

**Contesting national identity: discourse analysis of
political speeches.**

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Abstract

This article investigates how national identity is constructed, redefined and contested during the time of humanitarian crisis. The refugee crisis of 2014-2015 has significantly challenged and still does challenge socio-economic systems of the European Union. As a result a significant part of the member-states' populations turned their heads to the right. I propose a hypothesis of national identity to explain the open-door policy, meaning that those, who are in charge of drafting the policy, have been engaged in a public discourse that constructs the European Union identity as rather prominent and more important identity. Using a method of critical discourse analysis, it is shown that state identities have relational nature, completely are dependent on the political context and manipulated through a discourse.

*“There no facts, only interpretations”
Friedrich Nietzsche*

The recent terrorist attacks in Paris, France, have shocked everyone all around the globe. Many international leaders, organizations and citizens have responded with the anti-terrorist attitudes. The prime minister of Poland Beata Szydlo has spoken at the government meeting the day after the attacks. While admitting that Poland is a committed member of the union, she undermined, that the EU refugee politics is going in the right direction. She suggested that as response to the Paris attacks and the European refugee crisis in general, the EU has to change its refugee politics (Premier v internete, 2015). Indeed, the response to the attacks was overly hostile and framed by a lot of media

sources as the result of the European open door policy towards Syrian refugees during the Fall of 2015 (Clark, 2016). In the past year conservative right-wing parties have won a lot of votes in domestic elections. German Populist Party Alternative for Germany (AfD) has seats in half of the state local parliaments (Oliveira and Chadwick, 2016). The most recent regional elections in March of 2016 showed that the political picture in Germany is changing at the moment. AfD finished as a runner up in two regions out of three. The protests like PEGIDA protest in Germany or Patriotic Europeans against the Islamisation of the West drawing in more than 10, 000 participants at a single protest. As a consequence, xenophobic sentiments towards Muslims spiked tenfold in the country (Harris and Desco, 2015). The attacks on the New Year's Eve of 2016 in Cologne, Germany fueled anti-refugee nationalist protests in multiple German municipal centers (Smale, 2016). Unlike other EU states, Germany was not always as open to immigrants and refugees (Dummett, p.141). It has a history of hostility and anti-Semitism towards Turks and other Middle-Eastern refugees. In 1991, refugees were attacked at a local hostel and this fueled similar attacks around the country (Dummett, 142). Last year, both France and Germany saw an 83% increase for the period of the first six months in 2015 compared to the same period in 2014 of the Middle Eastern and North African refugees and this has challenged the system of domestic tolerance to the newcomers (Berry & Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015).

Despite the rising anti-immigrant sentiment, Germany continues to be the largest recipient of refugees from the Middle-East, France is a runner up (UNHCR, 2016). There appears to be a tension between national government policies and local attitudes towards immigration. For now, it looks like the national governments are willing to go against the

right wing opposition in their home countries. However, this requires the ability to suppress the right-wing parties' xenophobic sentiments at home. The right wing parties find a lot of support among locals, who feel disturbed by the unexpected numbers of refugees that flooded their countries.

Balancing between their own national identity and EU's collective identity, urges national governments of France and Germany to act with a minimal respect to local opposition. As a response to the humanitarian crisis, European Commission established a quota system of accepting refugees and encouraged member-states to follow the open-door policy. The local political parties are strongly opposed to such centralized approach of the EU. The opposing viewpoint is often justified by the potential political and security threat that refugees and immigrants might bring into the receiving society. This leads to my research question, how have Germany and France maintained open door policies in the face of domestic opposition? It seems elusive at first that common immigration policy brings the fruits of harmonization to existence. Just by sticking to the assignments of the European Commission, heads of national governments contradict to the domestic sentiments of hostility and fear towards non-Western refugees that are perceived as a threat to the political, social and economic systems of the European states. I argue that domestic anti-immigrant groups have been overpowered by strong sense of EU identity of the national governments, that forces harmonization of the immigration policy and continued acceptance of immigration to remain a strong EU state.

In order to tackle of issues of national identity and its impact on foreign policy, I will overview the constructivist literature on national identity. I will start off with the general constructivist critique of the existing positivist theories, neorealism and

neoliberalism. After discovering that positivist explanations are not sufficient enough in exploration of national identity, I will move on to just a few out of the million of definitions of national identity. National identity is a fascinating social construct that opens endless possibilities for the research due to the endless varieties of the human behavior. I will attempt to understand how European, German and French national identity can be constructed by the means of discourse. Through examining critically rhetoric of the major political figures of selected European member-states, I will try to understand how national identity can be manipulated and contested.

Theoretical frameworks

The world through the ideational point of view.

The distinct trait of constructivism as a framework is the type of research that it does (Nikalayeva, 2015). Constructivists' research, in general, identifies and explores things that we can't touch, but things that are important for understanding international relations. Constructivists look closer at role of ideas in social life, logic of social behavior, norms as social constructs, etc. (Dessler and Owen, 2005). Constructivists take into an account the agents, such as humans, institutions. The ideas and beliefs create the system as the history unfolds. Whereas the more classical theories like realism and liberalism describe the system as a constant, where the nature of the agents like people and institutions is predetermined. The choices in such predetermined international society are given rather than chosen by the leaders of states. In other words, realists and liberals will always be betting on prediction of the the outcomes. Constructivists see the

international system as an assortment of options. International system is created by the choices that the states have made and the course of social interaction between states. These choices and interactions create the following set of conditions, shape the international system of states, and the other way around, where the system shapes state's' behavior (Dessler and Owen, 2005).

National identity as a defining factor of state interests.

Social identity and state identity: definition

Constructivist approach in IR suggests, that the state's' behavior is driven not only by material given factors like hard power and economic gains, but it is shaped by social interaction between state leaders, political parties and other organizations. States acquire identities by sharing collective memories and meanings (Wendt, 1992). Different states have different identities, which allow them to see each other not only as enemies, but also in other different roles. Given, that identity, whether national or collective, does shape state's' political behavior and its foreign policy, we shall come up with the universal definition of identity, the role of identity in shaping foreign policy and how state identity is constructed (Kowert, 1998/99).

IR scholars find it difficult to come up with one single uniformed definition of national identity (Christin and Trechsel, 2002). Some derive their definition of national identity from psychology and other social sciences. The social group, that the individual feels belonging to, can partially define the individual's' social identity (Mercer, 1995). In social sciences individuals use their group to obtain a positive social identity (Mercer, 1995). Social scientists also agree that identities change over time. The change in self identity causes the change in the self interest consequently (Mercer, 1995).

