Identity Questions

Peters, Bernhard

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version
Arbeitspapier / working paper

gesis
Leibniz-Institut
für Sozialwissenschaften

Mitglied der
Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

BERNHARD PETERS

IDENTITY QUESTIONS

InIIS-Arbeitspapier Nr. 10/98

Contents

I.   Introduction (Summary)

"Collective identity" and "national identity" have become widely used and heavily contested concepts, both in various social sciences and in general public discourse. In this paper, I try to identify some problems or weaknesses, both in the prevailing understandings of these rnotions as well as in certain empirical applications. I propose some conceptual clarifications and discuss certain empirical applications, above all applications to the case of German national identity.

Many criticisms of the term "collective identity" refer to its connotations of wholeness, unity, homogeneity, and continuity or permanence. In section II I try to show that we can avoid this criticism if we use a more inclusive empirical conception of collective and national identity. Many understandings of collective identity draw too close a parallel with certain conceptions of individual identity, and fill the term collective identity with problematic normative or evaluative content. Identity is then used as a "success" term. For the sake of analytical clarity, however, it seems useful to understand the term in a more open and analytical way and to keep normative evaluations separately. (Some possible criteria for normative evaluation are mentioned in Section II.) Also some particular features of national identity, as distinct from other collective identities, are discussed.

Section II deals with some controversies and misunderstandings. In current discourses about multiculturalism and cultural differences, it is often implied that collective identity is somehow based on cultural difference. It is useful, however, to see collective identities as a special part of group cultures, and to distinguish analytically between the strength of collective identity and the extent of general cultural dissimilarity between a group and its social environment. Collective identity is not necessarily based on a large degree of cultural particularity. This proposition, however, is not to be confused with another, which has recently gained some popularity: that cultural differences are merely fungible markers for the maintenance of group boundaries. Collective identities have various contents, and these are not necessarily centered in the drawing of boundaries or distinctions with the outside world.

If we use an inclusive empirical notion of collective identity and drop the unitary associations of this term, it becomes obvious that we have to ask the same questions about collective identity which have been asked about the role and character of group culture or especially national culture in general: How *coherent* are belief systems or other symbolic systems internally? And how *homogeneous* is the group membership with respect to cultural features - how many versions of culture are there, adopted by various sub-groups? In the same way, collective identities may show various degrees of incoherence and cultural heterogeneity (Section III.3).

Furthermore, there is the popular opposition between two "theories" of collective (especially national or ethnic) identity, which concerns its "primordial" or "constructed" characteristics. There looms a false alternative. Much of the controversy is based on a confusion of two

questions: the question of the character or content of collective identities, and the question of their causal origins. Collective identities can both have "primordial" elements and be "socially constructed" (as are virtually all social phenomena, in *some* sense).

Sections IV and V then deal specifically with national identity. There is a notorious typology of "conceptions of nationhood", which opposes "ethnocultural" (or "ethnic" *or* "cultural") conceptions to political or "civic" conceptions of nationhood. This typology carries a heavy normative load, favoring civic identities over the others. It is also used for explanatory purposes. Analytically, however, the typology is unsatisfactory, as are the normative and explanatory applications. A more multidimensional analysis of elements of national identity is proposed, which clarifies some possible meanings of "ethnic", "cultural" and "political" in this context. This should not only free empirical comparative research from some doubtful preconceptions. It should also help to clear up some confusions about the term "constitutional patriotism", which is especially controversial in Germany.

Subsequently, there is a further discussion of the features of German national identity, with an eye to its differences from other Western (especially French and American) national identities and focused on the popular notion, that current German national identity has a strong "ethnic" component. At least if "ethnic" is understood in a narrow sense ("völkisch"), this is quite doubtful, however.

II.   National and other identities: some attempts at clarifying

II.1   What should be understood by "collective identity"?

The following understanding of the concept "collective identity" which I propose is probably not too far from several other current uses.[1] There are, however, some less trivial aspects of my explication, which will become clear, later.

First of all, "collective identity" should be understood as an area of culture, as a special class of cultural elements. In any given social unit we find stocks of symbols and meanings which make up the cultural repertoire of that unit.

Among these symbols and meanings there are some which pertain in a special way to an understanding of the social unit itself - to its current state, its character, its problems, its achievements, its history, its future. The totality of these cultural elements makes up a

---

[1]   Explicit conceptual analyses of the term identity often refer to the philosophical tradition of the concept "identity", as well as to the uses of "identity" in social psychology, where it refers to personality development (see e.g. Frey, Haußer 1987). But the philosophical uses of the term refer to metaphysical or ontological problems, and the interpretations developed in this context are not relevant to a notion of collective social identity (Marquard, Stierle 1979). Nor are various conceptions of individual identity of much use for the understanding of collective identity, as will be indicated later.

collective identity.

If we look at common descriptions of collective identities, we can identify certain elements of meaning which often play a part. The following is a list of such meanings.

− There are criteria for the identification of membership or the distinction between members and non-members. In many cases, especially in the case of modern states, there are of course institutionalized rules for the attainment of membership; collective interpretations relate to the interpretation and justification of those rules.

− There are collective self-images: the ascription of characteristics or traits which are typical of the members or of the collectivity as a whole, generally linked with (mostly positive) evaluations. These often go together with collective ideals (which the collectivity aspires to and also may fail to live up to), with notions of collective interests and common problems, and with ideas about collective duties or responsibilities. There may also be normative ideas about principles of social order and proper relationships between members of the collectivities (e.g. reciprocal rights and duties).[2]

− Within groups, there can also be feelings of special obligations, solidarity, commitment and trust towards other group members.

− Often there are also notions of collective pride (pride in the achievements of the collectivity) and of honor or dignity. These may lead to a sense of violation if the group or certain members are treated with contempt or in other ways improperly by outsiders, or a sense of shame if members do not live up to the central standards of the group.

− These collective self-images are often linked with contrasting images of other groups and with comparative evaluations as well as with definitions of the relations to other collectivities (as friendly or hostile and so on).

− Finally, there is the important temporal or historical dimension, relating both to the past and to the future of the collectivity: Collective memories or interpretations of the past, possibly commitments to certain traditions and collective projects or collective responsibilities derived from the past (linking the past to the present and the future), hopes and aspirations for the future (not only for the personal future), possibly even a sense of a collective "mission".

Some further clarifications:

---

[2] In the case of national identities, beliefs about political legitimacy, i.e. evaluations of the political system that one belongs to as more or less acceptable and worthy of support or loyalty can be part of these collective self-images. They might be linked, however, with more general political and moral beliefs, which are applicable also to other political systems and go beyond the range of beliefs which are considered here as parts of collective identity. We will come back to these demarcation problems and to some peculiar features of *national* identity, later.

How do we identify these symbols and meanings? We find them in acts or processes of communication and expression (both linguistic and non-linguistic). We find them in the minds or memories of people - as symbolic competencies, beliefs, images and so on. We find them in all kinds of artefacts which become carriers or stores of symbolic meaning. We discover these meanings by asking people about their beliefs, by interpreting artefacts, by studying communications and expressive practices.

Discursive and presentative meanings. We can distinguish between discursive and presentative symbols and meanings.[3] Discursive meanings can be articulated in written or spoken language. Discursive meanings can also be contested. They come with claims to validity (Habermas) which can be argued - questioned or criticized, justified or defended. Discursive meanings are what is usually meant by terms like "ideas" or "beliefs". Presentative meanings are represented by non-linguistic symbols or symbolic practices (signs, pictures, music, rituals etc.) or by non-literal, figurative or poetic uses of language ("fiction", poetry, metaphor etc.). Representative meanings can be interpreted in ordinary language, of course, and works or practices with representative meanings can be evaluated and criticized in various ways. But this does not really make presentative meanings into discursive meanings. We can argue about the meaning of a painting, or a piece of music, or a ritual, but we cannot make it an idea or belief - even if we can sometimes *connect* it to certain ideas or beliefs.

Collective identities are not only made up by ideas, beliefs, narrations or interpretations which are discursive in the mentioned sense. There are also presentative meanings in rituals and non-discursive symbols. There are collective representations in art forms, in popular entertainment, in literature, in stories and fairy tales, in signs, photographs, advertising graphics, in architecture, memorials, public rituals, in consumer goods, fashion, and for sports. The roles and relations of discursive and presentative meanings within collective identities are an intriguing problem. It could be argued that (especially in modern culture) discursive meanings are in some ways more important, especially with respect to changes of identity and contests about identity. In any case I will (without arguing this point) direct my primary attention to discursive meanings.

Meanings, practical dispositions and sentiments. There are complex relations, not easily analysed, between symbols or meanings, on the one hand, and actors' practical dispositions and affects, on the other. By "practical dispositions" I mean phenomena like desires, preferences, a readiness to act according to certain normative expectations, to follow certain rules and so on. The corresponding actions may derive from explicit choices and decisions, or they may be more or less habitual and unreflective. Symbolic meanings (evaluations of objects or states of affairs or activities, normative expectations and so on) are implicated in these dispositions, and many components of collective identity, which are of evaluative or normative character, imply a disposition to certain behaviors. Similarly, affects or sentiments which are often formed by symbolic interpretations can be expressed in symbolic forms and can be evoked by symbols.[4]

---

[3] I borrow these terms from S. Langer (1957).

[4] Affective content may be linked in a special way to presentative symbolism (rituals, images, built environment, landscapes).

I mention these relations because common understandings of collective identity often refer to certain practical dispositions or sentiments as parts of those identities. Think of concepts like pride, trust, or solidarity, which combine evaluative judgements or normative expectations and obligations with certain feelings. And there are concepts like "love of the country", with diffuse and manifold aspects of meaning, sentiment and inclinations to act. We can follow this usage and include such sentiments and dispositions in the meaning of "collective identity". But we have to keep in mind that the relations between articulate normative or evaluative beliefs and actual practice can be complicated - such beliefs do not invariably lead to corresponding actions.

Salience and reflexivity. There is great variability in the salience of various elements of collective identity, and of collective identity as a whole. In many contexts, these elements remain in the background, as unstated assumptions and beliefs, as taken for granted. Collective beliefs or other elements become more or less explicit, objects of attention or possibly objects of reflection, if they are taught in a deliberate way, if they are questioned or disputed or celebrated.[5]

Collective identities as a whole also differ in the degree to which their creation or reproduction is accompanied by explicit articulation and critical examination. There can be more traditional identities, which are transmitted or adopted without much questioning, and there can be more "reflective" collective identities which are subject to collective examination, deliberation, and possibly reformulation.[6] It is commonly assumed that modern culture has generally become more reflective in this sense. If this applies to collective identities, or to what extent, remains to be seen.[7]

Common interpretations and shared interpretations. The ideas, interpretations or representations which make up collective identity are collective in the sense that they relate to a collectivity, that they are ideas about a collectivity (e.g. the membership of a state or a "nation") held by members of that collectivity. Now collective self-understandings and other general interpretations *could* be collective also in another sense - or more precisely: in two other senses. They could be *common* beliefs among the members of the community in question, i.e. held by all its members or at least most of them. And they could be *shared* in another sense: they could be held with in knowledge or on the assumption that the other members of the community also accept them (Shils 1972). Beliefs can be widely accepted in

---

[5]   Seen from the individual, which always participates in several collective identities, one or the other collective identity may become salient, important, orienting or motivating, depending on the situation, as will be explained below.

[6]   Elements of collective identity can become salient without becoming the object of critical reflection, of course - if solidarities are invoked, collective identities are celebrated, denigrations of collective identities protested and so on.

[7]   There are *normative* demands that national collective identities in particular should not be accepted uncritically, as unquestioned traditions, but should be examined in collective deliberations. See, e.g., Habermas 1996.

the first sense without being shared in the second sense - if people do not know or do not care about the fact that they have certain ideas or beliefs in common. The degree to which elements of collective identity are held in common or shared by members of a collectivity is an open empirical question. It should not be part of the definition of e.g. national identity that there is large degree of commonality with respect to these symbolic elements.

Strong or weak identities. "Thick" or "thin" collective identities. Collective identity, as the notion is explicated here, is a descriptive term which does not imply much about the specific content or strength or degree of acceptance of collective representations. Collective identity exists wherever there are collectivities, where some of these cultural elements are present. Not all of the elements that were mentioned above need to be present or to be articulated.

These elements may be weakly developed and somewhat marginal for the members of the social unit, or they may be more central and more important to the members. And collective identities may have a narrow or "thin" character (as in those cases where a group or organization shares a small range of common interests or goals - which may nevertheless be quite important for the members - and where there is little historical depth and not much of a self-image beyond the narrow purpose and corresponding instrumental features of the unit). Or they may be rich, complex, "thick", of considerable historical depth, with detailed conceptions of group character, strong elements of collective solidarity and so on.

