# Germany's European Identity

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## Discursive Creation and Use of Supranational Belonging and National Delineation in German Politics and Media, 1989 – 2017

Master's thesis
M.A. History, Cities Migration and Global Interdependence
Specialisation Governance of Migration and Diversity

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All quotes from German newspapers as well as material from the German Bundestag have been translated by Jonas Begemann.

**Abbreviations**

EU – European Union

CoE – Council of Europe

FAZ – Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung

SZ – Süddeutsche Zeitung

Zeit – Die Zeit

"The European identity certainly is not an easily definable reality."
- Pope John Paul II at the Council of Europe, 8 October 1988.[1]

### I. Introduction

What the late pope John Paul II said about European identity, during his visit of the Council of Europe in October 1988, has been of utmost relevance ever since. Today, crises, inner-European dividing lines and a geopolitical situation that has fundamentally changed since the pope's speech continue to pose questions of Europeanness, belonging and the future of the European project. In the public debate of the past decades, European identity has been widely discussed by politicians, intellectuals, media and academics. Those debates showed the ambiguity of this alleged identity did also prove the concept's function as a very fruitful source for the study of the perception of Europe. The Swedish Historian Bo Stråth contoured the study of European identity:

> "The history of a European identity is the history of a concept and a discourse. A European identity is an abstraction and a fiction without essential proportions. Identity as a fiction does not undermine but rather helps to explain the power that the concept exercises. The concept since its introduction on the political agenda in 1973 has been highly ideologically loaded and in that capacity has been contested."[2]

Questions of who is European, who is not, how Europeanness is defined, how cooperation can and should proceed and how nation-states relate to the supranational union in regard to a shared identity are the wider guiding questions of this thesis. It aims at exploring the political and media use of European identity as a means to determine what the speakers understand as European and how they address Europe's diverse historical, cultural, political and religious experiences. Further, it wants to create a better understanding of how politicians and media approach the creation or strengthening of a shared sense of belonging within the nation-states and the EU's supranational institutions. Lastly, the thesis aims at showing the constructive character of identity-formation on the European level as a consequence of policy-preferences and regional and global political developments – the watershed points that will be introduced below. A particular interest lies in the functions, European identity fulfils, and the different frames that are used in the discourses; in other words, *how* European identity is used, how the discursive European-identity-formation-process on a national level has evolved since 1989 until 2017 and to what extent the use of European identity on national level reflect the current state (e.g. an intensification, decrease, stagnation, etc.) of European integration. Central aspects the thesis will explain are, *why* European identity is used differently at different times and *what* that means for the concept. By doing this, the thesis will not only be embedded in the discourse on European identity but connect to the broader discussion on the value of culture policies, European integration and the changing nature of the supranational Union.

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[1] Deutscher Bundestag (further DBT), "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 3. bis 8. Oktober 1988", Drucksache 11/3316.

[2] Bo Stråth, "A European Identity – To the Historical Limits of a Concept", *European Journal of Social Theory* 5:4 (2002), 387.

It is structured around several key moments in the recent history of Europe. These are the fall of the Iron Curtain and German reunification in 1989, the important European treaties (Treaty of the European Union – the Treaty of Maastricht 1992, treaties of Amsterdam 1997, Nice 2001 and Lisbon 2007), the East enlargement of the EU in the 2000s, discussions around further evolution of the Union in form of the (failed) constitution and Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union as well as the crises in 2008 and 2015. All these key moments influenced the institutional structure of Europe or the public perception of the Union and hence had a strong impact in shaping the different spheres of what we understand as Europe today. In the section below on material and methods, I will explain the exact methodology as well as the selected data – debates in the German Bundestag, reports by the German parliamentary delegation to the Council of Europe and selected German newspaper – in-depth. The research question and the sub-questions, which guide this research, read as follows:

Q: *To what extent, how and why has European Identity been used and discussed in the German Bundestag, its delegation to the Council of Europe and German newspapers between 1989 and 2017?*

- How is European identity defined?

- Which role do historic experiences and forms of othering play in the discursive formation of identity?

- How does the use of the concept European identity change over time and which impact do watershed points in European history have?

- When and for what reason is European identity been used in the German Bundestag and newspapers?

In chapter two, a short introduction to the concept of European identity until 1989, the year the timeframe for this thesis starts, will be provided. Chapter three is the historiography, where the relevant secondary literature will be discussed. In the following chapter, theory, I will present frames and assumptions and test them in the analysis below. Chapter five will outline my contribution to the academic literature and chapter six is dedicated to the material that has been used as well as the applied method. In chapter seven, the findings from the archival material will be presented and discussed. A conclusion follows in the last chapter.

## II.     Background: The concept of European Identity until 1989

On the political level, the economic and political crises of the 1970s started to raise questions about the relation of international actors and fostered an intensified search for common denominators within the European Community (EC). In 1973, this resulted in the adoption of the so-called Copenhagen

Declaration,[3] which defined three pillars of European identity: (1) The Unity of the Nine Member Countries of the Community, (2) The European Identity in Relation to the World and (3) The Dynamic Nature of the Construction of a United Europe. With further steps of European integration, especially the Schengen agreement which abandoned inner-European border controls and the introduction of a (rather symbolic) "second-order" citizenship by the Maastricht treaty in 1992, the question of a European identity and symbols that represent it gained further relevance on European level.

Much research on European identity has been conducted since the 1970s and 1980s.[4] Emphasis was put on the political attempts to create and foster European identity among citizens or on identity building on the supranational level in comparison to national levels.

With the beginning and later intensification of European integration, a search for a distinct *Europeanness* started. This was searched for in cultural heritage, beginning with the ancient Greece and Roman Empire via Christianity to Enlightenment and Democracy and shared heritage in arts, literature and music. Bo Stråth writes, that a reappearing feature in this search is *Unity in Diversity* such as religious and linguistic differences, which would be underlying to "the major ethnic cleavages and conflicts, historically and contemporary, in Europe."[5]

Key in the development of the concept of European identity in post-war Europe was the above-mentioned Copenhagen Declaration in 1973, which originated in times of economic crisis for the global order.[6] It was attempted, as Stråth goes on, that the concept would show the unity of the then-nine members of the European Community and their responsibility towards the world order. Central to the declaration is the second pillar, which defines the relation of European identity to the rest of the world, namely towards the Mediterranean and African states, the Middle East, the United States, other industrialised countries, such as Japan and Canada, the USSR and East European states, China and other Asian states and lastly Latin America. The order in which they are listed is significant, as it shows that the then only recently decolonised African states were considered to be much more relevant for Europe than they are today.[7]

European identity also played a role in the context of attempts to establish a new, European Keynesian economic order through the 1977 MacDougall Report, which eventually was never put in practice.[8] When neo-liberal frameworks started to spread over Europe in the 1980s, the nation started to loose political legitimacy and compensation was sought in the region as a success story. Those efforts were underlined by the foundation of the European Committee of Regions in 1994, an advisory body of all regions in Europe that aims at a closer relation of the supranational Union and the regions. As Stråth

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[3] Bulletin of the European Communities (further BEC). "December 1973, No 12. Luxembourg: Office for official publications of the European Communities. "Declaration on European Identity", p. 118-122.
[4] Stråth, "A European Identity", 387.
[5] Ibid., 388.
[6] Ibid., 388.
[7] BEC, "Declaration on European Identity".
[8] Stråth, *A European Identity*, 389.

describes, the concept of European identity was especially used throughout this period to define a new role for the European Community and to support a growing connection between the regional and the supranational level, which would bypass the nation.[9] Stråth, argues, that the creation of a European feeling of belonging, a common identity, was a rather unintended side-effect of European politics to support structural and economic cohesion within the community by promoting it to the European level. Formation of European identity would only have turned more intentional with the creation of shared symbols such as a flag, anthem and shared currency.[10]

Despite this development, the content of what a European identity is, remains fluid until today and heavily depends on the context and purpose it is used for. Therefore, further exploration of the political and media use of the concept, as the analysis below will present, can help to create a better understanding of the state of the relation between the member-states and the European level and the status quo as well as future of European integration.

### III.    Historiography

An enormous amount of academic studies has been published about the different dimensions of the broad field of European identity. Much of this work is of theoretical nature and therefore the following sections of historiography and theory are closely interlinked. Where the historiography will present the relevant literature, the theory will make use of this and additional academic works in order to present frames and a hypothesis for the following analysis.

Political scientists Saurugger and Thatcher state that literature on European identity is excessive and grew especially in the past 20 years, but Stråth indicates that the topic is discussed in academic work since the 1970s, as mentioned above. A considerable part of this literature would be concerned with individual identification with the European institutions, measures e.g. in forms of interviews or large-scale polls.[11]

An important distinction is been made between the *political* identity and the *cultural* identity[12] of the Union. While the political identity refers to an increasing institutional cooperation and integration (e.g. in form of strengthened European institutions and the transfer of competencies), the cultural identity refers to culturally-based forms of typical "Europeanness". The famous philosopher George Steiner, for example, found cafés to be a typically European element of culture,[13] but cultural identity can as well

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[9] Stråth, *A European Identity*, 390.
[10] Ibid., 390.
[11] Sabine Saurugger & Mark Thatcher, "Constructing the EU's political identity in policy making", *Comparative European Politics* 17 (2019) 461–476.
[12] Bouke van Gorp & Hans Renes, "A European cultural identity? Heritage and shared histories in the European Union", *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 98:3 (2007) 407-415.
[13] George Steiner, "The Idea of Europe", *10th Nexus lecture*, Tilburg: Nexus institute (2004).

refer to the roots of democracy in ancient Greece,[14] religion,[15] common characteristics of language, literature or music. This list can be continued ad infinitum. The two forms of identity are not mutually exclusive. Especially in references to shared cultures and a shared past, such as the two World Wars and the Holocaust, but also to earlier events as the Enlightenment and secularism, the two forms are often found together. Both are equally worth to be studied in-depth, however, this thesis focuses on the political use of identity. A cultural history study of European identity would require additional source and would go beyond the scope of this thesis. This means that references to culture might especially be made within the context of political institutions and the wider process of European integration. How the two forms of political and cultural identity inform the analysis below, will be outlined in the following theory-section. Bo Stråth has, in different works through his career, e.g. the book "Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other",[16] discussed the concept of European identity.

Further, he addressed European identity as an academic concept in an article in 2002.[17] Stråth describes European identity as a concept that depends on othering, the non-Europe, to define itself. At the same time, as an analytical concept, he contends that it would have turned out to be too essentialist (and thereby neglecting its artificial character) and would not mediate well ambivalence, transition and historic lessons. With this argumentation, Stråth brings together various aspects that are reflected in the academic discourse: The question of what is considered European identity, the emphasis on the EU's much-cited motto, united in diversity (further discussion follows below) and the political attempts to construct and foster a European identity as well as the concept's shortcomings in analytical use and as a political concept.

The study of discourses is generally central to the study of European identity, as work by the influential Danish political scientist Ole Wæver[18] and many others, such as the anthropologist and philosopher Grad[19], who writes that "discourse analysis will disclose how national and supra-national categories can be constructed as compatible or contradictory by different mechanisms of articulation", show. A frame that looks at the relation between the national and the supra-national identity-relations will be introduced below, in the theory section.

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[14] This reference appears to be made especially in news outlets and essays, see as an example: "And Greece created Europe: the cultural legacy of a nation in crisis", The Guardian, 3 November 2011, accessed 4 May 2020, https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2011/nov/03/greece-europe-cultural-eurozone-crisis.

[15] Timothy Byrnes & Peter Katzenstein, *Religion in an Expanding Europe* (Cambridge 2006).

[16] Bo Stråth (ed.), *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other* (Brussels 2000).

[17] Stråth, *A European Identity*.

[18] Ole Wæver, "European Integration and Security: Analysing French and German Discourses on State, Nation, and Europe" in: David Howarth & Jacob Torfing (eds.), *Discourse Theory in European Politics* (Basingstoke 2005) 33-67.

[19] Hector Grad, "The discursive building of European identity Diverse articulations of compatibility between European and national identities in Spain and the UK", in: Rosana Dolón, Júlia Todolí & John Benjamins, *Analysing Identities in Discourse* (Amsterdam / Philadelphia 2008).

Scholars such as the social scientists Irmina Matonytė and Vaidas Morkevičius[20] find mostly great differences between different national conceptions of European identity with "threat" being a common determinator. However, what exactly is considered a threat varies again. The influential political scientists Katzenstein and Checkel[21] understand as a process that flows through multiple networks, creates new and various patterns of identification and hence only exists in plural. They argue, that while there is no unique storyline of European identity, core points of the multi-faceted form of European identity (in their words: identities) are the Eastern enlargement and 9/11. Contributions in their book by the Sociologists ad Anthropologists Holmes, Díez Medrano and Favell see a re-politisation after a de-politisation around those core points. A central argument of their book, that "European identities are supported by factors too weak or inchoate to replicate processes of nation-state identity formation"[22], reads similar to Stråth's analysis.

Main streams of literature aim at identifying central elements of identity-building processes, in order to name aspects of which a European identity could consist and how it is composed. Forms of othering play a vital role in identity-formation-processes. Literature has examined different forms of influence by historical events on various streams of European identity. This includes the questioning of a common historical identity[23] or the study of attempts to construct a common past, e.g. by composing a narrative of shared culture, arts and historical political experiences[24] and the role of European remembrance[25] but as well European action within a global context, especially colonialism[26]. However, historical othering "exhibits some significant silences—the present 'dark sides of Europe' referred to above, but also its colonial past and the shaping of its identity through this historical context, and the shadows it casts over the present".[27] The last argument is supported by recent research on the House of European History, a museum particularly on *European* history initiated by the EU parliament, in Brussels.[28]

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[20] Irmina Matonytė & Vaidas Morkevičius, "Threat Perception and European Identity Building: The Case of Elites in Belgium, Germany, Lithuania and Poland", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 61:6 (2009) 967-985.

[21] Jeffrey T. Checkel & Peter J. Katzenstein (eds.), *European Identity* (Cambridge 2009).

[22] Ibid., 216.

[23] Marchi, Anna & Alan Partington. "Does 'Europe' have a common historical identity?" In: Paul Bayley & Geoffrey Williams. *European Identity – What the media say* (Oxford 2012).

[24] Aline Sierp (ed.), *History, Memory, and Trans-European Identity – Unifying Divisions* (New York/Lodon 2014); Chiara Bottici & Benoît Challand, "European Identity and the Politics of Remembrance". In: Bottici, Chiara & Benoît Challand, *Imagining Europe – Myth, Memory, and Identity* (Cambridge 2014); Małgorzata Pakier & Bo Stråth (eds.), *A European Memory?: Contested Histories and Politics of Remembrance* (New York 2012).

[25] Furio Cerutti & Sonia Lucarelli (eds.), *The Search for a European Identity – Values, policies and legitimacy of the European Union* (New York/London 2009).

[26] Patrick Pasture, "The EC/EU between the Art of Forgetting and the Palimpsest of Empire". *European Review* 26:3(2018) 545–581; Peo Hansen, "European Integration, European Identity and the Colonial Connection". *European Journal of Social Theory* 5:4(2002) 483–498.

[27] Thomas Diez, "Europe's others and the return of geopolitics", *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 17:2 (2004) 319-335: the "dark sides" are "the still present xenophobia and racism; the involvement of EU member states in the arms trade; the waste of agricultural production; to name but a few." See: Ibid, p. 331.

[28] Veronika Settele, "Including Exclusion in European Memory? Politics of Remembrance at the House of European History", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*,

German political scientist Thomas Diez has argued, that historical othering has lost of relevance – but is still present – while geographic othering, stimulated by geopolitical changes from the fall of the iron curtain to the East-enlargement of the EU, has gained momentum.[29] Growing numbers of researchers has studied aspects of this form of othering, e.g. by studying othering in the context of current EU neighbourhood projects, such as the "European neighbourhood Policy" (ENP) or policies oriented towards the regions to the East of Europe.[30] Of special importance of geographic othering besides the East enlargement, as will be outlined in the following paragraph, are the decade-long accession negotiations and discussions in regard to Turkey. Aydin-Düzgit[31] studied this field in detail and by doing so explored various discursive constructs of European identity. Besides the finding that geographic othering plays a vital role in the European self-construction, she states that "these Otherings do not necessarily denote perceptions of danger or threat."[32]

Diez' argument of a transition from historical to geographic othering contains, that the return of geopolitics into European-identity-processes is undermining the notion of the European integration's post-national character, the form political organisation of a polity that does not rely on the classic nation-state mechanism and preferences and has an identity that arguably not needs to be rooted in othering as much as in the nation-state. In other words, the European identity formation became more national at the cost of post- or supra-national forms of identity construction in which other global actors take a bigger role in the othering. This argument will be further elaborated on in the theory section below, where it will serve for the formulation of frames.

