

NEGOTIATION, IDENTITY AND JUSTICE

Pathways to Agreement

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SCALING UP, DOWN, AND ACROSS

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SCALING UP, DOWN, AND ACROSS

I returned to the national identity topic 15 years later with my colleague Steve Wood. As discussed earlier, we picked up and expanded on the levels of analysis theme in the third chapter of this Part. In the paper, prepared exclusively for this book, we review literatures at each of three levels of analysis – interpersonal, intergroup, collective – and then provide examples of how these levels interact as pathways to theory development. The pathways move up, down, and across. But in addition to theoretical contributions made by the chapter, we bring the micro (psychology) and macro (international relations) social science fields into contact.

Three insights stand out in this chapter: (a) The foundations for national identity are developed in the earliest attachments within the family, (b) the link between early attachments and national identity is bridged by group or community-level processes, and (c) collective-level attitudes may not be predicted from attitudes expressed by individuals or small groups. Issues about the causes and consequences of national identity are raised but not resolved. We struggle with the distinction between linear pathways from one to another level of analysis and a simultaneous interplay among these levels as illustrated by the EU example. These questions will no doubt keep us busy for a long time to come.

SCALING UP, DOWN, AND ACROSS

Pathways to a Theory of National Identity

Daniel Druckman and Steve Wood

Introduction

Scholars of national identity and nationalism approach their subject matter largely from disciplinary perspectives and conduct research within the silos of social psychology, sociology, history, anthropology, political science, or international relations. An exception is Malešević's (2013) treatment, which progresses toward an interdisciplinary analysis. His discussion of intertwined micro-macro relationships attempts to show how the nation-state emerges from a variety of small group interactions. Malešević contributes to efforts to develop an integrative theory of nationalism. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the phenomenon of nationalism in relational terms, as a blending of an overarching or umbrella level with many local instances. Noting that "the relationship between the micro- and macrouniverse is filled with tension" (2013, p. 14), he provides a platform for interdisciplinary research that cuts across the various psychological, social science, and humanities research silos. Addressing the puzzle of individual-society integration, Jaspal et al. (2016) claim that "there has been little attempt to synthesize the three prime levels of analysis" (2016, p. 2; see also Ashforth, 2016). We perceive an opportunity for progress at these levels of analysis and to advance toward an interdisciplinary theory on national identity within the context of more general group identities.

Our aim is to develop pathways to a theoretical framework conducive to understanding the formation and spread of national identities. The idea of pathways refers to directions for constructing a theory. One direction is a linear path from micro through meso to macro level interactions. It is illustrated by the statistical path found in the Druckman and Wagner (2019) analyses of peace agreements: adhering to procedural justice principles in a negotiation produced

fair agreements that led to communal cooperation that facilitated a durable societal peace. This is an example of an upward path from early micro to later macro interactions. In this chapter we also develop downward (early macro to later micro interactions) and simultaneous paths where influences from one level to another occur at the same time. We argue that the three directions are critical in developing a theory of national identity.

Issues of forming identities are addressed at the interpersonal level where such processes as mimicry and matching come into play. The research reviewed in this section provides insights into how these processes operate. Issues of spread are treated at a macro level where such processes as public opinion, opinion cascades, and social networking come into play. The section on collective dynamics provides insights into these processes. Smaller groups and organizations can be considered as mediating the micro–macro relationship. Becoming aware of group membership and its consequences for intergroup relations connects identity formation at the interpersonal level to spread at the collective level. Insights from research at this level pave the way toward an understanding of how collective identities emerge. This section is placed between the reviews of research at the micro and macro levels of analysis.

The next challenge on the path to a theory is to conceptualize interactions among the three levels. We do this by using examples from several spheres of activity. These include the way that micro and macro identities are connected in conflict resolution workshops, how we move from the macro to micro levels in military mobilization and combat on the ground, and how simultaneous interactions occur among levels when civil society actors participate in peace processes. A more complex example of multilevel interactions and shifting dynamics is the European Union (EU). These examples suggest pathways to theory that encompass vertical and simultaneous perspectives. A key is the bridging role played by group processes, such as how community cooperation links previous negotiation processes to durable societal peace. The questions raised open new lines of inquiry, including possible disconnects from individual to collective opinions, changes in the strength of identities as processes move from the interpersonal to the collective, and mechanisms at the group level that link the micro and macro levels. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further development of these ideas in concert with empirical research.

Interpersonal Dynamics: Mimicry, Matching, and Synchrony

There is little doubt that emotional attachments to others are acquired in infancy (Bowlby, 1988). A feature of these attachments is spontaneous or implicit mimicry, a pattern of copying the behavior and expressions of another person, reflecting their influence. Kavanagh and Winkielman (2016) show that people mimic others they like and avoid copying people they dislike. Individuals preferentially mimic members of their own group, a trend that begins with the family unit. This is a basis for group identity. Research across disciplines has provided insights

into the way mimicry operates and the functions it serves (Mead, 1934; Zentall, 2006; Whiten et al., 2009). Mimicry is selective. We are more likely to mimic others who share our values and backgrounds (Over and Carpenter, 2012). But it is also subject to change, as children grow and meet others outside the family, as relationships change, or when a liked model reveals exploitative intentions. Thus, observed mimicry may be regarded as a diagnostic of the state of interpersonal relationships. When the mimicry is high in fidelity, the relationship between the copier and the model is likely to be strong (McIntosh, 2006). Individuals mimic outgroup members less or even display the opposite behavior, such as scowls in response to smiles (Carr et al., 2014). These effects are cyclical in the sense of being mutually reinforcing where mimicked behaviors strengthen a relationship or group ties, which in turn increase the fidelity of the mimicking. These cycles also facilitate interpersonal and intra-group coordination.

