11 How culture and history shape Europe’s differentiated integration

The cases of liberal international relations and northern Euroscepticism

Richard McMahon

In response to the Euro crisis, David Cameron’s government has finally abandoned a half-century-long British struggle to remain at the heart of European decision-making, while holding back the pace of integration. This recognizes and helps institutionalize different types and degrees of integration within the EU. Similarly in the academic field, two recent books mark the increasing prominence of differentiated integration, which encompasses concepts such as variable geometry, multi-speed and à la carte Europe (Dyson and Sepos 2010; Kölliker 2006). An intricate matrix of intertwined institutions has developed to allow states to calibrate their participation in economic, political, cultural and security aspects of European integration, according to desire and capability. European states selectively participate in diverse combinations of organizations such as the EU, Nato and Council of Europe, and EU schemes like Schengen and the Euro, which promote and manage interdependence. Overlapping memberships, long candidacy periods and association projects like the European Economic Area (EEA) and Partnership for Peace create geographically differentiated constellations of countries with differing degrees and types of integration (Schmidt 2009: 30; Wæver 1996: 122). The integration zone thus has nebulous external borders, fading into its surrounding international environment via gradations of association and spheres of influence. More informally, states form coalitions and vary in negotiating style, implementation of European measures (Falkner 2000) and public ideas about integration. Enlargement powerfully stimulates calls1 for differentiated integration by increasing socio-cultural diversity (Pentland 2000: 278–85; Zielonka and Mair 2002: 5–6). New members like Sweden politically strengthen the coalition for diversification and broaden the range of positions to be accommodated. Successive treaties since 1993 therefore changed Europe’s motto from ‘ever closer union’ to ‘unity in diversity’ and progressively introduced spatial differentiation mechanisms like opt-outs, subsidiarity, enhanced cooperation and the open method of coordination.

This differentiated European integration demonstrates striking transnational spatial patterns, such as the ‘northern’ Euroscepticism of Britain and Scandinavia and the core-periphery structure of EU enlargement and calls for a two-speed
Europe. This chapter argues that this differentiated desire and capability of countries to participate in integration in various spheres is influenced by complex, historically emerging, transnational spatial patterns of socio-cultural similarity and difference, which affect issues like the differences to be reconciled in integration and the ease of negotiation (Fuchs and Klingemann 2002: 52; Zielonka and Mair 2002: 1). Scholars recognize such regional patterns, shaped by history, in factors like capitalism (Bulmer 1993: 372), nationalism (Drušák 2006: 169) and democracy (Fuchs and Klingemann 2002: 24–7). Civic or ethnic traditions of nationalism, for example, influence conceptions of European identity and have long been ascribed a particular east-west geography in Europe (Kohn 1944). Religions, dynastic empires, economic systems, socio-cultural transformations of modernity and formative experiences like the Reformation, Enlightenment and Napoleonic conquests shape these enduring transnational geographies of values, discourses, communication codes, institutions and conditions (Díez Medrano 2003: 170; Theiler 2004: 639).

Anthropologists (Bellier and Wilson 2000), historians (af Malmborg and Stråth 2002) and comparative political scientists (Díez Medrano 2003; Fuchs and Klingemann 2002; Marcussen et al. 1999) recognize that countries have different, historically emerging relationships to integration. Regionalization (Hurrell 2003: 39–40) and sociology literatures (Favell and Guiraudon 2009) link political integration to wider transnational social interaction. Europe’s transformation since 1989 from a stable space to a dynamic and unpredictable one has meanwhile stimulated numerous spatial analyses of European integration. Dyson and Sepos (2010) devote several chapters to regional differentiation in integration. However, many of these focus on general spatial implications of processes like globalization, regional devolution or even differentiated integration (Kölliker 2006). Outside of specialist research areas such as economic geography (King and Donati 1999), coalitions in the Council of Ministers (Mattila 2010) and enlargement (Zielonka and Mair 2002), scholars rarely study the concrete map of which territories participate in integration in what ways or systematically analyse how transnational cultural patterns affect this geography. Berezin and Díez Medrano (2008), for example, correlate Euroscepticism with a raw measure of physical distance and Jörnsen et al. (2000) analyse Europe’s abstract ‘territorial field of tension’. Studies of cultural influences on integration often focus on the factors influencing individual attitudes (Díez Medrano 2003: 170), while even selfconsciously transnational studies concentrate on the roles of transnational actors rather than spatial findings (Kaiser and Starie 2005).

