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Development of the European identity according to the historical relationship with national identity. Study between France and Germany.

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The idea for the theme of this Bachelor Arbeit came to me while I was talking with other German students. Indeed, many young people told me they were feeling more European than German, which from my French point of view surprised me a lot. Thus, this project would not have been possible without these two semesters of exchange. In general, I am grateful for this enriching year of study in Germany which was able to lead to the fulfillment of this final work.
I) Introduction

The European Union has developed and made it possible to create a strong organization bringing together European countries to give them a powerful path abroad. This organization has also allowed its citizens to obtain a rare flexibility. With the Schengen area, it is possible to travel, work, trade, or study abroad without any difficulty. This opportunity has been fully used by Europeans who have gradually created links between them. Now, the European Union is facing new challenges.

But originally, the European community was an economic organization set up after the Second World War to avoid armed conflicts. Peace was the main objective of the organization, yet from the very beginning the founders of the European Community thought that a sense of attachment and belonging to the Union would develop over time. Indeed, today, the European Union is also a political organization that created the status of European citizen. To carry out the rest of the European construction, many people believe that identity is a crucial and logical element of its development.

Studies have shown that the sense of European identity was not developed uniformly in each country. Indeed, we can distinguish between countries considered "pro-Europe" where the feeling of belonging is strong and others that can be less "European" or sometimes described as "Eurosceptic". The withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union demonstrates that there are different levels of attachment and above all that without a strong identity, the stability of the European Union can be questioned.

The Franco-German couple was the driving force behind European integration and still remains an important pillar of the union. But Germany seems to have developed a stronger European identity than in France. Indeed, the importance of the state and its superiority remains central for many French people. This can be illustrated by the rise in the results of the "anti-Europe" parties or by the blocking of certain treaties. How can this difference be explained? Why do Germans feel more European than the French? The two countries being substantially close in many aspects, we can wonder about the influence of other identities on the development of European identity. Indeed, a competition between multiple identities and an influence effect could have an impact. How are they determined and by what factors are they influenced?
The history of how each country’s identities were built makes up one of the biggest differences between them. Indeed, each present element has been influenced by a past element. For this, it can be emphasized that the construction of the nations in France and Germany are not similar and could have had an impact on the current European identity relationship. In the same way, France was declared the winner and Germany the loser in the conflict that led to the necessity for peace and the establishment of the European community. The objective of this thesis will be to estimate whether these historical disparities can partly explain the gap in the development of the European feeling between the Franco-German couple. This reflection brings us to our research questions: Does the development of European identity differ according to the historical national identity relationship? How to explain the differences in the impact of the historical relationship with national identity on European identity between France and Germany?

Some works showed that history could change citizens' identities in two different ways. Either gradually and incrementally through the interactions between the institution and the citizens. Or under the impact of a severe crisis that is considered to deserve an immediate change in the way of thinking. Thus, the two different constructions of the nation as well as the impact of the Second World War on France and Germany will be studied. To answer these questions, Eurobarometer statistical data will be selected. It is interesting to use already existing data to work on a large sample. In addition, using the same source makes it possible to compare the two countries using the same method of collection. This is crucial for an effective comparison.

We will start by conceptualizing the topic and then present the existing theories answering these questions. Then after presenting the method, the objective will be to test the theories and the hypothesis formulating by looking in the present for observable and expected traces.
II) General literature

To work on the development of the European identity and its relationship with others, it is important to theorize the different central terms used in this thesis.

1. Citizenship and social identity

First, it is important to differentiate citizenship from social identity.

Citizenship is a social status of legal belonging to a political entity (Déloye, 1998). This membership is a status that is materialized by a set of rights and duties. Citizenship status developed by breaking down into three elements (Marshall, 1950). Political rights that allow you to take part in the political life of the community and to exercise political authority over the powers (right to vote, right to stand for election, etc.). Social rights allow access to and participation in social and economic protection (right to education, health, etc.). And finally, civil rights, which include access to justice and respect for individual and fundamental freedoms (freedom of expression, religion, property, assembly, etc.). In exchange, citizens are members of the group and belonging to it implies compliance with obligations that may or may not be formal. For example, the latter have the duty to participate in political life by voting in elections or the obligation to participate in the financial burdens borne by the State.

All these normative rules will influence the behavior of the citizens of a community by creating a common system of civic norms. The proper functioning of this system of values and beliefs is based on various positive and negative sanctions as well as on the rights used as "visible symbols" of social organization (Durkheim, 1893, p.28). In this way, individuals follow a pattern of civic conformism that forms the cement of society (Elster, 1989). Indeed, citizen standards have an imperative character that will encourage citizens to follow certain behaviors and avoid others.

This tension between rights and rules creates a contractual relationship between citizens and the state. In exchange for different rights, citizens will legitimize the political organization in place and agree to follow its rules. This is the "Social Contract" between individuals and power (Rousseau, 1762). Citizens will not only follow the rules but agree with it. Thus, they will feel part of the organization and identify with it. Without this sense of belonging, of identity, the organization may have more difficulty imposing rules on citizens and evolving. It is for this
reason that the notion of identity differs from the notion of citizen and is also important nowadays and interests us in this work.

Personal identity is also different from social identity. The first term refers to a purely individual and fixed characteristic, while the second refers to the social group to which an individual belongs as well as his or her experiences within a society (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The sense of belonging depends on the vision that the person has of himself even within his place in his community. However, it is impossible to have a social identity alone because they are always collectively shared. (Risse, 2011). It is always an identification process that will link a part of an individual "Me" with a community "We". Identification with a social group is always collective. It is shared with all other members through a psychological bond. Thus, all members feel positive emotions towards other individuals in the community. To summarize, we can say that identity is the sense of belonging those individuals feel towards a group.

Many scholars agree on Benedict Anderson's (1991) assertion that identity is a social construct. His work focuses on nationalism nevertheless they have reached many fields of social science. To illustrate, being born with a passport of a certain nationality is not necessarily a genetic or natural heritage. It is a legacy that is learned during socialization. An individual learns to identify with his country and develop a national identity.

The most frequent use of the term is sociological and refers to the different collective identities of an individual: age, gender, nationality... Some identities were politically created by the elites of a community. It is these identities that will interest us in this dissertation, and it is important to explain the process that frames their formation.

2. Identification formation

I am French... This sentence, however simple, refers to deep mechanisms of identification that have since a long time been a topic of interest for researchers. How have political organizations such as nation-states managed to build a sense of belonging and allegiance among its citizens? Moreover, how can individuals who do not and will never know each other feel so connected?
It is by starting from a subjective perspective that we will highlight objective elements. The sense of identification does not only come from living within a politically organized population by an organization. Not either from the resemblance between citizens. Rather, it is a feeling of psychological appreciation of one's close relationship with the other citizens of the political organization. For example, Max Weber describes nationalism as a phenomenon of belief. It demonstrates that it is not objective similarities, such as language, traditions or blood that create national identity because the nation exists first in the consciousness of the actors. (Weber, 1978). It comes mainly from the feeling of sharing this belonging with all other citizens (Gaxie, 2019). Indeed, social identities must be shared collectively to exist. For example, the French feel French and know that all other French people share this feeling. This is what unites them all to each other. This shared knowledge is vital to conceptualizing the group's identity. This is called "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991).

