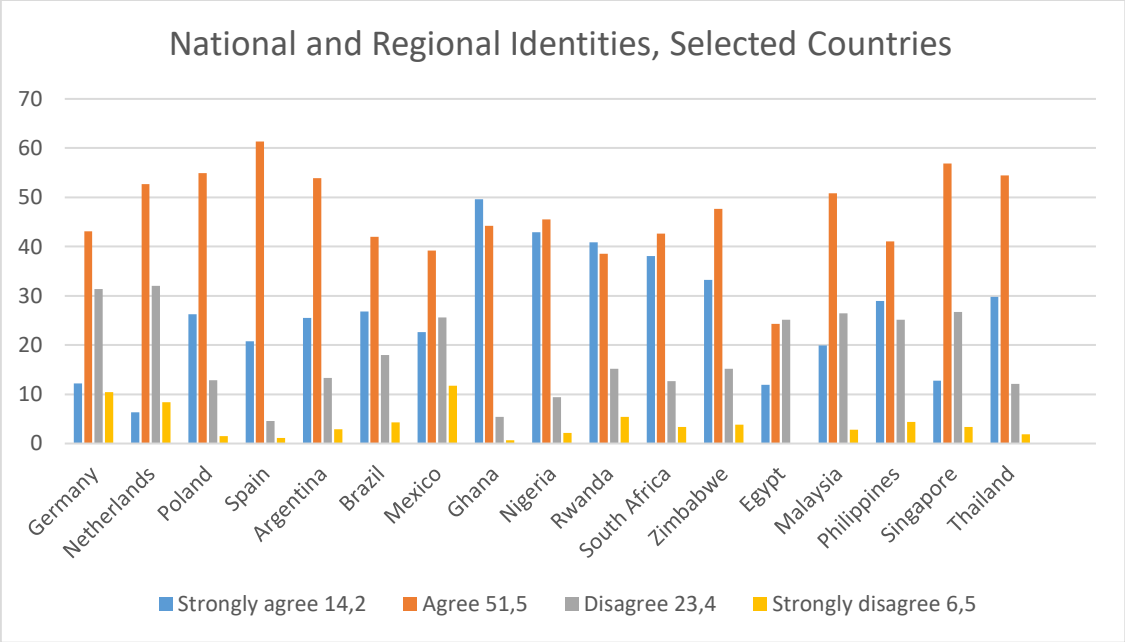
First, Roose used 2003 data of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) to compare regional identification levels in Europe with other world regions (Roose, 2013). The data for the EU15 show 54.2% of the respondents feeling "close" or "very close" to their continent. Respective mean values for three South American countries are 61.7%, for South Africa even 70.1%, but for three East Asian countries only a meagre 34.8% (note that there are almost no regional institutions in East Asia; see Roose, 2013: 287). What is more, Roose finds that those identifying with their region share socio-structural characteristics across continents, namely that "people with better professional positions, higher income and better education tend to identify more with their continent" (Roose, 2013: 292).

Second, the World Value Surveys (WVS) provides another dataset we can use to estimate the degree with which people identify with their region. The WVS data has sparked quite a debate on explaining the degree to which citizens across the world hold cosmopolitan and/or supranational identities (see e.g. Norris, 2000; Pichler, 2012; Jung, 2008). To begin with, the studies confirm by and large the socio-structural characteristics of those identifying with their continent or with the world at large, with some important differences (e.g. while Norris, 2000 points to age differences, Jung, 2008 argues in favor of a life cycle effect; on data for Europe see Fligstein, 2008). Jung in particular points out that most people across continents identify predominantly with their nation state, while those with supranational identities are distinct minorities (ca. 25% on average worldwide) almost everywhere (Jung, 2008). Pichler shows that cosmopolitan orientations are particularly strong in (non-Western) countries and continents that are less globalized (Pichler, 2012). Last not least, these studies confirm findings from European surveys that citizens holding transnational identities beyond their nation-state are also more liberal in their attitudes toward foreigners than those with exclusive national identities are.

A major weakness of these studies is that they do not take into account that most people hold multiple identities, even with regard to the territorial dimension. That is, people can strongly identify with their nation-state *and* with their region. As argued above, the main division in Europe is between those holding exclusive nationalist identities, on the one hand, and those adding Europe as a secondary identity, on the other hand; citizens with exclusive European identities form a rather small minority almost everywhere. Yet, the studies quoted above mostly focus on those citizens with strong supranational identities (except for Jung, 2008). The findings are, thus, less relevant for cross-regional comparisons with the European findings.

