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Collective Identities and the Integration of Core State Powers: Introduction to the Special Issue*

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Abstract

This special issue explores the relationship between collective identities and the integration of core state powers, that is, the delegation of powers to a centralized institution in policy areas that are essential for the functioning of the modern state. In this introductory article we present the main conceptualizations of the contributions to the special issue that define our understanding of collective identities and core state powers. We discuss the multi-level nature of collective identities and we discuss theoretical expectations over the link between collective identities and core state powers. Finally, we briefly present each of the contributions to the issue and discuss how they relate to the broad research goals, the special issue and to each other.

Keywords: collective identities; core state powers; European integration

Introduction

This special issue explores the relationship between collective identities and integration of core state powers, that is, the delegation of powers to a centralized institution in policy areas that are essential for the functioning of the modern state. In early days of European integration there were only marginal transfers of the competences that define the very essence of nation-states (most notably, in the monetary field). In contrast, the challenges faced by the Union over the last decade have created conditions for using stronger governance mechanisms in the EU, which may eventually result in the integration of policy fields traditionally seen as high politics. Several transformative processes – in particular, eurozone instability in the aftermath of the global financial crisis and the unexpected spike in migration flows, as well as the deterioration of the security environment beyond the EU's borders – have sparked a debate about the need to fully integrate certain competences, the management of which is currently split between the EU and member states. Amid the recent crises on the one hand, and an institutional appetite for further integration on the other, the struggle over who 'we' are, who is in and who is out, and what differentiates 'us' from others plays an increasingly relevant role in European politics (Hooghe and Marks, 2009).

Against this backdrop, it is timely to examine the relationship between collective identities and the integration of core state powers, that is, the ability to make decisions in areas

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that are crucial for the functioning of modern states, like fiscal policy. Previous research has shown that both economic considerations and collective identities at the national and European level are key to explaining general support for European integration (Hobolt and de Vries, 2016). However, as European policy-makers have increasingly moved beyond market integration to the integration of core state powers (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs, 2018), there are good reasons to believe that collective identities play a more powerful role today than in the past (Hooghe and Marks, 2009). The integration of core state powers has a higher potential for conflicts of national vs supranational identity than market integration as it challenges our understanding of national sovereignty, and because it has a tendency to result in zero-sum outcomes. In fact, scholars have stressed the importance of collective identity bonds in facilitating and legitimizing the integration of key functions of sovereignty. A degree of collective identity – a *demos* – is considered by some as a precondition for the exercise of those competences that rely, explicitly or implicitly, on community solidarity; as Weiler (1995, p. 226) puts it, 'the *volk* pre-dates historically, and precedes politically, the modern state'. Others consider, instead, that a sense of collective belonging emerges as a consequence of sharing the exercise of competences and the experience of mutual solidarity (Börner, 2014; Ferrera, 2005). In this perspective, institutions provide a framework within which citizens interact and develop a sense of community. Hence, from this perspective, the integration of core state powers is understood to be the driver, rather than outcome, of the creation of collective identities.

This special issue aims to advance this scholarship as an interdisciplinary undertaking, by looking at the relationship between collective identities and the integration of core state powers both from a theoretical perspective and from a sector-specific one, zooming in on the European Monetary Union, as well as on Schengen and on foreign security and defence policy. Despite the long-standing nature of this debate, several questions remain to be addressed: to what extent are collective identities a condition for advancing the European integration of core state powers, and what are the sources of collective European identities? Do different policy areas require different forms of collective identity to be forged? Is the tension between collective identities and the integration of core state powers a purely European phenomenon, or can we observe similar trends in other regional organizations? To answer these questions, we bring together in this issue leading scholars in political science, sociology, law, history and economics. While the special issue deals primarily with the relationship between collective identities (in particular, political identities that have a territorial dimension) and core state powers in Europe, some of the contributions also open up a perspective on other regional integration projects.

This introductory article serves as a background to the contributions in this issue. We start by reconstructing the main conceptual approaches to collective identities in the context of transnational integration projects, paying specific attention to the multi-level nature of territorial identities. We then move to discuss the key areas in the functioning of modern states: core state powers. Next, we discuss how scholars have interpreted the relationship between collective identities and core state powers, reconstructing the debate on whether identification processes are the source or the result of political integration. Finally, we introduce the individual contributions to this issue and discuss how they relate to each other and how they deal, individually and collectively, with the themes identified in this introduction.