Hülsse's[33] argument is closely related and picks up on the academic discussion whether the EU would have a modern nation-state or rather a postnational character[34]: He states that while the European polity had developed a post-national character, the notion of identity in the wake of the enlargement discourse of the 1990s had a strongly modern nation-state-identity-alike character. What ties those different, yet related arguments together, is the notion of a changing identity discourse in regard to the European project. Arguably, it has changed from a rather post-national to a more national form, expressed by an increasing definition via geopolitical and geographic questions. However, these findings are not unchallenged: where Hülsse finds a framing of Europe as a *Kulturnation* (cultural nation) on a larger

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23:3 (2015) 405-416; Elizabeth Buettner, "What – and who – is 'European' in the Postcolonial EU? Inclusions and Exclusions in the European Parliament's House of European History", *BMGN - Low Countries Historical Review* 133:4 (2018) 132–148.

[29] Diez, "Europe's others and the return of geopolitics".

[30] Christopher S. Browning & George Christou, "The constitutive power of outsiders: The European neighbourhood policy and the eastern dimension". *Political Geography* 29 (2010) 109-118; Senem Aydın-Düzgit, *Constructions of European Identity Debates and Discourses on Turkey and the EU* (Basingstoke 2012).

[31] Aydın-Düzgit, *Constructions of European Identity Debates and Discourses on Turkey and the EU*.

[32] Ibid., 172.

[33] Rainer Hülsse, "Imagine the EU: the metaphorical construction of a supra-nationalist identity", *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9 (2006) 396–421.

[34] Hülsse refers to research by Ruggie (1993) and Manners and Whitman (2003), see Hülsse, "Imagine the EU", 397.

scale,[35] Katzenstein and Checkel state that "the history of nation-states or state-nations does not provide useful material for analyzing the emergence of a collective European identity. European identity politics are not like those in a cultural nation, where processes of cultural assimilation precede political unification".[36] Hence, the frames below, which will be identified in the following section on theory, will aim at gaining a better understanding of the framing of Europe and the form of identification with the European level.

Lastly, in the work of Ole Wæver the nexus between security and identity takes an important role. The link between security, identity and migration, however, was studied by Wæver as well.[37] In this argument, the role of migrants as others and the political or public perception of arguable possibilities to gain or leave identities are both related to historical and geographical othering.

The here-discussed academic articles share a constructivist approach towards identity politics and European identity in particular. Central mechanisms found and reviewed in the literature are forms of self-construction through different ways of othering, a transitional character of European identity that is subject to changes along regional or geopolitical changes and crises more than in the political discourses consolidated national identities. Contested is especially the relation of national to European identities: this is both in the questions how those different forms of identity relate to each other and – even more so – if European identity is constructed in a national way or in a supranational/post-modern form and possible consequences of such a construction on the ground. Central methods to identity-studies are discourse[38] and policy analysis[39] but as well the study of e.g. museums[40]. Researching European identity is complicated as it can arguably be found in all kinds of policy fields, it can well be discussed without being mentioned. The most common approach, therefore, is to look at a particular discourse (e.g. on enlargement) and trace European identity there. Further, many studies provide cross-country analysis, which provide vital insights into differences across Europe.

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[35] Hülsse, "Imagine the EU", 416.
[36] Checkel & Katzenstein, *European Identity*, 215.
[37] Wing Commander P. E. O'Neill RAF, "The European Union and Migration: Security versus Identity?", *Defence Studies* 6:3 (2006) 322-350; and Stephen Castles, "Immigration and Asylum: Challenges to European Identities and Citizenship" in: Dan Stone (ed), *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (Oxford 2012).
[38] Dennis Lichtenstein & Christiane Eilders, "Konstruktionen europäischer Identität in den medialen Debatten zur EU-Verfassung – Ein inhaltsanalytischer Vergleich von fünf EU-Staaten". *Publizistik* 60 (2015) 277–303; Joanna Thornborrow, Louann Haarman & Alison Duguid, "Discourses of European identity in British, Italian, and French TV news", In: Bayley & Williams, *European Identity*.
[39] Saurugger, Thatcher, "Constructing the EU's political identity in policy making".
[40] Buettner, "What – and who – is 'European' in the Postcolonial EU?; Settele, "Including Exclusion in European Memory?"

### IV.    Theory

Several theoretical expectations can be drawn from the literature. These expectations will be reflected in the top-down frames (generic frames that are drawn from previous academic research). On those will be elaborated below in the chapter on material and methods.

**Cultural and Political Identity**

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, a central distinction that is widely made within the literature is between the notions of *cultural* and *political* identity. While aspects such as "European characteristics", shared past and other elements of a shared cultural heritage are subsumed under the umbrella term *cultural identity*, *political identity*, on the contrary, refers to political cooperation within the EU and other European transnational institutions. References to or a dominance of political identity in the discourse is expected to appear especially around the mentioned watershed points. Among those, the failed constitution of the EU in 2005 might be a core point, which can arguably tell much about the current state of identification with Europe. Those two forms of identity are not mutually exclusive. Most prominently are the much-proclaimed *European values* which refer both to a form of politics and a shared heritage they are based on. As part of the hypothesis, it is expected, that the distinction will be reflected in the sources to highlight different aspects of the discussed European identity, too.

**Four "Visions" – Political and Cultural Identity in Four Frames**

In the work of the international relations professor Vivien Schmidt the sometimes distinct, sometimes overlapping and intertwined relation between political and cultural identity is expressed in form of four "visions" within the European-identity-discourse(s).[41] While Schmidt sees differences between discourses in different member states, the four streams, or visions, would still appear in all national discourses. These are (1)"a pragmatic discourse about the EU as a borderless problem-solving entity ensuring free markets and regional security" (arguably mostly found in the UK, Scandinavian countries and the central and eastern European countries)  (2) "a normative discourse about the EU as a bordered values-based community" (dominant in France and Germany, but also Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy and Luxembourg), (3) "a principled discourse about the EU as a border-free, rights-based post-national union" (characteristic for the Commission and philosophical contributions) and (4) "a strategic discourse about the EU as global actor 'doing international relations differently' through multilateralism, humanitarian aid and peace-keeping."[42]

All four, the EU as a *problem-solving entity*, a *value-based actor* (a concept that is further elaborated on in Ian Manners influential work on the "Normative Power Europe"[43]), a *border-free postnational entity*

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[41] Vivien Schmidt, "Re-Envisioning the European Union: Identity, Democracy, Economy", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 47 (2009) 17-42.
[42] All four quotes from: Schmidt, "Re-Envisioning the European Union, 25.
[43] Ian Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40 (2002) 235-258.

and as a *global player* in opposition to traditional *realpolitik* are expected to appear in the below analysis. Realpolitik as a concept refers to the political will to enforce power-political interests, to reach certain political goals instead of enforcing a certain idea or theoretical approach towards politics.[44] While this definition partly overlaps with aspects of the four visions, especially the first one, it has to be noted that the visions still draw on the "ideological super-structure" of the EU. Realpolitik, for example, has no interest in greater political goals beyond gains in economy or security while the first vision of Schmidt is still related to the ideal of Europe's pacification and protection. Schmidt's four visions cover, as stated above, aspects of both political and cultural identity. But especially in regard to the cultural identity of Europe, references that are made to history and "the other" are covered only partially.

### Security and Securitisation of Migration

Diez argues that migration became strongly securitised in the United States but in Europe as well. The underlying notion is the one of "a 'European' territory that needs to be secured from the threats of illegal immigration, and in particular from the threats of 'Islamism'".[45] The consequence is a stronger focus on security in the protection of a European self against culturally as well as geographical others, mostly against Islam and the middle-East since 2001.

### Othering

The concept of othering is rooted in philosophical discussions of the relation of self-perception and delimitation of the other which goes back to Friedrich Hegel. "Othering" as an academic concept was later coined by the influential thought leader of postcolonial studies Gayatri Spivak and as well Edward Said and others.[46] Today, the term is widely used in social sciences, humanities and related fields. The concept entails that "the theory of identity formation inherent in the concept of othering assumes that subordinate people are offered, and at the same time relegated to, subject positions as others in discourse"[47] and that the centre (as opposite to the other) holds the power to describe. The other is drawn as inferior. For the subject that is under scrutiny here, this means, that it is of great interest to see which concepts, regions, societies or people may be used as the other against whom the (superior) self is constructed. As the three sections below will explain, it is assumed that the central other in the European identity discourse are the own history but that increasingly geographic and religious categories of othering gain relevance. The geographical form of othering is considered to be the closest not only to Spivak's definition but also forms of othering in nation-state discourses. Naturally, this form of othering has a strong cultural component: the geographical other is excluded from the geographical and cultural self, because this other is considered too different or, especially in the here examined discourses mostly implicitly, inferior. In addition, the creation of European-others can justify the implementation of

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[44] Merriam-Webster Dictionary, "Realpolitik", accessed 2 June 2020, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/realpolitik.
[45] Diez, "Europe's others and the return of geopolitics", 331.
[46] Sune Qvotrup Jensen, "Othering, identity formation and agency", *Qualitative Studies* 2:2 (2011) 64.
[47] Ibid., 65.

measures of exclusion which saw a rise in the past years, e.g. in form of securitisation of border regimes and continuing fortification but also the creation of "borderscapes" around Europe's external border for e.g. migration control.[48] It is, therefore, likely, that geographical othering will be a very present frame especially in the case external borders are discussed in relation to European identity.

### European History

This category of frames is focusing on two central elements: (1) the historical fundament on which European identity is been put in discourse and (2) forms of othering in regard to Europe's own past. The frame of *European history* could, for example, be related to cultural identity. For the analysis, it is expected that reference to and remembrance of the European past, especially World War II and the Holocaust, will appear frequently. What remains an open question, to be answered in the empirical analysis, is how the relation to other historical aspects that are considered central to European identity, such as the Enlightenment, Napoleonic Wars, Congress of Vienna, etc. is discursively constructed. In other words, the frame will concentrate on references to the past and provide insights how the current state of the European project is put in relation to historical events and which ones these are. In addition, of especial interest is the question to which extent the experiences of colonialism – particularly of Europeans as colonisers, but partly, also for the people in Eastern Europe as being colonised, too – is reflected. On a theoretical level, the reference to the past, to a shared remembrance, entails the responsibility to make sure the atrocities of the past will not be repeated.

Whether other historical experiences such as colonialism play a role here is of high relevance, as it touches upon questions of global responsibility and historical ties between Europe and non-European states. This frame is complemented by an analytical dimension that was introduced by Thomas Diez. As in national identity-formation processes, he sees othering as a crucial element and identifies two forms of othering as central in the discourses regarding European identity: *temporal* (here: historical) and *geographic*.[49] In this paper, he argues, that the form of othering used to create a European identity had the chance to be truly supranational by using Europe's past (instead of a geographic other) as the counterpart. However, he goes on, this would have changed as time moved on and geopolitics would have taken more space in this othering and with that a rather geographical othering would have become the predominant form of self-definition. This would mean a greater focus on *realpolitik* and a more nation-state-alike form of self-identification. This could be a consequence of the continuous transfer of competencies to the European level and the Eastern enlargement. Diez argument builds on the work of Ole Wæver, who as well saw in temporal (historical) othering the predominant form of self-construction in post-war Europe.[50] At a different point, he argues that the increasing embeddedness of European states

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[48] Jonas Begemann, "European External Border Management and its Narratives", RESPOND working paper series (2019), 10.5281/zenodo.3534054.

[49] Diez, "Europe's others and the return of geopolitics".

[50] Ole Wæver, "Insecurity, Security and Asecurity in the West European Non-war Community", in: Emanuel Adler & Michael Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities* (Cambridge 1998).

in the EU – and vice versa European thinking in the nation-states – has changed the nation-states and their identities. However, changed and "Europeanised" interests could turn back towards a more nation-state way of thinking.[51] This is, what could be the result of a return of geopolitics, a new dominance of geographic othering. This hypothesis of a shift towards more geographic othering requires, as Diez writes, further empirical study. Hence, this thesis will pay special attention to the form of othering and study, whether Europe's history as form of othering is actually losing relevance to the benefit of the more nation-state-alike form of othering via geographical othering.

### Geographical Othering

Geographical othering, further, appears to be a simpler form of othering: Saurugger and Thatcher write that "EU organisations have found it much easier to craft an EU identity in matters that involve non-EU actors".[52] On this basis, it can be argued that othering, that is not temporal but geographic falls back into a classic nation-state dichotomy between self and the other on grounds of exclusive categories. It is expected, that this form of othering will become increasingly relevant throughout the time frame, which would arguably have important implications for the perception and functioning of the EU and national-European relations (as argued in the section above).

### Religious Othering

Islamism, which is defined a religious ideology with the final aim to conquer the entire world,[53] is seen as a threat to Europe and its identity and this has consequences for the discursive consideration of religious similarities, traditions and – especially differences. While Islamism is considered to be a *security threat*, Islam is especially since 9/11 (but already before) considered to clash with European identity as the latter one would arguably be built on a Christian or optionally Judeo-Christian tradition and secularity, hence as a *cultural threat*.[54] How this arguable conflict is negotiated over time, and which other religion-related aspects play in will be analysed in the frame of *religious othering*.

**Power Over Education and Invention of Traditions**

While political considerations of a united Europe are much older than the current supranational institutions, discourses of a European identity in relation to political institutions are a post-war phenomenon. Attempts to create a European identity are, hence, inspired by national discourses on identity. Such can be a source of inspiration but as well a negative inspiration, as it is expressed e.g. in Schmidt's vision of the EU doing international relations differently: the supranational entity is then seen as a post-national institution, that should avoid rather than repeat or transform the mistakes of nation-

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[51] Wæver, "European Integration and Security".
[52] Saurugger & Thatcher, "Constructing the EU's political identity in policy making", 471.
[53] Mehdi Mozaffari, "What is Islamism? History and Definition of a Concept", *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8:1 (2007) 17–33.
[54] Byrnes & Katzenstein, *Religion in an Expanding Europe*; Checkel & Katzenstein, *European Identity*; as well most literature on the Turkey accession refers to the dimension of religious othering.

states. Saurugger and Thatcher[55] derived several elements from discourses on national identity. They highlight the role of *power over education* and, based on the seminal work by Hobsbawm and Ranger,[56] the *invention of traditions* as effective measures of identity-making. Invention of traditions is, especially in the European context, closely related to the rise of nation-states and would fulfil a function of promoting unity, institutional legitimacy and cultural belonging.[57] With increasing institutionalisation on the European level and prominent examples of invented symbols (e.g. EU flag or anthem) this can be expected for the European level too. Further, they claim that "identity [is] being developed through action".[58] According to this argument, an intensification of the European identity-discourse along the deepening European integration is to be expected. Further, the frames of *power over education* and *invention of traditions* are expected to play an important role in the analysis.

### The relation between Nation-State and European Identity

In addition to those elements of national identity, that inspire the formation of supranational identity, it is an interesting question, how the relation between these two forms of identity is presented and if and how this relation changes over time. The frame of *nation-state relation to European identity* is expected to be a highly diverse one, that changes depending on the time and position on the speaker. It can provide insides in the role of the nation, e.g. a continuation of its decreasing legitimacy as it was mentioned in the background chapter above or a re-emergence of the nation-state as the central authority of identity. Increasing successes of far-right populists since the early 2000s and the financial and "refugee crisis" are arguably symptoms of a re-emergence of the nation-state. Hence, it is expected, that the nation-state as a source of identification will have an increasing relevance over the here studied time frame. In turn, this means that the supranational institutions might be considered less relevant in terms of argumentations regarding identification. This frame will provide a deeper insight in the relation of nation-states to the EU. This point, however, is not related to the above-discussed form of identity of the EU, which was discussed in the chapter on othering and can be of a rather national or postnational character.

### Hypothesis, Historic "Hotspots" and Othering

For the study of the question "to what extent, how and why has European Identity been used and discussed in the German Bundestag, its delegation to the Council of Europe and German newspapers between 1989 and 2017" I expect, that in the analysis of documents from the Bundestag and German newspapers European identity is emphasised in times of crisis or fundamental changes, whether in a negative or positive light. Hence, it is expected to receive special attention during the 1990s discussions regarding the new European treaties, the East-enlargement and the constitution debate in the early 2000s

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[55] Saurugger & Thatcher, "Constructing the EU's political identity in policy making".
[56] Eric Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Traditions* (Cambridge 2014).
[57] Ibid.
[58] Saurugger & Thatcher, "Constructing the EU's political identity in policy making", 465.

as well as during the crises on the Balkan with significant numbers of refugees seeking shelter in Europe as well as 25 years later during the so-called "refugee crisis" of 2015 and the financial crisis in 2008.