Identity is a bridge between the environment (political environment) and state interests (Katzenstein, 1996). National identities are what distinguishes one nation from another and is a concept, which shapes nation's interests. National identity in international relations is state's perception of self and others. Hopf (1998) does notice, that the world without identities would have been worse than the world made of a complete chaos. Identity is viewed by constructivists as a variable or concept that comes from within. Identity is defined by interests and defines interests itself. In this regard the definition of social identity is somewhat translatable into the the realm of political world (Luedtke, 2005). Scholars like Benedict Anderson (1991) and Andrei Tsygankov (2001) have explored questions of national identity and see it as a culturally conditioned norm that translates into an object's belonging or association with a certain nation-state. As a norm national identity remains over-time and can be used by groups to determine who is the other and does not belong to the group (Onuf, 2013). Thus the concept of national identity can be used to predict xenophobic attitudes that were not caused by conflicts or economic interests (Brown, 2000). Concept of national identity explains the behavior in the situations, that can't be explained by calculating the material gains.

Katzenstein, Keohane and Krasner (1998) dive into the early emergence of the national identity as a variable in international relations. They have come up with a few major arguments in their study of national identity: 'variation in state identity, or changes in state identity, affect the national security interests or policies of states' and 'configurations of national identity affect interstate normative structures, such as regimes or security communities' (Katzenstein, 1996). Meaning that identities and interest mutually define one another. States won't act until they define who they are. With the

collapse of the bipolar world system after the Cold War, the U.S. redefined itself as the world hegemon and this 'title' reshaped the U.S. state interests. From the counterpart to communism, the U.S., arguably, became the expansionist neoliberal democracy.

After tracing down how the concept of state identity has been drawn from the concept of social identity, we arrive to the intersection of different *types of state identities*. First let's look at how the society gets divided into those, who belong and those who don't. If you subjectively place individuals into two separate groups, it will lead to intergroup discrimination (Del Sarto, 2006). Social scientists noticed that the cooperation between members of the group is preconditioned by the existence of that other group that is different and was singled out (Durkheim, 1964). In other words, one group singles other group or groups that are different out in order to define itself based on the existence of someone who is not them. Discrimination, sort of say, is a process that contributes to the formation of identity of those, who are "in" the group. It is a precondition, not a result of social integration (Del Sarto, 2006).

Thus the existence of that "other" different group influences social interaction within the "in-group" and can contribute to the intergroup conflict (Del Sarto, 2006). During the election campaign, Democratic Party in the U.S. has multiple candidates for presidency. Each candidate has its own distinct camp of supporters. However, after only one candidate from the Democrat party gets qualified for the finish line after the primaries, all the voters from all the various Democrat party camps become one entity of a single Democrat candidate supporters. In this example we can see that *collective identity* has rather situational than multiple quality (Del Sarto, 2006).

The discursive construction of national identity.

As it was previously discussed one individual can have multiple social identities. Your lady-boss can be the person you report to at work simultaneously she can be a mother, wife, etc. at home. She can also be a volunteer and community leader by weekends and outside of work life. This brings us to the concept of ‘multiple identities’ (Wodak, 1999). Just like people, nations can have multiple identities that intervene and define their interests as international actors. Having a variety of identities at his or her disposal, person or national government of the given state chooses one applicable to a certain situation. Us as humans not only use language to communicate, we also use it to construct things like marriage, institutions, foreign policy (Gee, 2014).

Domestic contestation of national identity.

By now we know already, that state identities have a profound impact on the political process domestically and internationally. We also established in the previous sections, that identity construction is socio-political process that can be conducted through a variety of different approaches. Identity can be discursively constructed or it can also be challenged and reconstructed, reshaped, redeveloped. Under what conditions state identity can be challenged domestically is an important IR question (Del Sarto, 2006). How significant is the domestic contestation of national identity to the state itself and its role in the international politics?

Immigration crisis as a challenge to state identity.

The migration crisis in historical perspective

This most recent crisis of 2015 might seem so severe and disturbing for the social, political and economic life of the Europe, however, it was not a new phenomenon

(Hollifield, 2015). People have been moving around for centuries. The U.S. as a country, arguably, has emerged as the land of migrants. However, the institutions of nationality were not established till the nineteenth century (Koslowsky 1999). Emergence of nation-state and visa system has conditioned the closed borders regimes (Hollifield, 2015). However, the industrial revolution, two world wars and colonization caused into even bigger migration movement. Thus, from the historical perspective, migration crisis of the past most recent decades has not been as significant as the ones a century ago, Hollifield argues.

In her *The Global Migration Crisis* (1995), Weiner states that, in the recent decades the world, including Europe, has experienced the flows of refugees comparable with the migration caused by the WWII. As Weiner puts it ‘the wars create refugees, but refugees do not create wars’. However, we see that more and more incident of the terrorist attacks happen in the context of migration and refugees. There has been a tension between sending and receiving societies, which made migration an international relations issue. Those fragile states of Middle East and North Africa, Balkans, etc. are the main exporters of refugees all over the globe. Along with being put through so many struggles, that seeking for asylum entails, those who got displaced and pushed out of countries of origin bring challenge social, political and economic systems of the receiving societies.

The *international refugee regime* was created in the aftermath of the WWII in 1950 (Hollifield, 2015). As a lot of consequences of the WWII, this regime aimed to prevent the world from what have happened in the past, to support the new world’s vision of the rule of human rights and equality. In 1951 the United Nations High Commissioner

for Refugees was established. Although being highly underfunded this NGO produces rather informative annual reports on international refugee protection. The UN convention on status of refugees that followed later in 1951 defined who is 'refugee', established the problem, set some rights and obligations in regard to refugees. However, it did not assigned granting of asylum as a universal obligation, leaving up the decision making to the nation-states (Barnett, 2002).

Today European Union lives through the critical time of yet another crisis. The refugees crossing the borders with or without of permission has become an enormous topic of debate and discussion all over the world. Why? It could be for the reason, that immigration as an important field of the public policy. Immigration affects relationships between states, and thus is extremely politicized and contested issue (Hollifield, 2012; Katzenstein, 1996) . Immigration clashes with the conventional principles of state sovereignty, national security, citizenship- defining features of the nation-states (Hollifield, 2012). Who should control rules of exit and entry in the supra state such as EU? Is border control in the jurisdiction of national governments or Brussels? These and other important questions are frequently asked now by scholars (Weiner, 1995; Brochmann and Hammar, 1999). After September 11 immigration has become a security issue in international relations (Hollifield, 2012).

The notion of nation-state that consisted of people that share the same cultural values and speak the same language has first emerged in Western Europe. Ethnic groups, that failed to assimilate, have not been treated by the national governments as equal. (Weiner, 1995). Regardless of its political regime, Western European countries were able to develop either welcoming or closed immigration policies. The concept of single

nation- single national identity has been defining European countries for a long time. Whereas now with the developing of the EU project, multiculturalism came to play as another factor, that have changed the politics of migration in Europe.

German leaders have recognized the importance of part taking in this collective European identity long ago and, especially, invested in creating political and social solidarity in the 90 (Willson- Rood, 2013). The 90s is the specific time period, when the originally economic project had to become political and social as well. European leaders realized, that the EU won't be a strong project without a common collective identity.