As influence from the ‘national’ model explains much of this neglect, the next section briefly argues that the novel culture-geography-politics relations of European integration make spatial variation newly important. The chapter’s main body then empirically examines two of the numerous interacting socio-cultural factors that help shape the spatial patterns of integration. One case study, Western Europe’s international relations (IR) culture of demilitarized relations between neighbouring countries, is part of a complex of mutually reinforcing and spatially correlating factors of wealth, liberal modernity and integration.
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Case study two, northern Euroscepticism, illustrates that this integrating region is crosscut with potentially dis-integrative cultural patterns like northern Protestantism, Anglophone exceptionalism and the Central European constitutional tradition. Both case studies involve complex interaction between historical contingency and historical continuity and between socio-cultural practices and discursive constructions of the nation and Europe. My conclusion stresses that this historically evolving complexity differentiates my approach from essentialist and deterministic speculation about integration and European cultural geography.

The European culture-geography-politics nexus

Though 1990s comparative politics scholars reconceptualized the EU as a novel, *sui generis* polity, rejecting traditional IR representations of it as a proto-state or inter-state organization (Antonsich, Chapter 1 in this volume), the European relationship between culture, geography and politics is still imagined in traditional national state terms. Dreams and nightmares of integration envisage a centralized, culturally homogenizing and crisply bordered United States of Europe, a geopolitical actor with an egalitarian, uniform application of rights and duties and a strong collective identity among citizens (Adler 2010: 75; Pentland 2000: 274; Zielonka and Mair 2002: 2–3). As EU scholars increasingly turned to culture in the 1990s, they therefore overwhelmingly concentrated on constructions of collective identity, the key link in nationalism between culture, geography and politics (Kohli 2000: 117; Antonsich, this volume). However, Europe’s feeble, fractured collective identity permits far less cultural homogenization and political centralization than powerful national identities did. Nationalism campaigned to seize control of modern states, which evolved primarily as military technologies (Marks 1997: 38). Requiring strictly delineated, exclusive, militarily defensible state frontiers, nationalists usually defined national communities according to relatively simple *a priori* criteria such as language, religion, established political frontiers or physical features like the island of Ireland. These easily understood, emblematic criteria helped persuade national publics that they formed distinct, territorially bounded natural communities of destiny. Within these spatially simple national containers, twentieth-century states organized societies, for war and social welfare, creating a historically unprecedented correspondence of multiple aspects of socio-cultural and political life (Jönssen et al. 2000: 73). Most of the complex mesh of transnational and subnational cultural patterns was suppressed or dismissed as politically irrelevant (Ruggie 1998: 179–80).

By contrast, the current low political salience of military threat dramatically reduces the EU’s need for sharp borders, intense solidarity or political centralization. European schemes like the Euro and Schengen can therefore disaggregate the spatial correspondence of political control over issues like money and migration that nation states organized for a few centuries (Marks 1997: 40–1). The weak popular political identification with Europe meanwhile undermines attempts to create a powerful consensus on any single ideal external EU border.
Not only does Europe’s geography raise far weaker passions than national geography issues like Flanders or German unification, but there is not even a common debate which could agree a consensus geographical programme. National geography discourses were often contested, but at least this usually occurred within a common national demos, the political community of people who identified with the nation. National demoi now hold largely separate conversations on which countries have a right to participate in European integration and how deeply their own countries should integrate. Among Baltic states for example, Estonians and Lithuanians appear enthusiastically pro-integration, while Latvians seem decidedly Eurosceptic (Eurobarometer 2009 (71)). Political centralization meanwhile gave national governments the tools to implement national geography programmes. European integration geography by contrast emerges ad hoc, unplanned and unpredictable from radically decentralized negotiation and technical measurements like the Copenhagen criteria for EU membership and economic convergence tests for EMU (Economic and Monetary Union) (Marks 1997: 28).

Persistent attempts by journalists and politicians to define Europe’s optimal ‘natural’ borders, often based on millennial geographical continuities from Charlemagne’s empire and Christianity (Soysal 2003: 197–9), paradoxically keep scholars focused on identity. Debates about Central European and Turkish accession powerfully mobilized these nation-style a priori definitions of Europe (Sjursen, Chapter 2 in this volume). Cultural politics scholars recognize this as essentialist and politically instrumental identity construction. However, this can lead to a generalized suspicion that all theories of large-scale, enduring spatial patterns of culture shaping present politics must be deterministic, instrumental oversimplifications. An important scholarly current, however, recognizes that separate human communities are not merely ‘imagined’. Identity construction interacts with the specific geographies of distinctive practices, conditions, discourses, institutions and communication codes to distinguish and define communities (Adler 2010: 68; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Jönssen et al. 2000: 3–5).