The forms of othering, which were outlined above, are expected to be crucial in the identity-building process. How and when they are used and if there is a development visible away from one form towards another – as suggested by Diez and others – will arguably take a central spot in the analysis and can potentially provide insights into how much the EU is defined against others. Here, the refugee "crises", in the 1990s on the Balkan and from 2015 on, will potentially be key moments.

The above-introduced frames, drawn from previous research, will be expected to appear within the analysis. As has been pointed out in the respective paragraphs, they might change in the argumentation, lose or gain momentum over time. Further, bottom-up frames, those who appear in the process of close-reading from the text, will complement these top-down frames. The frames are expected to be related to aspects of a political or a cultural identity. The analysis will show, if a certain cluster (political or cultural) becomes more or less relevant over time and why that is. The four visions of Vivien Schmidt will be used as four frames, but are as well functional to further diversify the spectrum between political and cultural identity. If a certain cluster, or aspects of it loses or gains momentum can be caused by a variety of explanations which will return in the final discussion.

The relation to the own, European history, to non-Europeans (and how they are defined) and to religion as a source of or threat to identity is studied through the frames of European history, geographical othering, threat of Islamism and religious othering.

Further, influences from nation-state forms of identity-formation, such as the frames power over education or invention of traditions as well as arguably increasing securitisation of migration due to a perceived threat by migration and the evolving nation-state relation to European integration will be part of the analysis.

It is expected, that othering-related frames (especially history and geography) together with the frame of the relation of national identity to the supranational will appear centrally in the analysis.

### V. Academic Contribution

The thesis will contribute to the vast amount of literature on this subject by looking empirically at several national discourses through both top-down and bottom-up frames and by testing hypotheses that are derived from different literature. Generally, a majority of the literature is derived from political sciences and looks at rather short or specialised time frames. This thesis aims at providing a historical perspective on the matter. Central to the empirical part will be Thomas Diez work, which was introduced above, in which he claims a change in the identity-formation-process from historical to geopolitical othering. This has important consequences for the overall work of the Union. As Diez states, this hypothesis requires further empirical testing.

The empirical study of the *elements* of the identity-building-process, further, marks a contribution to the academic literature as well. Lichtenstein and Eilders argue that current research had hardly studied the question what kind of community identification should be based on but instead was focused on issues of conflict in the debate and not on "the underlying constructions of European identity."[59] This thesis will add to the existing literature, by elaborating on the question how the European community is constructed and how that changed over time.

Most academic studies that research European identity search for it within specific discourses, e.g. the European identity within the security or Eastern enlargement discourse. While this way of researching the concept provides better understanding of specific discourses, it is arguably not capable of providing an understanding of use and relevance of the concept in its wider sense. How important it actually is and how different its functions *across* discourses can be, an only be studied if the general use of the concept is studied. This is particularly where this thesis adds to the existing literature: it provides an in-depth look at the genesis of the European identity across discourses and a wide time frame. Secondly, it will study one of the now 27 different national discourses on Europe with its respective key moments and preconditions in detail. This will eventually lead to a better understanding of the more discrete understandings of Europe from the perspective of a nation-state.

Lastly, research on European identity is often focused on European institutions. This is biased in the sense that those institutions clearly aim at fostering a European identity and that this is there only (or in case of parliamentarians, commissioners and bureaucrats) still dominant identity. Research on the question, how other central structures in the complex European system, without whom a European Union would not be possible, can add to a better understanding of the as well complex balancing of interests, aims and functions within Europe. Only if the nation-states are actively pro-European, the EU can work. How this European perception developed in times of re-nationalising tendencies is an important question to understand to which this thesis will contribute.

## VI. Material and Methods

### 1. Timeframe

As timeframe I have chosen the period 1989 until 2017. The short background chapter above has already introduced the period pre-1989. A study of this period would add to the understanding of the origins of the concept European identity. However, this thesis will focus on the later period, because the important institutional and geopolitical changes it covers impact significantly the state the European union is currently in. Besides entailing the European treaties which gave the EU it's current shape, the here chosen period is one that follows the changes caused by the fall of the iron curtain and covers a phase in which the role of and cooperation between nation-states was renegotiated. Hence, this period is vital

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[59] Lichtenstein & Eilders, "Konstruktionen europäischer Identität in den medialen Debatten zur EU-Verfassung", Translation by J.B.

in order to understand the current role of national-states within the European project and subsequently the form the European Union has today.

The main developments are, as mentioned-above already, the end of the Soviet Union and the German reunification as well as the treaties which until today define the form of the European Union: Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice and Lisbon. In addition, the period covers some of the deepest crises and institutional failures in form of the financial crisis 2008 and the so-called "refugee crisis" in 2015 as well as the failed attempt to give the European Union a constitution.

The danger of such a long timeframe lies in a reduction of explanatory power for the findings as a deterministic explanation of events by the events is risked. However, such a long period of time enables the research to provide an in-depth understanding of the studied subject and a well-founded understanding of the historic developments it underwent.

2. Method

As the main question of this thesis is about the extent, way and reasons why European identity has been used and discussed in the German Bundestag, its delegation to the Council of Europe and selected German media outlets framing analysis is considered to be the most suitable research method. This method enables a comprehensive understanding of the subject, provides a clear methodological procedure but leaves certain freedoms in the use of the findings. The framing analysis was constructed around both top-down frames defined based on previous academic literature and especially bottom-up frames emerging in the course of analysis by close reading the sources. After the process of source selection, explained below, close reading and keyword search have been applied. The sections detected as relevant were coded and ascribed to either the top-down frames or, if they did not apply, bottom-up frames that emerged from the process of close-reading. The identified frames, both top-down and bottom-up, are not mutually exclusive: Some are overlapping and others are strongly connected.

Lastly, the question how the frames, their use and their frequency has changed over time is key to answer the above-presented research questions.

3. Material and Source criticism

The thesis aims at understanding the use of European identity as a political instrument. Sources from the German Bundestag as well as newspapers have been chosen as they provide in-depth insights in the understanding, use and relevance of European identity on a national level. Further, they represent both the debate in the political spectrum and the wider public. Research in the archive of the German parliament, the *Bundestag*, has provided 359 hits when searched for "European identity" (in German). These have been reduced by applying the timeframe and a first scanning of the sources. Eventually, a body of 71 plenary debates and 15 reports by the delegation to the Council of Europe has been composed. For a detailed overview of the sources see table 1 below. Even though the Council of Europe (CoE) is not an institution of the European Union, it is a in certain fields influential European supranational

institution. Its parliament assembly consists of delegations sent by the respective national parliaments and it is mostly concerned with question of human rights and culture. The CoE is described as a "first entry point for all those who want to enter the EU"[60]. Due to its focus areas and the supranational meeting of national delegations, it can be considered that questions of European identity are discussed within this organisation and that its work has some impact on other areas of European cooperation, as it is the case in the field of human rights protection in Europe.

In the light of the genesis of European integration, for a long time driven by member states and until today with them controlling crucial policy areas, national documents on European identity are arguably able to provide relevant insight. While a generally positive stance towards Europe can be expected, study of these sources will present a more nuanced picture of the relation of the German political landscape to Europe. Although Germany is widely considered a pro-European county, a Eurosceptical party was elected to the Bundestag in 2017. Here, as in all other European member-states, support for ever deepening integration and cooperation is far from being ouncontested. Rather, national experiences and political preferences play into the national perception of Europe.

An additional body of newspaper coverage from the conservative *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), the liberal-left *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ) and the liberal weekly *Die Zeit* (Zeit) has been put together. Media articles from one member state can provide insights in how the concept of European identity is used, how strongly it is reflected or not and in which way its development is reflected in a public discourse in a member state, a discourse that is arguably much closer to the European citizens – whose identity is discussed here – than other discourses. They provide a more distant and critical stance than plenary debates by politicians. However, not any nation-wide relevant newspaper in Germany is Eurosceptic, hence, a positive stance towards the EU can be assumed here as well. This second body consists 73 newspaper articles, 20 from *FAZ*, 22 from *SZ* and 31 from *Zeit* including *Zeit Online* (see table 1 below for an overview). From all the newspaper archives, only editorial pieces, essays and other articles, on European identity focused, long pieces were chosen. Interviews were excluded, however, in all three outlets, guest articles by former politicians, especially former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt or as well Mario Draghi or Romano Prodi, and intellectuals, like Jürgen Habermas, Ulrich Beck or Paul Nolte have been included. All three newspapers belong to the most-read media outlets in Germany and claim for themselves to be focal elements of the public discourse. Table 1 below, at the end of the chapter provides a detailed overview of the selected sources.

Research in the archives of the European Parliament (EP) in Luxembourg has not provided enough material for a second body. What will not be a part of this thesis, are the feelings of European identity as it is asked for in different and well-known *Eurobarometer* polls, as this thesis aims at understanding the *political and media use* and *content* of the concept. Hence, identification of European citizens with

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[60] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/58, plenary session of 30 September 1999.

the EU or the Council of Europe and Europe in general will not be part of this analysis. Further, Eurobarometer data has been heavily criticised for being biased.[61]

As any analysis of discourses, the chosen approach bears several risks. First, it can only represent a certain aspect of the studied matter as there will remain a focus on one member-state. The concept of European identity can be, as it is a crucial part of the concept, vary among different member states. Secondly, the political dimension of European identity can be different from to the public experience of that same identity. The cultural sphere is again a distinct one, yet lines are blurred. The decision to focus on one member-state had to be made out of space and language constraints. However, all potential bodies of sources contain a significant number of documents which focus on transnational interactions. It is assumed, that the concept of European identity is heavily used by the European institutions for self-promotion purposes. When focussing on national sources, this clear use is assumed to be less present. Instead, an in-depth focus on one member-state promises to provide insights on the way processes of European integration and the relation between the member states and the European institutions has developed in roughly the past about thirty years. As the thesis aims at understanding the political use of the concept, the public understanding will be less relevant (despite its potential to provide important insights on the political capacity to "steer" the concept). The cultural dimension will frequently appear within political use. In the case that a media article body will be chosen, the public sphere dimension will gather greater relevance within this thesis.

A second limitation is the focus of the research on key words around European identity. On the one hand, the use of this keyword can be a "door-opener" into an excessive debate. On the other hand, however, the debate around European identity is far from being exclusive to other debates. Instead, various dimensions of living and working together within the European Union, shared heritage, problems, opportunities and many other aspects are discussed constantly. It can be argued, that all these discussions are as well be part of a "European-identity-discourse" without mentioning identity. Therefore, the danger exists, that not all dimensions that are touched upon in the following analysis are depicted in absolute accuracy. Here, the second corpus of newspaper articles can function to a certain degree as a corrective: wider debates and related questions are presented in a denser form, incorporating a wide variety of views, within the newspaper articles. Besides its function as a door-opener to discourses around the question of what is European the focus on the keyword *European identity* can show how this very concept is been used. In other words, while it may not reflect all dimensions of European identity, it can show what is presented as European by certain political and media actors and what not, where lines are drawn and how the self and the other are defined (and on basis of which criteria) when the strong – and critique-worthy – term "identity" is used.

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[61] Martin Höpner & Bojan Jurczyk, "How the Eurobarometer Blurs the Line between Research and Propaganda", *Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung MPIfG Discussion Paper* 15/6 (2015).

| Archive | Hits in Archive (table shows distribution over time along the time categorisation available at the respective archive) | Selected for analysis | Selection criteria |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Main sources** | | | |
| Archive of the Bundestag | 361<br><br>Per legislative period | 71 plenary protocols, one debate can entail several different hits<br><br>Per year | Hits are relatable to one or several discourses, an argument can be found, pure mentioning of European identity without further contextualisation was excluded |
| Archive of the Bundestag | | 16 Council of Europe delegation reports, one report can entail several different hits<br><br>Per year | |
| **Illustrative sources from newspapers** | | | |
| *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* | 547<br><br>Per 10 years | 22<br><br>Per year | Editorial pieces, essays and long articles (above 400 words), exclusion by close-reading if article is interview or pure coverage of e.g. political statements / quotes without contextualisation; guest contributions were included |
| *Süddeutsche Zeitung* | 301 (according to the archive, but the number entails a great number of double hits)<br><br>Per year | 24<br><br>Per year | |
| Die *Zeit*, incl. *Zeit Online* | 271<br><br>Per year | 31 (of originally 45 selected pieces)<br><br>Per year | |

Table 1. Overview of used archives and selected sources.

## VII.  Empirical study

In the following, the results from the research conducted for this thesis will be presented. Top-down and bottom-up frames have been clusters where they fit together. The analysis has not provided an additional cluster of frames that did not appear in the literature before. Instead, bottom-up frames appear as sub-frames which diversify, specify and specialise the before presented top-down frames.

The chapter will begin with the broadest dichotomy between cultural and political identity. The subsequent cluster – the four visions – will, however, show, that in most cases the line between the two can't be drawn so clearly. The European identity can only be constructed partly through inwards oriented elements such as culture and institutionalisation. It will as well address questions of security, the relation between national and European identities and if a European identity exists. The subchapter 1.3. will show, that forms of othering are key in the definition of Europe, especially where it comes to its borders. The last three subchapter will go into the importance of security questions in the formation of a European identity, the surprisingly little relevance of education and symbolism and other elements that are pointed out to define a European identity. After this outline of the empirical findings, chapter 2 will be specially interested in the frames' development and changes over time. Chapter 3 contains the discussion of the findings along a group of the research questions. The overarching research question and the last sub-question together build the wider research framework and will guide the final conclusion.

### 1.  What Is in the Frames and How They Developed

### 1.1. Political and Cultural Identity

#### 1.1.1.  Cultural Identity

Culture was frequently, but not excessively, referred to as a core concept of European identity, e.g. when it is described as a pillar of stability or the real basis of European identity.[62] Others find European identity in architecture.[63] However, within the Bundestag, it appeared, that the relation between Europe and culture, a greater appreciation for the value of culture as a uniting element, remained underdeveloped. Already in the early 1990s, an area of tension between national cultural protection and European cooperation on culture became visible.[64] This refers as well to the problematic question of the relation between European and national identities which will be the focus of a sub-chapter of chapter 1.2.3. Questions of cultural promotion and the fitting political level were important in 2007 and 2013, when a European cultural charter was demanded and cultural education as a pillar of European identity was pointed out.[65]

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[62] DBT, Plenary protocol 16/227, plenary session of 18 June 2009; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/230, plenary session of 23 April 1998.
[63] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/50, plenary session of 17 October 1991.
[64] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/201, plenary session of 14 March 1990.
[65] DBT, Plenary protocol 16/79, plenary session of 01 February 2007; DBT, Plenary protocol 17/217, plenary session of 17 January 2013.

At different points[66], attention was called to Eastern and central Europe's importance for a shared identity. It was argued that the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain were a sign of a reorientation of the Eastern states towards Europe and later that only the Eastern enlargement could stabilise and strengthen Europe culturally.

Culture, values and human rights are the central fields of action for the Council of Europe. Therefore, culture as the real uniting element of Europe was mentioned very often by delegates from different parties.[67] Culture as a source of shared identification was one of the most frequently used frames here. However, many contributions remained pure references to culture without further elaboration.

Most references to culture as basis of European identity were made within newspapers (seven times). Those were concentrated around three points in time: 1990-1992, 2000-2002 and 2014. All references were found in the rather centre-left *SZ* and *Zeit*, none in the *FAZ*. While the references of the early 1990s[68] referred to a European heritage that goes back to ancient Greece, Rome and the Latinity of the late Middle Ages, the debate in the early 2000s[69] was centred around questions of religious belonging and the question whether Turkey is a part of Europe or not. This debate was much more present within the newspapers than the political spheres. Former chancellor Helmut Schmidt's guest contribution in the *Zeit*[70] in October 2000 was representing this difference: He pointed out a list of European cultural elements that contains religious, political, scientific and cultural achievements.[71] However, he saw geographical borders of Europe most critically. Where Europe ends, and who still belongs to it, therefore, remained undefined despite all the named features of Europeanness.