In the similar fashion the state identity defines national interests in immigration policy. National identity is a norm of belonging as it was stated previously. Thus immigration is centerpiece issue of questions of national identity (Luedtke, 2005).

The success of the right-wing populist parties in Europe is strongly linked to the issues of national identity and values (Oesch, 2008). Afterall, it is up to the hosting society to decide who is included and who is not. The acceptance of newcomers is heavily dependent on how the hosting society identifies itself within the international system (Weiner, 1995).

Refugee or security crises and identity construction is a political phenomena, which promoted the identity creation by the means of foreign policy (Nabers, 2009). The humanitarian or refugee crisis is a challenge to national identity, because it causes public debates over who is included and who is not, whom is to share the resources with, and who is excluded from the national circle. If the public concern was created and there's no political force to articulate it, than the idea of nationalism comes to the surface and

contests the national identity, which is being promoted by the mainstream national government.

Methodology

For my case studies I chose to look at how German and French national identities are constructed through the discourse and then challenged by the critical events like influx of refugees. By the means of discourse- historical analysis I will revisit the historical events that shaped and resulted into the modern German and French identities. I will also elaborate on the specific EU, German and French immigration policies. I will do so in attempt to map out where the nations and the Union stand right now in their specific direction of foreign policy.

Discourse analysis as a social practice constructs is the path to understanding how people articulate their national identity. Discourse is a variety of social verbal and nonverbal interactions and behavior that gives objects their meaning. Through the discourse we evaluate each other's identity and create our own. Moreover, we then replicate those meanings and spread them around in a form of ideas and narratives. When we articulate things that relate to who we are, it is not a matter of what we call it, and it is the matter of what we mean by it. Studying discourse or using discourse in studying international relations will allow us to identify and predict patterns of human behavior and patterns of social and political life (Carta and Morin, 2014).

The method that I chose for this project is consists of two categories: critical discourse analysis (CDA) and discourse historical analysis (DHA). I thought, it will be the most suitable way to study national identity, especially in the times, when it is

challenged. The paradigm of CDA has been studied and employed as a research method for decades now (Wodak, 1999). CDA is a qualitative method of ‘measuring’ national identity. It allows the researchers to study the construction, transformation and justification of narratives of national identities. This method along with its sister method of discourse-historical analysis was perfected at Vienna School of Discourse Analysis. The historical aspect of such method allows us to explore the historical background of national identity and other narratives.

Language is what creates politics (Nabers, 2009). For the purposes of this research I paid a particular attention to the speeches, addresses and an interview of the political leaders of Germany and France. The individuals, whose speeches I chose, are in the position of articulating and constructing the identity through the discourse, they have an agency to socially construct identity. In those pieces of rhetoric I will be looking for the specific discursive components that, in my opinion, contribute to the development of national identity. My discourse analysis strategies were borrowed from the Austrian scholars of the Vienna School of Discourse analysis (Wodak, 1999). I have attempted to tailor their extensive methodology for my research of French and German identities. In my sample of political speeches I will be looking for specific discursive structures. I will place those structures into three different categories of the discourse analysis. The categories of analysis are the topological (thematic), strategic and linguistic devices (Wodak, 1999).

The first category covers three major themes that are present in the political speeches that I sampled. Those themes are:

1. Common political past
2. Common culture

3. Common political present + future.

By defining signifiers of the common political past I will be able to observe, which type of identity the speakers are referring too. The common political past theme is the indicator of the commonality between members of the same group. Mentioning of the common political events and the lessons learnt signifies speaker's' intention in constructing either EU's collective identity, German or French national identities. Then the indicators of common political culture will signify of how the identity is being maintained in German and French discourses. Identifying structures that talk about anything about everyday cultural practices and food, clothing, sports, etc. will be another way tell that the speakers have a certain attention to relate to the public. Through the analysis of construction of common present and future we can see in which direction French and German politicians taking their immigration policies: national or European.

Another dimension is categorized into strategic use of discourse and is also crucial for understanding how one identity is constructed and another is maintained or contested. Wodak (1999) coded these strategies into two macro- groups:

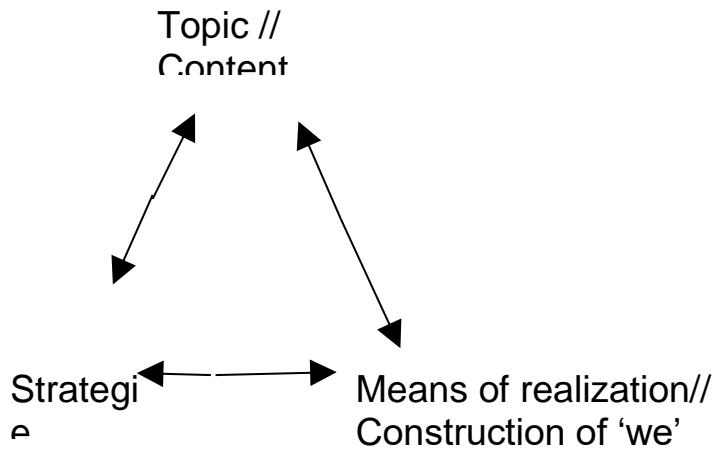
1. constructive
2. transformative/dismantling

Those two strategies, when present allow us to make an assumption of how identities can be manipulated through discourse. The constructive strategies will be identified by the use of structures and discourse that emphasizes unity, sameness, togetherness, similarity, solidarity. The transformative strategies in the other words are identified by key phrases extra-national dependence, warning against the loss of national autonomy, declaring something as obsolete.

Another way to execute the construction of national identity is to use linguistic devices in specific way. In this research of French and German national identities I will be looking at national articulation of “we- structure” as one of the possible means of discourse realization. The use of “we” has the straight relation to constructing of national identity, because it symbolizes ‘unity’, ‘solidarity’, ‘sameness’. In the political speeches the “we” is used purposefully because speech as a form of rhetoric is the event that requires preparation. In this research I will be distinguishing between four different ways of manipulating the “we” on the European arena (Larsen, 2014):

1. “We” only. When we is mentioned in regards to the member-state only.
2. Member state and EU constitute “we”
3. The EU only is implied, when “we” is used

Through constructing and using “we” on various occasions, national officials and populist parties’ spokespersons articulate ‘actorness’. As Larsen (2014) put it, ‘actorness’ for the purpose of this research is state’s construction of “we” in a given direction of foreign policy. We will use the immigration policy as a dimension for the research. By articulation Larson means a practice, that establishes the relations between actors. We will use language from the speeches of selected individuals that represent the state and state opposition.



For this research I have collected and analyzed through the lens of CDA four political speeches of the heads of national government of Germany and France, as well as speeches of their opponents. I chose Germany and France as my case studies, based on how different their approaches are to conducting immigration politics. Although both of them are Western democracies and members of the EU state, Germany represents a federative republic with less power in the center and more in the regions that are more or less automatic in terms of decision making (Risse, 2015). France, on the contrary, is a unitary state, and represent the republic with a very strong centralized power. It also represents the Western European country that could've invented the national citizenship (Brubaker, 2009). With that intention I will be looking at the video recordings from the EU parliament session from October 7, 2015. Angela Merkel and Francois Hollande have addressed the assembly and Marine Le Pen was responding to this address (EU parliament News, 2015). I also used the interview of the leader of German leading populist party Alternative for Germany (AfD) Frauke Petry (Deutsche Welle, 2016) .