The term ‘EUrope’, coined to distinguish the empirical integrating bloc from a priori imagined geographies of ‘Europe’ as a civilization or continent (Antonsich 2008) emphasizes that integration involves a specific, historically embedded matrix of both discourse and practices. Integration and opposition to it are both supported by multiple interacting socio-cultural and discursive elements, each with their own, sometimes enduring, transnational geographies (McMahon 2011).

The present chapter calls attention to this neglected point, that spatial differentiation in EUropean integration is sensitive to transnational historical geographies. However, spatial differentiation and weak identity also have some (largely oblique) implications for more typical preoccupations of EU studies, such as the causes, nature and viability of integration. By challenging ‘national’ models of integration, I contribute to the ongoing postmodernist, neo-medieval and constructivist assault on the EU’s assumed teleology as a traditional ‘Westphalian’ state (Pentland 2000: 277). My proposed geographical mechanism is nevertheless quite compatible with
any regional or even national integration process that is not entirely structured by powerful collective identities and their a priori geographical programmes. This even includes liberal intergovernmentalist models of integration, because they accept that domestic socio-cultural backgrounds shape the European policies of states (Moravscik 1993: 474). Though integration continues to make surprising progress, despite little active public support, it is probably too early to tell how increasing spatial differentiation affects its viability. Differentiation obstructs nation-style models of democracy based on a single demos, but decentralization may reinforce EU legitimacy. Both may require complex and imaginative forms of non-majoritarian democracy (e.g. federalism, consociation, negotiated democracy, multiculturalism). Legal and political scholars of EU constitutionalism like Tully, Shaw, Wiener and Weiler increasingly see these as necessary to respect and negotiate among culturally different national demo (Shaw 1999: 591–2).

**EUropean IR practice**

EUrope’s liberal IR model stresses the political and economic advantages of surrounding one’s country with friendly, stable, democratic, wealthy neighbours and of allowing the fullest possible interaction with their societies. Liberal EUropean integration was consciously designed to end devastating twentieth-century warfare by promoting interaction, interdependence and trust and undermining the bellicose realist model of international relations. Realism portrays the world as a cockpit of confrontation between rigidly separate, mutually suspicious and militarily threatening states. Realism and liberalism are rival academic IR schools, but constructivist IR writers (Adler 2010: 74) suggest that they are also competing cultural models. State foreign policies mix realism and liberalism to different extents on different issues, influenced both by rational calculation and unconscious socialization, and realist or liberal modes of international interaction can predominate in particular regions. Suspicious, belligerent behaviour stimulates threatened neighbours to respond in kind. EUropean integration by contrast cultivates international openness, trust and consultation to create a security community, or region of demilitarized liberal IR (Deutsch 2006: 53).

Realist rivalry with economic or military powers like the US (by France) or Russia (by Poland) often helped motivate EU membership (Hurrell 2003: 48). However, the security offered by membership has arguably allowed realist thinking and practices to fade. Greece after about 1996 for instance moved away from its previously confrontational relationship with neighbours (Tayfur 2003: 134–5), and since 1999 even supports Turkey’s EU accession. EUropean external relations policy consciously promotes international cooperation, rule of law and peace among EU members and in its neighbourhood (Diez, Chapter 3 in this volume). The EU made cooperation with neighbours a criterion for its eastern enlargement, especially in the Balkans, ‘sternly advised’ Baltic states to settle their borders with Russia, suspended Croatia’s accession in 1995 for military adventurism (Pentland 2000: 292), and attempted to end Balkan conflicts in 1991–2001. These conflicts strengthened arguments that only enlargement could
counter instability, nationalist confrontation and realist culture in neighbouring regions, which might spread backward into western Europe (Sjursen, this volume). Refugee influxes could stimulate an aggressive populist backlash and Western powers might back rival local clients, as when Germany shocked EC partners in 1991 by unilaterally recognizing Croatia’s independence.

The defining success of the Western security community (including North America) was in suppressing the relatively local realist geopolitical culture of nationalist conflict over territorial claims and ethnic minorities. Before 1945, these troubled almost every European state and interlocked tightly with long-distance great-power concerns such as global hegemony, ideological struggle and imperial competition. Local nationalist issues in eastern Europe for example sparked off both world wars. The Western security community contains the world’s densest concentration of large powers and former colonial empires. The Correlates of War (COW) project shows that in 1989–2001, global powers like the US, Russia, Britain and France were disproportionally involved in militarized interstate disputes (MIDs – see Figure 11.1). It is almost always disputed whether their regular overseas interventions are exploitative realist adventures or liberal police actions for peace and democracy. In western and much of central Europe (and North America) however, abnormally peaceful, demilitarized relations between neighbouring countries have been entrenched, in sharp contrast with the more realist practice of most other areas. Not only have interstate wars since 1989 taken place in the Balkans, Caucasus and Middle East, but eastern regions are also more prone to unfriendly, militarized ‘peace-time’ relations.