II.2 National and other collective identities: commonalities, differences, relations

In this rather weak and inclusive sense, almost every social unit with at least minimally developed boundaries and a minimum of internal communication will have a collective identity in this sense: face-to-face groups as well as larger ones, groups with mostly informal structures and formal organizations.[8] Families, friendship circles, organizations and associations of all kinds, professional or occupational groupings, religions, state-bounded societies (which case will be discussed presently), maybe civilizations or continents or other transnational units.[9]

---

[8] "Collective representations" might be a better, somewhat more neutral term than "collective identity". (This is Durkheim's term, of course. Durkheim, however, used the term in a somewhat different way.) Or "collective self-understandings". These terms have their own problems, however. Terms like "representation" or "self-understanding" do not bring out the normative, evaluative, practical components of the symbolic elements which are parts of collective identities. There is also a problematic feature that they share with collective identity: misleading associations of a group personality or group mind.

[9] Gender and sexual orientation are often quoted as examples of collective identity. But especially in the case of gender it is not clear whether the term, as defined here, applies, or to what degree. This depends upon the degree to which male and female (or other) identities are really understood as *group* identities or more as *differing types of personal identity*. Of course this varies among individuals. Some women do understand themselves as members of a (historical, transgenerational) group. Others probably do not. There could well be different gender roles, even different cultural characteristics of (many) men and women, with there being a male or female collective identity.

More complex identities will be found in larger, more encompassing groups or communities.[10] Also in groups with a longer life-span, where elements of collective identity, not least a collective memory have time to develop and accumulate. Transgenerational groups, which include whole families or members of all ages and life-stages, where membership is primarily inherited and new members are introduced in the life of the community primarily by primary socialization, are both encompassing and long-lived. Religious communities. Symbolic communities which define themselves by a common history, common traditions, common cultural practices or features ("ethnic" groups). But also classes, under certain circumstances. And of course the case that interests us most in this context: the state-bounded society.

There are different relations between the social organization of a unit and its collective identity. Social units with strong institutional and organizational structures *may* also have strong and complex identities. But in these cases, collective identity is not *obviously* necessary or very important for the maintenance of boundaries and internal order. This applies e.g. to formal organizations, but also to state-bounded societies, where the importance or necessity of strong collective identities has to be examined, not just assumed. On the other hand, there may also be very loosely organized communities, with little institutional, organizational or associational structure, who depend much more on their symbolic identity for their existence as a group. This often seems to be true for ethnic groups.[11] In these cases we might say that the community can only exist if there is a distinct collective identity, or that collective identity is constitutive of the community. But this is not *obviously* true in other cases.

If we now turn to the case of *national* collective identities, we may note some special features. First a definition, which follows from the more general notion of collective identity that was developed above: National collective identity consists of those elements of collective identity which are present or circulate among members of a state-bounded society, a society which is politically organized by a territorial state. "National identity" in this sense should be regarded as special part of the public culture of a modern state-bounded society.

By "public culture" I mean all those symbols and meanings which are publicly circulating or publicly assessible, relevant to or addressing a larger public. "Relevant" means: known by, accessible to, interesting for, noticed by, directed or addressed to, circulating among the national public. This does not imply that the same conception of national identity is "shared" by the members of the public in the sense that it is consensually accepted or internalized. A national public is a loosely bounded mass of laypersons which are connected by continuous processes of cultural transmission and communication.

Membership in the national public and participation in a national identity is not identical with

---

[10] Encompassing groups are those who combine a broad range of activities and concerns and are relevant to large parts of the lives of their members (rather than to specialized interests and activities) (Selznick 1992, 358-60). Membership in a state-bounded society or possibly in an ethnic group is more encompassing in this sense than membership in a business organization.

[11] Especially in the case of "symbolic ethnicity" (Gans 1979; Alba 1990; Waters 1990).

"citizenship", understood as legal membership in the polity. To be a citizen of a state is neither necessary nor sufficient for participation in the national public culture and national identity. Membership in the national public is based on residence and regular participation in the life of that society and its culture, on a certain familiarity with the cultural repertoire of the society and on some kind of regular cultural interaction. There could be citizens in the legal sense who do not participate in this sense, who are indifferent to or isolated from these parts of the national culture. And the more important case: There could be residents who participate in the national culture and collective identity to some degree at least, without being full citizens.[12]

Interpretations about membership criteria and membership roles, which will most importantly refer to the legal and political status of citizenship, will of course be elements of national collective identity. How important reference to the legal status as citizen is for somebody to be regarded as a member of the society is an open empirical question. Put differently: Collective identities refer to a collectivity with a membership. In the case of national identity, the group is probably most of the time identified with the citizenry. The citizenry makes up the nation. But in fact it is not always clear whether the relevant collectivity only includes full citizens in the legal sense, or whether it refers to vaguer notions of nation, society or country which may include other permanent residents, too and where formal citizenship is not always a salient feature.[13]

There are other, different uses of the terms "national identity" and "nation", of course. Sometimes "nation" implies some kind of cultural homogeneity or some strong form of collective identity which is shared by all members. If the term is used in this sense, there might be a citizenry who does not form a nation. Or only part of the citizenry may belong to the nation. Or there may be several nations within a state (i.e. the inhabitants may form several nations, and the state may therefore not be a "nation state", but a "multinational state"). The concept "nation" may also be applied to groups who live on the territory of one or several states and who aspire to some kind of political sovereignty (statehood or at least some kind of political autonomy within a given state). I will treat these as special cases, however.[14] National identity in the generic sense which is used here may include plural or competing definitions of the relevant "nation" or "nations", as will be discussed in more detail, later.

---

[12] As is apparently often the case with descendants of immigrants in Germany who do not have acquired citizenship.

[13] One might also separate analytically the political component of national collective identity from other components and refer only to ideas about the polity itself, about the community of citizens and their political and legal relations. National identity in this narrow sense would then only relate to ideas about the status of citizens, the relations between citizens themselves and between citizens and authoritative political and legal institutions. National identity may be sometimes understood in this way. But in reality this kind of "political" national identity is always very much intertwined with other elements. We will come back to this in the discussion about "constitutional patriotism".

[14] As to terminology, I would propose to talk of "nationalities" in these special cases. The term "nation" would denote the whole membership of a state-bounded society, and membership would be defined by the national public. "Nation" in this sense could comprise several nationalities. This usage differs from prevailing notions of "nation" as used in the literature, of course. But I think it is close to many everyday understandings.

State-bounded societies are those social units which have a very strong institutional or organizational structure. Among them is the political order itself: government organizations, political parties, constitutions and legal orders, the community of citizens and the citizenship role with associated rights and duties (which does not necessarily make up the whole membership, as mentioned). But also what today is often called civil society: organizations (economic and others), networks, markets, voluntary associations, and the whole range of smaller groups, families and others. Most of these groups see themselves as parts of the state-bounded societies. They are also participants in the national public culture.

These structures are implicated in the creation and reproduction of national identities. They also all contribute to the overall social order. It is a very open and difficult question, what kind of independent role collective identity plays for the overall social and political order, or, to put the question in a counterfactual way, what kind or what elements of collective identity are necessary or supportive for certain kinds of social and political order.[15]

If we now want to look at possible relations between national and other collective identities, we may first identify a formal feature: the relations of membership definitions. There are nested, overlapping and exclusive memberships. Nested membership occurs if the membership of one collectivity is included in the membership of a larger, more encompassing collectivity. In the simplest case of overlapping membership, we have two collectivities where some, but not all members belong to both. In an exclusive membership, there are two or more collectivities (of a similar type), where membership in one excludes membership in another.

Membership in a state-bounded society and in any case citizenship has long been regarded as exclusive in principle. One should only belong to one national community, to one body of citizens. However, especially in the context of Western European immigration, double citizenship becomes increasingly common, and there might be groups of immigrants who see themselves as members of two state-bounded societies and who participate in two national identifies. Similarly in the case of national minorities with external homelands, there might be cases where members identify themselves with two national identities at once.

We find nested group relations and collective identities in the case of all those collectivities which regard themselves as parts of a state-bounded society. Also, national collectivities can see themselves as part of some larger, transnational unit - as part of a larger civilization, for instance, or as part of a "Western world" with certain cultural and political commonalities, or in the special case of the members of the European Union, as parts of a special transnational political unit (which keeps searching for a common collective identity, however).

Often, these nested relationships shade into overlapping memberships and collective

---

[15] The popular understanding of a nation as an "imagined community" (Anderson 1983) seems to me somewhat misleading. Images of community may play an important part in the constitution of national, as well as of other collectivities. How important this element is for different communities remains to be determined empirically. Certainly the nation or other communities are more than images or imaginations, and they have other constitutive structures, apart from collective self-images.

identities. This is true for collectivities which are at least partly transnational in scope, but have national "wings" or departments or sub-units. Examples would be international religious communities or professional organizations of scientists.[16]

Substantively, these relationships may be mutually supportive, indifferent, competing or conflicting. Insofar as group membership and orientation towards a collective identity demands individual attention, commitment, even some kind of active support or participation, there is always some kind of competition. The amounts of energy and attention that individuals can mobilize are certainly variable, but nevertheless limited, and choices about allocation are always necessary. Most of the time these may be made habitually, however, without much reflection. Relationships between group memberships and collective identities can nevertheless be mutually supportive in some respects, especially in the case of nested identities. Family traditions, local and regional attachments, membership in a national church, and/or membership in voluntary associations may support people's national identifications.

Incompatible or conflicting relations between collective identities may emerge in several ways. In most cases, there are conflicts between social units, where collective identities are implicated. In certain cases, collective identities may produce conflict, because they imply conflicting orientations and demands. Or conflicts may affect certain elements of collective identity (e.g. collective pride or self-respect), and this may aggravate conflict. There may be all kinds of conflicts between collectivities with mutually exclusive memberships, of course. How collective identities might be implicated in such conflicts, if there are elements of collective identity which give group conflicts a special character and possibly make them harder to resolve, is an important question (which I cannot discuss in this paper, however). In the case of nested or overlapping memberships and collective identities, there may be simply conflicting demands which are put on the individual by the respective groups and their collective self-understandings, without open conflict between the groups as a whole. This is more or less the familiar case of role conflict. Demands of family membership may conflict with patriotic duties. In conflicts between groups, where overlapping memberships play a role, conflicts of loyalty emerge. In conflicts between states, for example, class solidarity may conflict with national loyalty.

Authors have made various statements about competing or conflicting collective identities. Often assertions are made that collective identity has some primacy about other collective identities, either in a descriptive or a normative sense. Subnational or transnational collective identities (based on ethnicity, class, religion) have been seen as dangerous for national unity. On the other hand, national identity has often been described as the winner in most of these conflicts. National identities have trumped both international class solidarity and more particularistic group attachments.

It is, however, not so easy to evaluate general statements of this kind. The impact of collective identities on people's orientations and actions is very much influenced by specific contexts, situations and characteristics of group conflict. It is true, of course, that stability of a

---

[16] The labor movement and socialist and communist organizations have long aspired to such a national-international structure, with limited success.

political order requires that allegiance to the state *on certain matters* is dominant over competing group loyalties. But modern political orders respect individual attachments to families, religious communities and other collectivities, and this is a precondition for their stability. There is some kind of balance, not simply predominance. Most of the time it is also not evident to which degree acquiescence in demands of the state is based on national identifications or on other factors, like power, coercion, various institutional mechanisms for the diffusion of conflict and so on.

One way to look at the comparative importance or influence of collectivities is to look not at open conflicts, but at the importance which collective identifications have for individuals' lives in general. This leads us to consider the relation between collective and individual identities.

II.3   Collective and individual identities

While we might suppose that some kind of consistent and coherent individual identity is necessary for a "normally" functioning personality, it is not obvious that the analogue statement is true for the collective case - i.e. that a consistent, coherent *and* consensual identity is necessary for the stability or proper functioning of all kinds of social units (which does not say if it is more important for certain kinds of collectivities than for others).

The term "social identity" is sometimes used to denote that element of individual identity which consists in identifications with relevant groups (Tajfel 1982). Following common sociological assumptions (as articulated above all in the theoretical tradition of social interactionism), individual identity is partly developed by this kind of group identification or by the acquisition of membership roles in such groups. The question "who am I" or "what kind of person am I" is partly answered by reporting relevant membership affiliations: I am a German, a European, a catholic, a member of the professoriate and so on.[17] Collective identity as understood here is different from social identity in this sense.

Questions about collective identity are distinguishable from questions about individual identity. Questions like "who are we", "what kind of group are we", "what does it mean to be German", "what binds us together", "how do we interpret our common past", "what are we striving for" are different from the question "who am I", and even from the question "where do I belong". These questions can only be asked in a meaningful way in the context of some real or imagined conversation within a group.

Thus, collective identity is a social phenomenon, not an attribute of individuals. While it is true that collective identities need carriers, i.e. persons who hold the collectivity and communication beliefs about it, or who participate in symbolic activities which relate to the

---

[17]   This *may* imply "identification" with those groups in the sense of support for strong collective identities (identification with the "fate" of the group, as it were, support of collective goals and so on). It may also just imply acceptance of certain roles and standards of behavior which are expected from the individual members of such groups. One can learn and accept e.g. gender roles or occupational roles without explicit identification with corresponding groups.

collectivity, it is nevertheless not very useful to think of collective identity just as the sum or aggregation of individual beliefs, attitudes and activities. Collective identities have properties of their own. For instance, elements of collective identity which are embodied in social practices, as well as in external carriers of symbolic meaning must be studied as such, not just as aggregated properties of individuals. Collective identities are created and recreated in social processes of communication, cultural transmission and contestation, and their existence and character cannot be separated from these processes.