Case studies

Background of the refugee crisis

The humanitarian crisis that hit Europe this last fall of 2015 was an incentive for this project. Although it became public and got picked up by the media in the late 2015, it has started long before that. Over the period of the last few years, the refugees were pushed out of their countries of origin by the war conflicts, violence and persecution, general instability in the Middle East and North Africa. Men, women and children, including infants, desperately headed over to the European countries in the hopes of finding a better and safer future. More than 200,000 people tried to cross the Mediterranean Sea in 2014 and this number only went up in 2015 (Berry & Garcia-Blanco & Moore, 2015). Hundreds of refugees' lives were lost to the sea and thousands more entered the EU and challenged the existing social and economic systems of the member states. The situation has become critical and national governments were confronted with the obligation to respond to the world and their citizens.

Out of all of the Western European countries Germany, is probably, the most desirable destination. The EU countries that are situated on the rim of the European continent happen to be the poorest countries of the Union. Countries like Italy, Hungary and Greece are not capable of accepting all of the refugees. Although according to the Dublin agreement the country of entry suppose to be the one processing the asylum applications, refugees pass through them and head over to Germany.

The notion of European 'economic superpower' is one of the reasons that makes Germany so attractive for the asylum seekers (Reimann, 2016). The opportunity to get a decent job there and a possibility to actually get an asylum status is higher than in Southern European countries. In addition, many refugees end up finding their relatives and family that settled in Germany earlier. Although the temporary border between

Germany and Austria was implemented in the late summer of 2015, the refugee welcoming policy of the Chancellor Merkel prior to that has encouraged thousands of additional refugees to enter Germany.

In February of 2016 the number of pending asylum applications reached over the 393 000 applications in Germany. Although the attitude towards refugees are overall positive, it changes in the beginning of the 2016. After the assault on German women in Cologne on the New Year Day, the public's support to Merkel's policies started to crumble. There are still those, who want to help those displaced people, who fled their homes in Syria and other countries for the safety reasons of survival. However, the recomposition of German civil society created this tension that was taken advantage of by the populist parties and popularized them among Germans.

The crisis is taking a huge toll on the German political system. The composition of local governments changes significantly in some regions due to the mistrust that German citizens develop towards Merkel's government. The anti-immigrant sentiment manifests itself into the public turning towards the Populist Party's agenda. Those populist parties build their agenda through turning Germans back to the question of national identity. What does it mean to be a German in the times of the refugee crisis?

In order to understand the moment, when the refugee crisis hit the continent, we will look at the *EU foreign policy on immigration* in the next section. We also will take a sneak peak at the German and French immigration policies and politics in the most recent to the crisis times. Although Europeans have migrated to many parts of the world after the war, many more immigrants entered the European continent seeking for work and

asylum (Hollifield, 2012). Historically European countries developed different approach to the immigration policies. France has always been the one, whose immigration politics were more loyal towards immigrants. Whereas Germany historically practiced closed door policies. (Weiner, 1995).

Since 1999 EU has been investing a lot of forces into the development of the common EU policy (EU Immigration Portal, 2016). A common immigration policy is much needed in the state that does not have internal borders. It started getting developed in order to provide prosperity, solidarity and security of the EU as a union of states. The EU and nation states under the common immigration policy still continue to have different sets of rules on immigration. Nation states have left the final decision making power to themselves.

Refugee politics and rules of entrance deserve a special rubric in this debate due to its uprising importance in the world of the unending conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. As early as in 1992 the European community of states has issued policies that made it difficult for refugees immigrate to the EU (Weiner, 1995). The refugee policy that was propes then by the politicians stated, that the EU would rather prefer the refugees to stay in the neighboring to the conflict countries than wander around the European continent. For instance, if Syrian refugees feel safer in Turkey, than in their own country, then they should stay and claim a refugee status in Turkey. This creates an enormous tension then between countries of entry and destination.

The EU countries have also tried to deal with the refugee influx bilaterally (Weiner, 1995). Recently German leader Angela Merkel and her government have been working on making a deal with Turkey regarding the overflow of the refugees. Germany

is trying to convince Turkey to take back a few thousands of refugees that fled Germany in the past couple of years (The Guardian, 2016). Turkey is hoping, that every that Syrian refugees won't stay in Turkey and will travel further West and Germany is hoping that Turkey can accept those refugees that were not admitted in Greece and returned back to the East.

In most of the cases, the EU immigration policy was aimed to prevent refugees from entering the common border. It was designed to put the burden of dealing with refugees on either international organization, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, neighboring to the conflict countries or redirecting the refugees to go back to those countries.

The formation of the EU common immigration policy began in the 1990 with the second Schengen Agreement (McLaren, 2006). Before the agreement the immigration politics were strictly left up to the national governments. In the 1980s most EU receiving countries accepted immigrants for the labor purposes. So the perception of those immigrants in the receiving countries was mostly positive due to the benefits they brought with. Simultaneously, those receiving countries lost control of the flow of those labor migrants. It happened due to the acceptance by European countries of the European Convention of Human Rights and the regime it established. One of the implications of the regime was the basic human right to live in the family. According to this right all the migrants under the jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights had an opportunity to reunite and bring their families into the receiving country. This significantly change the composition of the receiving countries' populations.

With events in the Balkans the need for a common asylum policy became apparent (McLaren, 2006). The unseen amount of refugees from central Europe has urged calling into force Dublin Convention in the 1997¹. The Convention aimed to prevent the situations where asylum seekers applied for asylum in multiple states simultaneously. It also added more responsibility to the receiving states: asylum applications couldn't get transferred from country to country with any accepting responsibility. The general purpose of the Dublin Convention was to reduce asylum application overall within the EU.

The Treaty on European Union of 1992 has brought the most cohesion into the coordination of the EU immigration policy. It established the the jurisdiction of the treaty law over the immigration policy (McLaren, 2006). A number of committees on asylum, visa and migration policies has been established. It was also defined who the 'refugee' is in the EU. A few other legally binding joint actions were discussed and brought into the realm of legal world and the jurisdiction of the joint EU law. However up till today most of the national governments were reluctant about accepting Brussels control over the EU immigration policies and common borders.

Since late eighteenth century through early nineteenth century *German immigration policies* were ethnic oriented (Bauder, 2008). On one hand the flow of immigrants never stopped due to the need of cheap labor. On the other hand the newcomers were never considered German and lived the life of the outsiders. It was a dominant attitude throughout the Wilhelmine era, the Weimar Republic, the Third Reich

¹ Originally signed in 1990

and the Federal Republic of Germany (Brubaker, 1992). Today immigrants constitute 20% of German population (Loringhoven, 2015).