Yet even with these imagined communities, citizens must be able to identify with a group that exists concretely. This is what social psychologists call "entitativity" (Castano, 2004, p.40). It is the ability of a group of individuals to form a common identity. A social group must create rules and goals that the entire community can share. To reinforce this feeling, different concrete elements help. For example, the making of a common history is important. Subsequently, it will lead to the creation of common symbols such as a national anthem, a flag, or the celebration of national holidays. Thus, the whole of a territory will share the same sense of belonging and above all celebrate it at the same time and in the same way. The unity of the territory will be based on this instrumentalization of identity by creating a series of common traditions and rites (Thiesse, 1999). It is for this reason that each nation-state will create this common history of identity. Another element was highlighted by Benedict Anderson. It is the contribution of technical objects with the development of the press and therefore the dissemination of literature. It is these technologies that explain why the same thoughts occur, at the same time, in the same communities. For example, reading a national newspaper will be social realities. But to this must be added, the fact of reading the same information as others and especially of knowing that others are doing the same thing (Anderson, 1991). The mixture of objective elements and subjective feelings of belonging is the basis of the feeling of social identification.

The construction of an identity is also part of the definition of the group's boundaries. Therefore, it is important to define "in-groups and out-groups" (Risse, 2011, p.26). The question of who is allowed to be a member of the community and who is not is the basis for the formation of any social group. The feeling of community will be accentuated by a feeling of difference and
distance from other social groups. To bring in the most real community possible, it is therefore crucial to define very clear barriers (Castano, 2004). The political order that governed the Cold War is quite suited to explain this concept. Indeed, two groups were opposed: the Eastern bloc against the Western bloc. The capitalist bloc defined the communist bloc as the social group "outside", and likewise vice versa. This distinction allowed each group to consolidate their respective senses of belonging and allegiance. Thus, during the Cold War, based on the rejection of the members of the other bloc, each bloc was able to create its imagined community.

To conclude, the concept of identification is based on the principle of "imagined communities". Once they become real in the imagination of citizens and the boundaries of the group are defined, the members of a group can develop a sense of belonging, this is called social identity.

3. Territorial Identities

Identities can be linked to a territory. Hence, the individuals of a territory will create a political community to govern themselves. The interactions between individuals and the community that organizes its territory will create a sense of proximity. Then eventually a political legitimacy (Risse, 2011). In addition, the definition of borders is very important in a political community because it makes it possible to know who can be considered a "citizen" and therefore who must follow the rules of the group. They make it possible to define the out-group and to make the community concrete and real in the minds of its members (Duchesne, 2008).

It is for these reasons that political communities are very often attached to a geographical territory. However, their influences remain highly dependent on citizens’ interpretation and appreciation (ibid).

Depending on the agreements and the different geographical groupings, the same citizen may be a member of different political communities at the same time. In this dissertation we will study three different political attachments: National, European, and Regional identity.

3.1 National identity

Pierre Genet defines the modern state as "an institutional creation that imposes on a given population in a given territory rules of conduct" (Genet, 1997). So, the State is a legal and
institutional assembly. It is a political organization. Rather, the nation refers to the social group in a given territory that shares a common history, language or culture that will be different from other nations. Marcel Mauss defines the nation as "a materially and morally integrated society, with a stable, permanent central power, with determined borders, with relative moral, mental and cultural unity of the inhabitants who consciously adhere to the State and its rights" (Mauss, 1969, p.584). The nation state is thusly a mixture with a legal and political dimension and an identity aspect. National identity is the feeling of attachment and allegiance to one's nation-state. This includes attachment to the social group of its national territory as well as to its administration.

There are nations without states, however, it is very difficult for a nation to create a sense of allegiance among its members because the state will take care of the regulation of national identity (Hervieu-Léger, 1998). For example, the Basque Country does not follow the borders of states and extends over two national territories. Yet the community shares the same language, history, and culture. However, unity has become increasingly difficult over the years. The differences between the French side and the Spanish side are gradually growing. Indeed, the maintenance of the imagined community is done through the work of maintaining the national consciousness exercised by the State. A Nation does not possess the coercive, moral, or material resources necessary to create a sense of allegiance and identity (Weber, 1978). Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish the evolution of the sense of belonging to the nation from state development.

The concept of national identity is strongly linked to nationalist sentiment because it is the result of the development of nationalism. Nationalism includes all the mechanisms that aim to create or strengthen the sense of belonging of the citizens of a nation (Deloye, 1997). The researchers have highlighted a paradox. On the one hand, they note the depression of nationalism that was at its peak during the twentieth century. Nationalism was reinforced by the context of world war. This decline is accompanied by a weakening of national identities in Europe, which is being challenged by the arrival of new international organizations as well as by the effects of globalization (Dogan, 1994). Without the fear of a nearby armed conflict, national identity was discussed and reflected (Duchesne, 2008). And on the other hand, some elements try to think that nationalism is still very powerful in Europe. In some countries, such as Spain or Italy, there is tension between the government and regional or ethnic movements. There is a real will on the part of the core and majority group to preserve national unity (Keating, 2004). Another clue
is the increase in far-right movements in Europe. The creation of these parties is a reaction of fear to immigration and the creation of new minorities.

The sense of belonging to the nation-state in Europe is very important in Europe. Still, there are other types of territorial identities that influence a large number of citizens, such as the feeling of allegiance to one's region, close to the citizens.

3.2 Regional Identity

Regional identity is the feeling of belonging to one's regional community and consequently to one's political organization and regional administration. It is therefore a level of territorial identity that is close locally to citizens. It is possible to differentiate an even closer fourth level, the local level. However, his study would create complications. Moreover, his analysis is not relevant and useful in the context of this brief. The study of the sense of regional belonging is interesting because it makes it possible to present an identity that competes with the sense of national belonging. It also shows that regional identity can be more or less strong depending on the territory.

Some local social groups share a strong common sense of regional attachment. This identity is explained by the feeling of closeness between the political organization that organizes daily life and the members of the group. The regional reality can contrast from the reality at the national level (Roca & Oliviera-Roca, 2006). Furthermore, regional identity is more complex than that at the national level. It is determined by different elements. For example, the importance of the cultural and historical specificities of these regions is very important to many citizens (Brigevich, 201-8). These specificities will differ depending on the state to which the region will be attached (Hooghe & Marks, 2005).