Sometimes the notion of collective identity is treated as an *analogue* to individual identity. The group or collectivity is then treated as some kind of collective personality. This is also misleading. On the social level there is above all the basic problem of agreement and disagreement, which is different from the problem of the consistency of individual beliefs and attitudes. The notion of individual identity is itself understood in different and contested ways. But in most uses we can find the supposition that personal identity is something positive, a necessary element of personality development and a successful life. Personal identity has something to do with a successful integration of different parts of a personality and of individual biography into some kind of coherent unity. The concept of collective identity as developed here is more neutral. It leaves open if all kinds of social units should be expected to have a collective identity which unites them on the basis of some consistent and shared self-image, a shared and coherent understanding of the common past and future, shared ideals about the character of the collectivity and so on. I take it that this question, which has both normative and empirical aspects, *should* be kept open, subject to further inquiry.

What are the *relations* between individual and collective identity? As the above mentioned notion of "social identity" implies, individual identity is in part formed or constituted by participation in collective identities, by collective identifications. Loyalty to a group, being accepted as member of a group (by other members or by non-members), seeing oneself involved in the life of a group, in some collective project, being proud of one's group, being interested in the well-being of the group or in collective achievements, feeling responsible for activities attributed to the group may all be important parts of individual self-understanding, a basis for self-esteem, an important element of the goals or ideals one pursues, a source of meaning for one's life.[18]

On a general level, not much more can be said. How important collective identifications are for various individuals, and what the relative importance of different collective identifications may be, are open empirical questions. For some people, collective identifications might be important, for others much less so. And forms of collective identity might have different relevance to different people. There may also be important situational and historical factors which influence the relevance or salience of collective identifications - e.g. situations of conflict or group mobilization. There is e.g. not much empirical evidence to support the notion that participation in a *national* collective identity is the most important collective identification in most peoples lives. Surely there are other candidates, e.g. family, other small groups,

---

[18] On the other hand, the development of collective identities may partly result from the attempts of individuals to resolve problems of individual identity. This may be important e.g. in the case of immigrant groups.

churches, occupational groups. Not much is empirically known about these things.

There are of course plausible assumptions or conjectures about the relevance of collective identifications for individuals and their identities. Yael Tamir has formulated such assumptions with respect to national identifications: "Membership in a nation promises individuals redemption from personal oblivion." "Identification with a nation gives individuals hope of personal renewal through national regeneration." "Membership in a nation offers rescue from alienation, solitude, and anonymity." "National membership assures individuals that, qua members, they enjoy equal status" (Tamir 1995, 433-34). It is not very well known, of course, how important these motives are and for whom. It is also not clear, why these reasons should apply only or primarily to the nation and not to some other collectivities (starting with the family).[19]

The relevance of collective identities to individual identities should be distinguished from the importance of more general cultural influences on individual lives, by the way. Certainly the national culture, and in some cases some other group culture is a very important influence in people's lives. It provides them with a cultural repertoire which helps them to develop goals and standards, to master tasks and problems, to give meanings to their lives. All this, however, does not necessarily imply the adoption of identifications with the national collective. One can become acculturated within a national culture while being largely indifferent to the national collectivity.[20] Collective identity is after all only a particular *part* of collective culture. This will be elaborated in the next section.

---

[19] There are possible alternative explanations for the support of groups by individuals, above all instrumental reasons deriving from private interests. See Hardin 1995.

[20] There is an ambiguity in certain accounts why "cultural membership" should be important for individual autonomy (Kymlicka 1995). It is not clear whether acquisition of a cultural repertoire or participation in a strong collective identity is meant. Some of the arguments used e.g. by Kymlicka point to both possibilities. If the argument points to the importance of strong collective identifications, its validity as a *general* statement is questionable. If it points to the relevance of a sufficiently rich cultural repertoire, it is not very problematic. But in this case it has to be shown why this cultural repertoire has to come from a single, coherent group culture.

III. Some controversies and misunderstandings about collective identity

III.1 Collective identity, culture, and difference

Collective identity, understood as the sum of collective representations, of symbols and meaning which refer to the collectivity itself, is a special part of the collective culture. National identity is a special part of the public culture of a state-bounded society.[21]

There are many elements of a group culture or national culture which are not necessarily part of collective identity: stocks of knowledge, many values and norms with no specific relation to the life of a particular community, patterns of individual identity, elements of expressive or aesthetic culture: music, literature and so on, which do not carry meanings that relate specifically to the community. Some of these elements may be shared with other communities, some may be special. The composition of the whole cultural repertoire and its patterns of distribution among the membership make up the cultural profile, the peculiar cultural character of a group. But that does not necessarily make them part of the collective identity of the group. They become elements of collective identity only insofar as they are regarded as such by the members, insofar as they are seen as expressing a specific cultural character of the group or as constituting a specific cultural heritage or tradition. The boundaries between the general culture and those "reflexive" elements which make up collective identity are not very sharp, of course, since representations of cultural features are an important part of collective self-images. And the maintenance of a distinct group culture can become an important collective goal and as such a part of collective identity. But collective reflections of the group culture only provide a selective, partial, possibly not entirely accurate representation of that culture. There are probably many cultural elements which remain implicit, unreflected.

The strength of collective identity is also not dependent on the degree of cultural difference or dissimilarity between the group and its social environment. *Individuality* is not *dissimilarity*. Collective identity and cultural difference are not the same kind of phenomenon. Since collective identities are necessarily unique, because they refer to a particular collective, its

---

[21] In an interesting discussion of the concept "national identity", Bikhu Parekh sets an encompassing understanding of collective identity against more limited understandings. The latter may refer to self-understandings or to shared values and commitments; the wider notion "includes the central organising principles of the polity, its structural tendencies, characteristic ways of thinking and living, the ideals that inspire its people, the values they profess and to which its leaders tend to appeal, ... their propensities to act in specific ways, their deepest fears, ambitions, anxieties..." (Parekh 1995, 257). Defined in this way, "collective identity" looses its distinctiveness - it becomes the total of all important properties (institutional and cultural) of a polity. It achieves the same general meaning as "culture" in Taylor's famous encompassing definition. Or at least it gains the meaning of "way of life" or "ethos". A more restricted and specific understanding might be more useful, however. Therefore I plead for a more restricted, and also for a less unitary understanding. Parekh's notion of collective identity is explicitly modeled after a strong notion of individual identity. This may be misleading, too, as later explained in the text.

features (cultural and otherwise), its situation, history and so on, they always provide *some* element of cultural dissimilarity, of course. But if we understand something like different world views, value systems, beliefs and so on by cultural difference or dissimilarity, then we find that marked differences in these attributes are not a necessary condition for a distinct collective identity. Members of different collectivities can become quite similar in overall cultural profile, in most beliefs, values, individual goals and life-plans and so on, without losing a distinct collective identity. Two groups with extremely similar cultural characteristics can nevertheless maintain quite strong collective identities. Italian renaissance city states or contemporary English soccer clubs might be examples. Group solidarity is not dependent on cultural difference. A collective memory, narratives about the history of the group makes for collective identity, but is unrelated to current cultural differences in other areas.[22]

So cultural assimilation of immigrant groups or minorities, or cultural convergence between state-bounded societies or even larger units does not necessarily result in a weakening of collective identities. There may be other relations, however. Strong group identities may lead to a high valuation, to a large subjective relevance of small cultural difference. We may assume, on the other hand, that the confrontation with cultural otherness, with very dissimilar cultural environments will strengthen collective identities.

III.2 Collective identity, boundaries, the other

These remarks may sound like a notion of group identity which simply stresses the maintenance of social boundaries, in the spirit of F. Barth (Barth 1969). Barth and other authors see features of group culture simply as markers of the delineation of group boundaries. Otherwise cultural content does not seem to matter much and cultural features are seen as quite malleable.

The proposition that collective identity is not necessarily dependent on important cultural differences does not imply such a thesis. Both the elements of collective identity (self-perceptions, group histories, collective aspirations and so on) and the group culture as a whole may be quite rich and complex, may have their own weight, a relevant influence on group life, may provide both limits and opportunities to cultural change. All this has to be determined empirically, of course. And the maintenance of group boundaries is certainly not the only function or effect of collective identities.

Similarly, there are understandings of collective identity which focus on difference, distinction, or otherness. Collective identity, in this view, is primarily produced by the construction of boundaries, by the maintenance of distinctions between in-group and out-

---

[22] This implies that "cultural conflict" and "identity conflict" may not be the same. In the first case, conflict may result from incompatible cultural orientations (e.g. norms or values which are not mutually acceptable). In the second case, group solidarities based e.g. on common histories or collective memories may shape conflict constellations, or experiences of disrespect for one's community may sharpen conflict. Huntington's diagnosis of a "conflict of civilizations" is ambiguous in this respect. Insofar as he refers to conflicts of historically grounded collective identities, counterarguments which refer to cultural similarities between civilizations or dissimilarities within them will not wash.

group, by the exclusion of the other, or by focusing on the differences between members and non-members. Groups create their self-image by drawing contrasts to their social environment, to images of the other.

Now it is certainly true that contrasts and comparisons are common elements of collective identities. But it is not *obviously* true that they always play the central role for the constitution of these identities. This should not be decided by definition.[23] There seem to be cases where collective identity is very much centered on problems of the group itself, e.g. on its history and collective future, where concern for difference and otherness is very muted.[24]

These are questions about the *contents* of collective identities. These must be distinguished from questions about the origins of collective identities or about the processes of creation and recreation. Here, external definitions often play a role. Groups have experiences and perceptions of the ways they are perceived, described and otherwise treated by the outside world, and this influences their self-perceptions. Sometimes groups may partly adopt external definitions, sometimes they may reject external perceptions and develop counter-images. Also, experiences of hostility, mistreatment, disrespect may form elements of collective identity.

III.3   How collective are collective identities?

If we use a weak and inclusive notion of collective identity, as developed here, and drop the unitary associations of this term, it becomes obvious that we have to ask the same questions about collective identity which have been asked about the role and character of group culture or especially national culture in general. There are familiar objections to the idea of a common culture and collective identity in modern societies. To sum them up, in a somewhat oversimplified or exaggerated way:

There is no national culture and identity that is a coherent system of beliefs or meanings. Contemporary culture and collective identity is eclectic, syncretist, internally fragmented, a jumble of heterogeneous elements, not an organic whole at all.

Neither is there cultural consensus. There are no cognitive and normative belief systems and no collective self-perceptions which are widely accepted as valid and binding. There is widespread controversy, dissensus, pluralism, difference, diffidence, at most some fragile acceptance, imposed by the more powerful groups.

There is therefore also no core or essence of a national culture and identity which would be relatively durable, which would change only very slowly, following largely its own logic. Cultural elements are constantly and opportunistically produced or constructed, especially by certain powerful elites, and adapted to changing political and economic circumstances.

---

[23]   For criticisms on such a "differentialist" notions of identity see Shils 1995, 107; Parekh 1995, 256.

[24]   This seems to a large degree to be the case e.g. in German debates on national identity in the last decades, see below.

More generally, there is no cultural determinism. Culture does not regulate or direct social action, like a computer program steering some complicated piece of machinery. Instead, social actors use cultural elements as a "tool kit" for the fabrication of interpretations and accounts, suited to their interests and plans.

Certainly, these statements have some force. But do they give a complete and accurate picture? If we get around in different countries, if we read the newspapers, watch TV, if we go to public meetings, talk to people, if we live in a country for a while, try to understand its politics, the ways of life we encounter - don't we feel very distinctly that there *are* very real and consequential cultural differences? And that there are collective self-images, historical narratives, collective ideals and other elements of collective identity which seem to have a recognizable influence? And if we look at some of the relevant comparative literature on political culture, value change, social movements, nationalism and so on, we find at least some confirmation (not conclusive, but suggestive) of the supposed influence of national cultures and identities.[25] And even if there is reason for doubt if there are unitary national identities - what is it, then, that so many people are talking about under this heading? Or what does it mean that there are public debates about national identity?

And of course there is a lot of cultural invention going on, but does it start from nowhere? And do we really approach culture as a tool kit, which we can grab at will and handle freely? At least we had to learn to handle these tools and this has left some imprint on us. And where did those tools come from, how were they produced and distributed or made available to us? Are there not accumulated cultural repertoires which we have to make our own before we can start to remould them?

Now it is not too difficult to describe in a general manner some kind of middle position between the polemical extremes. We do not have to follow the obviously false alternative between the assumption of national cultural homogeneity and cultural determinism on the one hand and the assumption of randomness or total manipulability of cultural variation on the other.

It is more plausible to describe a national public culture and collective identity as a field of contention. There is a lot of variation of cultural elements, a lot of difference, a lot of disagreement. But the whole ensemble is not just chaotic, without some kind of order or pattern. Cultural elements are more a repertoire than a definite blueprint for action, but it is still a repertoire with a distinct composition. And a repertoire only exists insofar as it is already to some degree mastered by the actors - who are what they are because of their mastery of or familiarity with that specific repertoire. Contention is widespread, but not random. There are fault lines, cleavages, camps, central issues and topics, certain inventories of ideas and arguments to support different positions. Despite all disagreement,

---

[25] Sometimes even in a somewhat surprising way, as mentioned above. Within the last years, for instance, we find some features of German or French policy, above all those connected to immigration, explained by the purported fact that Germany has an ethnic and France a political or republican national identity. We will come back to this example, later.

there are probably some common assumptions, some common language, some shared images and ideas.