Related concepts are matching, cooperative, and competitive tactical responding, and synchrony, moving together over time. Mimicry is central to both concepts and precedes them in the learning or developmental process. A difference is that these processes are neither spontaneous nor automatic. Rather they are intentional choices made typically in game-like contests that capture elements of negotiation. By building cooperation or instigating competition, matching strategies contribute to creating or reinforcing positive and negative identities. When cooperative moves are reciprocated, as in tit-for-tat gaming strategies, a trusting relationship develops, and a shared identity results. When competitive moves are reciprocated, a distrusting relationship ensues as parties pull apart. A way out of competitive or negative reciprocation spirals is by taking unilateral cooperative moves proposed originally by Osgood (1962) and pursued further by Adelman (1984) and Ramberg (1993). These interpersonal dynamics extend the research on mimicry by documenting the way cooperation evolves in repeated interactions (Axelrod, 1984). Implications for identity derive from the connection between cooperative responding and attraction or liking, which are key emotions for a durable identity to emerge.¹ A question of interest is whether compatriots imitate because they are similar or because they share attachment to the same nation?

When considered over long periods and a variety of occasions, matching may take the form of interactional synchrony. In an analysis of a negotiation over military base rights, Druckman (1986) showed how delegations matched and mismatched their verbal statements, as hard or soft rhetoric, through a year and a half of talks. Impasses occurred when the parties were out of sync; progress was made when they were in sync. In a study on eight bilateral international negotiations, Druckman and Harris (1990) showed that parties adjusted their moves or language in the direction of reciprocity. In all cases agreements depended largely on discovering a synchronous pattern of responding. More generally, Taylor (2014) showed how synchronous linguistic phases and cycles escalate and de-escalate conflicts. Hove and Risen (2009) showed that interpersonal synchrony increases affiliation or likability. The key was the timing of movements

between participant and experimenter, indicating that this effect was due to interpersonal synchrony rather than mimicry. One implication is that people infer closeness when they notice synchrony. Another is that “synchronized movements act as cues to a communal sharing relationship” (2009, p. 958). The second implication, noted also by Fiske (2004), draws attention to the sort of micro to macro connections that create and reinforce larger attachments, including national identities.

Findings from an experiment conducted by Druckman, Parlamis, and Burns (2022) show that party loyalty constrains the extent to which political representatives are flexible in negotiations. The negotiators represented their party in Congressional talks about the allocation of funds to four national programs (social security, labor and unemployment, veterans’ benefits, and agriculture). Those representatives whose voting record was party line (higher loyalty) moved significantly less on their preferred issues than those who had a mixed voting record (lower loyalty). They were especially reluctant to move on their most preferred issues. The inflexibility observed by these experimental negotiators is similar to the strong in-group attachments central to nationalism. These findings suggest a link between the interpersonal and group levels of analysis. Concession dynamics in bilateral negotiations is an example of interpersonal compromise. The representational roles taken by negotiators are understood at the group level where they must balance their constituents’ demands against those made by their opponents.

To summarize, there are three important forms of micro-level imitation: mimicry (shown in familial and tribal attachments), matching (building cooperation), and interpersonal synchrony (creating or reinforcing attraction or affiliation). Each of these forms of imitation is a social influence process that provides a basis for the spread of group identities. They are also precursors (when scaling up) to meso- and macro-level identities and are essential for theoretical paths to an integrated whole. We now move to the meso level and consider literature and issues associated with group dynamics.

Group Dynamics

Few issues have received more attention in the social sciences than how individuals are influenced by the groups they belong to or aspire to joining. Although widely regarded as an empirical issue, our understanding of the group-individual nexus is hampered by a lack of scientific consensus about how to define a group. The debate is framed at the extremes as whether the group is “merely” an assembly of its members or is an emergent property separate from its members. The impetus for this debate comes from Durkheim’s (1895) assertion that groups are a separate level of analysis, referred to as social facts, not understood by the psychology of individual behavior. The debate gained steam with the advent of social psychology during the early part of the twentieth century (Allport, 1985). The field was divided into sociological (groups) and psychological (individuals

in groups) factions. The crux of the issue lies in coming to terms with how to perform empirical research on groups.

Building on Homans (1950), Sherif (1966) defined the essential properties of groups as entities with an organization or structure and a set of values or norms. He was keen to point out that a norm is not to be regarded as the statistical average of the behavior or attitudes of its members. It emerges from member interactions and is thus considered to be a sociological designation. Back (1979) described several conceptual difficulties with the group concept, noting that a group is both real or visible and an abstraction or nominalist concept. Herein lies the difficulty in using groups as a unit of analysis for research. As “something new arising from individual components” (Back, 1979, p. 286), the group concept retains an element of elusiveness that confounds empiricists searching for operational definitions. So vexing was this dilemma that social psychology floundered as a separate academic discipline in the decades following the 1980s.² Despite these trends, progress toward developing empirical indicators of groups was being made from earlier work receiving less attention.

Campbell (1958) addressed the matter of evaluating the status of social groups as empirical entities. His indices of common fate (moving in the same direction), similarity (boundaries), and proximity (spatial contiguity) strengthened the argument that groups were entities independent of the individuals in them. Drawing on statistical analyses, he developed coefficients for each criterion that provided a basis for hypothesis testing. A decade later Druckman (1968) developed a method for evaluating hypotheses about a system of interacting simulated nations. Recently, Druckman, Mueller and Diehl (2022) used indicators of similarity and proximity to evaluate the compatibility of multiple missions within peacekeeping operations. These three articles moved the debate about the concept of group from an axiomatic, *a priori* discussion to an evidence-based exchange about methods for evaluating hypotheses about group behavior. They join the conversations about “groupness” stimulated by Brubaker and Cooper (2000), who distinguished between a strong bounded and a weaker fluid sense of connectedness, and Tilly (1978), who combined categories and networks in his concept of “catnet.”