At all three points, the role – and invention – of the nation-state, were seen as central to the cultural (!) identity.[72] While culture seemed to be widely accepted as a core-element of European identity, it was mostly politicians from the field of cultural politics or from cultural institutions in the case of the Council of Europe who referred to it. Further, the frame experienced a peak in the 1990s in the political sphere as well as in the newspapers. Here, though, a stronger concentration around the post-iron-curtain-global-order, the accession of Turkey and the aftermath of the financial crisis was visible. Further, in none of the sources was a clear line to some form of non-European drawn via culture. This was especially evident

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[66] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/201; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/79, plenary session of 16 December 1999.
[67] See DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagungen der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates am 5. Mai und vom 8. bis 12. Mai 1989", Drucksache 11/4881; DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 25. bis 29. Januar 1999", Drucksache 14/2057.
[68] "Europa auf dem Stier", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 5 January 1991, 101; "Latein für Amerika", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 25 April 1992; "Das Trennende und das Verbindende", *Die Zeit*, 9 November 1990.
[69] "Der Traum von den ‚schönen glänzenden Zeiten'", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 April 2001, 12; "Ein Anker für Ankara", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 7 December 2002, 4; "Wer nicht zu Europa gehört", *Die Zeit*, 5 October 2000, edited 30 December 2013.
[70] "Wer nicht zu Europa gehört", *Die Zeit*.
[71] "Wer nicht zu Europa gehört", *Die Zeit*.
[72] "Das Trennende und das Verbindende", *Die Zeit*; "Wer nicht zu Europa gehört", *Die Zeit*; "Europa ist eine uralte Tatsache", *Die Zeit*, 7 August 2014.

in the newspaper discourse on the Turkey accession: cultural arguments for an accession were present, the line of non-belonging was a religious one.

### 1.1.2. Political Institutions and Processes as a Source of Identity and the Constitution for Europe

Identification with Europe via political institutions started to appear first in the late 1990s, at a point where major treaties (Maastricht and Amsterdam) had been signed. In all bodies of sources, a strong connection to the planned and then failed European constitution became visible. European identity created by institutions played barely a role in the Council of Europe, implicitly, institutions were rather considered agents of the preservation of identity than architects. This did not make them a source of identification themselves.[73] In the Bundestag, it was pointed out that a Europe of different paces, of varied forms of cooperation, would put the shared identity at danger: only a coherent and cohesive institutional body could foster European identity.[74] While the planned constitution was widely seen as a major step towards a strengthened identity[75], the long-time conservative political leader Wolfgang Schäuble asked in late 2002, how a political identity shaped by the constitutions relates to countries that belong "partially" to Europe, such as Russia or Turkey.[76] The problem of the borders of Europe – where it ends, where it begins – could, from this point of view not be answered in the form of a political identity. Political institutions and their identity-providing function is, hence, closely linked to geographical othering, which will be examined below: the central question was, how big the entity Europe can be, to still provide a political identity (via the institutions). The Lisbon treaty turned out to be a second key point: it was framed as crucial for a political identity to reach a political union – mostly by Social Democrats.[77] Interestingly, this was the only frame which had a relation to the Lisbon treaty. The following chapters will show a decreasing discussion after the failed constitutional referendums and an almost vanished European-identity-discourse afterwards. Several years after the Lisbon treat when the discourse was dominated by the financial crisis and the "refugee crisis", the framing had shifted: Common rules would be there to serve national interests and cooperation should only take place where it's unavoidable. Disrespecting those would be critical for the European identity of the respective European states.[78]

Just as a cultural identity of Europe, political identity was more present in newspaper than in parliamentary sources. Institutional achievements, e.g. Schengen or Maastricht, were often framed as important aspects of a growing European identity. Ulrich Beck, in a guest contribution in the *SZ* in 1999,

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[73] DBT, Drucksache 14/2057.
[74] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/106, plenary session of 19 May 2000; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/13, plenary session of 04 December 2002.
[75] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/219, plenary session of 22 February 2002; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/236, plenary session of 16 May 2002; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/160, plenary session of 24 February 2005.
[76] DBT, Plenary protocol 15/13.
[77] DBT, Plenary protocol 16/227; DBT, Plenary protocol 17/34, plenary session of 25 March 2010.
[78] DBT, Plenary protocol 18/114, plenary session of 01 July 2015; DBT, Plenary protocol 18/186, plenary session of 07 September 2016.

stated, that the war in Yugoslavia strengthened the political identity of the Union, too.[79] The conservative *FAZ*, however, did not publish any articles on a relation between European identity and European institutions. Further, the identificatory power of the planned constitution, was seen critically.[80]

### Democratic Deficit

All three newspapers further questioned political identity through treaties, a constitution and institutions as a democratic deficit on European level.[81] The philosopher Jürgen Habermas in a guest contribution to the *Zeit* in 2001 related this to a re-orientation towards the nation-state in the early 2000s.[82] For this reason, the constitution was seen critically in the same newspaper. In addition, it was questioned in the articles whether the constitutional convent was aware of the distance of the EU to its citizens. Democratic alienation and lacking legitimacy were considered a threat to European identity already in 1998,[83] but as well in a 2016 guest contribution of the Polish then-foreign minister Witold Waszczykowski.[84]

While a democratic deficit did not play a role in the Council of Europe, the threat to European identity in form of lacking legitimacy was discussed in the Bundestag since the early 1990s and until a year before the Lisbon treaty was signed. The fear of citizens to lose cultural and political integrity, especially in the phase of rapid integration in the late-1990s as well as after the failure of the constitutional referendums, was phrased by politicians across all political camps.[85] The fear of losing national and regional identities in the 1990s and a perceived loss of geographic integrity in the mid-2000s relate to the frame of geographic othering and already illustrated how important for various political discourses the Eastern enlargement was. Interestingly, the problem of democratic alienation did not reappear in direct relation to European identity after 2006 in parliamentary debates in the Bundestag.

### 1.2. The Four Visions

Vivien Schmidt's presented her four visions as four main streams in national discourses. Every vision would be characteristic for the EU discourse of several member-states. However, this analysis shows, that all four streams do in fact appear in the German discourse on European identity, even though with varying relevance. In the cases of the pragmatic discourse and the principled one, I detected a variety of sub-frames during the analysis.

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[79] "Der militärische Euro", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 1 April 1999, 17; "Die unamerikanische Nation", *Die Zeit*, 23 May 2002, edited on 22 December 2013.; "Im Namen der Reisefreiheit", *Die Zeit*, 25 February 2010; "Angriff auf Europas Freiheit", *Die Zeit*, 20 April 2012.
[80] "Und jetzt eine Verfassung?", *FAZ*, 4 March 1999, 1; "Europäische Identitätsarmut", *FAZ*, 16 June 2003, 1.
[81] "Die größte Erfindung unserer Zeit", *FAZ*, 16 June 2003, 35; "Europas Identitätskrise", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 14 January 2004, 4; "Warum braucht Europa eine Verfassung?", *Die Zeit*, 28 June 2001.
[82] "Warum braucht Europa eine Verfassung?", *Die Zeit.*
[83] "Die Mischung macht's", *Die Zeit*, 6 August 1998.
[84] "Mit der Hand auf dem Herzen", *FAZ*, 4 April 2016, 6.
[85] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/50; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/126; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/160; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/181, plenary session of 16 June 2005; DBT, Plenary protocol 16/4; DBT, Plenary protocol 16/39, plenary session of 21 June 2006.

### 1.2.1. A Pragmatic Discourse About the EU as a Borderless Problem-Solving Entity Ensuring Free Markets and Regional Security

Economic cooperation and the development of free markets were and are at the very core of the EU. However, in the here-analysed discourses, this dimension was of subordinate role. Arguably, an analysis of earlier phases of European integration would show a different picture, but since the 1990s the cultural and political dimensions of the union appeared to be standing in the foreground, at least in regard to identity-discussions. The second dimensions of this frame (regional security) was of significant relevance. Security cooperation appeared, as the first subframe will present, to be of greater relevance than expected. In contrast, the following sub-frames of "securitisation of migration" and the "Yugoslavia Wars" where found to be much less relevant for the German discourse on European identity than expected.

#### Security

Security as a source of identity appeared frequently in the debates in the Bundestag between 1989 and 2006. After this, however, the frames did not make any further appearance. Especially in the 1990s, security was an important element of the discourse on Europe. Especially the goal of a defence-union was highlighted.[86] It was characterised by two main points: the aim to strengthen European cooperation from within, foster a European political identity and to find a (common) place in a new world order. Therefore, it is a defining element of this frame, to discuss the relation to especially the USA[87] but as well Russia[88]. Hence, a strong relation to geographic othering became evident. The relation to the USA was not framed in a confronting manner, instead the speakers aimed for a closer European cooperation within the NATO and to develop better European (security) cooperation but not on the cost of the transatlantic relations. With the end of the 1990s, security lost relevance in the Bundestag dramatically and only appeared once again, in 2006,[89] where security cooperation was only mentioned as a chance for European sciences.

As the Council of Europe did not have any security-related competences, this frame never appeared in the discussion in this organisation in the Bundestag. In the newspapers, it appeared, though, on a much smaller scale. Here, it was framed as being of strategic relevance and that the pressure to come to an agreement on European security cooperation would rise.[90] After an eleven-year-break, security made an

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[86] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/182, plenary session of 07 December 1989; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/14, plenary session of 13 March 1991; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/44, plenary session of 22 June 1995; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/109, plenary session of 12 June 1996; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/224, plenary session of 26 March 1998; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/72, plenary session of 24 November 1999; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/77, plenary session of 03 December 1999.
[87] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/182; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/14; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/109; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/224.
[88] DBT, Plenary protocol 13/109.
[89] DBT, Plenary protocol 16/46, plenary session of 06 September 2006.
[90] "Strategie-Szenarien im Konjunktiv", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 8 February 1999, 4; "Jede Menge Sprengstoff", *Die Zeit*, 21 Oktober 1999.

appearance in the newspapers again in 2010, in the midst of the financial crisis. While the frame had apparently lost relevance on the political level, a closer European cooperation on security was demanded in the *Zeit*, in order to continue the way towards United States of Europe and a sign of still-ongoing close cooperation.[91] This reference fits into a pattern of the newspapers: deepened European cooperation and strengthened identity gained momentum again during the 2010s, which stood widely under the impression of European crises and decay of the union.

### The Yugoslavia Wars

The Yugoslavia Wars (1991-2001) where, more than 45 years after the end of the second World War, the first war on European ground again. After long hesitation, European states decided to intervene in a military way. This situation could have strengthened a European defence identity. However, this relation was not drawn in the political arena of the Bundestag. Only a responsibility coming from Europe's historical identity was mentioned[92], as well as the lacking abilities to solve the wars alone[93]. Only Ulrich Beck in an already-mentioned guest contribution to the *SZ* in 1999 saw that Yugoslavia would compel a European security identity that would be needed for the defence of European values.[94]

The case of Yugoslavia, hence, showed, that Europe was still far from a lived identity in the field of security at this time: it was called for in speeches but not put into practice.

### Securitisation of Migration

It was expected, that migration would increasingly been experienced as a threat, especially after 9/11 and the refugee "crisis" from 2015 on. Much research of the past years had shown the tendency of a securitisation of migration[95] in order to re-create a feeling of security where migrants are perceived as a threat. This discourse clearly existed – and still exists – in the German Bundestag. However, it is not put in relation to European identity. Only twice was the relation between migration and European identity pointed out, once to warn of an increasingly negative attitude towards migrants already in 1999[96] and a second time in 2007,[97] where a European identity was mentioned by a Social Democratic parliamentarian as a means to achieve a better integration of migrants and better cohabitation.

The almost absolute absence of migration on the political level surprises, as discourses on migration had increasingly turned towards identity and led to a re-intensification of "Leitkultur"-debates.[98] A potential

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[91] "Worum es wirklich geht", *Die Zeit*, 17 December 2010.
[92] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/101, plenary session of 22 July 1992.
[93] DBT, Plenary protocol 13/224.
[94] "Der militärische Euro", *SZ*.
[95] Gabriella Lazaridis, & Khursheed Wadia (eds.), *The Securitisation of Migration in the EU – Debates Since 9/11* (London 2015).
[96] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/58.
[97] DBT, Plenary protocol 16/88, plenary session of 22 March 2007.
[98] "Germany's 'homeland' propaganda is making an inglorious return", *The Washington Post*, 10 February 2018, accessed 9 June 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/02/10/germanys-homeland-propaganda-is-making-an-inglorious-return/.

explanation could be delivered by an article in the *SZ*.[99] Here, European identity was framed as non-existent – an extremely common assumption especially in media, as chapter 1.2.3. will show. It, then, was argued that migration would create fear, precisely because there would only be national identities but not a European. Based on this argument, in the Bundestag, European identity would not be put in relation to migration or its securitisation because parliamentarians would not see this European identity being endangered, unlike the national identity. The only two other newspaper articles, in which migration and European identity appeared in a relation, argued similarly, stating that a European identity, additional to a national, would make it easier for migrants to be part of the German society.[100]

### 1.2.2. A Normative Discourse About the EU as a Bordered Values-Based Community

This second vision did widely appear in the Bundestag but as well to some extent in the Council of Europe and newspapers. In the Bundestag, shared values were referred to during the entire time-frame with an agglomeration around the development of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union in 2000. This frame remained consistent over the analysed 28 years with multiple references to especially human rights, democracy and as well freedom, equality and solidarity.[101] At the Council of Europe, values were as well frequently mentioned, in the following quote, the former French president François Mitterrand delivers a typical note:

> "The identity of Europe, the very thing which gives our culture its importance in the world, is based on the values which the Council of Europe has made the starting point for its action. Like you have said before me, I only say: civil liberties, all civil liberties; human rights, all human rights."[102]

Other speakers referred mainly to human rights as the uniting element of Europe.[103]

In newspapers, the reference to values was made much less and was present in two contexts only: during the development of the above-mentioned Charter of Fundamental Rights in the early 2000s[104] and, once,

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[99] "Renzis Endspiel", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 15 February 2014, 4.
[100] "Von Geburt an Multikulturalist", *Die Zeit*, 6 February 2015; "Die Rückkehr des L-Worts", *Die Zeit*, 6 October 2015.
[101] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/177, plenary session of 28 November 1989; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/189, plenary session of 11 November 1993; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/131, plenary session of 17 October 1996; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/222, plenary session of 05 March 1998; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/230; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/58; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/63, plenary session of 28 October 1999; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/79; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/105, plenary session of 18 May 2000; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/53, plenary session of 26 June 2003; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/112, plenary session of 28 May 2004; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/175, plenary session of 12 May 2005; DBT, Plenary protocol 16/4, plenary session of 30 November 2005; DBT, Plenary protocol 17/84, plenary session of 20 January 2011; DBT, Plenary protocol 18/186; DBT, Plenary protocol 18/223.
[102] DBT, Drucksache 11/4881.
[103] DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die Delegation der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 18. bis 25. September 1991", Drucksache 12/1834; DBT, Drucksache 14/2057; DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die Delegation der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 27. bis 30. April 2009", Drucksache 16/14161.
[104] "Wahrheit macht frei", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 6 October 2000; "Der Traum von den ,schönen glänzenden Zeiten'", *SZ*; "Abschied von Europa", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 October 2004, 4; "Das Neue kommt. Vorhang auf!", *Die Zeit*, 8 June 2000.

in 2013. This last mention described the protection of refugees as a lesson that was learned from the past.[105] Values as a core element of European identity were not mentioned in the *FAZ*.

### 1.2.3. A Principled Discourse About the EU as a Border-Free, Rights-Based Post-National Union

Under this vision, frames were subsumed which addressed free movement as well as more principled discourses on the relation between national and supranational identity, the question what an (post)national identity would be and if such an identity actually exists.

#### Free Movement

In the Bundestag, references to the possibility of free movement within the European Union appeared especially in the period since the beginning of the time-frame in 1989 and the enforcement (1995) of the Schengen treaty. A Europe without borders, it was argued in the frame, would be a Europe of the citizens and as well create economic benefits.[106] After 1999,[107] no further reference to Schengen as a source of European identity had been made. European integration and the newly gained free movement was in the early 1990s put in a direct relation with the German reunification and then continued towards the necessary Eastern enlargement.[108] European integration, with the vital signal of unity in the form of the Schengen agreement had arguably played an important role in keeping a European identity in Europe's East alive. While the necessity of an Eastern enlargement is later emphasised especially in the frame of Europe's history, it appeared here already in the wake of the German reunification. Free movement was presented as a form of motor that would start the process of the re-integration of the East and enable a shared ground of identity.

On the contrary, *SZ* and *Zeit* made use of Schengen as a pillar of Europeanness only much later, namely in 1999 and then in 2010 and 2012.[109] While in the political context, free movement was emphasised in the moment of its initialisation, it appeared in newspaper at points, where it was experienced as being under thread (e.g. when border controls in Europe were enforced again by few member-states due to arriving refugees in 2012), a pattern that was pointed out above already.

