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**EUROPEAN IDENTITY WORK
(FIRST DRAFT OF A PROPOSAL
FOR A JOINT RESEARCH PROJECT)**

Summary

Processes of European identity formation are analysed here in terms of identity work and, specifically, relationship (interplay) between biographical and collective identity work. First sections of the text (1 and 2) are focussed on grounding the approach in a range of theoretical orientations (symbolic interactionism and culturalist perspectives), on outlining its methodological implications (the rationale for using the method of autobiographical narrative interviewing and various methods of text analysis), and, finally, on developing research questions and preliminary analytical dimensions of studying the collective identity work, especially in relation to European identity work, the latter being based on results of the author's research on the minority nation society of Wales (e.g. collective identity constructions, and figurations, in terms of cultural periphery / centre, hybridity, and marginality). In the next step of analysis, these preliminary questions and dimensions are related to problems of European identity work in general. In the next section (3) overall heuristic strategies of the offered project are formulated: the attitude of refractive self-reflection, the dialogical principle of calibrating research interactants' perspectives, a multi-layer approach to the interplay between individual experiences and a variety of collective meaning resources, the strategy of contrastive comparison of studied cases and, finally, the

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zooming procedure of focussing (coding) empirical materials. The last section of the text (4) relates to the objectives / expected products of the project concerning dimensions and integrated model of collective identity work in Europe, and their practical implications for a range of social / political activities in education, legislation, governance, as well as for NGOs, social arenas and social movements

Key words: European identity work, collective identity, collective identity work, biographical identity, biographical identity work

1. THE PHENOMENON AND BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

1.1 Principles of Looking at Europe in the Planned Research Project

1. European integration is only effective to such an extent as it is accomplished by individual actors and their co-operation in the context of collective units, especially we-groups with their own identities. These actors are not just faced with far-reaching and complicated tasks with an implicit or explicit European dimension, but they have to relate to far more complex collective identities than it had been necessary under the traditional conditions of a national state (Viehoff and Segers 1999). The necessity to continuously and sensibly take over the perspectives of interaction partners who are members of other nations and cultures also partially contributes to the development of more complex individual identity constructions (via the respective constructions of me-images as it has been spelled out by G. H. Mead 1934) than it had been common in the contexts of traditional cultures confined to a national state.

2. Our analysis has to focus on the enormous cultural, historical and ethnic differences in Europe as well as on the development of cultural and symbolic forms of trans-national hybridity. Cultural hybridity and the “marginal” (Stonequist 1937) or multicultural personality emerge and become especially productive by way of translating, interpreting and liaison work.

3. The European principle of subsidiarity in the sense of a strengthening of the aspect of regions and periphery should especially be taken into account. “Periphery” means economic and political dependence, but also cultural diversification (especially on the territory of cultural minority nations) and respective potentials of creativity, i.e., the potential to create new socio-cultural projects of action.

4. The first signs of encompassing European cultural elements of a “lingua franca” should be appreciated with regard to their communicative functionality as well as their necessary and unavoidable superficiality. The acquisition of elements

of a European “lingua franca” culture should avoid all tendencies of fading out of awareness those differences between national cultures, which still remain on a deeper level – differences in terms of orientation, action and knowledge.

5. European complexes of problems and the arrangements of coping with them should also be analysed under the perspective of relevant occupational, especially professional, forms of action. The orientation of projects, the different conditions of action and the difficulties and mistakes at work have to be taken into account. Focusing on professional action has to be methodically “embedded” by a scientific-analytical sensitivity for social processes.

1.2 Basic Theoretical Approach of the Project on European Identity Work

Our research on European identity work is founded on the idea of an intricate relationship between biographical and collective identity work. (This also is the rationale for choosing the method of autobiographical narrative interviewing and of text analysis connected with it as a central empirical instrument for our inquiry.) Therefore it might be worthwhile to put together some notions regarding the basic idea which comes out of the writings of the “Chicago” social scientists George Herbert Mead (1934, 1964), William Thomas (Miller and Park 1921), Robert Park (1922, 1950, 1952, 1955); Everett Stonequist (1937) and Anselm Strauss (1959, 1978, 1993) as well as of the historian Norman Davies (1999).