The modern debate over immigration policy in Germany drags from the 90s (Loringhoven, 2015). It includes balancing of the two concepts: culturalism and multiculturalism. Culturalism stands for the lead culture being dominant and thus prevailing force of integration. The new immigrants should comply with German culture and values in order to call Germany 'home'. On the other hand, the liberal and democratic Germany was getting with the installment of the EU institution, the more views on immigrants were influenced by multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is a concept that the rules of entry and attitudes towards immigrants should based on tolerance, openness and acceptance. Thus this days Germany experiences the crisis through the combination of both approaches and views.

Who is a 'German' ? Formation of German identity.

Who is a German? This question itched social scientists for centuries. Philosophers, anthropologists, psychologists, historians had been egoed to find the answer to the question of German national identity. Nietzsche, one of the most proclaimed Germans of all times, once said that the question of 'who is a German?' will never die (Hirschfeld, 2014). National identity are not fixed by all means. However, looking at the historical past will give us a better understanding of what the 'German experience' has been like. It will also help us to understand in which way the historical past manifested into the present moment.

Germany became a unified nation-state roughly as we know it for the first time in 1871. This is when the primary German national identity was formed (Kitchen, 2012).

Originally it was humanistic, apolitical and cosmopolitan. However, the common enemy and the object of hatred- French Napoleon invaders became an incentive for the original German nationalism. Barbaric behavior French troops transformed the way Germans viewed themselves in the relation to the world. Germans felt culturally superior due to being disgusted by the inappropriate behavior of French. Germans felt being over the rule and institutions that other European Great Powers installed upon them. The feeling of resistance of the common enemy unified the nation by the time the Congress of Vienna established German Confederation in 1871.

After the German Empire got established under Bismarck, the 'second edition' of German identity was shaped. Bismarck's foreign policy was hazardous (Kitchen, 2012) , and his domestic policy promoted rather anti-Semitism and racism. Bismarck alienated anyone who was not Protestant conservative into 'not a true German'. The WWI has distorted this rather national division into national unity. Again, the national unity was found at the challenging time of facing the war. The power gap after the war brought Hitler and his National Socialist party to the steering wheel of the German nation. The nation was devastated economically and politically after the Treaty of Versailles peace agreement. The German identity and who is a German took a horrifically acute racist angle.

After the WWII the nation's spirit was crashed. The burden of crimes against humanity committed by Nazis impacted German national identity tremendously. German identity after the war didn't go beyond citizenship (Hirschfeld, 2014). The nation felt smashed by the aftermath of the war. The aftermath included division of prior united territory into two major zones of influence. The FRG politically became a capitalist

democratic enclave of Western democracies and GDR became a Stalinist planned economy dictatorship. While both parts were rebuilding themselves after the war, the Western part was a little more successful in economic gains. Western Germans felt proud about their economic achievements while experiencing a collective guilt over the Nazi past. They also felt in some special way about their brothers and sisters behind the iron curtain. Germans from the Eastern part meanwhile experienced pride for the sport achievements under the Soviet command economy.

The division of German land not only created two different countries, it seemed like it created two separate nations. After reunification westerners felt that they have to carry an economic burden for the easterners. This sentiment contributed into the perception of easterners on the West as needy and unthankful. In return, the westerners were perceived on the East like greedy colonizers. Thus not only German land needed to be reunited, German nation needed to be redefined after the reunification. Despite their differences, both sides realized that their past is a part of who they are. Through adapting liberal values and norms rather than through dwelling on guilt for historical past, they decided to redefine their national identity.²

French immigration policies

Generally, there are two possible scenarios of how the national governments deal with immigration, if the asylum hasn't been denied. One possible way is to integrate immigrants through granting them residence, another is granting them citizenship (Hargreaves, 1995). The former implies certain rights in the receiving society, the latter

² Holocaust is a recognized part of German identity. However, it is perceived by Germans as a collective responsibility for the crimes against humanity, rather a collective historical guilt (Hirschfeld, 2014)

guarantees the political rights of a citizen. In regards the immigration policies, French has been historically open. However, starting from 1970s, France became implementing restrictions on the issuance of work permits and residency status for non-nationals. Shortly after in the next decade, French politics was shaken by the big public debate over the issues of immigration. The debate over accessibility of French citizenship made it a common practice to perceive immigration as a threat to national identity in France. As the result, non-nationals chances of getting French citizenship were significantly complicated by the new passage of restrictive legislation in 1993.

Overall the immigration system of France remained hierarchical throughout the endeavors of the 20th century and despite decolonization (Hargreaves, 1995). Migrants and refugees from European countries were better accepted by French people, than those who came from sub-Saharan Africa. In fact, migrants from the West-Arab countries were the most frequently referred as others. French people are those who are not Algerians, for instance. French national identity as any other nation's identity derives itself from drawing the dividing line between 'self' and 'others'. Among the attributes, that qualify foreigners for others is religion. Although French society is considered to be a secular society, public attitude towards those who follow Islam has traditionally been more hostile than towards, those who don't (Hargreaves, 1995).

Who is a 'French'?

The modern French nationality started as far back the revolution of 1789. French people proclaimed themselves sovereign from the monarch and equal before the French law (Hargreaves, 1995). The most notorious product of the Revolution was the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. . That legal historical document

articulated what it meant to be French. Those French values include principles of universalism, unitarism, secularism and assimilation. According to the declaration the nation is an entity that is free from any sort of class division, religious separation and so on (Brubaker, 2009).

Citizenship, as an institution of belonging to the nation, or its political embodiment- state, was confirmed by the Constitution of 1791 (Hargreaves, 1995). According to the Constitution the rights of citizenship were reserved after the 'active' members of French society, which meant white wealthier males, women and poor class citizens were excluded from 'active'. In order to be eligible for the French citizenship one should have been born on the French soil or be a French father's descendant. Foreigners, if wished to apply for French citizenship, could have done so after a five year residence with a prove of integration into the French society. After the times of Constitution, the admission to the citizenship and its openness have been changing depending on whether the governing political force was authoritarian or liberal republican, but remained open overall.

French idea of nationality and belonging was always based of assimilation. The political rights and inclusion were only promised to those foreigners, who succeeded in their integration into the French society. The concepts of integration and assimilation headline the modern debates on national identity and immigration in France. Meanwhile, even those who are included, those who have become citizens, do not necessarily share the same national identity in France, and vice versa. Although, it is important that French national identity can be acquired through citizenship.

German national identity in the immigration discourse.

Speaker and occasion

Once again, for this research I examine political addresses and speeches of the heads of national governments and their opponents'. For the case of Germany I selected one speech by Angela Merkel and her opponent's Frauke Petry of Alternative for Deutschland (AfD), German Populist Party. It is important to consider that, the politician, who delivers the speech is most likely not the one who wrote it. Despite the fact of the ownership, the person, who delivers the speech is fully responsible for the product.