Recently, the decentralization of powers has increased, leaving more and more autonomy for the regions and opportunities to strengthen their identity. There are several reasons for this transmission. First, the fear of an imminent armed conflict at the border has diminished. This leaves more freedom for states to delegate responsibilities to local peripheries (Jelen, 2011). The European Union also plays a role in this transfer of powers because it works closely with the regions to act locally. At the same time, the organization has been trying for years to create a new identity to bring together the whole of Europe.
### 3.3 European Identity

European identity is the feeling of belonging to the European community and its territory, which is accompanied by an attachment to the administration of the European Union. This identity goes beyond national borders and envelops the common space of the European Union. In this thesis, the feeling of belonging to Europe will refer not to the entire European continent but to the political organization that is the European Union. Thus, the feeling of allegiance attached to European citizenship created in 1992 when the Maastricht Treaty was signed will be studied.

The study of European identity is complex because there is no clear theoretical framework in the process of identification with the European Union. More often, empirical scientists were interested in individuals' support for European integration and less in the development of European identity (Bruter 2005). Therefore, very often, this concept is analyzed using scientific knowledge on the sense of belonging to the state (Deloye, 1997). Traditional approaches will describe European citizenship as a new supranational or even post-national identity. In consequence, they note a break with the previous pre-eminence and superiority of the feeling of belonging to the Nation-State. Like so, the theoretical field of basic analysis of identity is upset by the development of the sense of belonging to the European Union. Nevertheless, it remains essential to conceptualize this new concept still uncertain because the European Union remains an organization mastered and organized by the States. Thus, its objective is not to harm the stato-national identity (Magnette 2004). However, several politicians defend the idea of a Europe with more and more powers, perhaps even surpassing those of the Member States in the long term. But to create this united community, it is crucial to develop a strong sense of allegiance. It is for this reason that the question of European identity is so important. However, for the moment, it is for many Europeans a secondary identity, which is insufficient to create a solidarity between foreigners, yet necessary to allow the payment of European taxes that will finance European policies (Habermas, 1998).

European unification began to unify Europe after a long period of war. The objective was to integrate countries economically and then politically to preserve peace by creating relations of interdependence (Bruter 2005). Now, without the threat of war between the members of the European Union, the political elites must invent new reasons to preserve unification. Developing a sense of belonging to preserve economic interests is a solution used even if a common interest can form a common identity according to a study by Karl Deutsch. Nevertheless, this feeling is atypical because it has been artificially encouraged, particularly
with the help of material symbols such as European passports, the Euro or the European flag and remains dependent on the historical specificities of each country (Risse, 2011).

The artificial construction of European identity is difficult because it suffers from a lack of a "real" psychological existence in the minds of Europeans (Castano, 2004). It is an imagined community that is difficult to imagine and abstract (Anderson, 1991). The territory is complex to visualize because the space is already divided into regions and states that have developed identities. In addition, its borders are stable and change regularly with the accession of new members or the withdrawal of the United Kingdom. Moreover, Europe could not build a common culture, history, or language to unify the community (Antonsich, 2012).

Thomas Risse opposes this idea. According to him, Europeans communicate without problems and share a real vision of the territory as well as the common humanist and libertarian values that underpin the foundations of the European Union (Risse, 2011). Sharing these values is even a condition of entry for countries wishing to join the Union. In addition, statistics from the European Commission (Eurobarometer) clearly confirm that a majority of European citizens identify at least somewhat with the European Union. The Europeanization of consciences occurs mainly at the national and regional level. That is why the European identity is not uniform throughout the country. It may vary in different ways from country to country, for example, because Europeanisation may resonate differently depending on the history and culture of origin of citizens (Risse, 2011). In some countries such as France or Poland, we speak of a "Europe of nations" while in Germany or Spain, we will rather evoke the construction of a "modern Europe". The vision of the European identity can therefore vary and create different vision of the Union.

Stato-national identity has long been considered the classic identity of citizens. Now, because of decentralization and European integration, it is being challenged by new territorial identities: from above by the European Union and from below by the regions. However, they do not necessarily compete with each other.
4. Multiple Identities

According to Peter Burke, a psychology researcher, "It is almost a truism to say that people have multiple identities" (Burke, 2003, p195). We can assume that it is the same about social ones. The multiplicity of identities does not strongly engage individuals to feel each of them with the same intensity. They can identify with it more or less strongly. In addition, citizens can mobilize certain attachment depending on the context. A quote from Thomas Risse perfectly illustrates this idea: "I might feel Rhinelandish particularly when dealing with Bavarians, German when visiting Italy, and European when interacting with Americans" (Risse, 2011, p.23).

All individuals have several social groups of belonging. However, feelings of belonging lead to a diversity of normative codes to follow. But sometimes the values carried by the different groups can be in contradiction. It is the confrontation between the different affiliations that will create the civic dimension of a citizen's identity (Deloye, 1997).

Thomas Risse conceptualized different types of multiple identities (Risse, 2011). According to him, they can be completely "separate". By taking the examples of the writer, it is possible to support his university and his football club. They do not entail the involvement of the other and are specific to the individual. Multiple identities can also be "cross-cutting" as in the case of an individual who is a believer and who feels a sense of loyalty to the European Union. These two common and distinct attachments can be shared with other members of both communities’ step by step with the entirety. He also speaks of "blend" identities between them as in a "marble cake". In this situation, they are very hard to differentiate and strengthen together. Thomas Risse uses the example of the inhabitants of his region, the "Rhinelander" who are described as liberal Catholics. These two identities are interwoven with each other and hard to detach. Although, the model most used by researchers to study the links between territorial attachment speaks of identities "nested in each other". A citizen can feel that he belongs to his region, to his country and to Europe. Indeed, this belonging feeling is characterized by an attachment to all territories. Thus, the citizens of a local community will be included in a larger community. And the second group still in a community with even more members.

But in spite of that, this does not mean that the European identity is stronger than the others. It is not exclusive, and the different levels are complementary. Considering it as a new sense of
belonging that does not aim to suppress the national attachment to the Member States\(^1\), it is interesting to question the impact of these pre-existing feelings of belonging on its development. It is often described as a secondary identity, implying that the different levels can play a role in the development of European attachment (ibid). The hypothesis set out below evokes, among other things, the possible influences of German and French national and regional identities on the development of the feeling of allegiance to Europe.

5. Identity modification and hypothesis

Do identity changes exist? Can we speak of an evolution of identities? On this subject, two groups of researcher’s debates.

In cognitive psychology, scientists defend the thesis of the stability of identities. They are present in the imagination of an individual; it is linked to a series of deeply rooted patterns or beliefs. Changing this way of thinking would be extremely complicated. That is why they believe that once formed, identity will be resistant to change (Fiske & Taylor, 1984). On the contrary, post-modern theory defends the thesis of a volatile identity. It would be the result of a constant negotiation and questioning by the individual. Thus, identities are always evolving (Syslverster, 1994). Thomas Risse demonstrates that these two theories are not so far away. His first argument is that the degree of contestation is not really related to the fluidity of identity. Second, he believes that they evolve according to the degree of strength to which an individual may feel part of a group. Thus, if a citizen is strongly attached to his nation-state, it will be difficult to detach him from it (Risse, 2011).