#### Relation of Nation-State Identity to European Identity

How does a new supranational identity relate to existing national ones? Does it replace them or rather complement? Are they contradictory, overlapping or mutually exclusive? Such questions are at the core of this, one of the most important, frame. The vast majority of elements here emphasised, that national identities must remain unchallenged by the new supranational one. But a few contributions still picked

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[105] "Die andere Heimat", *Die Zeit*, 17 October 2013.
[106] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/149, plenary session of 15 June 1989; DBT, Plenary protocol 11/177.
[107] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/63.
[108] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/149, DBT, Plenary protocol 12/101; DBT, Plenary protocol 11/210, plenary session of 10 May 1990.
[109] "Wahrheit macht frei", *SZ*; "Im Namen der Reisefreiheit", *Die Zeit*; "Angriff auf Europas Freiheit", *Die Zeit*.

up on an older stream of argumentation, which saw the "United States of Europe" as the ultimate goal, with a full dissolution of national identities in a new, post-national entity. This stream only appeared in very few contributions, arguably it was of much higher relevance in earlier phases of European integration and hence would require a study of the period before 1989. The German reunification changed the conception of the role of nation-states and the perception of Europe sustainably, as this frame shows.

This minor, though not less interesting, stream of the frame echoed discussions from the 1970s that revolved around the goal of a European *Bundesstaat*, a federal state. This vision, here indeed the vision for a final form of a political body, had its roots in post-war considerations that aimed at the 'forever-prevention' of war in Europe with the nation-states being a particularly toxic form of political organisation. In addition, the division of Germany created the impression of a weakened state that had its place in an integrated Europe. This feeling, which was all well considered to be to the benefit of the rest of Europe (and maybe the world) opened the doors for considerations for Germany to coalesce with other nations into a new European post-national system. Advocates for this path were still present in the Bundestag in the early 1990s. The delegate Ulrich Briefs stands representatively for this way of thinking, as he shows in 1993:

> "The first impulses of this new old German-national politics call into question what for four decades was a political self-conception that was a living reality, at least in West Germany, namely that one day in the future we would be Europeans and nothing else in a united, peaceful and democratic Europe. That meant and still means the fusion of Germany into a European federal state, the abandonment of national identity as Germans in favour of a new, different, European identity."[110]

This position was shared by other, mostly Social Democratic speakers.[111] Forms of a European identity that stand above or would be detached from national identities, references to a European identity that was older than national ones and later that it could be created genuinely supranational, appeared until the end of the 1990s in more and more cautious forms[112] and eventually vanished.

The vast majority of parliamentarians saw the national identity as the primary form of identification which, sometimes even one that would have to be protected against Europe. Then-Bavarian prime minister Stoiber was criticised heavily in 1993 in the parliament for his statement, that a reunited Germany would not need a deeply integrated Europe anymore.[113] However, the notion of a reunited Germany being less dependent on Europe was increasingly shared and illustrates the shift in perception of the relation between the forms of identity. For the time to come, a strong and proud national identity in a Union that takes "united in diversity" literally became the central narrative. This conception was shared across parties, representatives from the left to the Union emphasised the value of national and

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[110] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/189, p. 16307.
[111] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/50.
[112] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/58; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/63.
[113] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/189.

regional identities.[114] This frame was one of the most popular ones over the entire analysed time period. However, and despite the general decline of discussions on European identity, addressed in detail in chapter 2, it is visible, that the emphasise of the importance of national identity – or, in the negative form, the protection of the citizens' identity against an increasingly bureaucratic and overregulating Europe – was clustered around the development of new European treaties. With the failure of the constitution and the adoption of the Charter of Fundamental Rights as well as the Lisbon treaty several years later, the need to verbally protect national identities appeared to decline. Only after the financial crisis and during the refugee "crisis" in 2015, almost ten years after the last time mentioned, the relation between national and supranational identity with the need for the latter one to be rooted in the prior one, was emphasised in the Bundestag again.

While the treaties of the 1990s were considered milestones, the delegates in the Bundestag seemed to feel the urge to emphasise, that the nation and its identity will be protected and that Europe would remain a union of nation-states. This came hand-in-hand with an underlying, Eurosceptic note with increasing references to an over-bureaucratisation of the Union. Later, during and in-between the crises, it was emphasised again: European cooperation is good, but it can't come at the cost of the nation-state.

In the Council of Europe, it was solely the narrative of national identity that has to be preserved in a supranational union. Then-Chancellor Kohl was quoted that "only in a united Europe, which lives from its diversity and in which national and European identity are very well compatible, a renewed relapse into barbarism could be prevented in the future".[115] Similar statements were made by representatives of other German parties who were part of the delegation. The last time in the Council a reference was made to the relation between national and European identity was in 1999.

In the body of newspapers, only one indirect reference was made to a European integration that would result in a united political entity in a guest contribution by Ulrich Beck.[116] Other than that, the nation-state was as well seen as predominant – however, in a different way than in the parliament. In the *FAZ*, the frame was slightly changing from the notion that the nation-state can still exist next to the Union and that it would not be obsolete towards a problematisation of the dominance of nation-states, which

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[114] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/149; DBT, Plenary protocol 11/217, plenary session of 21 July 1990; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/50; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/126, plenary session of 02 December 1992; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/189; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/192, plenary session of 24 November 1993; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/44; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/241, plenary session of 18 June 1998; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/106; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/124, plenary session of 12 October 2000; DBT, Plenary protocol 14/219; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/13; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/19, plenary session of 16 January 2003; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/56, plenary session of 03 July 2003; DBT, Plenary protocol 16/39; DBT, Plenary protocol 16/52, plenary session of 22 September 2006; DBT, Plenary protocol 16/88; DBT, Plenary protocol 16/133, plenary session of 13 December 2007; DBT, Plenary protocol 18/186; DBT, Plenary protocol 18/193, plenary session of 29 September 2016; DBT, Plenary protocol 19/4, plenary session of 12 December 2017.
[115] DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 25. bis 29. September 1995", Drucksache 13/3275.
[116] "Der militärische Euro", *SZ*.

was perceived to keep the European people further apart than would be preferred.[117] Re-nationalisation and predominance of national thinking was perceived as destabilising in the *SZ*, especially in the wake of the eastward expansion and during the refugee crisis of 2015.[118] Most present was the frame in the *Zeit*. In the period until 2000, European identity was clearly phrased as only an addition to the main – national – one.[119] In the following years, this changes towards the emphasis of a re-nationalisation and insufficient identification with Europe.[120] Almost ten years passed between 2005 and 2014, when the previous conception, of complementary identities, returns. However, in two of the three articles of this last phase, othering – "we-are-not-definitions" – was criticised.[121]

### Absence of a European Identity

A lack of European identity could either be manifested through its absence in text and speeches or it could be pointed out as such in speeches or articles. This frame gathers those utterances in which a lack of European identity was stated. It is present in all three analytical bodies, though it was especially all three newspapers in which it dominated.

Firstly, in the Bundestag, attesting a lack of European identification was clustered around the Eastern-enlargement-debate. Secondly, a lack of European identity was often seen relational. Point of reference here were, as in other frames too, the transatlantic relations, e.g. when developing "an independent European identity, especially vis-à-vis the USA, in the concert of world regions"[122] was demanded by the SPD. A third major concern was the immersion of the Union. It was warned of a lack of a shared basis for cooperation, a thought that was formulated especially by the conservative Union.[123] But the connotation of missing identification was shared across the political camps.[124] However, a difference between the political camps was, that the rather left parties saw the absence of European identity rooted in a democratic deficit while on the conservative side this was put in relation to the geographic sprawling and a perceived boundlessness of the EU.[125] With the Eastern expansion being finalised in 2004, the frame disappeared for about ten years. It made its return in moments of crises. Both SPD and Union

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[117] "Flucht in biegsame Formeln", *FAZ*, 23 November 1989, 1; "Die Frage nach der deutschen Nation", *FAZ*, 21 May 1999, 1; "Heimat Europa", *FAZ*, 21 July 2011, 1; "Rissiger Firnis", *FAZ*, 14 February 2012, 1; "Renaissance des Vorurteils", *FAZ*, 22 February 2012, 1; "Rechtsstaat in Gefahr", *FAZ*, 5 January 2016, 1.
[118] "Auf dem Weg nach Deutschland", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24 March 1990; "Wahrheit macht frei", *SZ*; "Das Wir-Gefühl", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 22 August 2015, 24; "Die große Erosion", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 November 2015, 4.
[119] "Das Trennende und das Verbindende", *Die Zeit*; "Die neue Machtfrage", *Die Zeit*, 16 December 1999, edited 9 October 2007; "Das Neue kommt. Vorhang auf!", *Die Zeit*; "Wer nicht zu Europa gehört", *Die Zeit*.
[120] "Warum braucht Europa eine Verfassung?", *Die Zeit*; "Geht's nicht auch eine Nummer kleiner?", *Die Zeit*, 4 December 2003; "Was ist das bloß – ein Europäer?", *Die Zeit*, 23 June 2005.
[121] "Europa ist eine uralte Tatsache", *Die Zeit*; "Von Geburt an Multikulturalist", *Die Zeit*; "Die Rückkehr des L-Worts", *Die Zeit*.
[122] DBT, Plenary protocol 13/241.
[123] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/79; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/16, plenary session of 19 December 2002; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/56.
[124] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/106; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/53.
[125] DBT, Plenary protocol 13/224; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/53.

stated that the differences within the Union were too great for a shared identity.[126] This latest contribution, from 2016, further picked up on what was already an underlying connotation of the Eastern enlargement critique, namely that boundlessness. This was perceived primarily as a threat to the inner immersion of the Union and its shared identity. In a speech by conservative parliamentarian Christoph Bergner in 2016, various frames, the relation of national identity to the European and as well the later elaborated geographical othering came together:

> "We [do not find] - of this I am convinced - identity in borderlessness, because if we seek identity we have to seek the limits of our identity references, limits that Peer Steinbrück has called the 'normative project of the West'. Many well-meaning actors, including those in foreign cultural and educational policy, virtually take refuge in borderlessness and avoid the question: 'What is typically European?' in a way that I cannot comprehend. The debate on European identity is taking place at a time when nation-state models are being revitalized in Europe's party landscapes in the sense of anti-European objectives. The lesson we can learn from this is that European identity can only ever be understood as a conglomeration of national and regional identifications. It would be unwise to demonise national identities because we want to cultivate a European identity."[127]

Within the Council of Europe, a lack of European identity was attested at various points and understood as a task for deeper cultural cooperation and integration. The contributions, e.g. by Francois Mitterand and Angela Merkel, show, that building a European identity is understood as work-in-progress.[128]
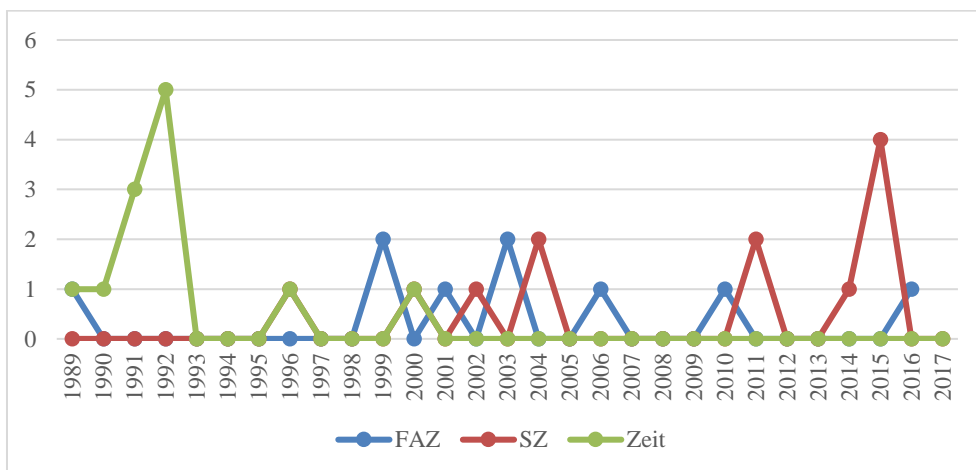


Table 2. Appearances of the frame "Absence of a European Identity in the three newspapers.

Most frequently the frame was used in the three newspapers. In the *FAZ* it appeared eight times, in *SZ* even 12 times and in *Zeit* articles seven times. Table 2 shows that, besides to peaks in *Zeit* (early 1990s) and *SZ* (2015), the frame appeared most frequently between 1999 and 2004. Dominant in the *FAZ* was the constitutional discourse, here, either political attempts to aim for a much deeper integration or the

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[126] DBT, Plenary protocol 18/50, plenary session of 10 September 2014; Plenary protocol 18/193.
[127] Plenary protocol 18/193.
[128] DBT, Drucksache 11/4881; DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 1. bis 5. Februar 1993", Drucksache 12/4572; DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die Delegation der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 14. bis 18. April 2008", Drucksache 16/13167.

lacking European public was criticised. This public would neither have existed nor wanted.[129] In the later contributions, this somewhat changed towards a reflection on the deficits of the European value-community, which would not be strong enough for a shared identity.[130] In the *SZ*, the appearance of the frame was split into two main phases. In the first one, the Eastern expansion and the "Turkey-question", whether Turkey should be entitled to access the Union, as well as the development (but less so its failure) of constitution were dominating. This phase included references to a lacking democratisation of the Union as well as to the German-specific experiences of the re-integration of parts of the country and the arguably failed creation of a shared identity. In this situation, where no coherent national identity would exist, a European identity would be experienced as "imposed".[131] In the second phase, between 2011 and 2015, no greater political projects were on the table, but crises defined the coverage on Europe. A variety of elements was central to the frame of an absent European identity in the *SZ*: (1) a changing self-definition towards a more geographical othering; (2) the various identities of the member-states being in the way of forming a shared one (3) as well as matters of renationalisation; (4) the experience of migration as crisis due to a lack of European identity; (5) a critical self-reflection on the still highly national *modus operandi* of media and the resulting lack of a European public and (6) the financial crisis as a crisis of identity.[132] In the *Zeit*, the temporal distribution was somewhat similar. Various articles between 1996 and 2001 addressed Europe's 'dry' character: it was a narrative in which national thinking and communications had remained in the centre of political thinking, but many competencies were delegated to Europe. However, this would have followed the model of the "slim West German constitutional state":[133] This would have been unable to stimulate the enthusiasm required for a shared identity because it rather creates a political space of rights and order instead of identification. Earlier than in the two other newspapers, the on-going presence of national modes was criticised, but as well a form of European identity was advertised that is more fluid and less defined than a classical identity-definition.[134] From 2015 on, similar to the other newspapers, the form of identity construction via othering, e.g. religious was criticised and it was asked how a truly transnational identity could be found.[135]

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[129] "Die Frage nach der deutschen Nation", *FAZ*; "Europa zählt", *FAZ*, 4 May 2001, 1; "Europäische Identitätsarmut", *FAZ*; "Die größte Erfindung unserer Zeit", *FAZ*.

[130] "Identität in der Wertegemeinschaft", *FAZ*, 30 December 2010, 1; "Mit der Hand auf dem Herzen", *FAZ*.

[131] "Wahrheit macht frei", *SZ*; for other articles from this phase see: "Ein Anker für Ankara", *SZ*; "Europas Identitätskrise", *SZ*; "Abschied von Europa", *SZ*.

[132] "Europa als Albtraum?", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 13 May 2011, 4; "Aus der Traum", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24 September 2011, 4; "Renzis Endspiel", *SZ*; "Das Wir-Gefühl", *SZ*; "Vergesst die Utopie!", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 29 August 2015, 24; "Eine Debatte für alle", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 19 September 2015, 26; "Die große Erosion", *SZ*.

[133] "Das Neue kommt. Vorhang auf!", *Die Zeit*.

[134] "Europa hat keine öffentliche Meinung", *Die Zeit*, 29 March 1996; "Die Mischung macht's", *Die Zeit*, 6 August 1998; "Das Neue kommt. Vorhang auf!", *Die Zeit*; "Warum braucht Europa eine Verfassung?", *Die Zeit*.

[135] "Von Geburt an Multikulturalist", *Die Zeit*; "Die Rückkehr des L-Worts", *Die Zeit*; "Das Eigene und das Fremde", *Die Zeit*, 23 August 2017, edited 14 September 2017.

It appeared, that in the times of crises, German newspapers reflected more on the question how a European identity was constructed – via othering – while during the first peak of the frame 'absence of European identity' the political projects of a constitution, the Turkey-accession and the Eastern expansion as well as the reflection on the ongoing dominance of national categories in political action and identity-formation were present. The impression of especially the financial crisis impacting the European identification deeply was shared among the newspapers. Not shared was the notion of the conservative *FAZ* of the EU as a value-based-community, which would be the basis and core of the identity. *SZ* argued against it quite openly by calling values not enough and only one element besides culture and a shared historical understanding.[136] In the *Zeit*, it was argued more subtly against, where it was stated that shared rules and rights would not be enough for common identification.[137] However, ways towards more identification (where the authors saw it as desirable) were not pointed out.