The closest one can get to cross-regional data resembling the Eurobarometer surveys cited above are cross-tabulations from two World Value Survey (WVS) questions (see figure 2 below). The WVS wave 2010-2014 asked in almost all regions whether citizens saw themselves as part of their country as well as their respective region.[5] The WVS even used the various regional organizations in their questionnaire, which, of course, raises the question of whether respondents were actually aware of their existence. In any event, the data show that Europe is not peculiar. In almost all regions of the world, large majorities of citizens feel as part of a regional community. What is more, most people hold dual identities in almost every region. That is, they strongly identify with their nation-state *and* with their respective region or regional organization. Figure 2 below plots the regional identification levels for those in the selected countries who also strongly identify with their own country. Overall, the numbers are rather similar across regions (Egypt constitutes the one exception).[6] The data for European, Latin American, and Southeast Asian countries are rather similar with majorities of 50% to 80% strongly identifying with their nation-state *and* with their respective regional community. In the case of selected African countries, the numbers are even higher (see blue bars for those who "strongly agree" in figure 2). In contrast, exclusive nationalists (those who strongly identify with their country, but do not feel part of their region) make up between 20% to 30% across countries. Once again, Europe is not exceptional in this regard.

Figure 2: Regional Identification Levels for Those with Strong National Identities[7]



Source: World Value Survey 2010 (see above). The graph plots regional identification levels for those who strongly identify with their country/nation. The Europeans were asked whether they felt as "citizens of the EU," while the Latin Americans, Africans, and Southeast Asians were asked whether they felt part of a "Latin American community, the "African Union," or "ASEAN," respectively.

We can use these data as a first indication that inclusive national identities (one's nation-state plus region) are common across the globe and that large majorities everywhere identify with

[5] See Variable 215 in http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSOnline.jsp (last access November 28, 2018).

[6] One explanation might be that Egyptians do not know about the African Union (AU) about which they were asked.

[7] Calculated from ibid.

their country *and* their region. Moreover, those holding exclusive national identities (those disagreeing with the statement about their region above in figure 2) are visible minorities almost everywhere. If further evidence corroborated these findings, we would be able to conclude that elite identity constructions with regard to region-building do indeed resonate with wider publics beyond Europe. As a result, we should be able to find a "permissive consensus" in support of regional integration beyond Europe so that the elite identity narratives, which we found with regard to region-building, would indeed resonate with mass public opinion elsewhere in the world.

Mobilization of Exclusive Nationalism beyond Europe

If pro-regional identifications can be used to legitimize regionalism and the transfer of core state powers outside Europe, what about the counter-mobilization of exclusive nationalism by populist forces? Indeed, the onslaught against global and regional governance is not confined to populism in Europe. There are some indications that identity politics serves as a mobilizing force beyond Europe. U.S. president Trump and his attacks against "globalism," the liberal international trade order, but also against regional cooperation schemes, such as NAFTA, as well as his withdrawal from the Transpacific Partnership Agreement (TPP) serve as prominent examples. Trump and his followers in the Republican Party map perfectly on the Southeastern corner ("right-wing exclusive nationalism") of the cleavage matrix (see figure 1 above). The same holds true for the new Brazilian president Bolsonaro and for Philippine president Duterte. Moreover, this type of populism is not confined to democratic systems, as the examples of Vladimir Putin in Russia or of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in Turkey document. In each of these cases, right-wing political elites did not create exclusive nationalist identities, but mobilized them thereby turning them from attitudes to political behaviour. Last not least, there are also some more left-wing populist governments (e.g., Maduro in Venezuela or Morales in Bolivia) trying to mobilize nationalist forces on the left against regional integration. These forces appear to occupy the Southwestern corner of figure 1 above. They all constitute part of a larger attack on the liberal international order of which regional integration is part and parcel.

While the evidence presented here is only illustrative, the examples mentioned indicate that our argument concerning the possibility of mobilizing popular identities in favor of and against regional integration holds beyond Europe. Future research is needed to explore the relationship between elite narratives, mass public identification levels, the mobilization of the latter in favour of and against regionalism, as well as the overall effects of these forces on region-building.

Conclusions

This contribution has focused on the causal pathway from identity to regional integration and the transfer of core state powers to regional institutions. We have argued that Europe and the EU are not as unique as far as the "identity – region-building" conundrum is concerned. Elite identity discourses constructing regions appear to be ubiquitous even in North Africa and the Middle East where they have not resulted in thick regionalism. Citizens around the globe appear to hold multiple identities, being able to identify with their nation-state and their respective region at the same time. We can also observe the political mobilization of identities and of identity politics beyond Europe.

At the same time, we have suggested that the functional story of regional integration starting with (economic or security) interdependence, the transfer of core state powers to regional institutions and, ultimately, the emergence of regionalized identities (whether Haas' neofunctionalism or Deutsch's transactionalism) might have to be reversed (see also Hooghe, Lenz and

Marks, 2019; Börzel and Risse, in prep.). Evidence from Europe, Southeast Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America suggests that the attempts of elites at regional institution-building usually engage in narratives linking national to regional communities. There is further evidence, particularly with regard to Europe, that such narratives are not just legitimations of decisions taken for functional reasons. The regionalization of identities also serves as a powerful motivator for regional integration. Besides, regions themselves are not pre-existing territorial entities, but social constructions pertaining to some adjacent territorial spaces. In other words, elite identity narratives constitute these regions in a fundamental sense. Last not least, elites apparently do not *create* regional identities among citizens, but they tap into pre-existing community orientations re-constructing and localizing them into coherent identity narratives, which link the respective nation-state to the region. Only *then* can regional institutions emerge serving some functional needs for economic or security cooperation.

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