The two theories agree to distinguish two cases where an identity can be changed over the course of history (Fiske and Taylor 1984). In the first, the transformation is "gradual". This means that evolution will take time and change gradually. Social institutions will influence identities using two methods. First, "socialization." Individuals will often be in contact with institutions and therefore create an attachment to them. And then another method is "persuasion." This time, individuals will become attached to the institution as politicians will

\(^1\)This theory is maintained by the European Union itself, which advocates the diversity of these identities with its slogan "Unity in diversity".
invoke stories and symbols to create attachment and change their identity. It is the effort of the institution that will create this attachment feeling over time. But there is a second possible evolution. An identity can change quickly and strongly during specific important historical events. During "severe crises", they can be strongly impacted and changed to manage a crisis. However, this change will depend on the interpretation of the citizens. A major historical event will not necessarily change the attachment of a social group. Indeed, the modification takes place if citizens unconsciously visualize that the crisis is important and decide that it deserves a change in their judgment in response (Risse, 2011).

France and Germany have experienced different constructions of nations. They have not historically been built in the same way and using the same method. In this brief, we assume that these two countries that have also experienced major world wars that have left traces on the identity of citizens. The hypothesis is based on the fact that the history of these countries has had an effect on the development of their European identity and can still be seen today. Hence the hypothesis: The history of France and Germany had had impacts on the current sense of national and regional identity and consequently, on the development of European identity.

To answer this hypothesis, the analysis will be divided in two historical events part. They correspond respectively to a gradual change of identity and another one due to a severe crisis. Thus, their analysis will make it possible to validate or refute the previous hypothesis and expected mechanisms.

5.1 Gradual change

Germany and France have experienced different nation-building. The objective of this part is to show how, according to the theory, this differentiated construction leads to two different identities and how it followed a model of gradual identity evolution.

As Theodor Schieder explained, there are two types of nation: state-nation and ethno-cultural nation (Schieder 1964). This distinction is recognized both by scientists in politics and by those in sociology. The first concept of "state-nation" is applicable to the case of France. It will be based on political criteria. Holders of citizenship are "complete" citizens. In Germany, the applicable principle is the "ethno-cultural nation". In this case, the nation is based on culture such as language or religion. Citizens must share since childhood the same roots as previous generations who lived on the territory. In both cases, the nation is a social construct that will be
strategic and meet the needs of individuals and the group. For example, in "gradual" change, elites can use and construct identities to adapt them to their strategic needs.

Ernest Renan and Heinrich Von Treitschke worked precisely on the distinction between Germany and France on this subject. Thus, the French nation follows an "artificial" logic (Renan, 1882) while the German nation is a "communal" construct (Treitschke, 1870).

In France, the nation was created around the institutional framework of the state. Unity will be political and based on the legal bond between individuals and their citizenship as well as on the history of the nation. Cultural unity is built by integrating regional minorities or immigration around the state and the status of citizen. Thus, membership of the nation state is voluntary.

The historical creation of the French nation was chosen by the French because national education created "the homogenization of national consciousness" (Deloye, 1997, p.182). The state has a monopoly on the education of new generations in France and can transform identities through this socialization. However, the nation has also been imposed on its citizens by struggling to make the various regional and local cultures disappear. French history has often been governed by a purely French presentation of historical events by understanding the France in its entirety around power (Baycroft, 2012). However, the use of regional languages has been abolished in favor of French and thus create a political cultural identity. Thus, gradually the France spread throughout the territory suppressing local patois. Yet, some regions are trying to combat this system by maintaining a strong attachment to their local culture. This is the case, for example, of Brittany, Corsica, the Basque Country or Alsace. But these regions are exceptions that are not shared by all members of the region. Fewer and fewer individuals can speak the local dialect.

It is for these reasons that the France is now governed by a central government and a very powerful capital. The regions thus had little political power before 1982 when the State began to decentralize part of its activities for technical reasons. However, the France remains very much controlled by the center. This recurrence of exchange between the State and citizens has created a strong national identity among the French.

In Germany, the nation was created around the people and their cultural unity. Indeed, individuals already shared a unity based on language, belonging to an ethnic group or a common
culture. Thus, it is around this base that political unity was built. Each Länder differs from each other but forms a general cultural unit that forms the German state. The education of Germans is formed at the regional level and not at the national level. Thus, it was easier to maintain the practice of local dialects. It is also for this reason that the accents specific to each Länder have been preserved over time. Some regions, such as Bavaria, have developed a particularly strong regional identity, but this is the case for all other regions.

This gathering of territories is found historically during the construction of the German nation. Since 1800 and the Heilige Römisches Reich\(^2\), there had been no national feeling in Germany. Rather, it was a grouping of 16 territories. Germany did not exist. But 1806 was the end of this empire. Napoleon won against the empire and founded the Reinbund\(^3\). This war will convey this new idea as sovereignty and nationalism. Intellectuals used these new ideas against France to create a national feeling in Germany. Later, during the Deutsche Bund\(^4\), there was a movement against the king in Germany in 1848, die Revolution von Völkerfrühling. Citizens want more rights, more democracy, more freedom. And above all, they want a nation-state with German unity. This revolution will build the first German parliament. But a reactionary bloc will stop the movement. Then in 1871, under the Second Reich\(^5\), Germany is not a democracy, but this is the first time we have talked about the German state. Then finally, in the nineteenth century the birth of the workers' movement will allow the beginning of the construction of German democracy, which will come in the 20th century. In addition, the trade unions will bring together the workers and thus part of Germany. Gradually, these movements will lead Germany to German democratic national unity. Nation-building in Germany was gradual and took time to bring the different territories together and form a state. Then the workers' movement helped consolidate the feeling of national unity.

History has gradually brought together the different German regions which were close in their cultural resemblance. Now, this story has the legacy of leaving a federal state with regions that have a lot of power. Consequently, the Germans developed strong regional identities.

\(^2\) 1400-1806  
\(^3\) 1806-1813  
\(^4\) 1815-1866  
\(^5\) 1871-1918
To summarize, the French politically created a cultural unity while the Germans had a cultural identity and created objective political characteristics around it. This differentiation shows us that history has built a country like Germany where citizens feel closer to their region than to the state while in France, the state and national attachment remain at the center of the values of the French. Thus, this reasoning shows us that the Germans feel less attached to their state than the French. France's attachment to the state has probably blocked the development of European identity, which has difficulty competing with the national one. On the contrary, in Germany the terrain has been more fertile. In addition, as we have seen, the European Union relies on strong regions to act locally and Germans do not have to question their regional attachment. This gradual construction and reconstruction of identities in France and Germany would probably explain the ease with which Germans develop a strong European identity. See for some superior to the national one.