Angela Merkel is a Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany since 2005. She is a first women and an East Germaner to run the *Bundeskanzlerin*. She is a member of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany (CDU). Merkel has been known as an effective leader of Germany and a big supporter of the European Union. Her style in politics can be characterized as less words more action. She is a sharp decision maker and problem solver for Germany, EU and the globe. There were a few examples of that ever since she was swan as Chancellor. She has bailed German banks during the global financial crisis of 2008; she was the one who bailed Greek banks and sustained the EU existence; during the Ukrainian crises she was the one confronting Putin in person and at the negotiations table. In a wake of the brand new refugee crisis, she is a key figure to refer to as well.

In the speech that I sampled for the discourse analysis Merkel addresses the European Parliament in October 2015. Marine Le Pen of French Front National and Francois Hollande, the President of France have spoken on the same occasion on the same day. In fact, the three speeches are connected in a format as address-address-

response, where Le Pen was re battling her opponents Merkel and Hollande. Frauke Petry has given her interview to the Spiegel, German international broadcaster. As its main audience the Spiegel sees international decision makers and opinion leaders, activist for liberal values and human rights. I believe, it is important to know who the speakers and the audience are in order to make the connection with the national identity.

In her statement to the European Parliament, Merkel has clearly followed a few narratives. Some of them, of course, were just various issues of the international politics. However, she also delivered the speech that was constructed in the way that allowed her to follow up on a few themes regarding national identity. She have mentioned the historical events, the and mutual feelings and attitudes experienced in the past not only by Germans and French together, but together with the whole Europe. Her speech opens up with passage that sets up the tone to the entire address:

The last time a French President and a German Chancellor jointly addressed the European Parliament was in November 1989. Francois Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl spoke together here in Strasbourg shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Both of them felt that great changes were about to sweep Germany and Europe. Both of them were deeply moved by this wind of change. Both of them were clearly expressed their commitment to responding with joint European solutions.

(Merkel, 2015)

To continue this narrative of the past events that were symbolically charged with collective action she brings up how skeptic old member states were at the beginning of the EU project. She uses the discursive structures like '*historic achievements*' to point out the mutual historic past. She describes the attitudes among member states then as they were universally and generally felt by every state that was in the EU project. She uses '*old fears and skepticism*', '*mutual efforts*' regarding the enlargement and integration of the new states in the 90s. Not only mutually experienced events and attitudes she

addresses in her speech. She makes it a special point to bring up the Lisbon Treaty and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. Mutual past through the creation of the legal documents and treaties. Merkel draws the pattern of the challenges that the Union overcame acting jointly in the time of the crisis. She mentions European financial crisis. Merkel mentions another challenging time for the Union in times of the Ukrainian.

As far as construction of common cultural values goes Merkel touches upon that but only in regards to the European Union values. She describes the way that EU underwent as a journey of acquiring more of *tolerance, prosperity, freedom, responsibility*. As a founding achievement and thus norm she views an *undivided Europe*. She describes Europe in terms of a global player, thus the entity with the *peacemaking and protective* virtues and qualities. She does say the actual words '*our principles*', '*our values*' quite a few. On one occasion she has said that the refugees impose a challenge on European values. Then she elaborates on her understanding of what those values might be:

In my opinion this means that we must be guided by the values we have enshrined in European treaties: human dignity, the rule of law, tolerance, respect for minorities and solidarity. In my opinion it means that pan-European challenges are not to be solved by a few member states on their own, but by all of us together.

(Merkel, 2015)

Merkel does have a specific vision in mind, when she talks about European Union. Virtues like European courage and and economic strength also add up to her description of what Europe is.

Constructing a common present and future is another topological dimension that Merkel covers in her speech in order to complete the image of Europe she envisions. She includes the Ukrainian crisis and the refugee crisis into the picture of the present time as

critical challenges to the world and European community. Merkel shares her view on the present time Europe - ‘*free and united*’. She describes the present in terms of collecting fruits from the hard effort of building the European Union. After all the hardships of creating the EU, now she presents us Europe that is ‘*more tolerant*’, ‘*more prosperous*’, ‘*more free*’, ‘*more diverse*’ than ever.

Derived from her view of the present day, Merkel constructs her view of the future in a form of a hope and prescription. She, as it was shown earlier, gets her vision for the future based on the previous successes: mutual achievements, common history and shared values. She states that the solution for the solid future is for European member states to stick together. In regards to the crisis, she also points out that it is important to involve neighboring with the EU countries into the crafting of the refugee crisis solution.

But it [Turkey] needs more support from us....For this very reason, the dialogue on migration policy that the European Commission has launched with Turkey is of vital importance. Germany will work bilaterally in support of Commission's endeavors.

(Merkel, 2015)

Merkel proposes improvements, when she talks about the future:

...we have to tailor our foreign and development policy far more closely to the goals of resolving conflicts and combating the factors that cause people to flee their homes.

(Merkel, 2015)

By taking all those steps of improvement of the EU policies and tailoring them to the crisis she admits, Europe will get altered again. She does admit that the influx of refugees will challenge the European values.

To bring a somewhat opposing view to a discussion, I examined an interview of another recently famous political figure in Germany. Frauke Petry, 40 years old, is the leader of German right-wing populist party Alternative for Deutschland (AfD). AfD was originally founded as an anti-Euro group in a wake of the Greek financial crisis (Connolly,

2016). Today this eurosceptic party took on another identity of anti-immigrant party. Although they are being associated with the radical anti-immigrant movement PEGIDA, AfD does not proclaim itself as a radical anti-immigrant party. However, Petry is notorious for being extremely critical of Merkel's open door policy.

In her interview to the Germany's main daily paper *Del Spiegel*, Petry has been following topological patterns of the past, present and future, that can be useful for our discourse analysis. She has referred to the WWII. Although in a way that was more critical to the ruling political party:

Germany's past used to justify all kinds of things. People say: We have to do this or that because we Germans have weighed ourselves with a special kind of guilt.

(Beyer & Fleischhauer, 2016)

This little passage was given in the context of the question about whether the current German nation should be patriotic or not. Petry does make a point that Germans should be taking '*responsibility for the past*' but at the same time shouldn't be ashamed to be '*patriotic*'. When asked about German identity in a globalized world, Petry stirred the answer toward national identification rather than European.

Petry, when asked a personal question about her place of origin, Dresden, discusses what it meant to be a German before the reunification. She describes on a personal example how many East Germans wished to escape to the West, despite the risk of their families that were left behind, being punished. Then she continues with the theme of reunification and describes the fall of the Wall as an '*extremely happy experience*'. Interestingly, the interviewer asks how the reunification slogan of 1989 "We are the people" became an anti-immigrant slogan in 2015. To answer that tricky question, Petry stirred up from the content of the slogan to the German political structure, democracy, where citizens can peacefully protest.