Figure 11.2 shows all MIDs in 1989–2001 except for long-distance collective interventions and post-colonial actions which took place in the Western Balkans and outside Europe. Greece’s enduring cold war with Turkey produced the largest number of bilateral MIDs (eight). Greece was also involved in two incidents with Albania. Almost all Norwegian, Latvian, Moldovan, Ukrainian, Polish and Georgian incidents meanwhile involved Russia, which also clashed with Britain, Canada, the US, Japan and China. COW casualty data suggest that MIDs involving eastern countries also tend to be bloodier than those involving Western European powers (see Figure 11.3).

![Figure 11.1](http://correlatesofwar.org/COW2%20Data/MIDs/MIDB_3.10.csv, from the Correlates of War project).
Other data confirm this geography. Military spending of 1.2–1.4 per cent of GDP or less is typical throughout much of Europe, but often rises to 1.9–2.7 per cent in the Balkans and among Russia’s neighbours and to 3.4 per cent and more in Greece, Russia, the Caucasus, Middle East and North Africa. Territorial disputes currently involve the great majority of European countries (Figure 11.2)
but most remain technical issues, often concerning maritime borders or uninhabited islands. All those that escalated in 1989–2010 to seriously disturb interstate relations are in the south and east. Spain disrupted communication links with Gibraltar, Slovenia temporarily blocked Croatia’s EU accession, Russia tore up border agreements with Baltic states, Moroccan and Russian troops occupied Spanish and Ukrainian territories respectively and Greece and Turkey engaged in military manoeuvres. Territorial disputes fueled insecurity on the Serbia–Croatia and Ukraine–Belarus borders, and continuous Azeri–Armenian hostility. They also give Hezbollah a pretext for continuing conflict with Israel. Confrontational nationalism in Eastern EU member states reinforces realist culture in tense neighbourhoods. Greece’s objection to an independent former Yugoslav republic calling itself Macedonia exasperates other Europeans (Tayfur 2003: 128–31). Russo-Baltic relations are perpetually sour and in 2009 Slovakia banned a visit by Hungary’s president. Greece before about 1996 (Tayfur 2003: 129) and Poland’s Kaczyński government of 2006–7 were notorious for making confrontational zero-sum demands within the EU and sometimes breaching its etiquette of diplomatic self-restraint (Adler 2010: 73). Prime Minister Jarosław Kaczyński for example cited German war guilt to demand more voting rights in the European Council. Eurovision voting offers a trivial but revealing confirmation of differing popular conceptions of IR. The fairly random attribution of points from western European publics suggests they vote on aesthetic grounds. Vote trades like the notoriously predictable Cyprus–Greece exchange of *douze points* suggest a greater popular prioritization of nationalist geopolitics in the east.

The close spatial correlation and interrelation between neighbourhood peace, European integration and indices of modern development and liberalism, such as wealth, a services-centred economy, democracy, rule of law and human rights (see Figure 11.4), suggests a common European cultural complex. Core theories of liberal IR and democracy studies posit that democracies almost never war with one another (Risse-Kappen 1996: 366), and that wealth and modernity...
correlate with liberal democracy (Fuchs and Klingemann 2002: 28). Liberal institutions such as non-violent, consensual domestic and international politics, free trade and human and civil rights are mostly found among those who have profited most from modernity. This means wealthier and more educated people, cities and core ‘developed’ regions of the modern world economy. Fuchs and Klingemann (2002: 50) find ‘a continuous decline’ in democratic cultural values towards Europe’s poorer east. Support for globalization (Eurobarometer 2010 (73)) and trust in the UN (Eurobarometer 2009 (71)) have very similar European geographies. Greeks, Turks and Cypriots were the least, and wealthy Scandinavians the most enthusiastic. Elements of the transnational spatial pattern of liberal modern development, centred on north-western Europe, date from nineteenth-century industrialization and possibly from early-modern (Wallerstein 1980: 134) or even medieval patterns of urbanization, population density and trade (Jönsson et al. 2000: 39–40). However, liberal values and practices now appear to be progressively transforming poorer European areas like the Mediterranean and east, including conservative religious bastions like Ireland and Poland (Girvin 1997: 128–9; Szajkowski 1997: 162–3).