All this has to be properly specified or qualified, of course. There might be further differentiations of collective identities, in addition to the alignment of adversary camps or the contests between different interpretations or discourses. Not only might there be different versions of collective identity which are supported by different parts of a national population. There might also be different degrees of interest. Aspects of collective identity might be more important for some people than for others. Public debates about questions of collective identity may be followed primarily by certain segments of the public, and active participation in public will be even more selective. In a certain part of the literature on national identity, statements about features about these identities seem to be derived from statements by intellectuals, journalists or politicians. It is not obvious how much influence those debates and statements have on the general population.

III.4   "Primordialism" vs. "constructivism": What are the questions?

From the literature on nationalism, ethnicity and collective identity, we are familiar with the opposition of "primordialist" and "constructivist" accounts of these phenomena. Most of the time, primordialism is flogged somewhat ritualistically: Collective identities are not given by nature or biology, and they are not unchanging essences. Instead they are changing, adaptable and "socially constructed".

This opposition is somewhat misleading, however. It is based on a conflation of two questions: First, what are the causes or origins of collective identities, how are they produced or created, transmitted, changed, and how variable are they as a result? Second, what is the content of collective identity, what kinds of meaning do we find there, what kinds of understandings about the nature of the collectivity and the relations between its members?

"Primordialism" is most often criticized as an answer to the first question. It is, however, better understood as answering the second question, and at least some important proponents of "primordialism" mean it that way (Geertz 1994; Eisenstadt, Giesen 1995).

Relating to the second question, "primordialism" means that there are certain elements of collective identity which are *understood* or *experienced* as unconditionally binding, pre-given and not subject to voluntary choices, of primary importance and particular force, connected with strong sentiments. These understandings may relate to solidarities between group members, identification with a group and its welfare, concern about the continuance of cultural traditions, life-forms or collective projects (which may in turn be connected with attachments to territories or landscapes).

Such an identification of "primordial" understandings and sentiments in some collective identity could be criticized in several ways. It could very simply be criticized as inaccurate because these interpretations and sentiments are just not there, or not strong, or confined to

certain parts of the population. Some elements of these understandings could be criticized as factually inaccurate; this pertains above all to historical interpretations and collective memories or stories, which are often invoked to support attachments to the group or a territory. This or other evidence may be used to support a diagnosis that certain "primordial" collective self-understandings are the result of manipulation or self-deception.[26] All these claims would have to be supported by proper evidence, of course. None of these possible criticisms rules out the possibility that there might be quite genuine, authentic beliefs and sentiments of a "primordial" character.

The last mentioned criticism touches on the first question again: What are the origins or causes of collective identities, and how stable or malleable are these identities? One causal account may be that collective identities are invented in some more or less deliberate or intentional way by interested parties, possibly to mask ulterior motives, to give some appearance of legitimacy to specific interests, or to manipulate people in the interest of the inventors.[27] Besides intentional manipulation, elements of self-deception or rationalization might also be involved. This opportunistic or instrumental or self-serving use of collective identities is apparently sometimes meant when people talk of "social construction".[28] This understanding is then set against the notion that collective identities emerge in some way naturally and universally, possibly as a result of biological mechanisms, or as a result of some unanalyzed universal social or cultural mechanism.

There looms a false alternative, however. Apart from intentional invention and instrumental use for particularistic interests, there might be many other forms of social "construction" or production or creation of collective identities, other forms of generating meanings. There might be processes of cultural creation and transmission which are not simply driven by specific interests, which are indeed prior to or more basic than the formulation of an "interest".

And as to permanence or change of collective identities, there are several questions, from the factual question of degrees of change in collective self-understanding, as noted by outside observers, to the more complicated question about the causes of permanence or change, and to questions about the role, which ideas about historical continuity play within collective identities. Biological inheritance might not be the only basis for the durability of certain social and cultural features, and the rejection of biological explanations or of some notions of an unchanging human nature does not settle the question of permanence and variability.

---

[26] Beliefs about primordial relationships could of course also be criticized in a straightforward normative way, as some kind of inappropriate collective egoism or ethnocentrism, or as traditionalism that cannot stand up to rational criticism. But it is not obvious that e.g. certain special obligations and solidarities could not be justified normatively.

[27] Nagel, Joane (1994). Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture. Social Problems 41, 1994, 152-176; Hechter, Michael (1987). Nationalism as Group Solidarity. Ethnic and Racial Studies 1987, 415-426

[28] Eller, Jack David; Coughlan, Reed M. (1993). The Poverty of Primordialism: the Demystification of Ethnic Attachments. Ethnic and Racial Studies 16, 1993, 183-202

III.5   Identities: "good" and "bad"

Collective identity is, like individual identity, sometimes used as a "success term" with implicit normative connotations. A "lack" or "deficit" of collective identity is then seen as a problem. There are also some related terms, which point to certain forms of collective identity which are clearly considered as bad. These are terms like ethnocentrism, chauvinism or racism.[29]

As I have explained above, I would propose an understanding of collective identity that is more neutral. That makes it necessary to identify empirically the consequences or implications of some form of collective identity, and to specify explicitly the normative criteria one might wish to apply in the evaluation of collective identities.

I will not be able to discuss such normative criteria in a systematic way here. We might consider very briefly, however, some possible criteria for evaluation, which are implicitly or explicitly used in descriptions of collective identities.

Insofar as collective identities contain norms, values or (as in the case of national identities) principles of political order, these may be evaluated according to the criteria of some moral or normative political conception. In this sense we could speak e.g. of "liberal" and "non-liberal", or "democratic" or "non-democratic" collective, or national identities. However, the case of *group-specific* moralities or solidarities poses some special normative problems. How do they relate do more general, or universal norms or obligations? What kinds of *special* obligations, loyalties, solidarities among the members of some collectivity could be justified? And how should conflicts between competing loyalties be resolved? These problems have generally been discussed with respect to *national* loyalties or allegiances and their relation to universal moral principles (sometimes framed as questions about the relation between "nationalism" or "patriotism" and "cosmopolitanism"). Many authors have argued that certain special obligations or allegiances could well be justified on universalistic grounds, but there is considerable controversy about these matters, which I cannot go into here.[30]

There are other kinds of evaluations, relating to more formal or pragmatic features of collective identity. The following five pairs of concepts denote some of these kinds of evaluation evaluation. These concepts have both descriptive and evaluative content. They denote certain features of collective identities and at the same time imply a certain evaluation of these features.

Deep or shallow. Deep identities are distinguished by intense commitments or solidarities and by a long time horizon (rich collective memories and felt collective aspirations for the future). Shallow identities are based on a narrow range of common interests or concerns, low

---

[29] Sometimes the term "collective identity" or "national identity" itself, or the corresponding phenomena, are treated as suspect.

[30] For some recent contributions, see e.g. Tamir 1994; Spinner 1994; Miller 1995; Cohen 1996; McKim, McMahan 1997.

solidity and short time horizons.[31] In a communitarian perspective at least, deep collective identities might be clearly preferable. The reasons for this would have to be spelled out in more detail, of course. And probably everybody would agree that there can be pretty ugly deep identities in this sense. So this criterion would have to be combined with some of the following.

Coherent and fragmented. These terms may mean two different things. "Fragmentation" of collective identity may mean that the relevant collectivity is ridden by internal conflicts and divisions and that there are different and incompatible versions of collective identity held by different sub-groups. Or it may mean that the elements of collective identity themselves, although widely accepted, are a jumble of incoherent pieces, so that collective identity cannot fulfill its function to give orientation and meaning to the lives of the members. It is of course a matter of judgement how much consensus in the first sense is desirable, depending on the circumstances, and how much coherence in the second sense is possible.

Genuine or manipulated. This one is harder to explain, because "genuine" or "authentic" might mean different things. Manipulated collective identities are the result of some kind of deception by interested parties (elites, powerful groups, and so on) who somehow, by persuasion or propaganda or compulsory education or control of public communication or other such means get other people to accept certain forms of collective identity. If these are not freely accepted, if acceptance is not based on some kind of undistorted cultural exchange, it might be regarded as a criterion of inauthenticity. There might also be forms of self-deception in the adoption of collective identities, the acceptance of self-serving beliefs, resulting from motives which one hides from oneself. But this is slippery conceptual ground.

Inclusive or exclusive. This could mean greater or lesser readiness to accept newcomers into the group. An inclusive collective identity could also be understood as a tolerant one, with norms of acceptance and respect for a variety of life-forms or other orientations and behaviors. An exclusive identity may mean a tendency to stigmatize or exclude members or subgroups which do not conform to the standards of the group. There might of course be very good reason to disapprove of certain behaviors, and not collectivity will or should tolerate everything. So this criterion has to be qualified somehow. Also the readiness to accept newcomers into the group may be normatively contested in various cases.

Open or closed. This refers primarily to the cognitive dimensions. A closed group identity would be one which does not admit internal or external criticism and is not ready to correct erroneous perceptions or judgements, be it of the group itself or of the outside world. An open collective identity would further reflections on its own premises, critical evaluation of its contents, readiness to correct mistakes.

Cooperative or aggressive. This one is more or less self-explanatory. Aggressive collective identities will put perceived group interests first under all circumstances, will pursue them in an aggressive way, will possibly tend to see the group threatened by a hostile environment.

---

[31] The distinction between "life-style enclaves" and "communities of memory" in "Habits of the Heart" (Bellah et al. 1985) is an example for this kind of evaluation.

Cooperative identities will be more trusting, ready to compromise or seek fair solutions which take into account legitimate interests of others, and will use restraint in the choice of means for the pursuit of their interests.

The last two criteria have been developed in the literature on ethnocentrism and group prejudice. All these criteria are pretty vague, as formulated here. They would need to be specified, and the corresponding normative judgements to be spelled out and justified much more clearly. It would also be necessary to specify them for different types of groups. Obviously, different criteria should be applied to families, churches or states. This enumeration of concepts which often play a role in the description of collective identities should only hint to a need to make the criteria for evaluation more explicit.

IV.   Some questions about national identity

IV.1   Conceptions of nationhood: some typologies

There is a well-known dichotomous model of nationalisms or conceptions of nationhood, which distinguishes between "ethnocultural" and "civic" (or "political" or "voluntaristic") conceptions. The first formulation of this classification or typology is usually attributed to the German historian Friedrich Meinecke (1908), who distinguished between "Kulturnation" and "Staatsnation". Hans Kohn (1945) later gave another influential formulation. In a more sociological perspective, Emerich K. Francis (1965) has spoken "ethnos" and "demos" as competing understandings of the character of national collectivities. Since then, the dichotomous model has been fairly widely used, with slight variations in terminology and definition.[32]

According to these views, the "ethnocultural" conception of nationhood relies on notions of common genealogy and descent ties, a common history, shared cultural traditions and customs as constitutive elements of the nation or of national identity. In the "civic" conception, the nation is understood as a political community, or more specifically as a self-governing, democratic polity with legal and political equality of its citizen-members (Smith 1991, 11-13).

There are other, tripartite typologies, which are basically developed by splitting the "ethnocultural" into two components: the "ethnic" and the "cultural". In an influential article about German nationalism, the German sociologist R.M. Lepsius has actually distinguished four conceptions of nationhood (Lepsius 1985). As the basis of his typology, Lepsius used the dominant criteria for "commonality" or "equality" between the members of the nation: Common descent or shared history, a shared cultural heritage, or membership in a liberal-democratic political community (citizenship), or working class solidarity. In this way, we get

---

[32]   There is also an obvious affinity to the opposition of "primordialism" and "constructivism", as well as to the sociological distinction between "ascription" and "achievement" (Parsons).

the four types: an ethnic conception (Volksnation), a cultural conception (Kulturnation), a political conception (Staatsbürgernation) and a "class" conception (Klassennation). The distinction between the "ethnic" and the "cultural" type is somewhat fuzzy, however, because the ethnic type is described as partly relying on cultural commonalities.