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I. Collective Identities: Multi-level and Multi-dimensional

Collective identities are multilayered phenomena. Rather than having a single identity, individuals hold multiple identities relating to their membership of different groups and their social positions (Kohli, 2000, p. 116). *Social identities* constitute the intersubjective portion of people's self-understanding, in other words, 'that part of "me" that belongs to a larger "we", a social group and/or community' (Risse, 2010, p. 22) whereas *collective identities* refer to 'social identities that are based on large and potentially important group differences, for example, those defined by gender, social class, age, or ethnicity' (Kohli, 2000, p. 117). Following social identity theory (Tajfel, 1981), we can distinguish between the evaluative, cognitive and emotional dimensions of collective identities (Hogg, 2006). The *evaluative dimension* refers to the criteria that define a group. People identify prototypical elements of a group, such as the typical attributes, behaviour and attitudes shared by the members of that group. The *cognitive dimension* involves processes of self-categorization: individuals ascribe these prototypical elements to themselves and consequently identify as a member of this group. In turn, identification *with* a group refers to the *emotional dimension*: the positive emotions such as feelings of attachment, pride or belonging that are associated to that group (Cram, 2012).

These multiple identities can be competing, complementary or reinforcing. Risse (2005, p. 296) speaks of 'marble cake' identities that partly overlap with each other. From a European integration perspective, collective identities can also be multi-level or nested in each other (Díez Medrano and Gutiérrez, 2001). In other words, one's regional and national identities can be perceived as being part of a European identity. The precise way that collective identities relate to each other can vary across individuals and is context-dependent and situational (Barnett, 1999; Cram, 2012). Collective identities can be politicized; that is, their articulation involves a political component linked to an aim of political self-organization, but they do not have to be. For the purpose of this special issue, we focus on political identities that entail a territorial dimension – at the sub-national, national or supranational level. We are well aware that territorial identities are not the only ones that matter in European politics (see, for example, Hobolt *et al.,* 2018 on Remain and Leave identities in the aftermath of the Brexit referendum). Nonetheless, taking a narrow perspective on political identities is reasonable in light of the goal of this special issue, which is to explore the relationships between collective identities and the organization of state powers (that usually takes place within defined territorial boundaries). Territorial identities may come with, but do not necessarily require, formal membership, such as citizenship. Whether formal or informal, the criteria for membership are often highly contested. For instance, in the European context, at the formal level it is disputed whether simply being a citizen of an EU member state is sufficient to make someone a European citizen. At a more fundamental level, two individuals who have the same sense of identification as European, and may feel equally proud or attached to the EU, may have quite different understandings of what it takes to be European (Bruter, 2003). There are competing narratives of what being European consists of (Stråth, 2002). One prominent distinction relates to political versus cultural conceptions of European identity (Bruter, 2004; Risse, 2010). This distinction is closely linked to the question of whether a European identity refers to Europe as a continent or the EU as a political system (Hofmann, 2013; Schilde, 2014). Whereas cultural understandings of European identity

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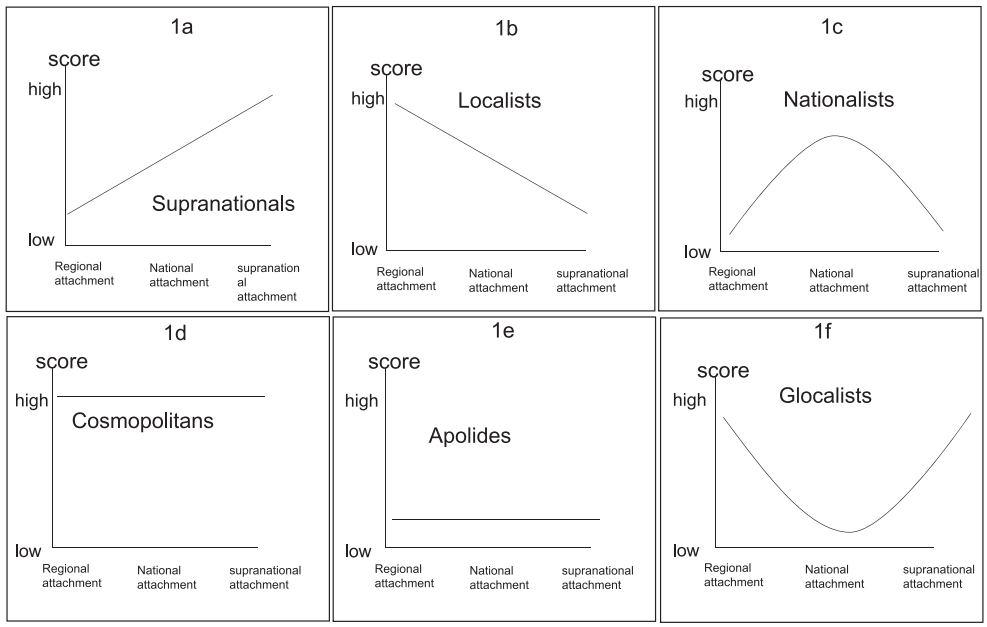
emphasize European cultural heritage, political conceptions of European identity refer to EU institutions, European law, and European citizenship. Furthermore, having a common identity is often invoked strategically to legitimize collective action and the pursuit of common interests. In fact, while scholars tend to propose that identity and interests are two alternative and competing explanations for social behaviour, identities and (the perception of) interests often go hand in hand. The relationship goes in both directions: one the one hand, our identifications shape our understanding of what constitutes our interests. On the other hand, it is easier to identify with political orders and institutions that address our interests than with those that don't.