5.2 Severe crises change

The Second World War was a trauma for the whole of Europe. However, this shock was particularly strong on the German population who were blamed for the disaster. Directly after the war, no one mentioned the consequences of the shock of defeat and the force of guilt on German identity. The return to a strong unity had to come back naturally. Nevertheless, many researchers have demonstrated that the trauma of war profoundly affected identity and national pride in Germany. Participation in the European Union would thus be a solution to face this problem. In this dissertation we will particularly monopolize the analysis of Thomas Risse (2011), Max Haller and Regina Ressler (2006).

Thus, following our theory, an identity can change quickly and strongly under the impact of a critical and major historical event. However, to change it, members of a community must think that the crisis was important and deserves a change in the way of thinking that preceded and provoked the crisis. Not all military defeats are necessarily accompanied by a loss of national identity. For example, after the First World War, Germans did not change their sense of belonging to the nation. Yet this war was also very traumatic for the country. Rather, citizens have strengthened their national identity and the importance of war. On the contrary, the consequences of World War II were interpreted by elites as a need of democracy and freedoms.

The process of identity change following the Second World War is a collective trauma shared by German people. The choice has left a mark on the collective consciousness of the members
of society and is transmitted from generation to generation. It is a cultural trauma that is deeply marked in the collective memory (Alexander, 2016). Consequently, the entire social group feels a sense of guilt towards the pain caused by other members of the social group. The solidarity between members is so strong that individuals personally feel guilt for actions they did not commit. This feeling is transmitted over time and its consequences are still present in current generations and the consequence on German national identity is still relevant and should be still observable today.

The German trauma has not only influenced the country's national identity. He also had some on the development of European identity in the country. Generally, when in a country the national attachment is strong, the European attachment will be as strong but will not exceed that of the base. However, the Germans are an exception to this finding. As a result of the trauma of national socialism, the attachment to the nation state is less strong than that to Europe (Haller, 1996).

This observation is explained by the construction of the new German identity by defining the Nazi past as the "out-group" (Risse, 2011). Thus, the military past can be rejected, and the European Union is seen as the modernity characterizing the new German population. The out-group will encompass excessive nationalism. To be sure not to promote his return, developing a European nationalism and attachment is much better seen by the population. This discourse was mobilized and used by the country's elites to build the new identity of the Germans. They talk about "others" by referring to the past and "we" by talking about Europe and its humanitarian values. In this way, the future of Germany is the European Union and is accompanied by myth and history of modernity and democracy. But also, of individual and collective freedoms in contradiction with the past.

The reconstruction of national identity has gone through the integration of European loyalty feeling to create "blend" identities that are no longer differentiated from each other. Europe's interests become those of Germany. The sense of belonging to Europe will, like the trauma, be transmitted through the generations. There is no clear difference in attachment between the older and the young nowadays. As we will see in Table 1, identities remain stable.
The Germans feel more European than the French because the elites have used the European construction by developing a new identity acceptable to the populations. The development of the sense of belonging to Europe has made it possible to cope with the severe crisis that the country has experienced. In Germany, the past represents the "others" who have not included in the current social group. Europe has been a solution to deal with the loss of German identity and national pride. Still, in France, the definition of "others" is more complex and is rather defined by non-French people and their extension through political organizations. Indeed, the attachment to the European Union in France was more complicated to be built and is still lighter today.

In France, the nation-state had already brought democracy and room for human rights for these citizens. Thus, the European Union was not seen as the organization of modernity because the state had already brought this aspect before the Second World War. Moreover, since France was declared in the victors’ camp, national identity was not questioned at all. Thus, modernity has remained attached to the vision of the nation-state. The European Union has only been an extension of these humanist values already present. Therefore, attachment to Europe is more questioned, contested and less automatic despite the relentlessness of the elites at the idea of the greatness of France with that of Europe.

The Second World War created a collapse of German national identity in favor of European one. This world war was a critical point that deviated the trajectory of construction of the development of the national collective identity. This was not the case in France.
III) Method

Thomas Risse explains that an identity can evolve in two different ways. The first type of change is "gradual" and the second occurs during "severe crisis". So, to answer our question about the impact of national and regional belonging feeling on the development of European identity in Germany and France, we will mobilize this theory. We have searched in the past, if we can find differences of identity to understand how they could have led to a different European attachment between the two countries. The analysis of this duty will focus on the present and the observable traces of this shock. The aim is to prove that these changes can be observed in the present and have had long-term effects on identities.

1. Case selection

First, before talking about the method, it is important to present the places of the France and Germany in the European Union and then to explain the relevance of the comparison and the choice of the two historical events.

1.1 Short historical background

France

The France is one of the founding members of the European Community. The country played a very important role in the construction of the common market and, ultimately, of the European Union. For example, the organization inherited the tradition of French administrative law. However, it will also several block its development. For example, with the "empty chair policy" of Charles de Gaulle from 1965 to 1966 or the rejection of the European constitution by the French people in a referendum.

Because of its population, 67.7 million inhabitants in 2021, its history but also its economic and diplomatic weight, this country is one of the most influential in the European Union. Especially now because the France is in the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union. It can currently play a significant role in the decision-making process of the political organization and, by instance, work on its vision of European integration.

Historically the France was built around its capital. It is therefore very centralized around the state institutions present in Paris. The State has many competences governing the everyday life of citizens. Thus, the French are very often in relationship with the nation. Nevertheless, the regions are gradually gaining power because of the encouragement of decentralization organized by governments in recent years. They are also gaining influence with the European Union, which is using them to act locally in all European territories.

**Germany**

West Germany was also one of the founding members of the European Economic Community. That being the case, its influence is important and historical. Upon reunification, East Germany was later integrated into the political organization.

Germany is the member country of the European Union with the largest national population with 83 million inhabitants. Its GDP of 3.344 billion euros makes it the strongest economy in the European Union. Germany's strong influence is also explained by its geographical position in the center of Europe. A German citizen, Ursula Von der Leyen is currently the president of the European Commission.

Germany is based on a federal tradition. The country is divided into different regions, the Bundesländer. They are powerful and have important skills. In addition, they will participate in legislation at national level through the Bundesrat. All countries will project their vision on the European Union in its construction. Germany is no exception to this rule and has tried to stick its political model to Europe. For example, the promotion of regions by the European Union through the different levels of competences and a consequence of the strong influence of the German system. Other projects such as the European Constitution have not worked. However, it is obvious that this country has left its "German build mark" (Lefebvre, 2009, p.89).