If we now leave aside the "class" type (which referred to the case of former GDR) as a somewhat special and historically mostly outdated type, we have a tripartite model, which we also find elsewhere. One example is the typology developed by Eisenstadt and Giesen (1995). They distinguish three "codes" or "ideal types" of collective identity, which they call "primordial", "cultural" and "civic". There are obvious parallels to the usual ethnic-cultural-civic distinctions. However, Eisenstadt and Giesen develop some peculiar explications: the "civic" is identified not with political voluntarism, but with the rule of tradition, and "cultural" identities are somehow modeled after world religions with a missionary thrust.[33]

In contemporary German debates about national identity, another variation of these terminologies and typologies has been developed. There, the term "constitutional patriotism" ("Verfassungspatriotismus") has become a very contested concept. This term was originally used by the German political scientist Dolf Sternberger, to denote growing support for the constitutional order in West Germany (Sternberger 1979). Its current use, however, is primarily influenced by later formulations of Jürgen Habermas. There are no very precise definitions around, however. But certainly "constitutional patriotism" has a close affinity to the concept of a "civic" national identity. In any case it is often opposed to ethnic or ethnocultural conceptions of nationhood.[34] There are some conceptual ambiguities, however, which we will have to discuss later: Is constitutional patriotism a special form of national identity, or just a special part of national identity?[35]

In these German debates, "constitutional patriotism" is used very much in a normative sense. But also in most other uses of the dichotomous or tripartite typologies there is a clear evaluative component: Ethnic and possibly cultural conceptions of nationhood are somehow suspect, related to particularism, exclusiveness, backwardness or traditionalism, susceptible to political authoritarianism or chauvinism, in any case not committed to liberal and democratic principles. The "civic" variant, meanwhile, is the more universalistic, advanced, modern one, relying on voluntary choice, liberal equality, democratic decision making.[36]

Apart from these evaluative connotations, there are descriptive and explanatory uses of these typologies. The dichotomous model was originally developed as a *historical* classification with two mutually exclusive categories. This classification referred to different

---

[33] In their case studies, they describe German collective identity from the 18th to the early 20th century as first primarily cultural, mixed with primordial elements, later changing to a primarily primordial code. Japanese national identity is described as a mixture of primordial and civic elements.

[34] Habermas himself has opposed constitutional patriotism also to a kind of economic nationalism, "DM Nationalism", which he saw at work after German unification in 1989; see Habermas 1990.

[35] Habermas has apparently come to distinguish between national identity and constitutional patriotism, or between ethical and political conceptions of nationhood. See Habermas 1993.

[36] For an interesting reversal of this evaluation see, however, Isaiah Berlin's position (Berlin, Gardels 1991).

trajectories in the development of modern states and national identities. Somewhat simplified, the distinction was made between historical cases where the state came before the nation (Western Europe) and where the nation came before there was a corresponding state. Current usage does not primarily refer to these historical facts, but refers to current features of contemporary nations and states. Here we still find classifications and comparisons, where especially France and the United States are treated as instances of civic conceptions of nationhood, while Germany is a prime example for continuing influences of ethnic understandings (e.g. Finkielkraut 1987; Schnapper 1991; Schnapper 1995, 183).

Recently, the dichotomous model has been put to explanatory use in the area of immigration and naturalization policies. Simplifying again, the story goes like this: "Ethnocultural identity" leads to restrictive, exclusionist policies (Germany), a civic identity to inclusive immigration and naturalization policies, be they of a more assimilationist (France) or a more "multicultural" type (United States, Great Britain).[37] Often, the basic legal principle for the conferral of citizenship status is also brought into the picture: ius sanguinis is seen as connected with an ethnic conception of nationhood and "exclusionist" policies; ius soli with civic national identity and inclusive policies (Baldwin-Edwards, Schain 1994, 11-12; Mitchell, Russell 1996, 72).

IV.2 Analytical problems

If we first look at the explanatory scheme, some problems of evidence are obvious. Often, the existence of the respective types of national identities is just assumed, as is the causal link to different immigration and naturalization policies. Sometimes it appears that the occurence of more open or closed immigration policies or the application of ius soli or ius sanguinis are taken as indicators of evidence for the character of the respective national identities.

This is clearly unsatisfactory. A consideration of alternative explanations, of the possibility that these policies could have quite different causes, is neglected.[38] These alternatives should certainly be examined, and there should be some independent evidence for the *contemporary* preponderance of either one of the two types of national identity and for their influence on political decision making. The ius sanguinis argument seems also futile. Existence of ius sanguinis elements in national citizenship and naturalization law does not tell us anything about the character of the national identity of a country, and not too much about its naturalization policies. There is an element of ius sanguinis in all Western (probably in all modern) citizenship laws: Children with parents who are nationals, but born abroad and not on the national territory, are always granted citizenship, either automatically or on

---

[37] The most important and influential example of this mode of explanation is Brubaker 1992; however, Brubaker's analysis is unusually detailed, focussing on certain historical periods and making some careful qualifications of his main thesis; see the interesting comments by Christian Joppke (1995).

[38] For alternative explanations, see e.g. Janoski, Glennie 1995.

demand.[39] If this proves an ethnic understanding of nationhood (because of the crucial role of descent), this understanding is present everywhere.[40] Furthermore, the existence of ius soli does not necessarily mean exclusive naturalization policies (Sweden) (de Rham 1990). And think of the case of Switzerland: hardly a candidate for the "ethnic" model of national identity, but using both ius soli and very restrictive naturalization policies.[41]

If we now look for more direct evidence and turn to contemporary descriptions or analyses of national identities, things naturally get complicated. It is quite obvious that none of the paradigm cases Germany, France, or the United States can be understood as a simple incarnation of either an ethnic (or ethnocultural) or a civic model of national identity.

German debates or debates about Germany refer to an ethnic national identity not simply as a dominant characteristic of contemporary Germany, but more as an element that competes with other, more civic elements (which have developed in Western Germany after the war). We will come back to this case, later.

Descriptions of French national identity rarely fail to note that there are several competing strands: the republican (or Jacobin) tradition (nearest to the civic model), a more statist or "empirical" element, as well as an "organic" tradition, relying on catholic tradition and the identification with a long collective history, reaching back to medieval times. In fact, if we look at French collective self-understandings as reflected in public debates, but also in national symbolisms and expressive rituals, in the museum culture, in the public use of history, in regional attachments, it does not look like we have a very clear instance of a purely or even dominantly political identity here that is mainly based on the universal values and principles of the French revolution. Certainly, liberty, egality, fraternity_ are still high in the pantheon. But there are so many other elements: A widespread public interest in historical images, going way back beyond the French revolution. Attachments to territory. Beliefs about the superiority of French culture and civilization (together with a pretty defensive attitude towards American cultural imperialism, and sometimes still a sense of a civilizing mission). Visions of national grandeur, relating to political and economic strength. Just visit the army museum, or look at the history books in the schools. Certainly Charles de Gaulle is not to be confused

---

[39] With very minor exceptions. Things become more complicated if parents are of different nationalities, but these details are not important, here.

[40] This kind of argument could be developed further, based on historical evidence. There is nothing particularly modern about ius soli and nothing particularly traditional about ius sanguinis. Adoption of either of these principles, or of some mixture of the two (as is the rule), was dependent on various historical circumstances and political considerations. In both cases, status is determined by birth (ascribed), not by voluntary choice. There is just one simple fact of the matter, regarding contemporary citizenship law: ius soli is the most simple way to secure citizenship status for the children of immigrants (provided they are born in the host country). But inclusive naturalization policies could of course be realized in other ways. The principle of voluntarism would be better served, for example, if a certain length of residence in a country gave an option right for the acquisition of citizenship.

[41] And what should we make of the British case, presumably a country with a civic collective identity, where elements of ius soli have been progressively introduced into citizenship law and where inclusive naturalization policies have been combined with restrictive immigration (and asylum) policies?

with the statue of liberty.[42]

The case of the United States is equally complicated. It has often been pointed out that American national identity has a special "ideological" character (Kohn 1957; Lipset 1963). First, European settlement of the country and then independence and nationhood were driven by articulate political (and also social and religious) beliefs and ideals, and the national past was seen as beginning with these events. So certain values and belief systems were always central for American collective identity, and struggles for the realization of these ideals, as well as some fights over these ideals, became an important part of shared historical memories. This also furthered the inclusion of new immigrants.

But what are these beliefs? Certainly political principles and identification with the constitutional system of the country were an important part. This gives some plausibility to the identification of American collective identity with the "civic" model. However, if we look at common descriptions of the "American creed", or visions of the "American way of life", we find that they are by no means confined to the political sphere. Stress on individual freedom and responsibility, self-reliance or self-help, egalitarian demeanor, equal opportunity in the pursuit of happiness and the competition for riches, achievement orientations, civil activism, free enterprise are not only or primarily political values, and are sometimes even anti-political in their meanings or consequences. There is also a debate whether or not there are other important elements of collective identity in the United States, not directly related to political or other general beliefs, but invested e.g. in national symbols and rituals (like holidays) or in the vernacular culture (Lind 1995). In the era of multiculturalism, there is of course open and ample *conflict* between competing visions of American identity.

Many authors who refer to the dichotomous or tripartite typologies of national identities have of course acknowledged these complexities. A simple solution presents itself: The two or three conceptions of nationhood should be understood more analytically, as ideal types. Real cases would be expected to show various mixtures of these ideal types, possibly with one element dominating the others. In this way, the typologies might still be useful analytical instruments. Many authors actually seem to understand both the typologies and its application to the paradigm cases in this way.

But the difficulties do not end there. If we think about these applications, two problems emerge.

First, there are difficulties with the description and distinction of the two or three types. Above all, it is not very clear what is meant by the "cultural" and the "ethnic" type and how they are related. It is also not clear if all elements of national identity, which can be found empirically, should or could be subsumed under one of the two or three types. Where does "economic nationalism" ("DM-Nationalismus") belong, for instance? Or identifications with a strong state, with somewhat tempered democratic convictions?

---

[42] For descriptions of the multi-stranded character of French national identity, see e.g. Safran 1991; Englund 1992; Jenkins, Copsey 1996.

Second, there is a question about the *relations* between the two or three ideal types or elements of national identity. In most uses, they are implicitly treated as incompatible or competing. If the "ethnocultural" element becomes stronger, the "civic" element must be weaker, and vice versa. If there are mixtures of the different types, they must be somehow incoherent or contradictory, because the elements pull in different directions. So mixed cases can either be incoherent belief systems, or there is *social* incoherence, as it were. In this case, the co-occurence of these elements is attributed to the fact that rival political currents each propagate one or the other conception.[43]

There is an alternative possibility, of course: that certain combinations of civic, cultural or ethnic elements may support, or at least not hinder each other. This possibility is sometimes also considered in the literature. This occurs primarily in more normative or counterfactual treatments of the problem. There it is sometimes maintained that some kind of cultural or ethnic identity is seen as necessary support of civic identity and the stability of a democratic political system. Some criticisms of the concept of "constitutional patriotism" contain such arguments, as do some discussions about the necessity of a "European identity" as a precondition for a more developed European Union.

These two problems obviously are connected. How one sees the likelihood of incompatible or complementary relationships between civic, ethnic and cultural types or elements of collective identity, depends to some degree on what is understood by these terms. Instead of discussing interpretations of these concepts which might be found in the literature, I will try to give a plausible account of what could be meant by civic (or political), cultural and ethnic components of national identities. Again it seems preferable to specify the possible components of national identity in a more neutral way, so that the interrelations between these components are open to empirical investigation. Such an analytical formulation should provide a base for reflections on more or less viable combinations. In this paper, however, I will only be able to suggest some possibilities.

IV.3 Some components of national identity

I will analytically separate collective self-perceptions relating to the current state of a "nation" (state-bounded society) from the historical dimension, from ideas or images about the collective past and future. These interpretations are very much intertwined in reality, of course, but an analytical distinction between them makes a description easier.

Collective self-images which are circulating within state-bounded societies contain descriptive as well as evaluative and prescriptive elements. These elements refer to the political order as well as to other social or cultural features of the society.

Conceptions of constitutional, legal and political order are important. In this context, the nation is seen as a political organization and a political collectivity, where membership

---

[43] This is typically done in descriptions of the French case.

implies specific rights and duties. There are values and normative principles which specifically relate to the political order (e.g. interpretations of political equality, liberty, solidarity, collective self-rule).

But these values and principles will rarely stand alone. As was illustrated by the American case, they shade into more general normative orientations, relevant also to other social spheres. Nor is it likely that members of a state-bounded society will see their country and their collective life only as a political enterprise. Descriptive and evaluative self-perceptions will refer to many other things as well: Societal features like patterns of stratification and the distribution of life-chances. Features of the national economy, the technology which is developed and used, and national scientific achievements. Elements of a national vernacular and high culture. Sports and other pastimes which are seen as typical for the society. A national cuisine. Features of the landscape (both natural and man-made). Specific character traits, virtues and vices (the way we are, what is typical for us, what we cherish and loathe or fear).[44] Images of a common way of life.

The notion of a "cultural" conception of national identity may mean some of these things. It should be noted, however, that the objects of these self-perceptions and evaluations are not only elements of culture. The national society is not only seen as a creator or carrier of a national culture, but also as a community of cooperation and achievement in the economic sphere or in other areas.

The historical dimension. In collective representations, the nation is seen as an entity with a past and a future which transcends individual life-spans. There are different understandings of this general notion.

The first element that comes to mind are group histories or memories: images, accounts, narratives about a common past. To make this a national (or other group) history, one needs to construct historical continuities, e.g. by identifying a historically continuing existence of the collectivity through all kinds of changes or metamorphoses, or by identifying appropriate "precursors". Why is collective historical memory or remembrance valued? Among other reasons, there may be a wish to better understand the current character and condition of the collectivity by understanding its development, as well as a desire to learn from past achievements or mistakes. Past experiences, for instance, may help to better understand current conflicts or the workings of political and other institutions.