Based on the idea that Europeans can have identities relating to multiple layers of political order, we have constructed six ideal-types of multi-level territorialized identities in Europe, shown in Figure 1. For simplicity, we reduced the number of polity levels to the three most salient: the (sub-national) region, the nation and the supranational community (in this special issue this means mostly, but not exclusively, Europe). These three levels are represented on the horizontal axis of each part in Figure 1. Conceptually, there is no necessary contradiction in feeling strongly attached to each of these communities; in practice, depending on individual and historical experience, these patterns of identification may be more or less exclusive. For the sake of simplicity, we depicted identifications as being either high or low, whereas more ambivalent identifications are of course possible. In Figure 1a, we show *supranationals*; individuals whose identification is stronger the wider the political community of reference. Figure 1b shows idealtypical *localists*, whose identification with the political community becomes weaker the further away such a political community is from their social context. Hence, the degree for local attachment

Figure 1: Ideal-types of multilevel territorialized identities



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(to the region, or local community) is higher than the score of the two other levels. Figure 1c describes a *nationalist* identification pattern: the attachment to the nation is stronger than every other form of identity. The next three ideal-types in Figure 1 describe instead less straightforward types of multi-level identities. When someone's attachment to the various levels of political community is equally strong (that is, the individual perceives herself as equally a part of a local, national and supranational community), the person has developed a non-exclusive, genuinely *cosmopolitan* identity (Figure 1d).[1] Figure 1e shows an individual with a very low attachment to every level of political community, best described as *apolide* (coming from the Greek *ápolis*, meaning 'without city, state or country'). Finally, Figure 1f depicts individuals whose attachment is low to their national community, but high to their local and regional community and to the supranational community of reference. We propose to describe individuals whose identification patterns resemble the one depicted in Figure 1f as *glocalists*.

II. Core State Powers at the Roots of Modern Sovereignty

Our goal in this issue is to explore the relationship between collective identities and political integration in functions that are essential for the sovereignty of modern states. Recent studies define these as core state powers (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs, 2016, 2018). We consider that these core state powers are composed along two dimensions: a *policy-based dimension* and a *resource-based dimension*. The policy-based dimension consists of the specific policy fields within the competence of a given political system, whereas the resource-based dimension entails the capacity of the political system to mobilize resources. In its original formulation, put forward by Philipp Genschel and Markus Jachtenfuchs (2016), the term core state powers referred explicitly to the resource-based dimension and thereby was different from similar conceptualizations, such as 'high politics'. However, the term is now used more broadly, indicating both essential competences and essential powers of public authority. Rather than introducing competing definitions of the same phenomenon, we suggest in this issue that the broad phenomenon includes both a resource-based and policy-based component.

The concept of the policy-based dimension of core state powers captures the functions of sovereignty from the perspective of the policy areas that are the competences of a given political system. Here, core state power refers to the power of making ultimate decisions in core areas of sovereign government. The definition rests on a distinction between these core areas and all other (non-core) areas of policymaking. Scholars have long distinguished between different areas where public action is exerted. Classical inter-governmentalists and neo-realists have often distinguished between high politics (that concerns competences deemed essential for the survival of the state, such as defence or foreign policy) and low politics – mostly economic concerns (Hoffmann, 1966, p. 874). From this perspective, integration would not (and should not) concern high politics. Neo-functionalists have adopted a similar distinction, albeit acknowledging that integration would one day spill into high politics (Schmitter, 1970). Liberal inter-governmentalists also adopt a similar approach, for instance, in

[1]European identities are not necessarily cosmopolitan. For a more detailed discussion of cosmopolitan versus European identities, see Kuhn *et al*. (2018).

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Andrew Moravcsik's concept of policy areas of 'high salience' (Moravcsik, 2002, p. 615). Political economists distinguish between policies that are inherently regulatory, and therefore can achieve Pareto-efficient outcomes, and those that are inherently redistributive, and therefore require a degree of solidarity within a community (Majone, 1999). Similarly, legal scholars and constitutional courts have identified competences that are considered reserved powers (Weiler, 1991). These remain under the control of the nation-state in so far as they define the capacity of a state 'to democratically shape itself'.[2]

Each of these approaches has been thoroughly criticized. Barnett (1990), building on Putnam's (1988) two-level games approach, argues that the distinction between high and low politics is misleading, as the exertion of classical state functions in highpolitics fields (such as the deployment of diplomatic services or the use of the army) is not independent of domestic redistributive choices in the collection and allocation of resources. McNamara (2002) argues that what constitutes a regulatory or a redistributive policy is actually socially constructed, and may vary over time; furthermore, Follesdal and Hix (2006) argue that that the distinction between regulatory and redistributive policies is misleading, because most regulatory policies may not be redistributive in their aims, but they may end up producing redistributive effects nonetheless. Others (for instance Fischer-Lescano, 2010) have criticized the German Federal Constitutional Court for its interpretation of what constitutes an unalienable key function of national sovereignty: by taking a purely institutional approach and anchoring socio-economic functions in the nation-state, the German Federal Constitutional Court would prevent the construction of a European tier of socio-economic rights, even when such tier would be absolutely required to ensure the effectiveness of these rights (Fischer-Lescano, 2010, p. 67).