This historically emerging geography of liberal modern development profoundly impacts that of European integration. Economic development encourages integration by intensifying interdependence (Milward 1992: 6). Opposition
Northern Euroscepticism

Cultural geography is rarely simple however. The EUropean cultural complex from which integration emerges is divided by factors such as Euroscepticism, the popular or elite discourses and associated practices that resist integration. Like realism, Euroscepticism is committed to norms of inviolable national sovereignty and rejects the EUropean integration norm of involvement by international bodies in domestic politics (Wæver 1996: 118). Eastern Europe therefore periodically produces Eurosceptic leaders like the Czech President Václav Klaus and the deeply illiberal Vladimír Mečiar in Slovakia, Franjo Tudjman in Croatia and Poland’s Kaczyński. Euroscepticism is also strong however in the highly developed, liberal societies of Britain and the Nordic countries. The countries that have negotiated or unilaterally claimed opt-outs from EU treaty provisions are Britain, Ireland, Denmark, Sweden, Poland and the Czech Republic. Whereas eastern European defense of national sovereignty often clashes with liberal values however, many Eurosceptic British and Nordic nationalists pride themselves on their superior commitment to liberalism.

The distinctly Eurosceptic groups that have progressively crystallized in the European Parliament (EP) are particularly strong in eastern Europe and Britain. The European United Left–Nordic Green Left (EUL–NGL) dates from 1994, and from 2004, parties like the UK Independence Party, League of Polish Families and Italy’s Lega Nord formed Independence/Democracy (ID), the first consistently Eurosceptic right-wing group, and its successor Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD). In 2007 the French National Front briefly assembled the extreme-right Identity, Tradition, Sovereignty (ITS). Finally, in 2009, the more mainstream European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), dominated by British Conservatives and Polish and Czech parties, split from the main centre-right group. Support for present, past and future member parties of the groups above, averaged across the 2004 and 2009 European Parliaments (Figure 11.5), offers an imprecise transnational measure of Euroscepticism because of...
cross-cutting national and European party dynamics, and linkages with other political agendas. Euroscepticism, for example, interacts intimately with anti-immigrant populism, whose electoral ascent has its own distinct transnational geography. EP representation does, however, suggest the particular strength of largely right-wing Euroscepticism in the UK and Central Europe, plus a weaker left-wing Euroscepticism on the Mediterranean. Eurosceptic groups (those listed above) constituted 62.9 per cent of the Czech EP representation, 51.8 per cent of the British, and 30–33.4 per cent of the Polish, Latvian and Cypriot. However, the strength of these groups varies dramatically between Central European countries and often contradicts opinion poll evidence. Poles largely trust the EU, believe it has benefited them and few consider it a bad thing (Eurobarometer 2009 (71)). Though Hungarians are much more negative on these measures, hardly any Hungary MEPs joined Eurosceptic EP groups.

Danish EP Eurosceptic representation since 2004 is a quite high (22.3 per cent), but Sweden’s is close to the EU mean and Finland’s is well below it. Other evidence strongly points toward a distinct northern Euroscepticism however. The delayed rise of right-wing Eurosceptic parties here may merely reflect the belated conversion to Europeanism of local social democrats (Stråth 2002: 144). The island and peninsular countries of northern Europe, plus Austria and
Switzerland in the Alps, have historically been slow to participate in EUropean integration. Britain, Ireland and Denmark joined the EC in 1973, sixteen years after its foundation, and Austria, Sweden and Finland joined two decades later. Norway, Iceland and the Faeroe Islands stayed outside and Greenland left in 1985. Four referenda in Norway, Greenland and Switzerland are the only popular votes to date against membership and in 1992 Swiss voters even rejected the less integrative EEA agreement. Opinion polls strongly predict another ‘nei’ when Iceland finalizes its present accession talks. All ten referendum rejections of greater integration before 2005 took place in Switzerland or the north. Five of the eight northern and Alpine countries have also remained outside Nato. Britain and Ireland remain outside the Schengen migration control agreement and Swedish and British public opposition to adopting the Euro remains strong (Sunnus 2004: 200). Scholars also stress that northern popular contentment with the EU and acceptance of European identity remain below those of the original member states (Archer 2000: 93–94 and 109; Eichenberg and Dalton 2007: 136). Northern leaders vote most often against the majority in the EU Council of Ministers (Mattila 2010: 28–29; Figure 11.6). In 2004–6, Sweden was the epicentre of no votes and abstentions, which gradually faded towards uncontested voting in France and the smaller member states (Mattila 2010: 31–3). Northerners and Mediterraneans usually formed separate dissenting coalitions.