A substantial literature has developed on the way that members of a group perceive other groups. Most of these studies, conducted primarily by social psychologists, consisted of analyzing ratings of own and other group members.³ The research demonstrates a robust partisan bias: more favorable rating of in-group than out-group members. Most impressive perhaps are the minimal group (MGP) studies where laboratory subjects are assigned to ad hoc groups based on such features as hair or eye color. Tasks consisted of deciding on point allocations for solving puzzles or other group products. Ratings almost invariably favored their own temporary group (Messick and Mackie, 1989).

In-group bias may be stronger when members are appointed as representatives of their group or party. This is illustrated by the loyalty–flexibility relationship

shown by Druckman, Parlamis and Burns (2022). In that study, strong constraints on movement in negotiation were demonstrated for role-playing members of the US Congress. These attachments to political parties, based on emotions or incentives, may encourage the loyalty–flexibility relationship obtained in the experiment. They also add a political identity dimension to the interpersonal dynamics that occur in bilateral negotiations or in the MGP experiments. Of course, if the existence of groups is temporary, the loyalty associated with them is demonstrated as transitory.⁴

A variety of explanations have been proposed for the ubiquity of loyalty-based in-group biases. These include, at the level of individuals, enhanced self-esteem (Tajfel, 1981), categorization in the service of cognitive economy (Turner, 1987), uncertainty reduction (Hogg and Mullin, 1999), and reduced threats to one's identity (Hornsey and Hogg, 2000). Taking social processes within groups into account, Insko et al. (1988) showed that cohesion, fostered by interactions among group members, strengthens identity and corresponding aspersions cast on other groups. Another source for in-group bias may be found in negative partisanship. This literature is updated by the Bohm et al. (2020) review. Abramowitz and Webster (2016) showed that partisanship in US politics derives from negative feelings toward the other party. It may also be the case that strong dislike for other nations strengthens national identities. These various explanations for an inward-looking bias call attention to a dynamic interplay among emotional, cognitive, and social processes that anchor individuals in the world around them. They do not, however, come to terms with the issue of whether ingroup amity and outgroup enmity are driven by similar or different mechanisms, nor do they call attention to the impact of such structural factors as power, legitimacy, or access to resources on ingroup bias (see Scheepers et al., 2006).

Part of that dynamic interplay is captured by social network analysis (SNA). Based on advances in statistical analysis, SNA provides a sophisticated understanding of social behavior within and between groups (Wolfer et al., 2015). Of particular interest to national identity researchers is the focus on both friendship (referred to as positive interdependencies) and hostility (negative relationships) among a population of respondents. The analyses of nomination data (of the form “who are your friends”) provide graphic representations of networks that can be distinguished in terms of tightly or loosely connected groups. A next step, yet to be taken by network researchers, is to use this structural distinction to evaluate the intensity of group identity and the strength of the ingroup bias. For nationalism scholars, these analyses provide a window into how and why individuals favor their own groups over other groups (Tarrant, 2002). By scaling up from the interpersonal to the group level, we add structural dimensions to our understanding of the role played by imitation in the formation identities. A question is whether the insights gained at the group level have relevance for larger collectivities, including those represented in the relatively new context of social media, a topic that we will take up in the next section.

Collective Dynamics

Moving from analyses of interpersonal and small group processes to collectives, we note similarities and differences. A similarity is the durability of attachments to interacting people and to abstract nations. Important differences turn on size, population diversity, and institutions. For nations, the spread of loyalties across sub-populations and the type of leadership count. These dimensions have implications for emotions, particularly trust and mistrust, and cognitions, regarding the spread of worldviews. They influence the ease or difficulty of mobilizing populations for action.

Problems encountered by social psychologists dealt primarily with small laboratory groups. These are compounded when the units are organizations or nations. As we move up the size scale, the entities become fuzzier and thus less amenable to empirical analysis. For public opinion scholars, the nation is represented by the results of large probability samples of bounded populations. These polls provide aggregated responses that reflect attitudes, beliefs, or anticipated behavior of the respondents. The data reflect the extent to which a nation is united or divided around certain public issues, such as media coverage of the Olympics (Billings et al., 2013). They also include sentiments toward a nation, defined as a statistical aggregation of its citizens' attitudes. As in small group research, the unit of analysis in these surveys is the individual. The Durkheimian proposition about social facts is not addressed, nor do they address the Thibaut and Kelley (1959, p. 147) assertion that "it is possible to describe much of the complex patterning in the interactions of an entire society in terms of a system of such reciprocal roles." Like Durkheim, we, in the 21st century, struggle to come to terms with the difference between statistical aggregations and a separate level of analysis that transcends individuals and small groups, where the sum is larger than its parts. What then are some directions for defining the nation as an entity at the systemic or societal level of analysis, separate from its citizens?

Insights from research using SNA can contribute to our understanding of collective dynamics. As we note earlier, the group membership networks uncovered by SNA distinguish between in-groups and out-groups. A question is whether the approach can be scaled up to capture fault-lines or cleavages in the larger society. For nationalism scholarship, a key division is party identification and the corresponding political ideologies. SNA can provide a window into connections among networks in the private and public sectors that engender support for policies and candidates. By tracing the evolution and change in these networks, we may be able to predict the direction of policies from a, more or less, nationalist (or internationalist) perspective. An example is the emergence of the nationalist president Donald J. Trump following a relatively internationalist Barack Obama administration. Particularly interesting in this example are the shifts in allegiance (group membership) that occurred among independents who joined Republican networks.