The second dimension of core state powers does not relate to competences in a narrow sense; rather, it focuses on the capacity to mobilize resources. This resource-based dimension was originally introduced by Genschel and Jachtenfuchs (2016). From this vantage point, we do not look at what the state should be able to do, but whether it has the capacity of mobilizing the resources to do so. The fundamental capability at stake, therefore, is the capability to mobilize resources. As Genschel and Jachtenfuchs (2016, p. 43; 2018, p. 181) put it, typically this relies on the 'twin monopoly of legitimate coercion and taxation'. These are then expressed in specific competences – the military, the control of borders, and the fiscal, monetary and administrative capacity needed to implement and enforce public laws and policies (Besley and Persson, 2013; Schumpeter, 1991; Tilly, 1990; Weber, 1978). The key issue here is the extent and exclusivity of control over coercive, fiscal or administrative capacity that the state commands. In this view, to the extent that an institution can claim the means to exert coercive, fiscal and administrative *control* over a territory, it is functionally a state.

In our view, both *competence* and *resource power* are fundamental dimensions of core state functioning. An organization endowed with *competences* but lacking resources, or depending on conferred resources, would either be a failed state (in the former case), or – to the extent that these resources are conferred, rather than collected *motu proprio* – would remain an international organization. On the other hand, the opposite configuration is also possible in principle (although unlikely in practice). We could think of an organization able to exert material control over the mobilization of fiscal, coercive, and

[2]Decision of the German Federal Constitutional Court of 30 June 2009, paragraph 252. Available at https://www.bundesverfassungsgericht.de/entscheidungen/es20090630_2bve000208en.html Accessed 24 July 2019.

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administrative resources but unable, for any given reason (for instance, due to the distribution of competences) to centralize the use of such resources in the key areas of sovereign competence. In this instance, the central organization would centralize the collection of resources that are subsequently made available to lower tiers of government. The use of these resources (for instance, for purposes of border control, defence or the welfare state) would be entirely left to these lower-tier territorial units.

There is one main distinction between the resource-based and the policy-based dimension. In the policy-based dimension, the areas of core state competence can vary across space and time. The definition of what constitutes high politics is therefore – to some extent – socially constructed (see for instance McNamara, 2002, for the specific case of the European Central Bank). On the other hand, the resource-based dimension is largely exogenous. While the means to mobilize taxation, symbols and coercion may change over time and space, the need to do so does not, as those are required for the exertion of public power.

Ultimately, sovereignty depends on the capacity of mobilizing resources *and* on the right to deploy those resources in highly contested areas. However, relying exclusively on the high and low politics dichotomy would miss the mark: as policies are shared across multi-level tiers of governance, the identification of who maintains the final authority on these becomes unclear. By looking at the capability to mobilize resources, by contrast, the distinction between the sovereign level of government and all other levels becomes clear. In most situations the nation-state has coercive resources and taxing power that the supranational level lacks. In the EU case, the Union regulates the taxes of the member states in intrusive ways, but it does not tax on its own account (Genschel and Jachtenfuchs, 2011).

III. Linking Core State Powers and Collective Identities

The integration of core state powers is more strongly linked to collective identities than market integration as it touches upon highly salient and politicized policy fields and challenges the very essence of the nation-state. Moreover, compared with market integration, which arguably makes everyone better off, it has a higher risk of zero-sum conflict. Hence, the integration of core state powers has an even greater potential for raising identity-based conflict than market integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2009).

There is a rich body of literature on the relationship between collective identities and the establishment of state powers. While most scholars recognize the fluid nature of these links, two main perspectives can be identified. Some scholars have seen identities as a source of, or as a condition for, the construction of state powers, while others acknowledge the existence of a more dynamic relationship between institutions and the construction of identities, whereby the former can, and often do, foster the emergence and evolution of the latter. These different approaches are nothing new. In the 19th century Ferdinand Tönnies (2012) distinguished between *Gemeinschaft,* an organization built upon contractualism and the rule of law, and *Gesellschaft*, an organization based on *community* (characterized by shared values, culture or religion).