But there are other relations to history, too. As a matter of fact, each currently living generation inherits, grows into an existing social world, with institutions, an artificial environment, stocks of capital, and a complex stock of cultural elements. All this is the accumulated result of the labors of earlier generations. How much current generations actually care about this fact is not clear. They may just take it for granted. But to make a cultural inheritance one's own means that one has to acquire it in a sense: one has to learn about it, understand it, practice it. To understand it, one has to deal with its development, with earlier cultural contexts. This forms peoples' personalities to some degree, and leads

---

[44] See the research on "national character" and national stereotypes, ...

them to see commonalities with other members of the society, who share the same heritage. This may lead to some kind of affective identification, to pride in the collective culture, and to certain collective commitments: People become interested in the continuance of shared cultural tradition. They want to develop it further, and they want to transmit it to later generations (first of all to their own children, usually).

There may be other kinds of involvement or commitment resulting from a perceived common past. Memories of past historical achievements may also be a source of collective pride and confidence. But also suffering and defeat, experiences of hostility, injustice, discrimination, persecution may be remembered and give rise to current resentment, mistrust, or demands for some kind of atonement or compensation. Collectivities also perceive duties of piety and remembrance with respect to the sufferings and sacrifices of earlier generations. And there exist perceptions of collective responsibility for injustices done by earlier generations.

Finally, there may be collective orientations towards the future, ideas about national goals or projects, ideas about progress and perfection, possibly a sense of mission (to give the world an example, make it safe for democracy, spread one's civilization, and so on).[45]

What does it take to participate in these historical elements of national identity? Familiarity with the national culture and tradition, and some kind of identification with it. Deep familiarity is above all produced by primary socialization. Seen from the collectivity, this familiarity or deep familiarity should qualify a person for inclusion in the community of memory.

Nothing that was said so far implies any notion of common descent. However, conceptions of descent are often closely intertwined with collective historical consciousness. In most cases, the national community is also seen as a *transgenerational* identity, whose membership to a large degree consists of successive generations. Most people will expect that their own children and grandchildren and those of most other members will again be members of the same national society. In many cases, people will also assume that their parents and grandparents or possibly other ancestors will have already been members of the national society. These assumptions are of course dependent on the immigration histories of the respective families, and on how these are remembered. This is one way in which "common descent" can be understood as an element of national identity: Our personal ancestors were already living on the land, and living in some kind of community. In this way we share a common history, tradition, culture - transmitted from generation to generation. How do we come to share a tradition, inherit a culture? By socialization, by growing up in a culture, which thereby becomes part of our personality, of our life, of our most important social relations. By this criterion, growing up in a community should be enough. But often the connection appears to be stronger if people assume that their personal ancestors were already there, and were involved in the doings of the collectivity. If we think of feelings of collective

---

[45] Currently, ideas of this kind seem to be somewhat out of fashion, though. Communism was the most impressive recent example of this kind of future orientation, which was constitutive for a sort of collective identity. But certainly we can find a sense of national mission or at least a rhetorical appeal to such a mission e.g. in American, French or British modern history - often somewhat discredited because of its use for the legitimation of suspect interests, but also because of the inherent assumption of superiority.

responsibility for injustice done by earlier generations, will they not be stronger if there is a genealogical link, if people think of their parents and grandparents in such a context?[46]

"Common descent" can also be understood in a different way, with stronger biological connotations, as they are reflected in terms like "race" or "breed". Here we have the assumption of a common gene pool, transmitted by endogamy, which determines physical traits and features of personality or character.[47] As we know, this is often linked with all kind of evaluative beliefs, regarding the special character and general superiority of the group and its members.

All these different things could be meant if people talk about an "ethnic" collective or national identity. In the following, I will use "ethnic" both in a wider sense, which includes all elements of collective identity which relate in an affirmative way to the collective past, and in a narrower sense. "Ethnic" in a narrow sense refers to those collective self-representations, in which the ascription of special solidarities and of special group characteristics is closely linked to notions of common descent, especially in its more "biological" understandings.[48] It should be obvious, that "ethnic" or other historical elements of collective identities can be quite different in character, as is true for the political and "cultural" elements. So let us now briefly look at some of the possible variations and combinations.

Relations and variations. Put simply, all these elements of national identity, which we could roughly classify as political, sociocultural and historical or "ethnic", can turn out nice or ugly. This is quite trivial in the case of the political element, i.e. of beliefs about and attitudes towards the national political order. If we leave aside the possibility of oppositional attitudes and look at positive identifications and forms of political support: These can be obviously oriented towards all kinds of political systems. There could be identifications with a dominant and authoritarian state, for instance. We can rule out this possibility, if we stipulate that "civic" identity is not any kind of identification with a political system, but only an identification based on liberal and democratic principles. Most authors who use the dichotomous or tripartite typologies seem to presuppose just that. But then the conceptual scheme leaves no room for types of political identity which are not so very liberal or democratic. Possibly it has been assumed that all these variants fall under the "ethnic" category. But that is misleading. Not all forms of somewhat authoritarian or statist political identifications are combined with strong orientations towards a specific community of descent (as will be illustrated by the contemporary German case, later).

---

[46] Could immigrants to Germany, say of the second or third generation, who have become German citizens and have largely assimilated into German culture, be expected to feel as strongly about the Nazi past as Germans with genealogical connections to that past? In this case, a negative answer seems plausible. But things are not so easy. Could we expect an American, whose ancestors immigrated a hundred years ago, to share some concern and some kind of responsibility for the earlier fate of black slaves and native Indians? This seems at least possible.

[47] People may also make a more metaphorical use of the terminology of descent and kinship. In this case, family and kinship are treated as models of unconditional ("primordial") solidarity ("brothers and sisters").

[48] In my discussion of the question if there is an "ethnic" collective identity in Germany, I will understand "ethnic" in this narrower sense (like "völkisch" in German).

As to perceptions about special characteristics of the national culture and society and forms of attachment to or identification with elements of national society and culture, we can also easily find unpleasant and more agreeable variants. Pride in cultural and other national achievements can go together with arrogance and intolerance toward other cultures and countries, but this is not necessarily so. It may also lead to pressures to conform to a certain cultural model within the country and to a restriction of cultural tolerance. But again, this seems not unavoidable. Finally, not much must be said about ugly forms of ethnic collective consciousness. But, trivially, not all forms of collective historical consciousness and identification are odious, and not even all kinds of beliefs about the role of genealogies are obviously reprehensible, or inimical to a liberal and democratic political order.

So what were the authors thinking who compared good civic conceptions with bad ethnocultural conceptions of nationhood? Probably they were just contrasting the "good" *versions* of political collective identity with the "bad" *versions* of cultural or ethnic identity, without thinking about less suspect alternatives, without considering the possibility, that certain forms of cultural and historical identity might be quite supportive to good civic order.

These authors may also have reasoned along the following lines: If members of a nation stress their cultural and historical commonalities (or e.g. their economic and technological achievements), this can be a substitute for a shared allegiance to (or a collective striving for) a liberal and democratic political order. Because they see their commonality and collective self-respect secured in other areas, they can be somewhat indifferent to their political regime. But this somehow implies a causal link which is not too plausible. Is it because of their economic or cultural or ethnocultural nationalism that people are not paying enough attention to politics, liberalism and democracy? Of course, if we fill "cultural" or "ethnocultural nationalism" with specific, apolitical or authoritarian *content*, the causal link becomes somewhat more plausible.[49]

The problem of pluralism. Multiple identities. There are other normative concerns about the cultural element of national identities. One has to do with the *content* of these elements: Is there a dominant, "hegemonic" tradition that is too exclusive, that pushes aside variations and countercurrents? Another has to do with cases where there are *several* established cultural traditions within a state-bounded society (the cases of national minorities or multinational states). Apart from empirical questions about problems and conflicts, there are normative questions about policy principles: how should the different traditions be treated by the state? A third concern is about the integration of immigrants. If there is a strong national cultural tradition, should they be expected to assimilate? Should they be allowed to opt for

---

[49] The concern about a "primacy" of the political element in national identity also may be misleading in another way. Questions about the objects of national pride have long been a staple of surveys. If pride in the political institutions of the country got into the middle or lower ranks, eyebrows would have been raised. But this does not seem to be a very valid indicator for the strength of political convictions or the degree of support for the political system. Political legitimacy may become routinized, political principles may become taken-for-granted or self-evident. Feelings of either achievement or threat may be weak. Discontent with the actual workings of institutions may rise (without necessarily undermining support for the constitutional system). Therefore, the political order may not be a particularly prominent object of collective pride, without any implication about the degree of support for constitutional principles.

their own cultural solutions, and if so, what does this mean again for state support for majority and minority cultures? Or should the majority culture itself be expected to open up and accomodate new elements, and should this again be furthered by political measures?

These questions cannot be discussed here. I only want to point to the empirical possibility of "multiple national identities". There are cases of state-bounded societies where we find several encompassing subgroups, some or all of which might have strong "cultural" or "ethnocultural" collective identities. They may nevertheless share elements of a comprehensive national identity. Naturally, this comprehensive, common identity will be focused on political principles. But it need not be confined to political contents. There might very well be other things like shared historical memories, more general values, ideas about specific characteristics of the society and so on. Switzerland might be an interesting case, with an apparently relatively strong comprehensive national identity overlaying the specific identities of its national groups. Other multinational states or states with national minorities might show similar patterns (if not always an equally strong encompassing identity).

Looking back at this exercise in deconstruction, what have we gained? It was my aim to open up analytically the usual dichotomous or tripartite typologies of national identities. It has been shown that they rest on some unstated assumptions which are somewhat misleading if applied to the analysis of contemporary national identities. Now it would certainly be useful to assemble the elements of national identity again and put together new typologies and more definite propositions about relations between elements, which then could direct empirical research. This I cannot do in this paper. Instead, I will look at just one more conceptual confusion: the uses of the term "constitutional patriotism". After that, I will illustrate some of the points made with the case of contemporary German national identity.

IV.4 National identity, patriotism, loyalty, support. And what is "constitutional patriotism"?

Nationalism, chauvinism, national loyalty, and patriotism are all *potential parts* of national identity.

Nationalism is usually understood as political program or a political movement, as a mobilization for certain national goals. As state-nationalism it is mostly directed against external rivals or enemies. But it can also serve as a mobilizing ideology for "national development". Minority nationalism is mostly directed against ruling states, with the goal of political autonomy. Chauvinism is an unpleasant, aggressive form of nationalism, backed by a powerful state, without regard for legitimate interests of other collectivities.

Political obedience, political support, loyalty, patriotism all designate attitudes of the members of a state-bounded society, directed at the political order or (in the case of patriotism) possibly at the country as a whole. We could understand these terms as designating attitudes of increasing complexity and strength. Obedience means just following

the law, accepting legal proscriptions or prescriptions. Political support may include a somewhat stronger identification with the political order, a readiness not only to follow the law in private pursuits, but also to be politically active in some way and to have an active interest in the functioning or maintenance (and possible reform) of the political system. Loyalty is even stronger, supererogatory as it were, going beyond legal requirements and the call of duty, implying a somewhat greater readiness to support and defend the political order. Patriotism finally implies a similar readiness, but also a more diffuse affective stance, which might be directed not only towards the political order, but to the country and its people ("love of the country"). All this is not very precise, but spells out some widespread understandings.

Now what may be meant by "constitutional patriotism"? If I read Habermas correctly, it should mean support for liberal and democratic constitutional principles and their national implementation. Further, this should be *principled* and *reflective* support, based on reasoned convictions about universally valid moral or political principles.

As a normative position, this is not very surprising. There might be some uncertainties or disagreements about the notion of "universal" principles. But there are certainly good arguments for the proposition that certain normative principles should be applied to all national constitutions: guarantees for human rights, principles of political equality and democracy and so on. And it is certainly desirable if citizens have reasoned convictions on these matters. In a descriptive perspective there exist certainly many citizens whose allegiance to the political order is in part based on considerations of this kind, who would not feel bound by political order, or be loyal to a political order, which failed to realize these principles to a sufficient degree, regardless if it were the political order of their own country.

These attitudes could be seen as forms of political support or loyalty. Why call them "patriotism"? There is apparently the intention to compare this kind of patriotism with other kinds, and to declare these contents of "patriotic" attitudes as the only acceptable ones. Are there other, additional sources of loyalty or allegiance than belief in universal principles applied to a specific political order? Are there other legitimate, normatively acceptable types of national identity? Some uses of "constitutional patriotism" seem to deny both possibilities. Here seems to loom some confusion, which is similar to the confusions about types of national identity, which were discussed above.

Consider the following propositions:

- Critical allegiance to the constitutional order, based on the application of liberal and democratic principles should be an important and necessary element of national identity. It should not be substituted or overridden by other forms of allegiance ("right or wrong, my country"). This normative statement is not very controversial, as I said.