Another direction is to account for societal variation. A set of pertinent dimensions consists of durability, spread, and coercion (Druckman, 2001). Durability or fluidity is defined by the extent to which national identities change with changed circumstances. Durable national identities are more likely in traditional religious societies. Spread refers to how widely an identity is shared through a national population.⁵ Diaspora nation minorities, for which a traditional identity may be stronger than the majority “at home,” serve to increase these identities’ durability. They would not influence the spread of an identity through a single foreign host society, though by definition they do spread an identity outside a “homeland.” Spread may be indicated by polarization or the frequency of dissident protests. It has implications for the ease or difficulty of mobilizing for collective action: Fractionated or divided societies are more difficult to mobilize for collective action; they are also less vulnerable to mythmaking by regimes in power (Van Evera, 1995). Coerced identities, reflecting demands for loyalty to authoritarian regimes, can be outwardly strong at the collective level and less so at other levels.

These nationalism dimensions were used to facilitate case analyses in class exercises. Students were asked to analyze current international negotiations in terms of these dimensions. Cases recently used were Brexit and the Copenhagen Climate talks. These were understood, in a first exercise, through the lens of durability of national identities in delegates’ societies, the spread of identities through the negotiating delegations’ societies, and the extent to which identities were coerced or voluntary in their respective societies. A fourth dimension was whether the various national delegations shared or were divided on their identities. They were also asked to project an outcome of the talks, which was compared to the actual outcome of the completed talks. A second exercise asked students to analyze the same cases through the lens of a set of situational variables, including time pressure, negotiating alternatives, accountability to principals or constituents, and media exposure.

A final exercise consisted of a comparison of the two analyses. The questions included the following: What insights emerged from each of the analyses? Which analysis, nationalism dimensions or situational variables, produced more interesting or deeper insights? Which analysis was more accurate in predicting the outcome? In the most recent class, students thought that the nationalism lens produced more compelling insights than the situational lens. These class exercises illustrate the relevance of collective dynamics in analyses of international interactions or negotiations among nations. Although the focus was on small groups of delegates, several dimensions reflected aspects of the delegates’ societies.

A third direction is suggested by the research on collective opinion formation and cascades. The social influence simulations run by Moussaïd and colleagues (2013) identify two attractors of opinion that they call the expert and majority effect. Of particular interest is the discovery of a positive reinforcement loop where a majority of the population converge on a similar opinion in the manner

of groupthink or social “echo chambers.” This loop is a feature of complex collective dynamics where the collective outcome is strongly path dependent on the initial conditions (see also Valori et al., 2012). Those conditions consist of the two attractors, expert and majority opinion, acting together but not necessarily beneficial to the group, which may be either relatively small or very large. Their probes go further by identifying what happens when the two attractors disagree with one another.

These investigators evaluated their opinion formation model at both the individual/small group and collective levels of analysis. The former consisted of experiments; the latter was explored with simulations. The simulations enabled them to scale up from individual behavior to collective dynamics. Interestingly, similar insights about opinion formation and change were generated at the two levels, but the study also calls attention to difficulties in doing empirical research at the collective level.⁶ A similar challenge exists when we scale up from studies of individual identities to population-level nationalism, including evaluating how collective opinion changes over time. A key question is whether national identities have similar properties to opinion formation and change.

A related body of work is on opinion cascades. Of particular interest is the Macy et al. (2019) finding on political polarization. They show that collective dynamics produce counter-intuitive findings on how influence operates. Specifically, the strong correlation between substantive political opinions and party identification found in repeated studies conducted with sample survey respondents was overturned at a collective level of analysis. For these authors, the collective level emerged from repeated runs, referred to as cascades, of persuasive messages, similar with how Monte Carlo simulations are conducted (Carsey and Harden, 2015). They compare responses to 20 questions in an influence condition with an independence condition: the former reinforces party identification by displaying opinions of previous participants in blue (Democrats) or red (Republicans) fonts; participants in the latter condition always saw the statement in a purple or neutral font. Party alignment was stronger in the influence than in the independence condition. However, alignment is not predictable based on identification where Democrats and Republicans align with their own party's positions. Rather it is a result of the opinions expressed by first movers. The distribution of opinions across ten repeated runs or worlds are sensitive to chance variation in the opinions of early movers, who may align with either party.⁷

The Macy et al. (2019) findings challenge assertions that partisan divisions are based on deep-rooted opinions or core values. They are more likely to result from a path dependence on chance events in the initial conditions. The opinions that divide national populations may be more subject to situational fluctuations than to durable belief structures. The extent to which these findings apply to national identity, which encompasses a cluster of related opinions, remains unpacked. They do, however, raise the issue of durability of identities and illuminate the factor of contingency. They also call attention to the importance of a collective level of analysis separate from the interpersonal and group levels.

Additional insights come from holistic dynamical systems analysis. The causal loop diagrams and mathematical models constructed by Liebovitch et al. (2020) reveal that there is no single factor that can explain the way that outcomes emerge from system processes. Rather small effects of many interacting factors produce collective outcomes like sustainable peace or contribute to the transitions from negative (war prevention) to positive (sustained relationships) peace. Similar dynamics may occur in the transition from nationalism (where ingroup amity coincides with outgroup enmity) to patriotism (where ingroup amity is independent of outgroup enmity). The research challenge is to develop models that demonstrate these transitions at a collective level. An implied logic is that as ever more issues and choices are introduced into a polity/society, felt group identities will gradually disintegrate, even if they initially stimulate new groups. Another impetus for changed collective identities is socio-political change. Todd's (2005) typology of responses to social change is an attempt to explain the connection between individual choice and changes in institutional structures. These kinds of system analyses add complexity to our understanding of identity developed from imitation processes and group structures. They set the stage for a discussion of interactions among the levels to which we now turn.

Integrating the Levels

The previous sections review research at each level of analysis. We now discuss interactions among the levels. Our aim is to describe and demonstrate how interpersonal and group experiences connect to larger contexts in influencing the way that national identities emerge and change through time.