**European citizenship**

To strengthen the people's membership of the European Union, it was necessary to create a sense of belonging to the European Union. It is for this reason that the debates around the creation of a European citizenship were initially created. However, its development has been long and is still not finished. As we have seen before, the European identity is most often a second identity.
Previously, a European was an economic actor participating in the common market and not as a citizen. Even so, at the Paris Summit, the Member States began to reflect on specific rights for European citizens. In 1976, the accession of the peoples was stated as necessary for the construction of Europe. However, the term "citizen" is not clearly mentioned, especially following the reluctance of the France and the United Kingdom. In 1985 in Milan, the organization invented European symbols such as a flag, an anthem, or a European passport. Then, from 1990 onwards, the European Commission prepared the basis for a new treaty dealing with the question of citizenship. It is a citizenship with limited rights superimposed on national citizenships such as the right of residence, voting or diplomatic protection. Thus, the legal creation of the status of European citizen dates to the Maastricht Treaty of 1992. Every citizen of a Member State automatically becomes a citizen of the European Union.

This citizenship is considered a major step in the construction of Europe. However, as we have seen, the development of the European identity associated with this citizenship is not uniform. This is what they found when comparing France and Germany. It is this difference that will interest us in this thesis.

1.2 Relevance of the comparison

The two states founded the European Economic Community at the same time and yet, they did not have the same relationship with European identity. That is why it is interesting to study these differences in the development of European identity across their territory. The comparison is even more relevant regarding the special relationship between the two countries, often considered the driving force of Europe because of their history and economic weight. Experts speak of certain tensions between the two nations. However, the two countries remain for the other an ally and an essential partner. They have been at the heart of European integration since the beginning and have faced the same challenges. This common situation must lead to convergent solutions. This is the reason why it is necessary to maintain Franco-German cooperation and to develop a sense of closeness throughout Europe that seems to be blocking in France.

For these reasons, this thesis will mobilize Comparative analysis. This interdisciplinary method will try to understand and analyze the similarities or contrasts (Collier, 1993). It can make regional, national, international, or even transnational comparisons. Indeed, the objective is to look for common denominators or particular patterns between different systems, situation and
institutions to analyse a case (Martin, 2006). This theory responds to the need to obtain theoretical and empirical knowledge to answer serious political questions. The method of comparative analysis thus makes it possible to test hypotheses and even to theory-building.

It is important to remember that there is no specific common method with comparison. Each analysis must be adapted to its case. We must choose a case, the subject of questioning, then the level of comparison and then how many observations we will compare (Dogan & Pelassy, 1981). We can therefore speak of binary comparison because the goal is to compare two countries with important analogies which, however, differ on certain particularities. It is these identities differences that are of particular interest to us.

1.3 The choice of the two historical events

**Nation construction**

To answer our hypothesis, the first part of this hypothesis is based on gradual identity changes based on the study of the impact of the construction of national identity on German and French citizens. The two nations did not follow the same method of construction. The French state built its nation around Paris by giving little power to the regions. He tried to limit the influence of local communities so that he could create a sense of allegiance of citizens to the nation-state. On the contrary, the state was built around the regions. Each is important and plays an important role in the management of the state.

These differences have led to more or less strong relations between citizens and their nation-state or region. In addition, this construction is at the origin of the organizational basis of the France and Germany. Thus, the study of these consequences on the identities of its citizens is extremely interesting. I will try to see if these differences have influenced the development of European identity.

**Second world war**

In a second step, the Second World War will make it possible to study the impact of a major crisis on identity changes. This event was selected because it was very important in Europe. Both countries have been at the center of this conflict. That is why it is therefore interesting to study it. Especially since it had a wide impact on the development of the European Union and was studied by many specialists including working on the impact of the war on the German population.
As a reminder, on May 7, 1945, Germany surrendered to the Western Allies unconditionally and on May 9 against the Russians. In total, the Second World War caused 55 million deaths worldwide\(^7\). Germany is divided between the victors and the Germans find a country in ruins. Moreover, the world is placing the burden of guilt on the entire population. The hypothesis is based on the fact that this pressure was transmitted to the next generations and that it is still present today.

A major event like the latter probably had consequences on the identities of citizens. It is very interesting to test our hypothesis and determine whether the shock of this severe crisis could explain the fact that European identity has not developed uniformly in France and Germany.

2. **Method selection**

To carry out our study, we will carry out a study of process tracing to test the theories and thus validate or refute our hypothesis. Our results will be interpreted using a political-historical interpretation based on statistical data.

2.1 **Politico-historical interpretation**

To study the construction of European identity, it is crucial to analyze past events. All social interaction will be situated in time, in a historical context as well as in a social space. It is therefore very important to become aware of the effects of past events on the present and to consider the historization of objects. This need has been put forward from the perspective of Anglo-Saxon North American sociology.

Precisely concerning studies on citizenship, the "political scientist must know how to historize these reasonings and take into account the dead hand of the past" (Yve Deloye, 1997, p.170). To carry out a relevant analysis, it is essential to understand the civic past of the different European countries and to analyze the different trajectories of social identities.

\(^7\) Number of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
2.2 Studying identities, a difficult task

It is difficult to study and measure social identities (Risse, 2011). Researchers have already used different methods such as survey data, psychological experiments, or speech analysis. However, whether quantitative or qualitative methods, each method has its flaws and controversies. Statistics and psychological experiences will highlight the stability of social identities more easily than evolutions. Discourse analysis analyzes the opposite. It will highlight the fluidity of social identities and their very malleable characters. Additionally, the apparent fluidity can hide an inner stability.

Methodological pluralism seems to be the appropriate technique to capture such complex results. It is for this reason that this survey is based on a large theoretical part and will seek to test its conclusions. Indeed, if our hypothesis is true, we should find in the present traces in the present of the impact of history. Here, the present refers to the evolution of the sense of European belonging since the creation of European citizenship in 1992 with the Maastricht Treaty. Without statistics covering the period studied, it is impossible to statistically study the impact of our two events historically during the possible evolution of identity. In addition, the choice of mobilizing surveys to find observable traces will allow us to notice the big impacts that led to a change and came to break the stability of the results. Thus, we will be able to study the general trend from 1992 onwards and the differences in the development of European identity between France and Germany.

To quickly summarize this method, process tracing is a method that will show causal mechanisms within a historical process that led to the result that we seek to identify (Maillet & Mayaux, 2018). It is not possible to directly observe a mechanism. Therefore, the analysis is based on the variables that will transmit the causal force. So, the mechanisms will be observed by identifying the traces and observable clues. We will be able to determine the causes and the result of the historical process.

In this work we will use the variant “Theory-testing-process-tracing” (Beach & Pedersen, 2019). This method starts from the literature by considering mechanism as present and will seek to test if it works as expected. Empirical observations will be used as evidence to assess the degree of plausibility of a theoretical proposition. Indeed, if the theory is true and the mechanism does exist, we should find some « empirical fingerprints » (ibid, p.9). If they are found, the researcher can assume that the mechanism is present and will function as a theorizer.
If they are not found, it is possible to question the possibility of a questioning of the theory. The "Identities and their predictors" section will summarize the expected mechanisms.