Nordics may be warming to the EU (Eichenberg and Dalton 2007: 136). Just 19 per cent of Swedes now consider membership a ‘bad thing’, compared with

Figure 11.6 Uncontested votes on legislative acts in the EU Council of Ministers, 2004–6 (source: Mattila 2010: 30).
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33 per cent in 1995 (Eurobarometers 1995 (43) and 2009 (71)). Eurosceptic countries enthusiastically promote selected integration initiatives. Norway, Iceland and Switzerland, for example, opted into Schengen and Norway collaborates in the EU Battlegroup programme. However, the historical northern reserve towards integration, the continuing political caution of leaders (which perhaps helps assuage public concerns) and Britain’s perennially virulent Euroscepticism require explanation. Though political science analysis of Euroscepticism has traditionally focused on objective economic and security benefits or dynamics of party competition, attention turned in the 1990s to historical traditions of identity, religion, nationalism, evaluations of democracy and threats to cultural autonomy (Boomgaard and Freire 2009: 1241; Hooghe and Marks 2004: 415–16; Lubbers and Scheepers 2007: 645–7). Physical distance from Brussels (Berezin and Diez Medrano 2008) on islands and peninsulas encourage a sense of separateness from what northerners call ‘Europe’ or ‘the continent’ (Stråth 2002: 131; Sunnus 2004: 196). Scholars also note that Nordic separateness is infused with identity narratives of separate, cohesive, ‘free’ and progressively liberal northern communities organized by national states (Jenkins 2000: 167–70). EU politics are rejected as elitist, corrupt and less environmentally concerned.

A growing literature links this specifically northern Euroscepticism with historically entrenched narratives of northern Protestant Germanic superiority over universalist, autocratic ‘Catholic’ continental Europe (Boomgaard and Freire 2009: 1241; Stråth 2002; Theiler 2004: 639). Catholic Christian Democrat parties largely launched European integration in a six-country bloc with a three-quarters Catholic population. Some Protestant fundamentalists are Eurosceptic (Church 2004: 279 and 285) but Boomgaard and Freire identify Protestant cultural tradition rather than religious faith as the main statistical determinant of Euroscepticism, also shaping the views of non-religious and non-Protestant people (2006: 1252). Protestantism places northern nationalism and superiority complexes in a long-term historical context, for example linking Sweden’s seventeenth-century civilizing mission with its self-image after 1945 as a champion of international law and development (Stråth 2002: 126). The content of northern superiority narratives has varied dramatically. A powerful industrial-age racial discourse contrasted dissolute, autocratic, evolutionarily backward Latins with enterprising, progressive, free, northern, blond pioneers of modernity and overseas imperialism (McMahon 2009: 582–3; Stråth 2002: 133). This discourse pervaded racialized Germanicist movements, such as mid-nineteenth-century British Anglo-Saxonism (Knox 1850) and the Nordic supremacism of early twentieth-century Scandinavian and German conservatives (Retzius 1909). British imperialists and interwar Swedish social democrats used narratives of superior Protestant democracy to legitimize colonial tutelage and social egalitarianism respectively (Stråth 2002: 126). From the 1960s, Scandinavian superiority discourse emphasized cohesive, egalitarian, democratic and environmentally aware societies, organized and maintained by strong interventionist national states (Archer 2000: 98 and 109; Sunnus 2004: 200–1). Paradoxically, Europe remained the illiberal Other of both this egalitarian, statist
Swedish model and the individualistic, anti-statist Thatcherism of 1980s Britain. Eurobarometer (2010 (73)) confirms northern pride in superior democracy. Northerners and Austrians are the most likely to trust their national parliaments and governments, worry that EU membership threatens democracy and believe their voices are not heard in Brussels. Eastern Europeans by contrast stand out for their trust in the EP over national parliaments.

Cultures of nationalism reinforce Protestant Euroscepticism. In the historical emergence of European nation states, Rokkan identifies an increased cultural preference for national political sovereignty over universalism towards the north (1980: 169–74). National Protestant churches allied with nationalism to oppose the universalist pretensions of the Papacy and continental empires. Eurosceptic national sovereignty norms therefore draw on seventeenth-century Swedish opposition to Catholic Hapsburg hegemony (Stråth 2002: 126–7), Britain’s 300-year geopolitical policy of undermining successive universal European empires (Teschke 2002: 33) and British and Danish resistance to Nazi Germany (Jenkins 2000: 171–2).

Germanic Protestant culture extends south to the Alps, but association with Nazism delegitimized Germany’s own potent Protestant-nationalist-racialist tradition of exceptionalism, redirecting superiority narratives towards pride in the country’s economic and political model (Díez Medrano 2003: 179). The German and Dutch location in Europe’s economic core and cockpit of war, plus their need to integrate large Catholic populations into national communities, helped make splendid Protestant isolation unsustainable. Swiss German-speakers, a small, largely Protestant, early-industrialized community, isolated behind mountains, share important elements of Nordic Eurosceptic exceptionalism. They assume their models of economy and democracy are superior and, because Europe and Switzerland both offer civic identities, are even more inclined to see them as in direct competition (Church 2004: 276–7; Theiler 2004). Eurobarometer respondents in Austria, the last continental Catholic capitalist country to join the EU, are quite unenthusiastic about integration (Fallend 2008: 201), but this may reflect their brief experience with it rather than resolute Euroscepticism. Many attribute the country’s late EU entry to the technical obstacle of Cold War neutrality (Fallend 2008: 205). A very high 66.6 per cent voted for membership in 1994 and even during the 2000 EU political boycott of Austria’s government for including the far-right Freedom Party, a poll found 76 per cent in favour of continued EU membership (Pelinka 2004: 219).