One way to conceptualize connections among levels is a path that scales up from micro through meso to macro processes. Research on justice in peace agreements by Druckman and Wagner (2019) shows how this is done. The authors measured processes at each level. Peace negotiator interactions were coded in terms of indicators of procedural justice during the negotiation process and by indicators of distributive justice in the outcome. The implementation period following agreement was assessed in terms of indicators of adherence by former combatants to the terms of agreement over a five-year period. The collective level was captured by an index of durable peace in the larger society. Statistical analyses showed that each level, from interpersonal to collective, provided the necessary conditions for the next stage. The quality of negotiator interactions was essential for societal change to occur.

Another example from the realm of peace agreements, but more relevant to issues of national identity, comes from research on civil society. Cuhadar and Druckman (2022) examined the role played by different types of civil society groups in the way peace processes unfolded in 50 societies. The three levels of analysis were engaged in each society. Interpersonal dynamics were reflected in interactions among negotiators representing one of the disputing groups. Group dynamics occurred among the civil society actors who represented women, minorities,

labor unions, and other groups. Collective dynamics were captured by the larger civil society with a stake in the outcomes and their implementation. This study provides an example of both competing and overlapping identities, for example, preferences for different outcomes among the various civil society groups and between certain civil society groups and the negotiators. This matrix of conflicting identities served to slow progress in talks and cause problems for implementing the agreements (Nilsson, 2012). Rather than a path that scales up or down, these interactions occur simultaneously among multiple levels, during and after reaching agreement.

A third example of interactions among levels is the 2018 Prespa agreement between Greece and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). The agreement changed the latter's official name to the Republic of Northern Macedonia. This decision incited a nationalistic backlash in Greece, including increases in hanging national flags in cities and support for right-wing political parties (Martinez et al., 2022). These reactions were interpreted by the authors in terms of identity threat posed by sharing one's cultural heritage via nomenclature. From the vantage point of our levels framework, these reactions can be interpreted as a scaling down from official symbolic decisions to popular attitudes that spread through mimicking in neighborhoods and communities. A similar scaled-down re-invigoration of nationalist movements and populist parties, construed as group dynamics, occurred within some states that became members of the EU. A stronger sense of national identity in the face of perceived threats from, or dissension with, a supranational organization was evident. We elaborate on this case of competing identities in a later section.

A fourth example, also from the field of conflict and peace studies, is found in the literature on interactive conflict resolution (ICR). This type of workshop intervention was designed with the avowed purpose of transferring changes in attitudes that occur during face-to-face interactions to the level of societal change. It provides another example of scaling up. Identity issues are central in the design and implementation of the ICR workshops. Rouhana (2000, Figure 8.1) presents a theoretical path that travels from micro- to macro-level components of the ICR technology. His micro-level activities include training and analysis exercises engaged in by workshop participants. The participants are selected on the basis of criteria that define them as influence-agents in their own society (e.g., Israel and Palestine, Greeks and Turks in Cyprus). These activities are intended to serve conflict-resolution objectives: increasing the differentiation of the other side, changing the enemy image, reducing mutual stereotypes, achieving deeper understandings of the psychological bases of the conflict. These objectives serve the larger goal of societal change, including changing beliefs about the adversary, influencing decision makers, and changing the dynamics of the conflict. Evaluations have shown that attitude change usually occurs in the workshops but rarely translates into societal change (Fisher, 2007).

The ICR interventions suggest that identities may be more fluid at the interpersonal than the societal level. This could be due to the difference

between the settings of direct face-to-face interactions and less direct attempts by the “converts” to influence decision-makers who did not have the workshop experience. Although the workshop participants were influential in their societies, they may be viewed as heretical by friends and colleagues who did not have the workshop experience (Doob and Foltz, 1974).⁸ It could also be due to a strategic misstep at the group level of analysis. Insufficient attention to networking may pose a barrier to attempts to persuade elite decision makers. Rouhana’s (2000) framework skips this intermediate level of analysis. It connects micro (interpersonal) to macro (collective) without the intermediate step of changing group or community perceptions of out-groups. Our scaling up argument emphasizes graduated changes through the three levels, accounting for specifics of the context in which the changes occur. We take this up in our case analysis of the EU.

Interaction dynamics among the three levels also occur between national, sub-national, and supra-national identities. Levendusky (2018) illuminates how context influences the relative salience of party and national loyalties. His example of ardent US Democrats and Republicans meeting in a foreign country conveys how context heightens or relativizes one or the other or both identities. They related to each other in terms of shared national identity rather than party differences. Levendusky (2018, p. 59) notes that “when respondents’ sense of American national identity is heightened, they come to see those from the other party as fellow Americans more than members of an opposing political tribe.”⁹ Similar with the function served by superordinate goals, shared collective identity may be an antidote to the emotion-driven politicization and aligned dislike of the opposition party and its supporters. This scaling up reflects an interplay between group or party and collective dynamics. Interplay in this example is a result of context changes.

The shift may also work in the other direction. For example, national identity is salient when citizens are recruited or volunteer for military service. However, that may give way to primary (sub-national) group attachments on the battlefield. Loyalty shifts from the nation to combat buddies when the going gets tough (Lynn, 1984; Daley, 2018). These arguments and examples raise questions about the conditionality or plasticity of identities (Legro, 2009). Grommé and Scheel (2020) show how bureaucratic-political agencies combine performativity and statistics to create identity categories and distinguish a majority (ethnic) national category from various work-related categories. More generally, identities are part of a dynamic social field, as described by Sztompka (1994) and Delanty and O’Mahony (2002). Examples come from the arena of US Congressional politics where collective outcomes in the form of electoral victories or defeats emerge from the loyalties of individual voters. Most representatives display an unwavering loyalty to their parties. Conflicting narratives about issues like presidential bribery are framed to sway public opinion with the goal of garnering votes for their candidates in upcoming elections. The key micro-level variable is the party loyalty of individual voters. The key macro-level variable is aggregate

votes in the election – a form of collective action. The relationship between these variables is mediated by narratives espoused during the public committee hearings and by social media networks, regarded as a group or meso-level dynamic. Election results are indicators of performance, serving to weaken or strengthen loyalties depending on the outcome.