- Loyalty to the constitution and identification with the constitutional order based on general moral convictions is quite sufficient as a cultural foundation of the political order. Other elements of national identity are unnecessary. This is more or less an empirical proposition, or probably a counterfactual theoretical proposition with empirical content

(because it is an open question to what degree this kind of "pure" constitutional loyalty actually exists). It is not easily tested, but most observers of contemporary political cultures and national identities would probably have some doubts.[50]

− Apart from constitutional loyalty, based on universal moral principles, other elements of national identity are definitely undesirable, incompatible with "constitutional patriotism" and possibly suspect in other ways (ethnocentric, collectivist, intolerant and so on). A sense of belonging, of togetherness, of being a people should be based exclusively on common allegiance to a liberal and democratic political system, to the principles of the constitution. Not on identification with a common history and a national culture. Affection ("love") for the motherland or fatherland, or pride in it (other than pride based on the realization of a good or just political order), is a bad thing.

For the reasons indicated above, this is an implausible position.[51] There are many cultural and historical elements of national identities, which are both unavoidable and potentially supportive of loyalties to a liberal and democratic constitutional system.

Critics of Jürgen Habermas (Gebhardt 1993), but sometimes also followers have taken him to mean the second and third propositions, when he advocated constitutional patriotism. This must be a misreading, however. Habermas has on several occasions proposed a distinction between his notion of "constitutional patriotism" and collective identity. He has acknowledged that generally valid liberal and democratic principles have to be interpreted and applied in the context of a specific national situation and history, and that support for these principles has to be backed by appropriate elements of particular collective identities and life-forms (Habermas 1996).[52] Otherwise his concern that critical reflection of the German past in the period of National Socialism should remain a constitutive element of German collective self-understanding would not be understandable.

V. German and other national identities: Does Germany have an ethnic identity, and is it different?

---

[50] A more specific version of this proposition states, that nothing but such a kind of constitutional loyalty should be expected by immigrants, as a precondition of citizenship. This is probably less problematic, although still debatable (much depends on the precise meaning of "expected", for instance).

[51] As indicated above, these "incorrect" attitudes are common enough in the supposed homelands of constitutional patriotism - the United States and France.

[52] Habermas' formulations are sometimes somewhat opaque, however. Also, his position may have shifted over time. See his influential article "Können moderne Gesellschaften eine rationale Identität entwickeln?" (1976), where he understood both individual and collective identity as some kind of abstract moral consciousness or even as some structure of rational deliberation. Also in his articles on legitimacy, he tended so see "rational" acceptance of a political system as based only on abstract reasoning about universalistic principles. But in later writings, he has often said that abstract and universal moral and political principles have to be embedded in more particularistic life-forms, and that there is unavoidably a particularistic, "ethical" element in democratic decision making.

As already mentioned in my discussion of typologies of nationalism, there exists a popular assumption that an ethnic conception of nationhood still has considerable influence on contemporary Germany and that Germany is different from other Western countries in this respect (Muller 1994, 46-47). This is most often asserted in discussions of Germany's restrictive naturalization policies and its much more generous repatriation policies for members of German minorities in Eastern European countries. The ius sanguinis argument plays an important role in this context (Muller 1994, 45; Baldwin-Edwards, Schain 1994, 11-12; Mitchell, Russell 1996, 72).

In German public debates, there is also some concern about the influence or resurgence of an ethnic ("völkisch") national identity (Oberndörfer 1993). There are continuing public debates and controversies about questions of national identity in Germany, particularly since the 1980s. One popular perception of these controversies goes roughly as follows: There is a universalistic, cosmopolitan left, advocating constitutional patriotism and multiculturalism, battling nationalist and ethnic tendencies on the right.[53]

How does the evidence for these assumptions look like? It should be noted that the question here is not if there are any ethnic elements in German national self-understandings, or if there are ethnic tendencies in the political arena. Instead, the main question here is whether Germany is significantly *distinct* from other Western countries in this respect

Policies: As noted above, it is questionable to *infer* an influence of ethnic national consciousness from restrictive immigration or naturalization policies. Is there independent evidence for the influence of an ethnic conception of German nationhood on recent decision about naturalization and asylum policies in Germany? After inspecting samples of newspaper reports and commentaries about these questions and of stenographic reports of parliamentary debates, I am unable to find much of an "ethnic" rhetoric there. Arguments are about benefits and (especially) perceived costs of immigration and asylum, about the necessity of burden sharing with other Western European countries (with respect to asylum), about illegal immigration and the perceived misuse of the right to asylum, about fears of crime and social disruption. Much of this is questionable, but on the face of it there is no "ethnic" argument. There are not even many open appeals to protect the integrity of German culture (even if this is sometimes alluded to in debates about "multiculturalism").

The case of repatriation policies for members of German minorities in Eastern European countries would need a more extensive discussion, which cannot be provided here. These policies and their legal regulations emerged from a situation after the war, when West

---

[53] There was some brief concern about German nationalism after German unification in 1989. But observers largely agreed later that national sentiments were quite muted. There was much complaint about a lack of national solidarity between populations in the western and eastern parts of the country. Other criticisms pointed particularly to a lack of *civic* nationalism, resulting from a deficit of public political debates on both sides about the political modalities of unification and the constitutional foundations of the new Germany (Habermas 1990). Fears of a resurgent nationalism were more related to subsequent events, like the waves of anti-foreigner violence in the early 90s and the conflicts about the German asylum law, than to specific reactions to German unification.

Germany had to integrate large numbers of refugees from former German territories. These policies and their political justification may well indicate some elements of ethnic national consciousness or solidarity. The question then becomes, however, if Germany is so much different in this respect from any other country where we can find a similar constellation, resulting from earlier emigration and a desire for remigration, especially under circumstances of discrimination in the host country, or resulting from the loss of territory (e.g. by decolonization). I have not studied these cases yet (and I am not aware if anybody else has), but I would presume that differences will not be great.

Nationalist movements: There are extreme right wing parties and movements in Germany. There is xenophobia, and there is anti-foreigner violence. Right wing organizations propagate various kinds of nationalist rhetoric, much of it pretty chauvinist and ethnocentric. But even there, openly racist or narrowly ethnic ("völkisch") tones are somewhat muted. Racism has been thoroughly discredited by National Socialism, and right wing parties who are seeking a place in the official political arena have to keep at least some distance from this past. This is different, of course, with extremist underground groups, who openly use national socialist rhetoric. But they are a very small and detested minority. The young, mostly drunken thugs who are beating up foreigners may in some way be moved by ethnic sentiments (and bystanders applauding them on some notorious occasions may also be), or may be encouraged by a perception of ethnic sentiments in the society. But for unknown reasons they are also beating up homeless people, which throws some doubts on the make-up and clarity of their beliefs. In any case, there is not much public acclaim for these things.[54]

But more importantly for my argument here, it is by no means clear if these phenomena are more widespread in Germany than elsewhere in Western Europe. Right-wing parties and movements are e.g. obviously stronger in France. Levels of anti-foreigner violence in Germany over the last decade or so have probably not been stronger than e.g. in Great Britain (Koopmans 1996). Levels of anti-foreigner sentiments, as identified by surveys, have not been notably higher in Germany than in some other Western European countries, especially if immigration levels are taken into account (Fuchs, Gerhards, Roller 1993).

Surveys: There are a couple of studies on German national identity based on survey data. The available data are poor, however, insofar as they do not allow much inference about the structure and content of collective representations. They mostly show answers to questions about the objects of national pride (and comparative levels of national pride) and similar things. So the analyses are somewhat inconclusive. In general, they point out that the German data have become more similar to comparable data from other western countries. They do not show a markedly stronger influence of ethnic conceptions of nationhood in

---

[54] It has been argued, that the waves of xenophobia and anti-foreigner violence in Germany in the early 90s have been furthered by the public dramatization and utilisation of the asylum issue by the government and the governing parties (Koopmaans 1997, with strong empirical evidence). But as was argued above, there is little evidence that the political elites were much moved by an ethnic conception of nationhood, nor did they use appeals to ethnic sentiments, at least not in any explicit way. See also Thränhardt 1995, for a comparative view on similar developments in France and Great Britain.

Germany.[55]

Public debates: Let us now look at German public debates about national identity. These are illuminating, because there we have an explicit articulation of interpretations and beliefs.[56]

In Germany, a host of books and journal articles about "national identity" has appeared since the 1980s. But debates about national identity or collective interpretations (as defined in Part I of this paper) can be found throughout the postwar years of the German federal republic, if not always under the title "national identity".[57] There have been debates about the character of Germany in the past and Western Germany in the present, about particularities of its social and political system and of its culture and even the social-psychological make-up of its population, about its relation to the GDR and the problem of national unity, about its relations to other countries, above all its special relations to "the West". And there have been debates about the German past, especially in this century, more particularly about National Socialism and about the consequences of this past for the new Germany. If the debates about the recent national past had been somewhat muted in the earlier post-war years, they certainly erupted in the 60s and have been a very important element in West German public debates ever since.[58] The "Historikerstreit" of the early 90s and the recent "Goldhagen Debate", as well as the recent controversies about a public exhibition that documented atrocities of the German army in the East during the war are well-known examples. But in many important public debates, from the controversies about a West German army in the 50s to the problem of the official recognition of the post-war boundary changes in the East, to the debates of German unification, the debates about German military participation in NATO or UN missions or the questions of immigration and asylum policy, interpretations of the German past and its consequences for present-day Germany loom very large. Recently, a "second past", that of the former GDR, has been included in the debate, with many attempts to draw parallels and distinctions.

It is not possible to describe the issues and developments of these debates in more detail here. Suffice it to say that these are not just general debates about general problems or

---

[55] See Blank 1997; Westle 1994; also Weidenfeld, Korte 1991; Scheuch 1991. German unification has brought some complications with it, insofar East Germans show a markedly lower level of identification with the constitutional order and political institutions. It remains to be seen if this is a temporary phenomenon.

[56] On the other hand, it is problematic how representative or influential public statements are, especially if we look primarily at book publications, quality newspapers and journals or magazines with higher intellectual standards.

[57] I am leaving out developments in the former GDR.

[58] The debates about the Nazi-past within the 60's students movement, however, were peculiar in certain respects. On the one hand, there was a strong element of blame directed against the members of the older generation. On the other hand, there was a strong inclination in large parts of the movement to see national socialism in a universal, not specifically national frame, and to articulate lessons or consequences in international terms, so to speak. Fascism was to be blamed on capitalism (if not on modernity), and the international abolishment of capitalism often seemed more important than more specific consequences or responsibilities for the German situation. (In this respect, the situation in the GDR was similar.) It may have to with this point of view that parts of the student movement had difficulties acknowledging a special relationship between Germany and Israel. But this was a passing phenomenon.

principles of the political order. Universalist normative positions and arguments play a role, of course. But there are very strong elements of collective interpretation in the sense described above - of the interpretation of the specific history, experience, character and situation of a national collectivity. Interestingly, it is predominantly the left, although generally universalist and cosmopolitan in outlook, which tends not only to stress the specific features or the uniqueness of German history (above all of National Socialism and its crimes), but also insists on deriving specific normative consequences from this history, apart from the general consequence that we should vigilantly defend democracy, liberalism and enlightenment universalism. These consequences concern specific collective responsibilities or obligations, from restitution to duties of remembrance to peculiar restraints in international politics. Parts of the right, on the other hand, insist that Germany should not be unduly burdened or bound by its past, but should behave like any other state, or like any other state of comparable size and might, in defending its national interests on the international scene (whatever that may imply). Sometimes this claim is backed by attempts to "historicize" or "relativize" the German past, as known from the "Historikerstreit". This is, of course, also an attempt to establish a "positive" national identity, with stronger national pride and so on, instead of the more self-critical identity posited by the left.

What is *not* apparent in these debates, by the way, is the element of *ethnic* (or "völkisch") national identity which is so often ascribed to Germany - not only as a feature of the past, but also of the present.[59] This element is almost completely lacking in public debates, except as a straw man for the critics of nationalism, and except for some mutterings from the right fringe, which generally remain confined to right wing publications. The discourse of the right rarely appeals to an ethnic conception of nationhood, but is primarily based on conceptions of law and order, raison d' état and "realist" power politics ("Machtpolitik"). This is a Hobbesian view of politics, and there is no ethnos in Hobbes. The hard-nosed attitude of "Realpolitik" in foreign affairs is sometimes dressed up in the rhetoric of "responsibility" and sometimes garnished with some heroic posturing. But rarely are there appeals to any ethnic (or romantic) notions of "Volk". This kind of *statist* orientation does not need any "ethnic" foundations, and in most cases it does not show a strong affinity to ethnic conceptions. Of course there are elements of cultural nationalism in the sense of appeals to German cultural traditions, and there are more general appeals to a continuing national history. In this respect, however, Germany is certainly not any different from other Western countries.[60]

---

[59] See e.g. the literature about current immigration policies, but also more general pieces on nationalism and national identity (Koopmans, Kriesi 1997; Schnapper 1995; Brubaker 1992 - with some qualifications). In the light of all the criticisms of cultural homogeneity, "essentialism" and so on, this is a surprising tendency. Often the assertion of an "ethnic" character of the German conception of nationhood is derived in a circular way. It is taken as an *indication* of ethnic nationalism that Germany has restrictive naturalization policies and still has ius sanguinis as the central element of its citizenship law. At the same time, such an ethnic conception of nationhood is treated as a causal factor in the explanation of these policies. But restrictive naturalization policies could be explained in a number of ways. There are no attempts to establish the existence of ethnic self-conceptions independently, at least not for post-war Western Germany.