Scholars arguing that a shared identity is a condition for integration (and even more so for the integration of core state powers) do not necessarily imply that identities are completely exogenous to the process of integration or that they are immovable

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constructs anchored to someone's ethnic, linguistic or religious group. Rather, most scholars in this camp believe that institutions come with conditions that make individuals willingly accept the exertion of power, especially when decisions taken by those institutions generate collective consequences. These decisions are ultimately seen as legitimate only as far as the institutions are an expression of specific, organic identity groups. Early decisions from the German Federal Constitutional Court (for instance, in its 1993 Maastricht decision) have injected this specific understanding of the relationship between institutions and identities into the European legal order. The so-called 'no *demos* thesis' that polarized scholarly debate on European integration in the post-Maastricht period analytically suggested that without a *demos* there is no democratically legitimate state, and normatively claimed that consequently Europe should never acquire core state powers (Nicoli, 2017; Weiler, 1995, p. 226). Later studies differentiated themselves from the absolute claims put forward by *no demos* scholars, and legal scholars have extensively discussed the actual limitations posed by the identity argument in constitutional terms (recent decisions by the German Federal Constitutional Court notwithstanding – see, for instance, Garben, 2020). However, the idea that identity groups ultimately constitute the boundaries of the community within which the core state powers can be exerted has not disappeared from the scholarly debate. In the demoicratic approach to integration (Nicolaïdis, 2003; Van Parijs, 1997), for instance, the lack of a shared identity does not constitute a limit to European integration. Rather, it constitutes a limit to the principles that can be used to reach and implement a decision in the field of core state powers at supranational level. While acknowledging that democracy requires a degree of identification, scholars adopting a demoicratic perspective argue that supranational organizations active in the field of core state powers could still be legitimate, as far as the individually democratic decisions of each of the nation-states embedding the communities of references are individually respected. This would not prevent supranational core state powers, but would require the persistence of (1) veto rights on constitutional reforms and (2) exit rights for single nation-states (Cheneval, 2011; Cheneval and Schimmelfennig, 2013).

Scholars have also looked at the limits posed by identification within the *process* of integration. For instance, two of the leading theoretical approaches to supranational integration – inter-governmentalism and post-functionalism – depict collective identities as limits to the construction of supranational institutions, albeit in fairly different terms. While classical inter-governmentalism focuses on national interests and national elites, classical inter-governmentalism scholars conceive of national identities as immutable and as a constraint to further integration (Hoffmann, 1966, p. 868; see Kuhn, 2019 for a more elaborate discussion). In turn, collective identities are a central element of post-functionalist theorizing (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, 2018). According to post-functionalism, political institutions do not only reflect efficiency but are also an expression of community (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, p. 2). If functional pressures lead to the integration of highly salient and politicized policy areas, this may potentially clash with people's sense of identity. This clash provides an opportunity for political entrepreneurs to mobilize citizens around these latent identities and to construct a narrative against integration (Hooghe and Marks, 2009, 2018). Interestingly, this is only the beginning of the story. According to post-functionalists the

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emerging conflict may lead to a restructuring (in Lipset-Rokkanian terms) of the axis of polarization of the debate, which in turn might eventually foster supranational identities. In the short term, however, there is little doubt that the post-functionalist approach to supranational integration sees latent national identities as a potential threat to further integration, should these be activated by opportunistic political entrepreneurs. Exclusive identities may even represent a threat to existing integration in highly politicized contexts, such as the European Monetary Union or the Schengen area (Karstens, 2020).

While the studies above mainly see collective identities as a condition for legitimate institution-building, an important body of research has been examining the extent to which state institutions can lead to the emergence of collective identities (for instance, McNamara and Musgrave, 2020). Broadly speaking, there are two models of collective identity formation. The first is 'culturalist' and refers to individuals' exposure to communicative content in symbols and discourses. The second one is 'structuralist' and emphasizes individuals' 'involvement in spatially situated relationships' that span the new community (Recchi, 2015, p. 125). These two models roughly correspond to dominant scholarly explanations of European identity formation: cross-national interactions and institutions. The first explanation emphasizes the power of shared experience and frequent interactions in generating a collective identity. In the context of the EU, Karl Deutsch's transactional theory is a prominent example of this approach. In the wake of World War II Deutsch and his colleagues (1957) suggested providing the institutional framework for frequent and multi-level cross-border interactions among ordinary citizens, which in turn would foster a common 'we feeling'. Research in this tradition has indeed found that cross-border interactions have proliferated and that highly transnational individuals are more likely to feel European (Fligstein, 2008; Kuhn, 2015) and more attached to other Europeans (Deutschmann *et al.,* 2018) than individuals who do not interact across national borders, but transnationally active Europeans are a minority. Similarly, Matthijs and Merler (2020) in this special issue show that highly mobile individuals are more likely to feel European than less mobile individuals, especially when moving to a high-wage member state becomes an opportunity to improve one's livelihood. A related strand of literature takes up the Deutschian tradition to study socialization of national elites in European institutions such as the European Commission (Checkel, 2005). While research on interactions is highly relevant, our focus here is on the second explanation; namely, institution-building as a precursor of mass collective identity. It is important to note that these two approaches are complementary rather than competing. Communicative content renders transnational interactions more likely and feasible, whereas transnational interactions reinforce the socializing effects of institutions. While identity-building can be an unintended consequence of institution-building, it is very often the result of conscious and active nation-building by political elites.