The US politics example illustrates an intertwining of loyalties or attachments at the individual level and party cohesion at the group level (Rosenberg and Beattie, 2019). Effects move in both directions, from loyalty to cohesion and vice versa. Through time and repeated interactions among party members, a set of norms in the form of consensual narratives emerge. When these norms are shared widely, they can harden into ideologies that rationalize and reinforce pernicious stereotypes of competing groups, as Fyfe (1992) observed regarding racial examples. A critical step in this process is the transition from words in the form of narratives to collective actions in the form of voting or recruitment for fomenting regime change or warfare.

More broadly, the competing narratives espoused by the contending parties have implications for a political culture. Democratic and Republican Party candidates in the US often point out that the next election is about who we are as Americans. This rhetoric invokes core beliefs often contested in cultural conflicts: for example, different definitions of honesty in interpreting evidence of wrongdoing. Both political parties are challenged to be sufficiently persuasive to retain loyalty from members and to attract potential supporters from independents or converts from the other party. They often appeal to national identity, with Republicans espousing *America first* rhetoric and Democrats urging their adherents to recover the essence of *American values*. Each party accuses the other of selling America short by forfeiting what it means to be an American. A research theme suggested here is the relative impacts of group loyalty and incentives on political actions. For example, are congressional representatives motivated primarily by party loyalty or the power accrued from winning elections? The prevailing narratives (words) of both parties emphasize the importance of loyalty to country, which is a necessary accompaniment to their primary goal of obtaining or retaining power by winning (deeds).

The examples presented in this section show how the three levels interact in practice. They illustrate the interdisciplinary analyses on nationalism advanced by Malešević (2013). Sometimes these processes scale up through time from interpersonal to intergroup to collective level dynamics. An example is when meso-level civil society agents interact with the larger macro-level civil society. Other processes scale across, such as when small combat units deal with primary group and national identities at the same time, or they may move from macro-level agreements to many popular (though separate) expressions of a national identity. Dilemmas that occur when trying to transition from one level to another are evident in the ICR interventions, in the conflicts between national and sub-national or small group identities, and from words in the form

of political narratives and deeds in the form of voting or collective action. Two questions emerge: How would a multi-level analysis of national identity be performed in complex, multi-layered organizations? What are the pathways to the development of an integrated theory? These questions are taken up in the sections to follow.

Multilevel Identities in the European Union – Conflicting, Compatible, Contingent?

The examples discussed earlier deal mostly with a few nations. The EU presents a more challenging case for the levels framework. The interplay among supranational institutions, states, nations, and other entities has implications for group and interpersonal processes. Other features are shifting dynamics and diffusion or mutation through time. These themes raise questions about the application of the three-level framework. If we conceive of the EU as an organization, Ashforth's (2016) model can assist our search for theoretical pathways. He conceptualizes an "I think, we think, it is" progression, analogous to phased integration. Collective identities "tend to emerge from individual identities, or at least individual conceptions of what the collective is or can be, and collective identities in turn both enable and constrain identities nested within them" (Ashforth, 2016, p. 81). Later, after politics has entered the discussion, Ashforth (2016, p. 82) suggests that "espoused identities tend not to be literal descriptions of the organization's essence, but somewhat idealized and aspirational depictions." These and other observations are insightful and useful for our aims.

National Identities and Supranationalism

Overcoming nationalism was a principal motivation for the ideas and institutions that developed into the EU, which some see as a threat to nations and their states. There are several ways that national identities could be reinvigorated in the context of an organization or system that encompasses a supranational element. One manifestation could be confrontational, as opposition to a perceived rival for macro-level authority. Such friction existed throughout the European integration process and intermittently intensified. A second possibility is that the EU's forerunners rescued the nation-state, a unique form of principal-agent arrangement (Milward, 1992). Identity is less crucial in this account, which emphasizes material interests and pragmatic accommodation. Tension resides in the coexistence of both *threat from* and *accommodation to* the supranational concept.

A third possibility is that which represents the *de facto* predominant EU elite consensus. National identities revive in partnership with supranational institutions, which do not make claims on the sentimental or cultural dimensions of individual, group, or collective identities. Such a condition implies a division of responsibilities and a sharing of macro-level status, in functional terms. This

arrangement emerged because integrationist elites realized that the idea of the nation – present in individuals, families, and villages (micro); cities and regions (meso); and constitutions, parliaments, and electoral systems (macro) – was too powerful to attempt its dissolution. Acknowledgement of nations and their myriad local or regional expressions was conveyed in principles of devolution and the allocation of competences. These principles eventually found residence in supranational EU laws, budgets, and policies.¹⁰ Despite the presence of alternative identities, neither nations nor identification with them have expired. Nations co-exist, in the minds of individuals and at a collective level, with a networked and semi-integrated EU. Can the process of integration itself function as a social emotion, as it does in small groups and nations? Does drawing closer as a society/polity, or as a family of cultures, as well as a single economy or security community, presume emotional attachment?

An alternative conception, recalling the dynamic social field noted earlier, is provided by Delanty (2016). Focusing mainly at the meso level, he argues that networks, rather than coherence around a national idea, is the basis for social formation in Europe. Whereas Karl Deutsch (1953) regarded social communication as the glue of national identity, Delanty perceives the same as providing connectivity for networks. Contrary to the assumption of society as a nation, defined by a state, the social is a field of relationships, which do not need to be understood through a national or state prism.