### 1.2.4.   A Strategic Discourse About the EU as Global Actor 'Doing International Relations Differently'

The fourth vision was the least present one. As the Council of Europe is no body of the EU, it is not concerned with foreign politics of this other organisation which also has a different set of member-states. Therefore, it unsurprising, that this vision made no appearance in the Council's sources. But as well in newspapers, the EU's geopolitical actorness seemed not to be considered a source of identification. This can be taken as an indicator for the EU's much proclaimed value-oriented politics either not being very present public or not being seen as value-driven, but instead that the EU in its foreign policy capacity is rather just another forum for realpolitik, of pragmatic and unideological politics.

Most often, the frame appeared in the Bundestag in relation to the Eastern enlargement. Together with the historical dimension, which will be addressed in the following frame, it was the "different" form of politics, that was often been used as a reasoning for the need of the enlargement.[138] Besides this temporal clustering, the frame made only one more appearance in 2016.[139] This means, that the alleged different form of politics played no greater role at least for the construction of identity when the treaties, Charter or agreements with third states were negotiated.

### 1.3. Forms of Othering

Especially values, but as well other frames from the spheres of cultural and political identity, can be considered elements of an inwards oriented identification with a focus on the *self*. The above-presented results had shown, how those frames search for defining elements within Europe. The counterpart to this is the othering, searching for the *other* to define the self. Both forms had been pointed out again as

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[136] "Abschied von Europa", *SZ.*
[137] "Das Neue kommt. Vorhang auf!", *Die Zeit*
[138] DBT, Plenary protocol 11/177; DBT, Plenary protocol 12/126; 129; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/230.
[139] DBT, Plenary protocol 18/186.

crucial for the construction of European identity.[140] Newspaper articles argued, that it would be worth to discuss how we find a transnational identity "which is based on shared values. For this, we have to first of all distance us from all 'we-are-not-definitions'. An identity, which is only based on the exclusion of others will in future be less plausible and true",[141] because Europe would already be a mixing pool at the crossroads between East and West. However, research for this thesis has shown, that forms of othering still played a central role in the formulation of a European identity. Below it will be shown, that forms of othering became relevant at points were relations to states and regions had to be defined which are either non-European, still European or potentially both (especially the cases of Turkey and Russia).

While the first form of othering, the historical, is – depending on its use – either an inwards oriented form of identification (in form of references to the own past and the lessons learned from those arguably shared experiences) or oriented against the other (e.g. when the historical experiences are not shared), the two latter forms of othering, geographical and religious, are directly and solely interested in differences from the non-European. These three forms of othering had been identified in the theory above, and the research has shown that the assumption those forms are relevant holds true. Further, the analysis below shows, that the relation to the own history remained important at all time with peaks in the early 1990s, between 1997 and 2006 as well as 2008 until 2012. Geographical and religious othering became more important since the end of the 20th century, reached a peak of importance between 1997 and 2005 and declined afterwards but remained present. The tables 3, 4 and 5 below give a visual impression of the peaks and temporal distribution of the three othering frames.
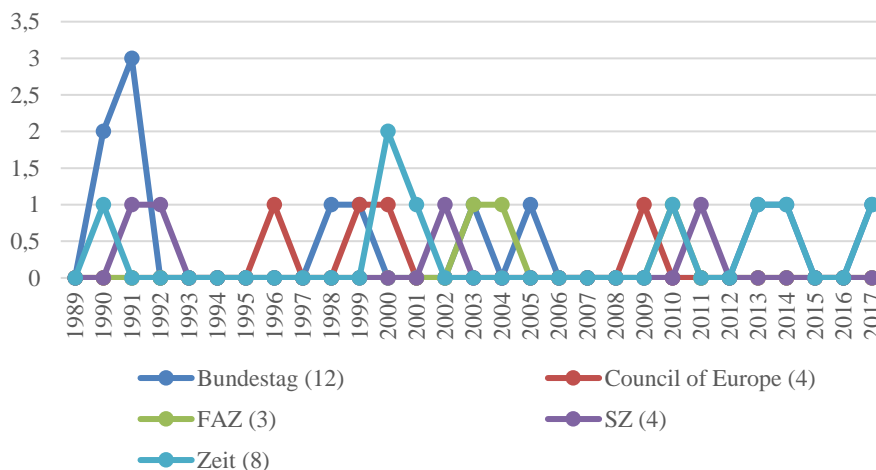


Table 3. Temporal distribution of historical othering, 31 hits in all sources.

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[140] DBT, Plenary protocol 18/223, plenary session of 22 March 2017; "Von Geburt an Multikulturalist", *Die Zeit*; "Die Rückkehr des L-Worts", *Die Zeit.*
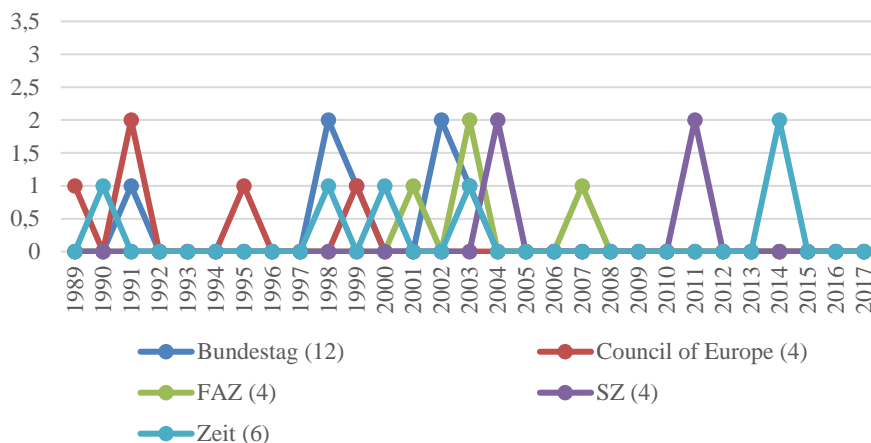[141] "Die Rückkehr des L-Worts", *Die Zeit.*

Table 4. Temporal distribution of geographical othering, 25 hits in all sources.
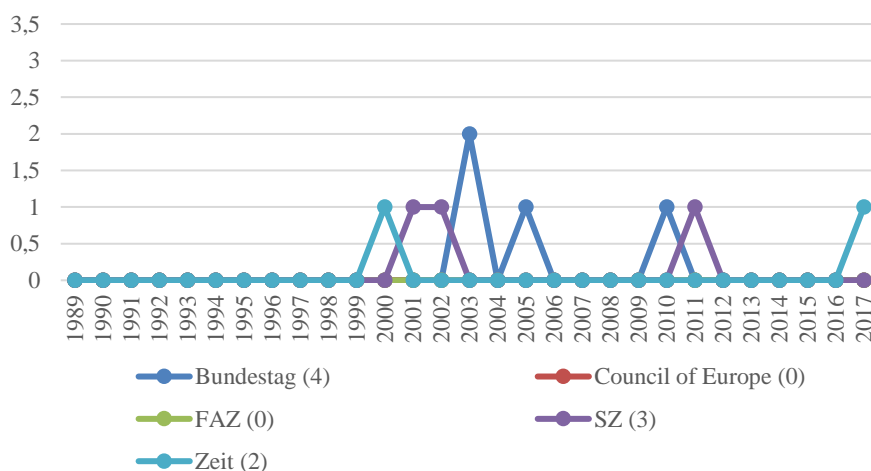


Table 5. Temporal distribution of religious othering, 9 hits in all sources.

### 1.3.1. Europe's History

The construction of a European identity through European history is clearly one of the most present frames with a great relevance in both newspapers and Bundestag. In the latter, the frame was very present from the beginning onwards (see table 3 above). In a changing global environment, the role of European integration had to be negotiated again, but its roots in history were emphasised:

> "[The] Western bloc has found its own identity through its value-based, political and securitarian determination. From the very beginning, it was more than just a reaction to the Soviet hegemonic policy after the Second World War. In truth, the Western Alliance was the lesson learned from the mistakes made after the First World War. The end of the Warsaw Pact therefore does not affect the continued existence of the Western Alliance."[142]

National Socialism and – depending on the political faction of the speaker – communism, but especially the atrocities of the Second World War appeared frequently. The narrative was often, that "[w]e see that

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[142] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/14.

there is no way around European unity, because the ruins left behind by totalitarianism, both National Socialism and Communism, can only be removed by a joint European effort."[143]

The frame regained momentum in a phase between 1998 and 2005, with relations to several key moments. In the discussion on the Eastern enlargement, the argument was brought forward, that European identity has to be found again and that the re-integration of the Eastern states into the Union would bring back a missing piece of culture.[144] The second context was the European constitution. For the first time, a conflict about the role of the past became visible when it was both pointed out, that the proposed constitutional treaty did not reflect the past enough[145] or that the shared history would not be source enough for a common identity.[146] The especially strong role of the Second World War and the Holocaust returned towards the time frame's end (2013, 2014 and 2017) when those experiences of the past were pointed out explicitly in relation to European identity.[147] Unlike in the first phase of the early 1990s, however, the speakers avoided here the relation of historic experiences with the need of a deepened cooperation. History had turned from a reasoning for integration to a mere reminder of human monstrosities. Within the reports by the delegation to the Council of Europe, references to the identity-building power of history are made as well. Those are similar in structure and refer to the two World Wars especially. This is, fittingly, related to the Council's main fields, values and culture.[148]

A minority of the newspaper articles referred to history and past in relation to European identity before 2000. However, content-wise those were not much different to the later ones. Various authors in the different outlets referred to moments, developments and experiences of the past; a variety of events that spans from the Ancient Greece and Rome via the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment and the World Wars.[149] A certain relation to geographical othering became evident in those articles, that reflected on the events that should be part of a historical narrative or not, e.g. the role of Communism in relation to the reflection on Fascism[150] or the historic relations of Europe and Turkey[151]. The conservative *FAZ* was especially oriented towards the East of Europe, all three articles reflected upon the relation of Western and Eastern Europe as well as Communism. The four articles from the *SZ* made the most direct relation

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[143] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/50.
[144] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/58.
[145] DBT, Plenary protocol 15/175.
[146] DBT, Plenary protocol 15/56.
[147] DBT, Plenary protocol 18/3, plenary session of 28 November 2013; DBT, Plenary protocol 18/50; DBT, Plenary protocol 18/235, plenary session of 19 may 2017.
[148] DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 22. bis 26. Januar 1996", Drucksache 13/4201; DBT, Drucksache 14/2057; DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 24. bis 28. Januar 2000", Drucksache 14/5007; DBT, Drucksache 16/14161.
[149] e.g.: "Europa auf dem Stier", *SZ*; "Latein für Amerika", *SZ*; "Das Trennende und das Verbindende", *Die Zeit*; "Wer nicht zu Europa gehört", *Die Zeit*; "Europas Kultur und ihre Krise", *Die Zeit*, 7 December 2013, edited 31 December 2013; "Die andere Heimat", *Die Zeit*; "Die alte und die neue Welt", *Die Zeit*, 6 November 2014; "Das Eigene und das Fremde", *Die Zeit*.
[150] "Die größte Erfindung unserer Zeit", *FAZ*; "Auf dem Gipfel", *FAZ*, 30 April 2004, 1; "Identität in der Wertegemeinschaft", *FAZ*.
[151] "Ein Anker für Ankara", *SZ*.

to geographical othering by discussing Turkey-relations or calling for stressing the geographical othering more[152] and were published throughout the entire timeframe. Most articles were published in relation to the constitutional referendum, which had not appeared in the other two newspapers in relation to this frame. Two articles made a relation to religious othering, one by Cardinal Ratzinger, the later-pope Benedict XVI.[153] One article made the only reference in the entire body of sources to the lacking presence of Colonialism.[154] Another article was written in direct response to refugee protection and another was related to the ani-European developments of the refugee "crisis"[155], but besides this and the constitution-related articles, more articles were published that had no apparent relation to a key moment. This gives the impression, that this frame and the role of history were in the newspapers important enough to not only appear around certain key moments but to be always present, even though with varying intensity.

What makes the frame of European history especially interesting for the case of this thesis, is not only which things were mentioned and how their use changed – but which experiences of history were *not* mentioned. Of course, European history is too rich of moments that could be defined at crucial, yet, historic experiences such as colonialism with its century-long impact on Europe's position in the world could be expected to play some kind of role in an identity-construction which refers to the own past as a darker form of the new self. Despite this identity-construction, research had shown,[156] that colonial thinking and during colonialism established global structures still took a central space in the external affairs of the supranational Europe, especially in the early phases of integration, e.g. in the context of "Eurafrica"[157] in the 1950s and 1960s. By naming Africa first in the section on global relations, the Copenhagen Declaration on European identity also reflected the continuation of a worldview informed by the bygone colonial world order, in which Africa had a much greater strategic relevance for the European states than it does today. One the one hand, this often-unseen relation between late colonialism and European integration may serve as a partial explanation for the absence of colonialism in the identity-formation. On the other hand, it comes as a surprising finding, that the often-emphasised role of values in European politics and the lessons that could have been learned from colonialism in regard to an informed foreign-policy did not at all change the dealing with the own colonial past. Continuously, this experience made no appearance (besides one newspaper article) in the creation of a European identity in the sources of this thesis. Another second pattern of explanation for the absence of

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[152] "Europa als Albtraum?", *SZ.*

[153] "Europas Kultur und ihre Krise", *Die Zeit*; "Das Eigene und das Fremde", *Die Zeit.*

[154] "Unterwegs mit dem Engel", *Die Zeit*, 7 October 2010.

[155] "Die andere Heimat", *Die Zeit*; "Warum hat Europa keinen Nationalfeiertag?", *Die Zeit*, 12 July 2017.

[156] Peo Hansen & Stefan Jonsson, *Eurafrica: The Untold History of European Integration and Colonialism* (London 2014).

[157] Eurafrica is a pre-war concept of a strategic partnership between Europe and Africa in which the two continents are considered being complementary and mutually dependent. The concept was picked-up again after war in an early stage of European integration where it was a central pillar of Euro-African agreements such as the Yaoundé Conventions and a fundament of European Africa politics. It was criticised among many others by Kwame Nkrumah for being neo-colonial and lost its political relevance after the mid-seventies. For more information the seminal work: Hansen & Jonsson, *Eurafrica.*

colonialism in the here-studied sources is the German specific-discourse, in which the own colonial involvement and experiences remain marginalised until today.[158] Based on these two explanations, it is argued, that integrating colonialism into a narrative of the historical self as other would conflict with (underlyingly) on-going forms of colonial practices in at least the early European Community.[159]

### 1.3.2. The Geographical Other

Geographical othering played an important role in the plenary debates. However, its appearance is temporally much more concentrated with almost all utterances been made between 1998 and 2003 (see table 4 above). This can be put in direct relation to the core of the different extension debates (Eastern Europe, Turkey and rarely even Russia). The central others in this frame were – in order of their relevance – Turkey,[160] the United States[161] and the Eastern European states[162]. It was the vivid discourse on the Turkey-accession, which already played an important role in different frames, that appeared most often and as well frequently in relation with religious othering. This form of othering will be subject to the following sub-chapter. Important in this discussion were as well values and languages. The discussion of the early 2000s, this was shown by the constitution-frame as well, saw a first rise in the political sphere of questions of religious traditions and roots of Europe. The US-discourse was centred around geo-strategic and security questions, asking how Europe can define its position and highlight its identity within the transatlantic partnership. The third and last stream, regarding the East, was less of an exclusionary discourse than an inclusionary one, with both sources had highlighted the *belonging* of the Eastern European states to the European Union. Towards the East, that was made clear[163], the line has to be drawn through Russia, making this another problematic case, similar to Turkey. This stream was related to security questions as well, in the form of NATO's Eastern enlargement. The case of Russia exemplifies the increasingly complicated new geopolitical order. While pre-1989 sources were not analysed here, the important role of the Soviet Union as a geographical other still was made clear in the Bundestag:

> "The motives of the founding fathers were to secure peace and security, economic prosperity, the perception of global responsibility and not least the creation of a common identity. It was the threat from the Soviet Union with its expansionist ideology against which every single state in Europe seemed too weak and too small."[164]

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[158] Dirk van Laak, "Deutschland in Afrika – Der Kolonialismus und seine Nachwirkungen", *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte (APuZ)* (04/2005).
[159] Hansen & Jonsson, *Eurafrica*; Begemann, "European External Border Management".
[160] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/79; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/13; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/16.
[161] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/14; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/224; DBT, Plenary protocol 13/241.
[162] DBT, Plenary protocol 13/224; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/56.
[163] DBT, Plenary protocol 13/224.
[164] DBT, Plenary protocol 16/88.

Geographical othering appears to have always been of certain relevance. This is supported by the paragraphs on international relations in the 1973 Declaration on European Identity, which was introduced in chapter II above.