European identity formation is thought to be facilitated through 'cultural infrastructure' that makes the EU a taken for granted social fact and creates an imagined community of its citizens (McNamara, 2015, p. 43). As Cram (2012, p. 72) argues, the EU must emerge as a 'meaningful presence' to facilitate collective identity. This can happen through direct socialization in institutions such as education, or through exposure to symbols, common myths and (news) messages. Scholars frequently draw comparisons with historical examples of nation-building in the 19th and 20th century

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(McNamara, 2018). These examples cannot entirely be used as a blueprint for European identity formation as they frequently involved legal or military coercion, such as the forced use of the national language and persecution of minorities. In contrast, the repertoire of European 'nation-building' limits itself to persuasion (Risse, 2010). Moreover, while the historical nation-building of the modern state tended to be sanguine and sought to craft exclusive loyalties of its citizens, official narratives of European identity emphasize its cosmopolitan, post-national character and allow for 'unity in diversity'. Symbols such as a common flag, anthem or currency have historically been used as tools for nation-building (Smith, 1992). European institutions have not shied from doing so as well (Bruter, 2003; Shore, 2000). For example, the Adonnino Committee, which was tasked with advising the Council on creating a citizens' Europe, to 'respond to the expectations of the people of Europe by adopting measures to strengthen and promote its identity' (Adonnino, 1985, p. 5), highlighted the use of symbols. Today, the EU has a common flag and anthem and celebrates Europe Day on 9 May, and Euro banknotes depict symbolic European bridges. Following the recommendations of the Adonnino Committee, the EU has become more active in cultural policy (Sassatelli, 2002), for example, through the European capitals of culture and by promoting European cinematography.

Empirical evidence on the effect of symbols on mass European identity is mixed. Experiments by Bruter (2003) found that exposure to good and bad news about Europe as well as symbols of European integration have a strong impact on European identity. In contrast, experiments where respondents were exposed to visual cues such as the European flag found that these cues activated instrumental connotations of the EU rather than affective ones (Cram and Patrikios, 2015).

Education is another institution that is thought to be central to nation-building (Weber, 1976). Much has been written about the power of (higher) education institutions in instilling cosmopolitan values in their students. Particular attention has been paid to civics education, and how the move from predominantly nation-centred civics education to more Europeanized curricula may affect pupils' self-understandings (Keating, 2009; Schissler and Soysal, 2005). Moreover, scholars argue that education provides students with the cognitive skills to deal with complex and abstract communities such as the EU (Inglehart, 1970). With higher educational attainment, students are better prepared for an international labour market and hence are less likely to feel hostile towards workers from other countries. Indeed, Europeans with higher levels of education tend to be more likely to hold a European identity (Kuhn, 2012; Polyakova and Fligstein, 2016). Fernández and Eigmüller (2018) have shown that the expansion of education helps close the gap in European identity between those with lower and higher education.

While the research above refers to a broad range of state institutions, the effect of policies that are more closely linked to core state powers is of even greater relevance to this special issue. For example, universal military service has often been used as a tool for nation-building by socializing recruits and exposing them to national norms, but there is little empirical evidence that such efforts have been successful (Krebs, 2004). Relatedly, some argue that the establishment of social policy has historically created solidarity within states by linking citizens together and by framing their understanding of membership in a community of fate. Börner (2014) argues that European social policy could have

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the same effect on European solidarity and identity, but that it is currently not far-reaching enough to do so.

Finally, common institutions may construct collective identity by shifting upward the milieu of political competition, creating political space for mobilization at a new scale (Bartolini, 2005). Lipset and Rokkan (1967, p. 4) suggest that, in the US context, the presence of federal representative and executive institutions that can be won over in cross-state political competition induced elites to organize countrywide party organizations, which in turn constructed American identity. McNamara and Musgrave (2020) in this special issue further develop this argument, discussing how different phases of political competition in the USA were key to the emergence of an American identity.

IV. The Structure of this Special Issue

In the previous section we discussed in detail our conceptualization of collective identities and core state powers, and how they relate to each other. The contributions of this special issue have further developed our empirical and conceptual understanding of these relationships. We adopted a multidisciplinary, multimethodological perspective: to include contributions from political science, political economy, international relations, history and European law. While most of these contributions assess the relationship between core state powers and collective identities in the European context, some deal with the global manifestation of the phenomenon, either horizontally (Börzel and Risse, 2020) or by zooming in on other regions, such as McNamara and Musgrave (2020) in the US case and Eze and Van der Wal (2020) in the African case.