Historical traditions of national integration, in which multiple groups/centres join together, but retain their individuality, may also help explain the weaker Euroscepticism of continental Protestants. In the former territory of the radically decentralized Holy Roman Empire, which developed intricate representative organs (Axtmann 1999: 129–37), the Belgian, Dutch, German, Austrian and Swiss states pioneered complex forms of non-majoritarian representation such as federalism, consociation and negotiated (rather than adversarial) democracy. These recognize that the national demos is not entirely unified, people have simultaneous multiple political identities and groups as well as individuals.
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require representation and cultural and political autonomy (Tully 2004: 4–9). European politics might therefore feel more familiar and legitimate in these nations (Jönsson et al. 2000: 124–5). By contrast, the northern and eastern experience of national integration encourages expectations of a powerful centre which homogenizes sectional divisions in the name of democratic equality among individuals. Complex, opaque Brussels bargaining can appear particularly autocratic and elitist, when compared to the open contestation between ideological positions in these single-demos democracies.

Supporting this hypothesis, cross-border regional cooperation is most intense in former Holy Roman territories (Jönsson et al. 2000: 148) and polls show Swedes, Britons and Greeks are particularly reluctant to accept simultaneous European and national identity (Eurobarometer 1995 (43)). Hooghe and Marks (2004: 417) meanwhile find that rejection of multiple simultaneous political identities (Belgian and Flemish for example), if cued by political elites, strongly predicts Euroscepticism. Europeans do not always frame European non-majoritarian and differentiated integration mechanisms in terms of local democratic traditions however. Radically polarized net support for two-speed Europe of plus 9–22 per cent in France, Germany, Austria and the Benelux Countries and minus 9–33 per cent elsewhere instead suggest a European core-periphery pattern (Eurobarometer 1995 (43)). Subsidiarity’s greater popularity in Greece, Denmark and the UK imply a link with nationalist Euroscepticism.

Britain shares with Nordics a Protestant heritage, superiority complex and preoccupation with sovereignty and free trade (Gussarsson 2005: 171), but UK public opinion and EP representation have been much more stubbornly Eurosceptic. One key difference is that Nordic exceptionalism narratives of liberal internationalism are much more compatible with Europe’s stated IR doctrine than Britain’s treasured maintenance of great-power identity by consistent support for realist American IR (Cinnirella 1996: 265–8). Realist geopolitics were not discredited in the Anglophone by association with 1940s national humiliation. British defence spending (2.5 per cent of GDP) resembles Balkan rather than Western European levels, while Washington spends a ‘Middle-Eastern’ 4.5 per cent of GDP on the military. America offers Britain an alternative Protestant alliance, which is much more protective of sovereignty. While the US has unusually serious reserves about international law, refusing to ratify several widely accepted international treaties, Britain often supports even the most widely condemned US actions, such as encouraging Israel to continue bombing Lebanon in 2006. Britain’s was also the only left-wing Western European government to back America’s 2002 invasion of Iraq. By contrast, Nordic and Dutch confidence in the UN is 15–20 per cent stronger than the European norm (Eurobarometer 2009 (71)).

Great power identity does not automatically create Euroscepticism. France shares Britain’s high defence spending, historical suspicion of European supranationalism and great-power pretensions, but far more French than any other EU nation see enhancing the country’s world role as the key benefit of EU membership (Eurobarometer 2010 (73)). The geographical continuum in multiple...
components of liberal modernity from continental Europe, via Britain, Ireland, Canada and American liberals, to America’s conservative red states may therefore hint at a specifically Anglophone culture of modernity, which emphasizes national sovereignty, libertarianism and, in some places, militarism and religiosity (Antonsich 2008: 702; Fuchs and Klingemann 2002: 31).