Within the Council of Europe, the re-integration of the Eastern European states was the dominating stream.[165] The frame was, as previous frames have shown as typical for the Council, put in relation to cultural aspects. In addition, it was made clear that Russia would be welcomed in this forum, with the clear statement that "[t]he enlargement of the Council of Europe must not end at Russia's borders; this would also be a failure for European identity."[166] Only one speech showed othering towards the US in regard to social security legislation: "Globalisation threatens to lose European identity in a neoliberal and American economic order; the European Social Charter must lay down minimum standards in this respect."[167]

Questions of geographic othering become more relevant in the wake of the enlargement questions of the late-1990s and early-2000s in the newspapers as well. In the *FAZ* the lacking reference to the religious heritage in the constitution took an important role, especially in regard to the Turkey-accession-debate,[168] but as well in regard to other "critical cases" like Russia and the Balkan-states. A religious fundament together with a not anti-American stance appeared as the core here, as a growing anti-Americanism with the function of emphasising the own identity was criticised at different points.[169]

In the *SZ* the Turkey-accession appeared prominently over a somewhat later and longer timespan, between 2004 and 2011. The stance was quite clearly anti-accession with references to a lack of shared values, political problems and historic and cultural differences.[170] When the integrative function of history declined, a conflicted question appeared: this decline was found by one author but in a different article it was still seen as a basis of identity.[171]

In the *Zeit*, appearances of geographical othering were more scattered out. More than in the other outlets, the problems of geographical othering were pointed out.[172] Potential accessions by Russia and Turkey

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[165] DBT, Drucksache 11/4881; DBT, Drucksache 12/1834; DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 30. Januar bis 3. Februar 1995", Drucksache 13/815.

[166] DBT, Drucksache 13/815.

[167] DBT, "Unterrichtung durch die deutsche Delegation in der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates über die Tagung der Parlamentarischen Versammlung des Europarates vom 22. bis 26. September 1997", Drucksache 14/504.

[168] "Europäische Identitätsarmut", *FAZ*; "Die größte Erfindung unserer Zeit", *FAZ*; "Fahrplan", *FAZ*, 26 March 2007, 1.

[169] "Partner, keine Rivalen", *FAZ*, 13 June 2001, 1; "Die größte Erfindung unserer Zeit", *FAZ*.

[170] "Europas Identitätskrise", *SZ*; "Abschied von Europa", *SZ*; "Aus der Traum", *SZ*.

[171] "Europa als Albtraum?", *SZ*; "Abschied von Europa", *SZ*

[172] "Das Trennende und das Verbindende", *Die Zeit*; "Grenzen für Europa", *Die Zeit*, 5 March 1998; "Wer nicht zu Europa gehört", *Die Zeit*.

are mentioned once and were seen from a critical perspective.[173] Growing anti-Americanism, the formation of a European identity based on a negative picture of the US, was further criticised here too.[174]

In the media outlets, more reflections on geographical othering appeared in recent times than in the political sources. However, the tendency towards a peak of geographical othering during the accession-debates with a peak between 1998 and 2003 and the constitution's development in the following two years was present in the media too. This has been visualised in table 4 above.

### 1.3.3.  The Religious Other

Religious othering played a smaller role than the two previous forms but nevertheless gained momentum especially in 2003 and 2005. Here, it was solely emphasised by conservative parliamentarians that the religious heritage of Europe should have found access to the Charter of Fundamental Rights and the proposed constitution.[175] Angela Merkel said, months before she became Chancellor: "A clear reference to God would certainly have helped us to define our identity more clearly."[176] In 2010, a parliamentarian from the Left party took an opposite stance, stating that a "European identity that sees itself in demarcation to Islam amounts to marginalization and discrimination of parts of the European population – This cannot be."[177] However, later, especially during the refugee "crisis", religious othering did not find attention anymore. In the Council of Europe, religious othering did not play a significant role. This can potentially be explained by the higher number of members, including Orthodox and Islamic countries which may let appear religious diving lines less relevant where it comes to European identity.

Active religious othering appeared, as pointed out above, prominently in the *FAZ*[178] and as well in the *Zeit*, including an above-introduced guest contribution by Cardinal Ratzinger.[179] In *Zeit* and *SZ*, it was argued that religious questions only then would play a role where a line to the other has to be drawn, hence, the othering in the emphasis of the own religious heritage was pointed out here.[180] In the *SZ*, the question of the importance of the own religion as a source of identity and demarcation to others was seen most critically.[181] However, the notion, that religion fulfils an important function in the defining of the self and exclusion of those who do not belong to Europe anymore was still present.[182]

The rise of religion in the discussion on identity came at a time, where questions of how far Europe reaches and what actually is at the core of a European identity, how it can be defined who shall not be

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[173] "Grenzen für Europa", *Die Zeit.*
[174] "Die Geister des Pralinengipfels", *Die Zeit*, 5 June 2003; "Der neue alte Antiamerikanismus", *Die Zeit*, 24 February 2014.
[175] DBT, Plenary protocol 15/19; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/53.
[176] DBT, Plenary protocol 15/175.
[177] DBT, Plenary protocol 17/82, plenary session of 17 December 2010.
[178] "Europäische Identitätsarmut", *FAZ*; "Fahrplan", *FAZ.*
[179] "Europas Kultur und ihre Krise", *Die Zeit*; "Das Eigene und das Fremde", *Die Zeit.*
[180] "Ein Anker für Ankara", *SZ*; "Das Eigene und das Fremde", *Die Zeit.*
[181] "Der Traum von den ‚schönen glänzenden Zeiten'", *SZ*; "Ein Anker für Ankara", *SZ*; "Gehört der Islam zu Europa?", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 27 April 2011, 11.
[182] "Der Traum von den ‚schönen glänzenden Zeiten'", *SZ.*

seen as European, where discussed most intensively. However, as quickly as the frame arose it disappeared again in the mid-2000s. While the notion of the Judeo-Christian or only Christian heritage remained strong on national levels, it lost relevance in the European identity discourse. It appears, that this happened parallel to a general decreasing European-identity-discourse. In the field of tension between the own values, realpolitik and the attempts to emphasise the own, shared identity, religion took a particularly problematic position.

### 1.4. Inspired by Nation-State Identity Discourses

Based on the reviewed literature, I formulated as part of the hypothesis, that both frames, power over education and the invention of traditions, symbols and a shared currency – the Euro – would be emphasised more than they eventually were.

### 1.4.1. Power Over Education

The youth as carrier of a European identity or the formation of European identity over education appeared at various other points in the academic literature or political debates. In the here analysed sources, however, parliamentarians in the Bundestag rarely made a reference to it. Only in two debates,[183] this frame was mentioned, once in 1992 and once in 2004. Similar looks the situation in the Council of Europe, where education was emphasised twice, both in the context of a more intensified historical education that would teach the atrocities of the past and the common gains from the European project.[184] In newspapers, it appeared even less, with only one reference to Latin education as a pillar of understanding the common heritage.[185]

Different factors could arguably explain this little interest within the political sphere: The above-analysed frames showed already, that European identity had especially been used were a political project was advertised. The Bologna process (1999) falls into the studied time frame, but apparently was rather advertised by higher degrees of comparability than by creating a shared European educational system, which would foster European identity. Generally, no educational reform or concept plays a role in the analysed documents and therefore education could be underrepresented.

The second explanation could lie in the federal character of the German education system, where the *Länder* (Germany's 16 federal states), not the German government, are in charge of educational matters. This results in a lower representation of this topic in the federal parliament.

### 1.4.2. Invention of Traditions, Symbols and a Currency

Invention of traditions played an equally little role in the analysed debates. Even more than education, this is surprising, as symbols took a more important role since the introduction of an anthem and flag in 1985 and 1986 respectively. However, frames above had already shown that references to European

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[183] DBT, Plenary protocol 12/126; DBT, Plenary protocol 15/114, plenary session of 17 June 2004.
[184] Drucksache 13/4201; Drucksache 14/5007.
[185] "Latein für Amerika", *SZ*.

identity often made in the phase before an implementation, as an argument for the respective process. With the treaty of Maastricht, a "second order" European citizenship was introduced. A Europe of the citizens,[186] however, was not emphasised in the political debate. Where citizens appeared, it was a reference to the national citizens, to whom the Union should not be too distant (similar to the above-discussed frame of a democratic deficit). European citizenship, after the Euro the second most important symbolic introduction of the 1990s, seemed – and seems – to have too little argumentative weight, to be used in the political debate on a national level. Within the newspapers, it looked only slightly different: Twice was European symbolism discussed, but only in *SZ* and *Zeit*.[187] The first mention, from 2000, was a critical reflection of the European Capitals of Culture scheme which would be (interestingly!) symbolically overloaded and unclear in its focus – instead, it would search for European identity between Christian roots in the south and the nature of the North.[188] 17 years later, symbolisms and traditions was risen again, in 2017 and, hence, a situation in which the Union was still perceived in crisis, one author demanded the introduction of a European holiday on the date of the Storm on the Bastille.[189] Symbolism and tradition appear as a matter that might play an important role within the European institutions, but on this here-studied national level, European symbolism was rather inexistent. The same counts for the media landscape, in which the topic only appeared in the wake of a scheme's reform (the Capitals of Culture followed a different concept from 2000 on) or in a moment of crisis.

The great exception to this rule, however, is the introduction of the symbolically most important element of the EU of the past decades: the Euro. In the Bundestag, it was primarily the conservative CDU/CSU (Union), who was leading the government until 1998, who advertised the introduction of the Euro as a strengthening of European identity.[190] Especially Chancellor Kohl refers to the Euro as a new element of a shared identity, while at the same time making clear that national identity remains the central one (as shown above). This is not surprising, as Kohl is considered one of the founding fathers of the Euro. The Greens, who were part of the new government from 1998 on, were more sceptical of the integrative strength of the Euro[191]and the conviction of the Union had apparently decreased over the years: after the financial crisis, one argues, that the Euro does not anymore provide enough identification with Europe.[192] Being located in the sphere of the EU, the Euro did not play a significant role in the Council of Europe.

However, in the media, a controversial debate took place, whether the Euro could provide the identity most media stated to be absent, as it was discussed previously. Especially the *SZ* was arguing against

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[186] This concept refers to a strengthening of active European citizenship as an attempt to bring the European institutions closer to the citizens. While the term was in use for a long time already, an actual and funded programme called "Europe for Citizens" was introduced in 2014 for a six-year-long period.
[187] "Warum hat Europa keinen Nationalfeiertag?", *Die Zeit*.
[188] "Ganz nach Beliebigkeit", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 15 May 2000, 18.
[189] "Warum hat Europa keinen Nationalfeiertag?", *Die Zeit*.
[190] e.g.: DBT, Plenary protocol 13/230.
[191] DBT, Plenary protocol 14/105.
[192] Plenary protocol 18/193.

the identity-aspect of a shared currency, calling it the "most trivial and indifferent medium"[193] and criticising the awarding of the Charlemagne Prize, a highly recognised prize for work done in the service of European unification, to the Euro. The author argued against the prize's reasoning that European identity would be strengthened through the Euro, saying that a singular European identity was never a goal and the Euro the wrong vehicle to reach it.[194] Other media are convinced of the Euro's identity building strength. The *FAZ* argued contrary to the *SZ*, calling it a basis for identity through more transnational interest. Lastly, guest contributions by Historian Paul Nolte and then-European Central Bank director Mario Draghi defended the Euro as a "powerful symbol"[195] of European identity which would have risen since the treaty of Maastricht.[196]

### 2. Temporal Rise and Decline of Frames and Clusters

European identity was, in the Bundestag, widely discussed over the entire time span that was here-analysed. Only in a small number of years, no reference to the concept was made at all (1994, 2008). The years with the most frames mentioned were 1989, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2003. Those peaks and lows match with a wider tendency in the body: the concept of European identity experienced comparatively high popularity in the early 1990s, between 1998 and 2005 and again in 2016 and 2017. In the two phases in between, 1993 until 1997 and 2006 until 2015, the concept experienced very little attention. Table 6 below illustrates the temporal distribution for all sources.
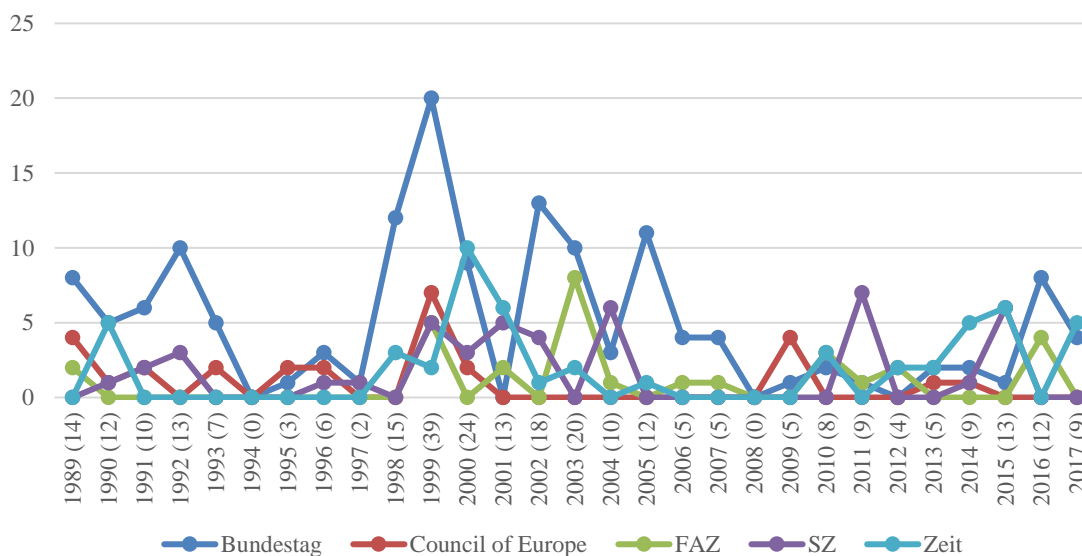


Table 6. Overview over all frames in all sources. Numbers in brackets behind number of year indicate total number of frames per year.

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[193] "Traumtänzer auf dem Weg zum Boden", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 26 May 1997, 13.
[194] "Leere Symbolik", *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 December 2001, 15.
[195] "So bleibt der Euro stabil!", *Die Zeit*, 30 August 2012.
[196] "Die unamerikanische Nation", *Die Zeit*.

Several frames appeared frequently over the entire time span. Those are especially the (normative) discourse on the EU as bordered values-based community, how national identity relates to the European identity and the frame of European history. The last one had lost a bit momentum in the early 2000s, but still appeared frequently and never vanished.

Other frames lost relevance in the curse of time. These are security related frames which stopped playing a role for European identification after 1999. This is remarkable, as security-related cooperation, securitisation and common security- and foreign policies were only strengthened from this point on. Only in the field of defence and closer cooperation within NATO, aspects that were often referred to when security and European identity were put in a relation, did arguably not significantly develop. National relation to European identity remained a key frame over the entire time, but the notion of a European identity that should and would replace the national identities and would eventually lead into a united Europe completely disappeared in the 1990s. As well of declining relevance was culture. This frame never disappeared, however, it appeared less frequently.

Where culture as a common element of identification lost momentum, identity created by the European institutions appeared increasingly often, parallel to the increasing institutional integration. However, at the same time, the frame of an absence of European identity appeared more and more often, especially since 1998.

Lastly, a number of frames experienced peaks in utterances. In the early 2000s, where the discussions on accession of Eastern European states, Turkey and the development of a European constitution othering took a new central place in the argumentation. Religious roots as well as geographical boundaries of Europe became much-used frames. The vision of the EU as a global actor 'doing IR differently' appeared at various times in the 1990s. But, just like the security frame, it did not play a role anymore after 2000s. This can arguably be seen an argument for the EU's turn towards a stronger and rather realpolitik-oriented actor, which could be attributed less the role of an institution that is more value-based than other actors. This argumentation will return below, in the discussion. The principled vision-frame of the EU as borderless, rights-based post-national entity was as well strong in the late 1980s and early 1990s as well as in 1999 but with the planned further steps of integration becoming reality, this frame lost relevance significantly. Symbolism had reached a peak of references shortly before the introduction of the Euro, but afterwards played almost no role anymore.

Generally, European identity appeared less frequently in the Council of Europe than could have been expected. After 2000, this topic barely played a role anymore and already did not appeared in the reports to the Bundestag in 1992, 1994, 1997, 1998 and between 2001 and 2008. The frame of history played a particularly big role in the phase between 1996 and 2000, but other forms of othering did barely or not appear. Institutions alike never played a considerable role, besides few references to the Council itself as a guardian of identity. With culture and the protection of European values being the central fields of action for the Council, it came as little surprise, that the respective frames were dominant over the

timeframe. More surprisingly, the frame of an absence of European identity was found frequently: European identity was seen as work in progress. The picture looks quite differently in the Council compared to the other newspaper sources. It appeared, that the own work influenced heavily the perception of European identity. The discussions, further, show, how detached the two European supranational organisations are. It could be argued, that both protect different forms of European identity. However, the Council is most clearly the much less relevant organisation that is – even if it comes to its core fields of culture and human rights – rarely if ever referred to in the other sources.