The collection opens with a contribution by Tanja Börzel and Thomas Risse (2020), which sets the stage for the development of the collection. They begin by delving into the theoretical relationship, in the European experience, between the integration of core state powers and collective identities. In particular, they argue that while collective identification with one's nation and with Europe has remained overall stable over time, the fundamental issues of 'identity politics can be both a facilitator and inhibitor of the integration of core state powers: the influence of identity politics on integration is particularly powerful if it relates to the constitutive dimension regarding the in-group and out-group distinction' (Börzel and Risse, 2020, p. 29). In the second part of their article they explore the way that these dynamics take place beyond Europe, providing a horizontal comparison between different continental experiences. By comparing the emergence of collective supranational identities and the use of domestic nationalism beyond Europe, they suggest that not only the EU, but also other integration processes need elite-driven 'identity narratives … for communicating credible commitments to other political leaders' and 'to generate citizen support for integration' (Börzel and Risse, 2020, p. 36).

Börzel and Risse (2020) set the stage for subsequent contributions; firstly, a set of articles that discuss the European case, and then a set of articles that discuss the relationship between identities and integration beyond Europe. The discussion of the European experience begins with an assessment of the legal role of constitutional identities in the European context, in which Sacha Garben (2020) examines the legal limits posed to European integration by the constitutional nature of national identities.

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In particular, she explores to what extent national constitutional identity serves as a legal limit to European integration of core state powers (Garben, 2020). Her main argument is twofold: on the one hand, she points out that on matters of EU competence the ultimate word rests with the European Court of Justice; while national constitutional courts could in principle oppose decisions by the European Court of Justice in fields they consider protected by national constitutional identity, they may not openly breach explicit European Court of Justice rulings (short of mandating a break-up of the EU). This implies that the notion of constitutional identity ('by its nature it is reserved for exceptional situations and can only ever throw incidental counterpunches' Garben, 2020, p. 43) cannot provide a 'sustained limit' to competence creep, which in turn can be addressed only by a clearer division of competences within the different tiers of government.

The open question is, therefore, whether there is a sufficient identity reservoir for the European exertion of core state powers, and how these relate to specific policy fields. Before moving towards a sector specific analysis, the third article – co-authored by Björn Bremer, Philipp Genschel, and Markus Jachtenfuchs (2020) – provides a horizontal exploration of the relationship between public preferences for integration in several fields of core state competence and exclusive nationalism. In doing so, the authors use an original dataset on public preferences for integration of core state powers collected in spring, 2018 in a selection of European countries. While the survey lacks a specific measurement of the collective identification of the respondents, Bremer *et al*. (2020) proxy it by looking, in particular, at the preferences of voters of populist radical right parties, which typically correlate with self-reported exclusive nationalism (although they cannot be considered completely equivalent, as exclusive nationalists are also found among the electorates of other parties). While they do not find generalized opposition to the integration of core state powers, they do find specific opposition in certain countries and among certain voters. This opposition is shaped by exclusive national identification and by interests. Interestingly, they found instead important support for increased horizontal cooperation in fields that would, in principle, be shielded from European cooperation (see Garben, 2020), such as military matters. Even fiscal solidarity seems to be broadly supported across the countries in the panel, although voters of parties with exclusive national identities tend to oppose it.

In the next article of the collection, Francesco Nicoli, Theresa Kuhn and Brian Burgoon (2020) explore the issue of fiscal solidarity and its association with collective identity in detail using a survey experiment on EU-level social insurance fielded in autumn, 2018 in 13 European countries. The authors assess how collective identities impact on preferences for different designs of EU policy packages (for example, with varying redistribution potential, governance and conditionality). Building on the concepts presented in this introduction, Nicoli *et al*. (2020) identify three ideal-types of identification patterns: genuine Europeans, genuine nationals and genuine localists. Genuine Europeans are more supportive of very generous redistributive schemes governed at European level; and the more exclusive is their European identity the more they support these schemes. Genuine nationals support certain EU-level social policy packages as long as they entail no long-term redistribution, are less generous and are administered nationally; even more so, the more exclusive is their national attachment. All in all, Nicoli *et al*. (2020) found

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that rather than driving support for European social policy in general, national and European identities structure support for different types of European social policy: Even individuals with exclusive national identities are ready to support EURS as long as it does not involve cross-country redistribution and as long as the funds are managed by the member states rather than by an EU body.

Matthias Matthijs and Silvia Merler (2020) approach the issue of economic stabilization from a different perspective. Rather than discussing how identities impact on economic stabilization, they start out by arguing that the euro crisis had very heterogenous consequences for different countries, which – in turn – affected citizens' identification patterns. Their main finding is that 'the key determinant in European individual identity formation … [is] the relative importance of exit (emigration) versus voice (economic policy preferences) for different socio-demographic and socio-economic groups' (Matthijs and Merler, 2020, p. 112). Especially in southern Europe, young cohorts of educated and mobile individuals tend to feel more European than their northern counterparts. The authors argue that the higher levels of identification among these southern Europeans is attributable to the fact that they can emigrate to high-wage countries in the EU in cases of economic downturn whereas northern Europeans do not have this opportunity.