To develop the theme of the democratic state even further, we now will look at how Petry envisions Germany as nation state. First of all in this interview she points out that Germany is a democratic state, or at least it should be. However, she wishes to uncover how the national government's policies, on the immigration including, do not stand up to democratic standards. In fact, she cites one of the columnists that she is in alignment with :

The immigration of so many Muslims will change our culture. If this change is desired, it must be a product of a democratic decision supported by a broad majority. But Ms. Merkel simply opened the borders and invited everybody in, without consulting the parliament of the people.

(Beyer & Fleischhauer, 2016)

Among other values and virtues Petry mentions in a context of German national identity are *'freedom'*, *'rule of law'*, *'traditional marriage'*.

As far as the vision for the German present and future, Petry again, draws it from her party's political agenda. The agenda is based on the fundamental values of freedom and democracy. She believes German nation deserves to feel *'patriotic'*, it deserves to be *'free and democratic'*. When asked where does she see her party in 10 years, Petry replied: 'In the government'.

Strategies

Given, that discursive strategies are used by speakers to communicate their ideas with the certain intention, we can take a closer look to how those strategies were employed in the case of German politicians: Merkel and Petry. In the table below I will provide the discursive structures, that I thought will identify whether Merkel and Petry intentionally tried to construct European or national identity, or both.

Petry	Merkel	
'Healthy relationship to our identity' 'Healthy patriotism' 'Responsibility for preservation of democracy, freedom and the rule of law'	'Great changes for the Germany and Europe' 'Joint European solutions' 'Healing of divisions in Europe' 'Europe is free and united' 'Efforts have paid for all of us' 'Jointly developed tolerance and diversity' 'We emerged stronger than we entered the crisis' 'By acting together...we were able..'	Constructive (unity, sameness, togetherness, similarity, solidarity)
'Islam threatening us' 'EU disenfranchising us' 'Government lying to us' 'German currency and migration policies destroying EU solidarity' 'Corrective to Brussels centralization' 'Nationalism and patriotism are not the same' 'To create citizens, not consumers'	'Must not give into temptation to fall back on national government action'	Transformative (extra-national dependence, warning against the loss of national autonomy, declaring something as obsolete)

Constructing the “we” Germany

Since Germany is a member of the bigger supra state- European Union, the pronoun ‘we’, ‘ours’, ‘us’ can be articulated in the discourse of Merkel and Petry in a few possible ways. All four sampled speeches were different in length and the longer the speech is the bigger the usage of ‘we’, we can expect. For that reason I made the following table of the frequency of usage the ‘we’ construction in affiliation with the EU and national identity.

Please note, the frequency is given in percentage, not in an absolute value.

Le Pen	Hollande	Petry	Merkel	
78% (7)	5 % (1)	90% (18)	6 % (2)	Member state only
22% (2)	82% (18)	10% (2)	51% (17)	EU + member state
0% (0)	13 % (3)	0% (0)	43% (14)	EU only
9	22	20	33	Sum (times)

Figure 1 “ Frequency of employment of the ‘we’ structure in various meanings”

Merkel mentioned the pronoun ‘we’ ‘ours’ or ‘us’ 33 times throughout her address; Petry mentioned ‘we’ and its variations 20 times; Hollande expressed we 22 times; Le Pen’s speech was the shortest and had the least amount of ‘we’ structure- 9.

French national identity in the immigration discourse.

Speaker and occasion

Francois Hollande is the 24th President of French Republic and a member of the French Socialist Party. He has been a member of this party for decades. Among his political agenda are proposals of public investment banks, extending retirement age, and marriage and adoption equality and so on. Le Pan on the other hand is a recognized leader of French biggest nationalist party Front National. She is notorious for her anti-immigration position. She believes, mass migration will create even more segregated areas within France, than there already is. Those segregated communities, she is convinced are where the fundamental Islamic extremism takes off in Europe. The Islamic

fundamentalism is the a threat to French liberty and thus her political agenda is pro-French and anti-immigrant.

Topological contents

Hollande's speech appears to follow the time lapse like patterns as well. French president does mention an important historical events to illustrate the end of the division of Europe. He talks about the *26th anniversary of the unification of Europe*. Among other event from the past he fixates a lot on the *Greek crisis*. He discusses it in terms of the challenge it posed on the European Union, and what a success story it turned out to be after the Union acted jointly. He discusses the other crises, like the security crisis and the events in Ukraine. He reminds us how the crisis is being dealt with on the co operational basis in the *'Normandy' format*.

The present time is viewed by him through the lens of yet another crisis to to France and Europe. Refugee and migrant crisis along with the social crisis is what France and European community are dealing in a present day. *Fear* is the described by him as a prominent construct, that crisis brings with it. Terrorism and its spread is one of the major threats, that French and European communities are faced with today. As far as the picture of the future day goes, Hollande proposes:

For the future: reinforce the euro zone, strengthen Schengen area, returning to national borders will be a tragic era. Control of external borders, implementation of the European border guard service system, creating the common asylum regime for the European Union.

(European Parliament New, 2015)

Hollande does see the future of France, as a joint future within the community of European state, with shared external border, not national borders. He needs a strong Europe that will *'underpin French sovereignty'*. He specifically mentions the conditions,

that won't make Europe a strong state. Nationalism will bring war, thus only joint policies and responsibilities is the key to sustain '*more Europe, but not less Europe*'.

Hollande's vision of the past, the future and the present of France is imbedded in the European idea. He talks about France as of a state with the rule of law as a major foundation and incentive of the nation-state. Then he draws parallels with the fundamental values of the European Union and finds French and EU values to be in an alignment. Them both, France and EU, share commitment to the *solidarity, responsibility to humanitarian action*. Cooperation and joint policies are promoting *commonalities, not differences*. Thus he sees sovereignty as an obstacle of the modern world's cooperation and implementing liberal values.

Le Pen with the mastered skills of the public oratory was rebutting Hollande's address. As far as history goes she does not try to bring up unifying events, to highlight the commonalities between French and EU agendas and shared history. However, she brings up the French Constitution, which dates back to the 18th century. She is tackles the unique French history, that is only appealing to the exclusive group of people- French citizens. French Constitution here is a normative document, a historic event and an emotional appeal.

For the news of the day Le Pen does not bring to the table anything new, the picture is still the same, the perspective that she give is completely different from the one that Hollande has in store for the present and the future of France. She draws the picture of the day from portraying the Hollande's government in the negative terms:

The interest of France is not to blindly submit to a policy decided in Berlin, Brussels or Washington.

Or

Your model is a subservience to the US, austerity, unfair competition, mass surveillance of citizens, social dumping, and migration submersion.

(European Parliament New, 2015)

The policies that Le Pen criticizes in these statements have been implemented as a response to the challenges of recent decade. From her critical position, it is clear that she disagrees with the way her national government responds to the global threats like financial crisis and refugee crisis.