Newspaper mentioning of European identity went through periods of more and less intensity that were somewhat similar to the Bundestag-debates. In two periods, 1993 until 1995 and 2008 until 2009, the concept was not mentioned. But in the times between 1994 and 2004, European identity had been discussed more excessively than before or after. After 2004, a phase of very little interest followed, but since 2010, it re-gathered certain momentum. While these phases are somewhat similar to the Bundestag, the news-coverage usually followed a certain event (if crisis, treaty or referendum), with the exception of debates around the accession of new member-states, while references to the Bundestag usually took place before an event, e.g. when the Euro was referred to as a crucial mean of fostering identity in the future. Different were as well the used frames. The by-far most used frame was the absence of European identity (28 references). Authors in all newspaper pointed frequently out, that there was and is nothing such as a European identity and that it won't be created through certain actions (see above). The second most-used frame was the relation of national to European identity (20 hits). Unlike in the early phase of the time frame in the Bundestag, a European identity replacing the national one did never play a significant role in the newspapers: while they were still seen critically in many articles, national identities remained the central sources of identification. The newspapers mostly argued, that national identities within an integrated Europe have to be preserved. At few points, this was accompanied by the notion that media themselves would have to fulfil an important role in creating a trans-European public and identity. European history and geographical othering were as well among the most-used frames (14 references respectively). The latter one started to appear during the accession-debates but was increasingly problematised. References to history and values remained important over the entire timespan and rather became more important, while culture remained important as well but rather lost relevance. Generally, within the newspapers, patterns in the use of frames were less marked, the frames appeared to be more stable over time.

### 3. Discussion of Findings

The analysis of the three bodies of sources from the Bundestag, the reports of the Bundestag-delegation to the Council of Europe and three German newspapers have provided relevant insights into the use and functions of European identity in public and political debate. Those will be discussed in this chapter, structured along the narrower research sub-questions presented in the introduction of this thesis. The last sub-question as well as the main question, which mark the broader research frame, build on the

findings outlined in this chapter and will be picked-up in the final conclusion in the end. This discussion aims at bringing the results from the above-frame analysis together and contextualise them.

### 3.1. Definitions of Identity

The here-analysed sources provided a great number of definitions of European identity, as the analysis above has shown. Among those, references to elements derived from nation-state identity discourses (especially education and symbolism) were used less frequently than others, which is a surprising outcome. Forms of othering, however, were essential not only for national identity-discourses but in the here-discussed case as well. Chapter 3.2. will elaborate on those. The last chapter had pointed out temporal changes and shows, that the perception of the European identity changed towards a greater emphasis of the necessity of national identities. This can be exemplified by the disappearance of the call for United States of Europe with an identity replacing the national ones since the mid-1990s. Tendencies between political camps were visible as well: to conservative politicians, the value-community dimension was central, while the politically left valued especially the importance of democratic structures on European level as a source of identification.

Where history as a central distinction to some form of an "other" was central in the 1990s, the various accession debates – central watershed points as it will be argued below – brought in the late 1990s other forms of othering to the fore. A parallel development was the increasing relevance of nation-states, in the relation of the different identities but as well in form of slightly Eurosceptic notions, e.g. when lacking democracy, over-bureaucratisation or a great distance of the Union to the citizens was criticised. The constitutional treaty, which eventually failed, appeared in the discourse as a last peak of the identity-discourse. Bridging the gap between institutions and citizens and creating a shared identity visibly lost relevance in the new millennium and did not play any significant role in the discussion of the EU's latest great treaty, the treaty of Lisbon.

Despite these tendencies towards re-nationalisation and a declining European identity discourse, institutions were attributed with an increasingly important function in regard to identification with Europe. While this sounds counter-intuitive at first sight, it can be seen as a logic consequence of strengthened institutions. Cultural elements, either clear-cut in their own frame, or in a form mixed with the political identity within the four visions, appears to have lost momentum over time. The picture, then, is that of a Union, whose institutions are increasingly important for identity but, at the same time, the discourse on identity flattened. The rise of institutions might have caused a greater role of realpolitik, which came at the cost of the more-vague cultural superstructure.

Within the Council of Europe, central frames for the definition of European identity are values and culture, but here a decreasing relevance of the concept became evident more clearly than in all other sources: over long time-spans within the time frame, European identity was not explicitly mentioned here.

In the newspaper articles, a variety of forms of identity played a role, but while European identity was often used to argue for something in the Bundestag, in the media it appeared more as a reactive concept. This point will be elaborated below. Besides attempts to find common identity in history and cultural achievements of the past, the discussion of what European identity is, was strong in the debates concerning the constitution. As well, as the following chapter will show, was the relation to the United States of defining relevance for the European identity discourse.

Lastly, a majority of the frames that had been identified above, based on previous academic work turned out to be the central ones (e.g. forms of othering), but few made lesser appearances (e.g. education and symbols) and others – especially subframes – emerged from the here analysed sources (e.g. absence of European identity or Yugoslavia).

### 3.2. The Role of History and Othering

History was always considered a central element of shared identity in Europe. References to the lessons of history, the two World Wars and the Holocaust in particular, are often considered the reasons an integrated Europe became possible. Therefore, it is no surprise, that history as well took a central role in the here analysed sources. The above-introduced theoretical work, especially by Thomas Diez, gave reason to expect, that in the recent years the forms of othering took a turn away from a historical self-othering – the European downfalls of the past as the other of the enlightened present – towards more nation-state-alike form of othering, namely the definition of the self via (geographical) borders to non-European others. And, indeed, this form of othering became increasingly important since the mid-1990s and especially in the beginning of the 21$^{st}$ century. The dominant debates of this time still had a strong historical connotation, e.g. in the form of a historical belonging of Eastern Europe to the European Union, but was geographic at its core. Over the entire time analysed here, a re-negotiation of the transatlantic relations was present, including voices who argued for a sharper distinction from the United States and those warning of this distinction alike. The geographical dimension was, in fact always present. While this thesis did not cover sources from before 1989, it was argued above, that the geographic other, particularly the Soviet Union, has continuously strengthened European integration and identification from outside.

In addition, historical othering (or identification via historic events and achievements) did not disappear. Therefore, the argument that geographical othering would have replaced historical one cannot be proven in this thesis. However, another element of Diez' argumentation did appear in this study as well: he argued that the turn to more geographical othering would have been a symptom of a transformation of the EU to a realpolitik actor. Based on the findings of this thesis, I argue that identification on European level got increasingly attached to the institutions but experienced a dramatic decline since the constitution failed in several referendums. Where the Union got increasingly involved in global political affairs besides its traditional fields of the internal market and trade and only strengthened its position as a political institution, identification was increasingly searched for within the nations. This argumentation

is supported by the ever-increasing frame of national identity in relation to European identity, in which the protection of nations and their identity as well as the emphasis of *United in Diversity* only became stronger. Further, the role of history had changed, too: In the beginning of the analysed timespan, references to historical experiences were frequently linked to the need of integration and institutionalisation as a logic consequence. The relation of history to rather concrete consequences for current political affairs changed towards an emphasis of remembrance without the connection to further European integration. In other words, the historical need for European integration and identification decreased visibly over time.

In addition to the geographical component, the early 2000s saw a rise in references to Europe's religious roots, sometimes in opposition to Islam. This frame was at least in the 1990s not relevant and remained present – on a lower level – until the end of the timeframe.

While the otherings were central components of self-identification, they often remained vague. The tendency provides further evidence to the claim, that European identity always remained – and more importantly was intended to remain – a second-order identity which can be used inclusively or exclusively alike. From international relations stems the concept of *forum shopping* in which parallel existing structures are systematically used depending on the greatest benefit. This concept appears to be fitting in many cases for the analysis of the relation between identities and the argumentative function of Europe on national levels. This, then means that European identity functioned during the here-analysed times as an argumentative canvas that could be filled differently even at a time, depending on the "realm" of Europe the discussion takes place in.

Discussions on the edges of Europe were present and important in the Council, too. While in the Bundestag lines were often drawn at the borders of Russia or Turkey, the Council was and is until today the more integrative forum. History was of great relevance too, but religious othering played little to no role were values and culture remained the central elements of identification.

The newspaper articles discussed especially the potential accession of Turkey in detail, while the Eastern enlargement and especially Russia played a smaller role. Religious othering was present in the different newspapers, but geographic othering with focus on the transatlantic relations and history were the dominant forms. History was in many cases seen through a geopolitical lens, the United States and the Soviet Union were important actors.

As it was discussed above in the analysis of the othering frames, some elements were left out of the otherings almost completely. What research already had shown for the history-telling of Europe, that colonialism never played a role in the European history-telling,[197] appeared in the same form here.

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[197] Settele, "Including Exclusion in European Memory?"; Buettner, "What – and who – is 'European' in the Postcolonial EU".

Othering within the here-examined context functions less hierarchical than othering usually – especially in the (post)colonial context does. Defining an "other" by geographic or religious means entails, the analysis above has shown, a strong cultural note. A country is not only deemed other because it is located too far away, as it was clearly the case in Morocco's failed accession attempt in 1986, but also because it is (at least partly) outside an area of perceived cultural homogeneity. However, a certain degree of valuation is unavoidable. In the case of Turkey it is the criteria of not yet reached civil society and state of law, which makes the candidate too inferior to access the exclusive club. In case of America, the "other" on the "own"-side of traditional geopolitics, the West, is the other because of either varying social welfare politics or different geopolitical ambitions which sometimes even counteract the European approach towards global politics. In regard to religion, the perception of a wild, expansionist and coherent religious system "Islam" is present in Europe, but in the here studied discourses to a surprisingly little extent. Inferiority is, hence, present in the formation of European identity, but neither outspoken nor very strongly. Where it clearly exists in various other dimensions of European identity formations and foreign affairs, in the European identity discourse the criteria of belonging seem to be less rated than it might be the case in other contexts.

A greater relevance of religious and geographic othering in the financial and the refugee "crisis" was expected in the hypothesis presented above; however, the analysis had shown the refugee "crisis" was, not put in relation to European identity in the Council and the Bundestag. Arguably, European identity was here not considered relevant or strong enough to be harmed by what caused intense identity discussion on national levels. Within the newspapers, the notion of a Europe under threat by increasing nationalism and national responses was more important. This underlines the argument, that European identity in newspapers appeared in a more reactive manner and is discussed merely in times of crisis or described as absent. A direct reference to the financial crisis was made in none of the sources: the major European conflicts during this crisis only appeared indirectly in the form of a rising number of references to the problems of European identity in the newspapers.

### 3.3. Evolution of European Identity and the Role of Watershed Points

Discussions regarding European identity revolved strongly around watershed points. The crucial events were the post-reunification debate in the early 1990s, the European treaties between 1993 and 2007 (Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice, Lisbon), the Eastern Enlargement and its discussion until 2004, Turkeys accession application and the surrounding debate since the late 1990s, the development of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in 2000 and the development of a constitution for Europe which eventually failed in 2005. These points were crucial particularly in the Bundestag. In the media, the two crises in 2008 and 2015 played, sometimes indirectly, a relevant role, too. This difference points out a pattern in the entire time frame: discussion in media was most intense in the early 2000s and in times of insecurity, where cleavages within the Union became most visible. In the Bundestag, European identity almost disappeared during these uncertainties. Here, the 1990s with their various debates and experiences

(especially the reunification), where crucial. A study of the period pre-1989 would be able to test the thesis, if the German reunification was a central watershed in regard to "Europe-goals" on German level and maybe even across Europe.

The most central point was the Eastern enlargement debate. Above it was argued, that Diez argumentation of a central shift from historical to geographical othering cannot be proven right in this thesis. However, if the enlargement debate is isolated from others, it appears that the argumentation was more historic at first (e.g. that the East historically belongs to the Europe or that the East enlargement marks the moment were the heritage of the Wars was overcome) and turned more geographic after that. As soon as the Eastern states became EU-member-states in 2004, the framing of them turned more critically. Together with the failed constitutional treaties, this marks the point in the Bundestag, where European identity seemingly lost its argumentative momentum and was barely mentioned for the years to come.

At no point was the "Brexit", the United Kingdom's departure from the EU, put in a relation to European identity. More generally, national opt-outs and special treatments were, in the here-analysed sources, never put in relation to European identity. In the Bundestag, this reaffirms the notion that the concept was rather used for promotional purposes than seen as an actual identity that could be threatened. In the newspapers, on the other side, were the crises and other pan-European developments increasingly seen as a danger for the European cohesion and identity.

European identity appears to never have reached the status of anything close to a "first-order" identity. In the political institutions, it often appeared as a flexible "tool" for the promotion of certain interests. But where it was not of use it was not mentioned, and crises appeared to be considered mostly a threat to national identities but not the shared supranational one. In the media, that pronounced the lack of this identity much more, the crises were experienced as a greater threat to it. The so-called refugee "crisis" illustrates this: in the Council and the Bundestag, migration was not put in a relation with European identity unlike in the media.

## VIII.  Conclusion

This thesis has aimed at applying a different view on European cooperation, integration and identification by studying the use and functions of European identity in political and media debates. The analysis was guided by the main question: "To what extent, how and why has European Identity been used and discussed in the German Bundestag, its delegation to the Council of Europe and German newspapers between 1989 and 2017?"

**Findings: changing relevance and new tensions.** This research has shown different uses and relevance of European identity in the various institutions. Furthermore, it has indicated that institutions became increasingly sources of identity, but that the European identity discourse lost relevance and intensity along a re-emergence of nation-state categories. Certain elements of nation-state identity discourses were translated to the European discourse, leading to an even stronger intensification of the field of

tension between elements and categories of national and post-national identity. With a focus on the perception of the European Union on one particular national level, this thesis has provided a more detailed understanding of the functioning of the German debate on Europe and shown a visible re-nationalisation, accompanied by the rise of Eurosceptic notions and inner-European cleavages.

The thesis has shown, that, after a period of intensification in the 1990s and 2000s, European identity lost much of its discursive relevance. As a concept that appeared to be mostly used for the promotion of further steps of European integration it became less attractive where further integration became less likely over time. Later, the crises and inner-European dividing lines were not framed as a threat to European identity in the different sources as the concept appeared to have lost much of its relevance and argumentative strength in support of further European integration. In the German media and especially parliament, the 1990s were filled with fundamental debates on the relation of the different parts of the German nation with each other and the nations relation to the supranational Union. In a new and diversified geopolitical situation, the nation-state returned as the main source of identification.

**The results' relation to the academic debate.** Another contribution of this thesis to the existing academic literature was the critical empirical testing of existing theoretical concepts as well as to point out the relevance and most important forms of othering. Thomas Diez' argument of shifting forms of othering was in the here-studied context partly disproven, but his second argument of a development towards returning geopolitics in European identity constructions, which would undermine European integration's role as a challenge to the world of nation-states, was found in this context as well. In the introduction and later on, Bo Stråth's argument of European identity's history as the history of an ideologically loaded concept which great disagreement on the content and meaning was introduced. The findings of this thesis have provided further empirical prove to his claim.

However, it is another key finding of this thesis, that Stråth's argument of a questionable analytical use of the concept, which had been introduced above, has to be strongly questioned. As I have shown in this thesis, the study of the use and discussion of European identity can be a highly valuable tool for the study of a general relation of the member-states to the supranational entity and among themselves. The study of European identity can provide insights in the construction of a European self and especially also of a European-other and forms of exclusion.

**Research outlook.** As this detailed study of the European-identity-discourse between 1989 and 2017 has provided relevant insights for a better understanding of the perception of Europe and its relation to the nation-states, it would be of great academic interest to add to this a study of the European-identity-discourse for the period between the foundation of the European Community until 1989. A study of this period would further be able to test the thesis, if the German reunification was a central watershed in regard to "Europe-goals" on German level and maybe even across Europe. Next, a study of the relation of early attempts to build a European identity in relation to the (post-)colonial other, Africa, and the concept of Eurafrica would be of great relevance to gain a better understanding of neo-colonial elements

of European-identity- and foreign-politics-discourses. Lastly, and very importantly, further studies that examine other national discourses on European identity would be of greatest value to get a better pan-European understanding of Europe from "down below", the national levels.

**Windup.** Different forms of European identity, which have been popular in the Bundestag, Council of Europe and German newspapers as well as the evolution of forms of othering and a move towards a greater importance of national identities and solutions were shown by my thesis. The European identity's multifarious nature, functions and hopes that were put on it remain a complicated reality, even 32 years after John Paul II.'s telling speech at the Council of Europe.

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