Shifting Dynamics Among Levels

The EU is a useful case to draw on as an illustration of how politics operate up, down, and across multiple levels of governance. However, the three-level concept may not capture multiple identities in the EU's institutional context. If we retain three and make the EU the macro or collective, and interpersonal relations the micro, then the national becomes the meso or group level. There is overlap between meso and micro, or meso and macro, such that interim levels might be required. One would be needed to accommodate regions, or we divide the meso into upper (nations) and lower (regions) layers. If nations are elevated to share the macro level, the meso (group) level still contains many different types of entities (regions, interest groups, cities, small and medium-sized enterprises, clubs, networks), some of which are transnational. We could also note a 'meta-macro' level of exogenous influences and global conditions. Thus, supranational–national interaction is only part of the story.

Observance of these developments, manifesting in the emergence of a multilevel polity, precipitated the first studies on multilevel governance (Marks and Hooghe, 1996; Hooghe and Marks, 2001). This literature recognized the importance of horizontal as well as vertical interactions. It also recognized a meso level, principally regions, embedded as a key part: the EU cooperating with member states, responding and appealing down to local communities, up to national governments, or circumventing the last to deal directly with

Commission Directorates or the Committee of the Regions. Regional policy is one of the largest EU budget items, and regions can be regarded as mediating bodies between supranational (macro) and local (micro) levels that, if not entirely bypassing nation-states, reduce their influence as gatekeepers or ultimate decision-makers. In some EU member states, regions have greater formal authority than in others. They are an “unextractable and important tier of government within the EU multi-level polity,” a defining component in a Europe “of” or “with regions” (Schakel, 2020, p. 771). Regional governments and civil groups deploy subnational patriotisms in competition among themselves and sometimes with the national level. Alliance with supranational actors can exploit subnational identities, potentially to offset national identities.¹¹

The previous sections also call attention to a more dynamical conception of complex organizations. As we noted earlier, these models depict how many interacting factors produce collective outcomes. They also trace the paths that lead to transitions such as from a pre- to post-Brexit EU environment. The idea of paths or path-dependencies is also highlighted by models of social influence processes. Of particular interest in these is the emergence of unpredictable collective outcomes from interpersonal and group dynamics. The first-mover finding from the Macy et al. (2019) research may apply to certain EU processes. For example, policy initiatives, often taken by more powerful member states such as Germany or France, have moved upward to the supranational level and resulted in new EU laws and regulations. It is also the case that EU decisions can cascade downward in unpredictable ways, with different interpretations and implementations by various member states, networked partners, and regions. Meso-level actors may have mediating or constitutive roles in these processes.

Power and authority dynamics shifted and diffused as multiple actors and levels entered the EU context. It is not so clear how identity accompanies the politics through all the levels of governance, from supranational institutions, sharing or competing for macro-level authority with nation-states, down to the meso level and the micro level. A strong connection between governance and identity through all these levels is patchy or underdeveloped: it may be the missing link.

Pathways to Theory

An encompassing and plausible theory will be dynamic and multi-level, addressing fundamental group attachments and emergent properties in the world. Progress in accomplishing this goal depends on understanding how the levels interact. The examples provided in our earlier sections are first steps in this direction. They call attention to both vertical and horizontal interactions: downwards from macro to micro, upwards from micro to macro, and across with simultaneous interactions. In this section we raise questions about the interplay among levels that promote theory development.

Moving from micro- to macro-level processes, we ask: What motivated Greek citizens to display flags as an expression of protest to the Prespa agreement? How did changes in the intensity of identity occur among participants in the ICR workshops? Why did a majority of British citizens opt out of the EU, viewing membership as a threat to their sovereignty? These examples illustrate a ramping up (Prespa, Brexit) and reducing (ICR) of the strength of national identities. Rather than trying to understand these responses through a micro-level or disciplinary lens, we suggest a focus on the paths that followed at meso and macro levels. The Macedonia name change occurred at an official level. Brexit was made official through long and difficult negotiations. In contrast, the ICR experience did not lead to societal changes and, in fact, caused some participants to regret their experiences. Explaining these paths is a basis for multi-level theory development: Why do some changes at the micro level lead to positive and others to negative changes at the macro level?

Moving in the opposite direction, we posit other questions: Why are shared national identities heightened in foreign contexts? How do aggregate opinions or election results strengthen or weaken national (or party) identities? Why do national identities weaken in the transition from military mobilization to combat? These questions ask about the relationship between context or aggregate events and the strength of national identities. A related idea is that micro-level processes are a microcosm of macro-level decisions. This idea gains relevance in the literature on diplomatic negotiations where negotiated decisions reflect policy-level processes. Explaining these downward paths is another challenge for developing multi-level theory. A further consideration is simultaneous movement up and down the levels ladder: individual loyalties spiral upward, as in opinion cascades, and downward, as when collective norms surface as shared attitudes. In the ICR workshops, the clash between upward (influencing society) and downward (influenced by society) pressure was evident. In building a multi-level theory, it is important to identify mechanisms that explain how micro-level processes influence macro-level processes and vice-versa. Little is written about these connecting factors. One element of a new approach, consistent with our multi-level concept, is to examine the roles played by meso-level group dynamics. The implementation stage in peace agreements provides an example. Druckman and Wagner (2019) showed that micro-level interactions during the negotiation process influenced durable peace at the societal level through cooperative community activities during the implementation of the agreements. The failure of ICR workshops to induce change at the societal level may have been due to overlooking the influence of networks operating in both the Israeli and Palestinian communities. Instead, the workshop organizers assumed that their influential participants would elicit change at the highest levels of government. The concept of bridging people was undeveloped in this conflict resolution context. The bridge was more likely to reside in larger networks with a stake in social change. Summitry provides a different type of example of multi-level processes. Improved interpersonal relations between political leaders at bilateral

or multilateral meetings must translate into negotiated agreements at a meso level, which then lead to policy change at a macro level.¹² A recent example of both types of summitry is President Biden's participation in the G7 in England followed by his meeting in Geneva with Vladimir Putin.