2.3 Eurobarometer data

As explained earlier, to test the hypothesis of memory, my choice fell on the use of survey data. Writing a bachelor thesis, my resources are limited. Taking that into account, collecting my data would have been long and unrepresentative of the French and German populations. To carry out a larger-scale study, it made more sense to use the surveys already conducted about citizenship to work on a fair socio-economic representation.

The best choice was to mobilize data from the Eurobarometer. It is a collection of studies carried out twice a year in Europe. It was funded by the European Commission and managed by the European Parliament. This organization was created in 1974 by Jacques-René Rabieret and is managed by the European Union. The aim is to show the expectations and concerns of European citizens on many issues. In this way, the powers that be can adapt their policies to the needs of Europeans. The recurrence of its surveys makes it possible to determine a general trend concerning specific questions. For example, the question on European citizenship has been asked since 2011. Thus, it is possible to draw a trend in the long term. The questions that make it possible to find the observable traces that will interest us were asked between 1994 and 2006. These results are not extremely recent but it makes possible to evolve the impact of the historical events analyzed. In addition, the interval of more than ten years of taking an opinion allows to have a long and relatively stable assessment of the situation.

Generally, the Standard Eurobarometer surveys are conducted using face-to-face interviews in all EU Member States and sometimes in some candidate territories. The questionnaire is translated each time into the national language of the country. The respondents will select by chance and the investigator will try to contact the person four times. Moreover, the investigators never tell the respondents that the survey was organized by the European Commission to limit any influence. The sample design applied is a random plan. It is mainly proportional to the population of each Member State to reproduce the demographic weight of each Member State. The sample design also respects the distribution of populations in terms of rural and urban areas. On average, 1000 interviews are conducted. For example, in the winter survey 2021-2022,

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8 Important French senior civil servant and former collaborator of Jean Monnet.
1,604 interviews were conducted in Germany for 18.89% of the European population and 1,005 in France for 14.66%. During the covid-19 crisis, interviews remained face-to-face by staying in front of the doors of homes and respecting sanitary measures. However, additional interviews were conducted online using the computer-Assisted Web Interviewing technique to achieve the required amount of maintenance.

A second type of investigation will be mobilized. This is the Special Eurobarometer 508 report on "Values and Identities of EU citizens". This survey was conducted between October and November 2020 and was published in November 2021. It is interesting because it measures, twenty years after the last data, the regional and national identity. The survey is part of the Eurobarometer group and will follow the same techniques as those used for standard surveys.
IV) Analysis

Based on Thomas Risse's theory, we will study the impact of two historical events on the identities of French and German citizens. So, we will test our hypothesis using Eurobarometer statistics to find observable traces present.

As a reminder, here is the hypothesis of this paper: *The history of France and Germany has had impacts on the current sense of national identity and thus consequently on the development of European identity.*

1. Pre-existing differences

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to understand how history can explain why Germans feel mostly more European than the French. First, it is therefore essential to begin this analysis by demonstrating that this statement is true.

In 2005, the French population rejected the new constitution for Europe. For many people, this vote is a proof that the France has not developed a strong European identity. In all six original countries that created the European Union, the discourses of the elites have described the European Union as a positive development. This strengthens the European feeling of the masses. On the contrary, in France, the French elites are divided on this subject (Risse, 2011).

The French have developed a strong attachment to their nation-state. According to Max Haller, when the national identity is strong in a country, loyalty to the European Union will also be stronger. However, the Germans do not confirm this rule. Indeed, their sense of belonging to the nation-state is weaker than that to Europe (Haller & Ressler, 2006). This strong European identity is explained by a lack of attachment to the German state and a lack of national pride (Haller, 1999). Indeed, the German population hardly expresses an attachment to their national identity.

However, does this mean that France feels less European than Germany? To answer this question, it is important to compare empirical and numerical data. The following Eurobarometer survey was carried out using face-to-face questionnaires. Individuals had to answer the question...
"You feel you are a citizen of the EU?" The numbers displayed on the graph are the percentage of respondents who answered "Yes" to the question. Other possible answers were "No" or "I don't know."

In the graph below, this question was asked of Europeans from summer 2011 to winter 2021-2022 almost twice a year. Being dependent on the choices and results of the organization, it is not possible to study this feeling before 2011. Prior to this date, the questions asked were formulated differently, which could distort the results. In addition, the previous questions that can be used to answer our question rather question support for the European Union, which is different from the sense of belonging. Thus, the question on European citizenship, which is present here, allows us to analyze concretely the Europeanisation of the German and French populations.

**Table 1: European identity in France and Germany**

With the help of this graph, we can easily see that Germans feel more European citizens than the French. The gap is constant and obvious. At most, 88% of the German sample felt they were citizens of the European Union while for the French the maximum was 67%. Similarly, the minimum was 73% in Germany compared to 56% in France. On average, the gap is 19 (18,947) points.
The graph above plots the fluctuations in European identity in France Germany according to Eurobarometer. But that's not what we're interested in. What concerns us is the gap between the two countries that allows us to map the present reality. So, this reality can be exploited and explained afterwards.

According to Eurobarometer results, Germans say they feel more European than the French. After proving this claim, the rest of this thesis will focus on explaining these differences and trying to determine whether history had an effect in the formation of this present reality.

2. Identities and their predictors

The objective of this part is to establish the predictors of the development of European identity. For this, mechanisms will be analyzed using observable traces. To confirm the previous analyses, certain realities that are still observable should be able to be identified. Thus, we will try to look for the current consequences of the two historical events presented above, on the identities of German and French citizens.

It is possible to analyze the relationship between attachment to Europe and attachment to the nation through a multivariate analysis. Thus, the variable that we are trying to understand and that remains stable is the variable dependent. In our case, it is the European identity. So, the question "You feel you are a citizen of the EU?" of Eurobarometer makes it possible to measure the strength of citizens' sense of belonging to Europe. The question is not whether individuals support political organization but whether they feel they are members of a particular social group by being a European citizen. As seen above, the Germans answered this question more in the affirmative than the French.

The dependent variable will be impacted by the independent variables. Here, the causes that influence the development of European identity and that we will study are regional identity, national pride, and national identity. Indeed, the analysis of national pride will make it possible to study the relationship of affection between citizens and their country of origin with the question "Would you say you are proud to be (nationality)?". These are the emotional attitudes of citizens, which is going to be very characteristic of their opinion. The analysis of regional...
and national attachments will rather take into consideration the strength of attachment by identifying oneself in relation to the social group and its relationship with "others".

The first model used will use regional and national attachment from 1994 to 2006 to confirm or refute the analysis of "gradual" identity change because of two differentiated nation-building. Indeed, as explained earlier, the federal construction of Germany based on a cultural grouping has highlighted the importance of the regions for the citizens. While in France, the nation-state has a very important place. That is why, in the face of weak competition from the nation-state in Germany, it has been easy for Germans to develop a European identity. To confirm this mechanism, it is essential to demonstrate that Germans indeed feel closer to their region than to their state. And, at the same time, the French are indeed closer to their state than to their region.