Conclusion

National models of integration may ultimately reassert themselves. At present however, Europe’s appears to be moving towards a new culture-geography-politics nexus, that makes transnational regional geographies especially important. Identity discourses were crucial in determining the simplified geographies of nation states with unified demoi and sharp external borders. Multipolar, technocratic EUropean integration creates a more complex geography and a weak and fractured identity. Despite intense official promotion of a nation-style European identity, individuals still very largely judge integration on perceived concrete benefits and disadvantages (Antonsich, Chapter 1 in this volume). If nineteenth-century nationalists had used similar criteria, the Mezzogiorno might never have united with Italy. Compare meanwhile Germany’s rapid and uncontested unification, mobilized by representations of common nationhood, with the EU’s hesitant eastern enlargement, despite the persistent mobilization of European identity narratives by candidate states. These relatively unpersuasive arguments had to be backed up with technical evidence that EUropeanizing reforms had sufficiently transformed accession country societies, politics and economies. National identity narratives included cartographical masterplans, so that France’s “natural” Rhine frontier was (almost) as dearly cherished in Nice as in Strasbourg. By contrast, discourses of superior, Protestant exceptionalism largely just affect the geography of EUrope’s north. Similarly, prospects for Ukrainian association with the EU depend heavily on specifically Polish sponsorship.

Practitioners and scholars increasingly recognize that historical cultural diversity influences participation in EUropean integration. I argue that one important and influential aspect of this diversity is its transnational spatial patterns, such as Nordic and Central European regions or north-south and core-periphery continua. These shape the specific geography of participation. The relative roles and interactions of economic, social and political practices, and European, national and regional identities, each of which have their own geographies, vary by context. Local Eurosceptic identity narratives with roots in the Protestant Reformation are crucial in northern integration. In the poorer east, identity remains important (Sjursen, this volume) but is weakened by dissonance between identity discourses of belonging to Europe and to the West. Socio-cultural convergence with EUrope, shaped by historic geographies of modernity, is therefore vital.

Transnational patterns show a complex empirical mix of structure and continuity with ambiguity, contingency and fluidity (Berezin 2003: 9). They therefore challenge universal theories of modern change like Fukuyama’s liberal ‘End of History’ (1989), in which spatial variations are mere gradations on a single
progressive scale. Differences within Europe and within the West suggest that liberal modern practice contains large-scale and enduring transnational spatial patterns, as distinct as those of religion and sometimes predating them. These practices include the production of identity discourses such as northern exceptionalism. As history implies both continuity and change, cultural differences can be ancient without automatically being essential and inexorable. Protestantism has enduring associations with discourses of freedom and northern superiority, for example, but these discourses have supported norms ranging from imperialism to pacifism, depending on context. Ongoing EUropean integration, two centuries of liberalism and ancient religions all shape transnational patterns of socio-cultural diversity in a continuous process. The EU for example both admits candidates which socio-culturally resemble existing members and moulds them to increase this resemblance (Zielonka and Mair 2002: 5). Research strongly suggests that EU membership gradually alters preferences and identities (Antonsich 2008: 699; Eichenberg and Dalton 2007: 136; Kohli 2000: 119). It might or might not produce enough cultural convergence and European identity to sustain integration. Enlargement will almost certainly transform Europe’s traditional spatio-cultural dynamics however. The original EEC members defined integration in terms of their own socio-cultural and identity patterns. Dissimilarity from these meant that the Mediterranean, north and Rumsfeld’s ‘New Europe’ in the east integrated later and less completely. However, these new areas are now transforming Europe and refusing to heed Chirac’s 1997 advice to ‘keep quiet’. Northern enlargements for example create an increasingly powerful caucus for intergovernmentalism and free trade.

Historically evolving spatial patterns of European culture therefore deserve much greater recognition as important ‘actors’, shaping EUropean integration. Historical geography has been vital to the study of the rise and variety of Euroean nation states, producing insights like the distinction between ‘eastern’ ethnic and ‘western’ civic nationalism, Stein Rokkan’s north-south dynamic of localism versus universalism (1980) and Jenő Szűcs’s east-west taxonomy of three Europes (1985). This approach is even more appropriate for examining Europe’s spatially hyper-complex regional integration than the nationalist project of dissolving international regions into a grid of structurally equivalent states.

Notes
1 As does the present economic crisis.
2 Sub-national historical geographies also affect integration. A vivid example is the stronger pro-integration vote in formerly German regions of Poland (see www.elector-algeography.com/new/en/countries/p/poland/poland-european-union-referendum-2003. html). This chapter, however, concentrates on diversity among states.
3 MIDs are incidents below the level of war, including fortification of borders, military incursions, exchanges of fire, threats of force, military mobilizations and seizures of planes and ships.
4 See http://milexdata.sipri.org.
6 Francophone Swiss are much more pro-EUropean.
7 The historical experiences of large western European and former Austro-Hungarian territories combine national centralism and regional autonomy. Since the 1970s, devolution in Spain, Britain, Italy and even France increasingly acknowledges this diversity.
8 See http://milexdata.sipri.org.

Bibliography

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