Van Wijk et al. (2019) argue that social innovators, usually regarded as emerging from the micro level, are unavoidably influenced by the entirety of social orders, which pattern their behavior. Micro and macro levels are in a symbiotic relationship. It is, however, the meso level, where "actors' interactions and framing produce the frictions, highlight the tensions, and identify or create the cracks behind the new opportunities for social innovation" (Van Wijk et al., 2019, p. 890). It is at this level that actors might "begin to jointly (re)negotiate the structures, patterns, and beliefs that constitute their social worlds" (Van Wijk et al., 2019, pp. 890–891). These examples highlight the importance of meso-level processes in developing a pathways theory.

A theoretical understanding of the levels concepts would be incomplete if we did not also consider simultaneous interactions, by which we mean two or more levels interacting at the same time. The Summit example mentioned is a case in point. Interpersonal relations between two or a few leaders merge with official government decisions at a macro level. The relationships developed between leaders during their face-to-face discussions have direct policy consequences. Another example comes from international exchange programs. Pettigrew and Tropp's (2006) meta-analysis of contact studies shows that the key to cooperative relations between hosts and visitors is institutional support for the program. The macro-level endorsement underwrites the program and contributes to the quality of the micro-level exchange experience. A more complex example of simultaneous interactions is the EU case. Shifting identities between a supranational entity and nations incite a push and pull in citizens' attachments. A question is whether the EU attachment weakens the strength of earlier socialized national identities. Or do these identities serve different functions, with the European more instrumental and the national more sentimental?

Our focus on pathways emphasizes directions through which national identities travel. It also raises questions about how the strength of those identities may change as they move around the levels landscape. This contribution is a step towards a theoretical understanding of the concept. Next steps include discovering the mechanisms that help to explain changes and their consequences. Central to our quest is: What happens to individual identities when we focus attention on groups or nations? From a scaling up perspective, insights come from research on cascade dynamics. From a scaling down perspective, the negotiation micro-cosm idea provides an interesting pathway. From a horizontal perspective, the merging of levels idea from summitry and the simultaneous supranational and national identities from the EU example are promising. Each path may depend on activities that bridge the individual to the collective. They occur largely at the communal or meso level of analysis. These are possible routes to an integrative theory of national identity.

Conclusion

In this chapter we build on earlier interdisciplinary analyses. These include studies of nationalism in (international) sociology (Malešević, 2013), of individual-society linkages in social psychology (Jaspal et al., 2016), and on identities in organizational studies (Ashforth, 2016). Each of these treatments emphasizes the importance of cross-level connections. We also recognize the value of these connections and extend previous work in several directions. One is to define and review relevant research on identity from each of three levels, referred to as interpersonal, group, and collective dynamics. Another is to integrate the levels by providing a variety of examples that illuminate interactions among two or more. The examples raise a distinction between vertical (up and down the levels ladder) and horizontal (across levels at the same time) linkages. A third direction is to reveal complexity using a case where supra and national identities intersect and shift through time. A fourth direction is to suggest pathways toward theory development. The pathways include possible disconnects from individual to collective opinions, changes in the strength of identities as processes move from the interpersonal to the collective, and the importance of group-level processes as bridges between the micro and macro levels.

These contributions open new lines of inquiry on the mechanisms that link the levels of national identity. One type of mechanism focuses on the way that group or community dynamics connect citizens' attitudes to societal norms. A second deals with process-context relationships: for example, how do exchange programs and other interactions reflect and influence international relations? A third type aims to understand how interpersonal relations among leaders translate into national foreign policies. These lines of inquiry can be investigated with process tracing methodologies (George and Bennett, 2005). They encompass scaling up, scaling down, and scaling across modes of analyses.

Notes

- 1 The relationship between behavioral matching and influence has been exploited by entrepreneurs eager to make profits. The most notable example is Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) based on modeling the way that family therapists influence their patients (see Druckman and Swets, 1988).
- 2 Witness in this regard the demise of social psychology departments in the US, notably at Michigan and Harvard, and the migration of social psychologists to business schools and communication departments.
- 3 The earliest studies in this tradition were conducted by Blake and Mouton (1962), Bass and Dunteman (1963), and Singer et al. (1963).
- 4 An important difference between political and experimental group identities is that the former are likely to last longer than the latter. This difference raises a question about the durability of identities in laboratory groups. Those may be temporary, reflecting the situation constructed by the designers of the experiments. This does not, however, render them as less important than political or organizational identities. It suggests that identities are strongly influenced by situations (see Meyer et al., 2010, for a review of the situational strength literature).
- 5 Note the difference between durability and spread. The former refers to strength of identity (intensity), the latter to sharing of an identity (extension) in a population.

- 6 We distinguish between aggregate analysis of individual opinions and collective behavior. The former are valuable for studies of mobilization such as protests, but do not capture the idea of a collective level of analysis.
- 7 An international example is norm cascades or norm band-wagoning (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998).
- 8 The attitude changes that occur from participation in the workshop can be problematic in another way. A softening of national identities can lead to a larger re-evaluation of lifelong identities with the attendant psychological problems. A way around these possible consequences is to retain one's pride in country while working with adversaries on cooperative projects (see Deschamps and Brown, 1983, for a way to do this).
- 9 An example of recognition of common identity at a supranational or civilizational level is the chance meeting of English and French expeditionary personnel at Botany Bay in 1788. The French commander, Count Lapérouse, wrote in his journal that "Europeans are all compatriots at such a great distance." Similar connections among individuals who do not share a *national* identity but do share a *supra* identity, in the sense that it can incorporate many and scale up to another level, are common today. The situation is crucial.
- 10 Further complicating the EU system is the range of opt-outs and other variations across policy and legal domains, such that in those instances not all member states or regions operate at the same level.
- 11 Another complication for a three-level schema is that majorities in some regions consider themselves to be 'nations,' for example, Catalunya or Euskal Herria in Spain.
- 12 See our earlier discussion of public Congressional committee hearings as a meso-level process.

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