Since Le Pen's current agenda is extremely critical of the today's government, her vision for the future of France within the European policy is also different from the one, that Hollande envisions. She constructs the future within the European community, but not as the Union with shared borders. She wants to see France as an autonomous state in a '*multipolar world*' without the center of gravity, whatever it might be. As far as right now she sees Germany as a decision making power and the policy assigner to France and the EU. She wants to see people of Europe not as a community of nation-states, but not member states:

...the voice of free Europeans, our sovereign peoples who turn away from the European Union, because they crave nation.

(European Parliament New, 2015)

She does see the political future of France being a democratic republic with the freedom of speech, freedom to choose their future through democratic vote and a country, ruled by law and French Constitution.

Linguistic strategies

Identifying the discursive strategies enables us to visualize what intentions Hollande and Le Pen have in portraying France and French national interest. We will see what elements of national French identity were important and which were not to bring up in front of the audience of the European Parliament. Overall, it was harder to pinpoint specific discursive structures that would signify constructive and transformational strategy. However, Le Pen's respond was full of clues of how she approaches French identity. Hollande on the other hand clearly states, that overall, French identity and interests are within the European Union's scope of interests.

Le Pen	Hollande	
<p>French Constitution Title 1</p> <p>'Interests of France are..'</p> <p>'Migration is essential issue of French security, prosperity and identity'</p>	<p>'Action to solidarity'</p> <p>'France and Germany produced a common response'</p> <p>'Terrorism is a common threat'</p> <p>'Build the Union on commonalities, not differences'</p> <p>'Sovereignty of the member states is a dismantling of community'</p> <p>'Nationalism is war'</p>	<p>constructive(unity, sameness, togetherness, similarity, solidarity)</p>
<p>'The interests of France are not to blindly submit to others policies'</p> <p>'France is not Germany'</p> <p>'France's interests are not EU interests'</p>	<p>'Prevent the retreat of France to the nation shell'</p> <p>'Sovereignty is in decline today'</p> <p>'Nationalism is a movement backwards'</p>	<p>Transformative (extra-national dependence, warning against the loss of national autonomy, declaring something as obsolete)</p>

Construction of 'we' France

As well as in the German case, French politicians use 'we' structure to construct the unity and solidarity of whether national or European order³. Hollande has mentioned France as a part of EU most of the time. To Hollande France was is first and for all a member of the EU. Hollande's France is reliant on a strong European Union for its sovereignty. For Le Pan Sovereignty from the EU is France. She is highly critical of Hollande's attempts to mimic the EU and German policies, realizing that the reason France has faced this humanitarian crisis in such bad economic shape is only due to the austerity policies, that Brussels and Merkel crafted to sustain Greece.

Analysis.

Understanding of nation, European and national consciousness, and identity

Through the critical discourse analysis of the data collected, it is apparent that the key political figures have not hesitated to employ various techniques of construction of national identity. Thematic dimension of the political speeches gave us an exact impression of how different Germany and France are viewed from different political spectrums. Although it is rather obvious that the political views of the national government and their opposition will be different, it is an interesting thing to observe that both sides have been employing the same technique of constructing national identities.

Hollande and Merkel draw us the picture of the Europe united. They both almost copied one another in their attempt to deliver the image of Europe in the most similar fashion. They both opened their address with the revisiting the symbolic history of fall of

³ Refer to Figure 1 for results.

the Berlin Wall. An interesting part was that Merkel often referred to Germany as the EU, and Hollande mostly referred to France as a member of the EU. He made an impression, that France is a recipient of European aid and reliant on the EU in drafting future policies. Whereas Merkel made an impression that Germany is the EU. German interests are where the EU interests are. It seemed like today EU's only interest is survival through the challenge posed by humanitarian crisis.

Hollande and Merkel talked about the future in the identical terms. They both articulated future German and French interests are in the joint solutions, cooperation, shared values from the historical lessons. Although the idea behind the open-door policy might be solely made up of economic interests and preserving the Euro zone, the only way it can be executed is through making people believe the 'we are all in it together'. Without constructing the reality, where everyone is united by the same idea, it is not possible to make one.

On the other hand, we have the leaders of the opposition, Petry and Le Pen that in constructing German and French national identity rely on completely different sort of historic events. Le Pen talks in her speech about the French Constitution, which we know from the background section, is the fundamental institute of French existence. Le Pen refers to it as a fundament of French civilization. By replacing the word nation with the word 'French civilization', she emphasizing the significance of the Constitution for the French experience. She mentions constitution in a context of sovereignty. By putting this two concepts together, she reinforces the notion of French identity. Le Pen redefines French identity through the believe of the concept of sovereignty.

All four of the politicians bring up the same democratic values that in their opinion France and Germany should live up to. However, all four of them interpret them differently. Among those values are universal democratic standards- freedom, solidarity, human rights, human dignity, and democracy. Heads of national governments use those values to persuade the European audience, that if they don't deal with the refugee crisis jointly, they will fail to live up to those values.

Petry, while using the same vocabulary as Merkel, employs those democratic values to construct a completely different picture. She confronts Merkel by saying that the government does not obey these values. Merkel's government creates the nation of consumers, not the democratic society. For Le Pen, Hollande has abandoned French nation and 'sworn' to Merkel and the U.S. by saying that the nation- state is obsolete. Both of the opposition leaders contest their government's interpretation of democracy.

The French and German construction of national identity has been different historically. German cultural unification led the Germans from all German lands unite politically. France on the other hand created the unitary state first and then experienced cultural unification (Hargreaves, 1995). In the challenging times like the refugee crises is, it is apparent, how crucial the collective identity is for keeping the Union alive. The vitality and sustaining European identity as German and French shared identity is a driving force of the Merkel and Hollande's politics and policy choices. They both couldn't stress enough how important it is to build the union based on similarities, not on differences.

Conclusion.

My research of issues of national identity I would like to conclude with some observations I have noticed about the nature of the problem. National identity gets scholarly attention over and over again for a few decades now, especially in the times of challenge or crisis. This research is not an exception. European Union found itself in problematic situation, where the policy prescriptions from the Brussels are being resisted on the domestic level within member states. The resistance manifests itself into the political force that arise to contest the 'official' national identity and redefine it based on what the political and historical context is.

Identities have the qualities of a marble cake. They don't overpower each other, they unfold with time and within the political context. In the case of France the right wing Front National builds the case against Hollande's government through challenging his definition of France interests are. Germany assumed the unspoken role of the EU leader, due to the weak leadership in Brussels, thus felt obligated to not only think of what does Germany need but what is the EU interest in handling the crisis- integration and member state cooperation.

Natallia majored in International Relations from San Francisco State University which enabled her to discover her passion for research, writing, and storytelling. With the tools that her school gave her she has learned how to communicate the people with diverse cultural backgrounds. From personal experience, Natallia knows what it means to be a refugee in a foreign country. At 21 years old she immigrated to the USA from Belarus in a hope of finding a better future and educational possibilities. Now many years and legal processes later she is interested as never before in issues of immigration here in the U.S. and abroad.

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