[60] Nor are *these* conceptions of national identity confined to a "nationalist" right. The left does not really deny that there is some kind of historical unity, based on cultural transmission and links between successive generations, transcending radical discontinuities of the political order. As indicated above, this understanding is an obvious, even if often implicit presupposition of the debates about the German past, of the demand that Germans have to learn from *their* history, have

To conclude: The dichotomous model of conceptions of nationhood and its application to Germany vs. France and the United States should be laid to rest.

Racialist discourse, or ethnic discourse in a narrow sense has been thoroughly discredited in Germany through National Socialism (in some ways much more so than in Great Britain or the U.S., where "race" is used quite freely, even if not with respect to the nation as a whole). National pride and enthusiasm are also still regarded with some reserve, comparatively (sport events being the exception). Military strength and military virtues are not regarded highly (Hedetoft 1993). It is not very obvious if there is much concern about a continuance of German cultural tradition; in any case it is less articulated than in France or Great Britain. Cultural Americanization has generally been accepted with equanimity or even enthusiasm, even if there have been countermovements from time to time (mainly in intellectual circles). There are sharp and continuing disagreements about the interpretation of recent German history and its contemporary relevance. There are attempts to lay this past and contemporary responsibilities deriving this past to rest. At least parts of the public are heavily engaged in these debates. There are disagreements about principles of foreign policy (although there is still comparatively strong support for European Integration among the elites and comparatively large acceptance among the population). Parts of the German public are much occupied with German national identity. This identity seems strong with respect to its historical component, which is at the same time intensely contested. It seems comparatively weak with respect to positive identifications and attachments, with respect to support for a national culture, or general national glory. Since 1989, the "national question" with respect to the "two Germanies" is shut. It had not been much on the mind of most West Germans, anyway, for a time. Now there is grumbling about a lack of convergence between East and West German cultures and identities, but this would be another topic.

VI. Epilogue

This paper has mainly dealt with the questions how the notion of collective identity should be understood, what the important elements or dimensions of collective (national) identity are, how these may be related together, and how types of collective identity may differ and relate

---

some kind of responsibility to draw consequences from *their* common past. See Habermas' interesting statement (in a "laudatio" for Daniel Goldhagen): "In Diskursen der Selbstverständigung, die durch Filme, Fernsehserien und Ausstellungen ebenso wie durch historische Darstellungen oder 'Affären' angeregt werden, streiten wir uns nicht über kurzfristige Ziele und Politiken, sondern über Formen des erwünschten politischen Zusammenlebens, auch über Werte, die im politischen Gemeinwesen Vorrang haben sollen. Gleichzeitig geht es darum, in welchen Hinsichten wir uns als Bürger dieser Republik gegenseitig achten können - und als wer wir von anderen anerkannt werden möchten. Dafür bildet die nationale Geschichte einen wichtigen Hintergrund. Nationale Überlieferungen und Mentalitäten, die Teil unserer eigenen Person geworden sind, reichen nämlich weit hinter die Anfänge dieser Republik zurück. ... Vorausgesetzt, daß die jeweils lebenden Generationen in der Art ihres Denkens und Empfindens, in der Gestik des Ausdrucks und in der Weise ihrer Wahrnehmung über ein Gespinst kultureller Fäden mit Lebensform und Denkweise vergangener Generationen verknüpft sind..." (Habermas 1997).

to each other.

Despite the large literature and lively public debate about nationalisms and national identity, the contours of Western national identities are still not sufficiently explored.

But of course there are other questions: How are current national identities created and recreated? There is a large and heterogeneous literature on this topic. Much of it is either historical in orientation or dealing with specific forms of creation, like historical commemorations. In my view, it would be useful to study in a more systematic way how elements of national identity are created and debated in the sphere of public communication.

And what is the relevance, what are the effects, what is the impact of collective identities? How are they involved in social conflicts - what are "identity conflicts", and what are the features of these conflicts? How do different national identities affect the workings of political institutions, or social order in general? About these questions, there is some speculation, but very little systematic evidence. In fact, in this area, too, it would first be necessary to clarify the questions, it seems to me. Some conceptual clarifications, which were attempted in this paper, might provide a starting-point.

Literature

Alba, Richard D. (1990): *Ethnic Identity: The Transformation of White America*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Anderson, Benedict (1983): *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso.

Baldwin-Edwards, Martin; Schain, Martin A. (eds.) (1994): *The Politics of Immigration in Western Europe*. London: Frank Cass.

Baldwin-Edwards, Martin; Schain, Martin A. (eds.) (1995): *The Politics of Immigration in Western Europe*. London: Frank Cass.

Barth, Fredrik (ed.) (1969): *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Cultural Difference*. Bergen-Oslo / London: Universitets Forlaget / Allen & Unwin.

Bellah, Robert N.; Madsen, Richard; Sullivan, William M.; Swidler, Ann; Tipton, Steven M. (1985): *Habits of the Heart*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Berlin, Isaiah; Gardels, Nathan (1991): "Two Concepts of Nationalism". *New York Review of Books* 38, 1991, No. 19 (Nov. 21, 1991), 19-23.

Blank, Thomas (1997): "Wer sind die Deutschen?" *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B13, 21. März 1997.

Brubaker, Rogers (1992): *Citizenship and Nationhood in Germany and France*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Cohen, Joshua (ed.) (1996): *For Love of Country. Debating the Limits of Patriotism*. Boston, MA: Bacon Press.

de Rham, Gérard (1990): "Naturalisation: The Politics of Citizenship Acquisition". In: Layton-Henry, Zig (ed.): *The Political Rights of Migrant Workers in Western Europe*. London: Sage, 158-185.

Eisenstadt, S.N.; Giesen, Bernhard (1995): "The Construction of Collective Identity". *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 36, 72-102.

Eller, Jack David; Coughlan, Reed M. (1993): "The Poverty of Primordialism: the Demystification of Ethnic Attachments". *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 16, 183-202.

Englund, Steven (1992): "The Ghost of Nation Past". *Journal of Modern History* 64, 299-320.

Finkielkraut, Alain (1987): *La défaite de la pensée*. Paris: Gallimard.

Francis, Emerich K. (1965): *Ethnos und Demos. Soziologische Beiträge zur Volkstheorie*. Berlin: Duncker & Humblot.

Frey, Hans-Peter; Haußer, Karl (Hrsg.) (1987): *Identität*. Stuttgart: Enke.

Fuchs, Dieter; Gerhards, Jürgen; Roller, Edeltraud (1993): "'Wir' und 'die anderen'. Ethnozentrismus in zwölf Ländern der Europäischen Gemeinschaft". *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 45(2), 238-253.

Fulbrook, Mary (1996): "Germany for the Germans? Citizenship and Nationality in a Divided Nation". In: Cesarani, David; Fulbrook, Mary (eds.): *Citizenship, Nationality and Migration in Europe*. London: Routledge, 88-105.

Gans, Herbert (1979): "Symbolic Ethnicity: The Future of Ethnic Groups and Cultures in America". *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 2, 1-20.

Gebhardt, Jürgen (1993): "Verfassungspatriotismus als Identitätskonzept der Nation". *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* B 14, 29-37.

Geertz, Clifford (1994): "Angestammte Loyalitäten, bestehende Einheiten". *Merkur* 452, Mai 1994.

Habermas, Jürgen (1976): *Zur Rekonstruktion des Historischen Materialismus*. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, Jürgen (1990): *Die nachholende Revolution*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, Jürgen (1992): *Faktizität und Geltung*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, Jürgen (1992): "Staatsbürgerschaft und nationale Identität". In: Habermas, 632-660.

Habermas, Jürgen (1993): "Constitutional Struggles for Recognition". *European Journal of Philosophy* 1/2, 128-.

Habermas, Jürgen (1995). *Die Normalität einer Berliner Republik*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, Jürgen (1996): *Die Einbeziehung des Anderen*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, Jürgen (1997): "Geschichte ist ein Teil von uns. Warum ein 'Demokratiepreis' für Daniel J. Goldhagen". *Die Zeit* Nr. 12, 14. März 1997, 13.

Habermas, Jürgen (1992-93): "Citizenship and National Identity: some Reflections on the Future of Europe". *Praxis International* 12, 1992-93, 1-19.

Hardin, Russell (1995): *One for All.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Hayashi, Chikio (1998): "The Quantitative Study of National Character: Interchronological and International Perspectives". *Journal of Comparative Sociology* 39(1), 91-114.

Hechter, Michael (1987). Nationalism as Group Solidarity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1987, 415-426

Hedetoft, Ulf (1993): "National Identity and Mentalities of War in Three EC Countries". *Journal of Peace Research* 30(3), 281-300.

Inkeles, Alex (1990-91): "National Character Revisited*". Tocqueville Review / Revue Tocqueville* 12, 83-117.

Janoski, Thomas; Glennie, Elizabeth (1995): "The Integration of Immigrants in Advanced Industrialised Nations". In: Martiniello, Marco (ed.): *Migration, Citizenship and Ethno-National Identities in the European Union*. Aldershot: Avebury, 11-39.

Jenkins, Brian; Copsey, Nigel (1996): "Nation, Nationalism and National Identity in France". In: Jenkins, Brian; Sofos, Spyros (eds.): *Nation and Identity in Contemporary Europe*. London: Routledge.

Joppke, Christian (1995): "Toward a New Sociology of the State: On Roger Brubaker's 'Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany'". *Archives Européennes de sociologie* XXXVI, 168-178.

Kohn, Hans (1945): *The Idea of Nationalism*. New York: Macmillan.

Kohn, Hans (1957): *American Nationalism*. New York.

Koopmans, Ruud (1996): "Explaining the Raise of Racist and Extreme Right Violence in Western Europe: Grievances or Opportunities?". *European Journal of Political Research* 30, 185-216.

Koopmans, Ruud; Kriesi, Hanspeter (1997): "Citoyenneté, identité nationale et mobilisation de l'extrême droite". In: Birnbaum, Pierre (ed.): *Sociologie des nationalismes*. Paris: PUF, 295-324.

Kymlicka, Will (1995): *Multicultural Citizenship*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Langer, Susanne K. (1957): *Philosophy in New Key: A Study in the Symbolism of Reason, Rite and Art*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lepsius, Rainer M. (1985): "The Nation and Nationalism in Germany". *Social Research* 52(1).

Lind, Michael (1995): *The Next American Nation: The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution*. New York: Free Press.

Lipset, Seymour Martin (1963): *The First New Nation*. New York: Basic Books.

Marquard, Odo; Stierle, Karlheinz (Hrsg.) (1979): *Identität*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag.

McKim, Robert; McMahan, Jeff (eds.) (1997): *The Morality of Nationalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Miller, David (1995): *On Nationality*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Mitchell, Mark; Russell, Dave (1996): "Immigration, Citizenship and the Nation State in the New Europe". In: Jenkins, *Sofos*, 54-82.

Muller, Steven (1994): "Democracy in Germany". *Daedalus* 123, 33-56.

Nagel, Joane (1994): "Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture". *Social Problems* 41, 152-176.

Oberndörfer, Dieter (1993): *Der Wahn des Nationalen*. Freiburg i.Br.: Herder.

Parekh, Bhiku (1995): "The Concept of National Identity". *New Community* 21(2), 255-268.

Peabody, Dean (1985): *National Characteristics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Safran, William (1991): "State, Nation, National Identity, and Citizenship: France as a Test Case". *International Political Science Review* 12, 167-180.

Scheuch, Erwin K. (1991): *Wie deutsch sind die Deutschen?* Bergisch Gladbach: H. Lübbe Verlag.

Schnapper, Dominique (1991): *La France de l'intégration: Sociologie de la nation en 1990*. Paris: Editions Gallimard.

Schnapper, Dominique (1994): *La Communauté des Citoyens*. Paris: Gallimard.

Schnapper, Dominique (1994): "The Debate on Immigration and the Crisis of National Identity". *West European Politics* 17(2), 127-139.

Selznick, Philip (1992): *The Moral Commonwealth: Social Theory and the Promise of Community*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Shils, Edward (1972): *The Constitution of Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Smith, Anthony D. (1991): *National Identity*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Spinner, Jeff (1994): *The Boundaries of Citizenship*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Sternberger, Dolf (1979): *Verfassungspatriotismus*. Frankfurt am Main: Insel.

Tajfel, Henri (ed.) (1982): *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Tamir, Yael (1994): *Liberal Nationalism.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Tamir, Yael (1995): "The Enigma of Nationalism". *World Politics* 47, April 1995, 418-40.

Thränhardt, Dietrich (1995): "The Political Uses of Xenophobia in England, France and Germany". *Party Politics* 1(3), 323-345.

Waters, Mary C. (1990): *Ethnic Options: Choosing Identities in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Weidenfeld, Werner; Korte, Karl-Rudolf (1991): *Die Deutschen - Profil einer Nation.* Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.

Westle, Bettina (1992): "Strukturen nationaler Identität in Ost- und Westdeutschland". *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 44(3), 461-488.

Wilterdink, Nico (1994): "Images of National Character". *Society* 32(1), 43-51.