The second model will study attachment and national pride from 1994 to 2006 to confirm the fact that World War II had a major effect on Germans’ identities. Thus, it is possible to study the impact of this major crisis on the development of European attachment. As seen before, the European Union has been seen by the German people as the new identity in which to believe and express. Thus, this mechanism should be confirmed by the rejection of nationalism and its past consequences as an external member of the social group. Thus, this rejection should be seen in the analysis of attachment and national pride. On the contrary, the French should retain a strong attachment and pride.

The last model will use national and regional identity as an independent variable. The figures collected in 2020 will make it possible to follow the evolution 20 years later. This model will make it possible to determine whether identities have further evolved or remained stable. Thus, it is possible to test our hypothesis in the short and long term. But above all, to determine the duration of the impact of history on identity changes.
3. Data Analysis

3.1 Years 1994-2006

The impact of historical events on identity changes should have left clear observable traces stated above. Observations must be consistent with expected results to validate or refute the hypothesis.

Table 2: Regional attachment in France and Germany

Table 2 shows that the differences in sense of belonging to the region between France and Germany. On this table, the two curves do not intersect. Germany's curve is still higher than that of France. Thus, the Germans always feel closer to their region than the French. At most, 94% of the German sample felt attached to their region while for the French the maximum was 89%. On average, the gap is 6 (5.625) points.

The observable trace expected that the Germans feel closer to their region than the French is confirmed.
The table 3 questions the national pride of the two countries studied. The results are clear and obvious and above all particularly stable. The French feel much prouder than the Germans to be of their nationality. The French curve is higher and never crosses the German curve. At most, 86% of the French sample responds positively to the question on national pride. While for Germans the maximum is 71%. Similarly, the minimum was 71% in France compared to 45% in Germany. On average, the gap is 18 (18.25) points.

Indeed, the French feel prouder of their country than the Germans. This expectation is confirmed.
Table 4 shows the differences in national attachment between the French and the Germans. Again, the results are clear, and the curves do not intersect. The French feel mostly more attached to their country than the Germans. The maximum reached is 93% for the French against only 88% for the Germans. The minimum is 89% in France compared to 85% in Germany. On average, the gap is 5 (4.75) points. It is important to note that the gap between the two shorts tends to narrow very slightly over the years.

Once again, the result corresponds to expectations because the French feel more attached to their nation than the Germans.

3.2 Year 2020

The Eurobarometer Survey on the Identities of Europeans published in 2021 makes it possible to monitor the evolution of regional and national identities. The question is different from the previous one because it does not analyze attachment but directly the identity of citizens. However, it makes it possible to compare the gap between France and Germany and see whether it is narrowing or increasing.
Table 5: Identities of German and French citizens in winter 2020

Table 5 shows that the strength of the sense of national identity in France and Germany has reversed. The two results are extremely close and separate by only 1%. Indeed, Germany has caught up with national identity.

On the contrary, the regional identity gap between France and Germany is maintained and confirmed over time. 57% of French people feels from their region against 65% for Germans, or 8 points apart. The question asked in 1994-2006 was different, however, the difference was 6 points. We can therefore say that it is stable.

Source: Special Eurobarometer 508 report, November 2021.
V) Results and Discussion

Following the previous analysis, it was possible to test the hypothesis using statistical comparison models. In addition, the two periods of analysis made it possible to compare the changes in identities following two historical events in the long term and thus confirm their role in the development of European identity.

The first analysis model made it possible to test the causal mechanism of the impact of German and French nation-building on European identity following a gradual change. According to our theoretical framework, nation-building in France was based on political criteria. The nation around the state. In Germany, the nation was based on culture and created the state and the status of citizen. As we have seen statistically, the French feel less close to their region than the Germans. This is characterized by a strong patriotic feeling that has been present for many years. Thus, the construction of two nations seems to have had an impact on the importance of different identities and their impacts on European identity.

The second model aimed to test the hypothesis that the Second World War had a traumatic impact on the German population. Thomas Risse explains that the European Union has allowed Germany to exclude its past by considering it outside the European social group. Thus, the organization represented the new modern European Germany as its new identity. Indeed, data from 1994 to 2006 confirm the theory. The observable traces of national pride prove that Germans feel much less proud than the French in their country. This major crisis has also had a clear negative impact on national identity in favor of the European one. In France, we do not notice this causal mechanism at all.

The third model made it possible to analyze the evolution of these conclusions twenty years later. Regarding the gradual change, the difference remains substantially the same regarding the importance of regional identity in Germany, which makes it possible to validate the initial theory. However, about the evolution due to a severe crisis, the situation is more complex. Indeed, the Germans have seen their national identity catch up with that of the French. Moreover, between 1994 and 2006, the gap was already narrowing slightly. This observation leads to the idea that the change of identity due to a severe crisis will have a less lasting impact than a gradual change. Indeed, Germans probably regain a sense of belonging to Germany in relation to citizenship and not to the culture that remains attached to the region. However, the Second World War and this mechanism still left deep traces on European belonging feeling. In fact, the national trauma disappears but its effects on the relationship with Europe remain.
Certainly, the European attachment will probably remain in the cement of the construction of the identity of the "new" Germany and its citizens.

It is important to highlight the different limitations of this duty. First, statistical analysis is dependent on the available data. That is why it is regrettable that we cannot analyze national pride alone from 1994 to 2006. Similarly, regional, and national attachment has only recently been tested once in 2020. The comparison must therefore be based mainly on old figures that are not simultaneous with our important dependent variable because the question of European identity was only clearly posed from 20011 to 2022. This lack of data makes links complicated, especially in the case of the gradual change of identity with Europe. The causal effect of German and French nation-building on national and regional identities is clear. However, it is much less obvious about their link with Europe.

A second limit is found in the disparities present within the two nations or even regions. Indeed, the two countries were used as two separate and united entities but sociologically, it is known that other factors will influence the development of identities such as social belonging or Age. However, studying all of its elements would have been long for a bachelor's thesis.
VI) Conclusion

To conclude this thesis, we can say that the hypothesis is confirmed. We have seen that there is not a common European identity but rather several ones formed at national level. The history of France and Germany has one of the impacts on citizens’ relationship with national identity, which itself played a role in the formation of European identity.

This dissertation advances the possibility of an expansion of Thomas Risse's theory. Indeed, the impact due to a severe crisis would probably be less lasting than the change of identity due to a gradual change. This result could be tested in a new survey with more resources and at the disposal of other analytical data.

Lately, this thesis aimed to demonstrate the influence of history on the identities of citizens. However, identities are determined by many other elements, which are obviously not all historical. Once again, a multifactor analysis with more means would be very interesting to capture their evolutions, a very broad theme with very varied analysis possibilities.
VII) References


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