Matthijs and Merler's (2020) article expresses the important function of maintaining Europe as a space with no internal frontiers, granting a fundamental freedom to circulation; a specific form of negative integration achieved by limiting domestic action in the field of border management that has been traditionally seen as a core state function. Matthijs and Merler's work suggests that freedom of movement constructs identification, while Felix Karstens (2020) asks, in the sixth contibution in this collection, to what extent opposition to freedom of movement is associated with exclusive national identities. In his article, Karstens presents a newly collected dataset exploring attitudes towards mobility and intra-EU border controls. Interestingly, the main results of the article suggest that collective identification with Europe is the strongest predictor of support for open borders, especially when the respondents are themselves close to national borders, and when they have a migration background, lending credibility to the idea that cross-border interactions and socialization construct European identification in ways that translate into support for the integration of core state powers.

From this point onwards, we move away from a sector-specific perspective, to explore the effects of long-term historical processes and historical memories in the process of identity formation, both within and outside Europe. In the seventh article of the collection, Catherine de Vries (2020) explores experimentally to what extent exposure to frames that explicitly recall World War II affect respondents' preferences for cooperation in different fields, following benchmarking theory. Her main results indicate that exposure to negative memories increases support for cooperation when it comes to economic and financial aid, but does not substantially increase such support on free movement or defence (in the latter case, with the exception of the UK).

Conversely, military cooperation and élite socialization is the centre of the contribution by Stephanie Hofmann and Frédéric Mérand (2020). In this article, Hofmann and Mérand explore the construction of collective memory frames, that is, how political leaders used reference points from the past to create a community of fate, structuring their world-views when it came to matters of national defence and cooperation. They focus on France, Germany and the UK as the main drivers of the construction of European defence

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arrangements, and they illuminate the pivotal role of France in this respect. In particular, they argue that early security cooperation between France and Germany, originally established in the Elysée Treaty, became an important driver in the shared experience of devastation in World War II, and therefore resulted in forms of cooperation grounded in symbols and institutions that gradually became Europeanized. Conversely, Franco-British cooperation was associated with a different common past – the loss of empire and of imperial power – and therefore resulted in bilateral agreements aiming to re-establish their joint capacity for being global powers. In turn, this created the basis for further Europeanized cooperation, but on the grounds of joint operational capabilities rather than on the ground of institutions and symbolic mobilization. In both cases, cooperation was framed in a common, shared experience that induced former enemies to feel close to each other and to think alike in terms of joint security arrangements.

The ninth article of the collection also provides a historical lens on the development of core state functions and its relationship with identification patterns, and does so by looking beyond Europe. Kathleen McNamara and Paul Musgrave (2020) examine the evolution of the US institutional system, paying particular attention to different moments in structuring political competition. The authors note, in particular, that in democracies the centralization of political authority is crucial to the development of collective identification, as long as such centralization is accompanied by a process of structuring political competition. In the USA this took place in different phases. The first was the process of contestation around the initial draft of the Constitution of the United States, which constituted the first wave of pan-American mobilization. Secondly, and most importantly, the direct election of the US president established a competitive party system, which in turn led to identification with the system. As the authors put it, their analysis of political competition 'demonstrates the importance of this key arena for polity building'(McNamara and Musgrave, 2020, p. 184).

Finally, in the concluding article of the collection, Michael Onyebuchi Eze and Katja van der Wal (2020) examine the evolution of pan-African identification from a critical historical perspective. They consider that the notion of national identity in Africa is fundamentally different from a European understanding of the construct. While in the European context national identities were often the result of a long process of identity formation, in Africa they resulted from the colonialist need to establish a functioning colonial administration that encompassed and superseded original group identities. Consequently, African national identities today have an ambivalent character: on the one hand they constitute a civic backbone to political action, as long as individuals do not feel that they belong to a nation-state by birth, but they can consciously develop such an affiliation through civic engagement. On the other hand, national identities are on occasion perceived as externally imposed constructs that rupture or cut across primordial, borderless group identities, and therefore represent, for some, a lasting inheritance of the colonial era. Such artificial national identities cannot provide a sufficient base for the construction of pan-African institutions. Eze and Van der Wal (2020) argue, in this regard, that pan-African institutions would be best served by the construction of an open, cosmopolitan, multi-level African identity ('Afropolitanism') that would go beyond national identities, maintaining their civic character but removing the exclusivity and essentialist bias inherited by the colonial experience.

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Concluding Remarks

Considered together, the contributions collected in this special issue substantially advance our understanding of the in multi-level political systems such as the EU. While each of the articles collected here brings us a step further down the path to grasp these relationships in full, these pieces are probably insufficient, on their own, to clarify the issue at stake fully. However, considered collectively, they do shed light on the two-way, multidisciplinary relationship between core state powers and collective identities.

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