Another valuable source of ideas which should be mentioned – a source of ideas which is too often overlooked in current sociological discourses – can be found in the Polish tradition of the sociological reflection on nation, nationhood, and culture (re-)production processes forming both collective and individual identities. Abstracting from the 20th century Polish sociological literature on nation as a whole and to begin only with Florian Znaniecki’s study on antagonism against strangers (1930/31), continued and developed in his fundamental work on modern nationalities (1973 [1952]), two other contributions are also worth mentioning: Józef Chałasiński’s (a student and follower of Znaniecki) large study (Chałasiński 1938) on the process of a wide ranging spread of national ‘we-feelings’ across and against social class differences and inequalities within Polish society in the times before World War II and then Stanislaw Ossowski’s (1984) work on nation, nationhood and patriotic attitudes as part of the personal experience of social and cultural feelings of belonging to groups.

Znaniecki’s perspective, albeit focused in his latest work on nation (1952) chiefly on social roles, social groups and collective social processes constitutive of creating and disseminating the national consciousness which was to overcome the

traditional forms of experience, bonds and loyalties, stems from the ideas which were developed in earlier times in cooperation with the Chicago sociologist William Thomas, and published in the series of volumes of *The Polish Peasant in Europe in America* (1918/1927). Integrated with the works by Chałasiński and Ossowski, this perspective has found a continuation in a series of studies carried out by Antonina Kłoskowska (2000), who has been looking to grasp the very phenomenon of how nation and national culture as the collective meaning resource is embedded in, and located on, “the grass-root level” in actual biographical experiences of persons living in the centre of their national culture, in its periphery or its borderlands. Based on a large collection of autobiographical narrative data, analysed with a wide range of hermeneutic methods of interpretation, this work is close to the interpretative sociological approach stemming from, among others, the Chicagoan, symbolic interactionist and phenomenological tradition in sociology.

As mentioned already, there is an intricate relationship between biographical identity work and collective identity work. National and European identity work are part of this collective identity work, which will become more and more important. Biographical identity can only be constituted through interactive co-operation of the respective individuals in collective endeavours. The third, the “neutral” position in interaction – the perspective of the generalized other (using a term by George Herbert Mead 1934) – can only be grasped by the individual (especially, but not only, by the growing up child) if she/he refers to all possible, i.e. experienciable and imaginable, positions of single actors and constituent we-groups that are in the interaction system she/he is participating in, and if she/he imagines their different outlooks through taking the roles, i.e. the perspectives, of the various other interactants. The neutral position to be grasped is not just the abstract intersection, the focussed task structure and/or the (more or less emotional or thoughtful) chorus of we-voices of the different positions of the participating team members in the various interacting (i.e. co-operating and/or competing) we-groups from family up to ethnically and/or culturally defined national collectivities. Constitutive for the individual’s building up of the neutral perspective of the generalized other are in addition the positions of the arbitrator, the referee, the liaison worker, the critical observer assessing the projects and the activities of the participating teams and their members as well as defining and deciding the next steps to be taken in conflict situations as well as negotiating between different plans, interests and contributions of the various parties participating. Grasping the perspectives of these four types of positions is necessary in order to acquire a circumspect and responsible personal identity as well as individual citizenship of biographical importance.

The references and role-taking regarding the various positions in the collective we-groups and interaction systems which the individual belongs to – but especially regarding the peculiar neutral positions of shared team tasks (as voiced by a team coach), of the arbitrator and referee, of the liaison worker and of the critical observer – are shaping one's own individual identity features via images and expectations of the "me", which the individual assumes – on the grounds of partial experiences – that the fellow interactants and especially the speakers ("coaches") of the we-groups as well as the arbitrators and the liaison persons in the interaction systems and the critical observers in the audience would have of him/herself. In addition, by the same mechanism, one's own individual identity features are not only configured, stabilized and made flexible for change and self-critical correction, but also abstracted, generalized and standardized. On the basis of this abstraction, generalization and standardization stable expectations of action and interaction regarding behaviour patterns and modes of co-operation (and partially conflict, too) of individuals are made possible, although their personal identities are – and remain – unique. Finally, generalized outlooks on collective concerns, including those of territorially based we-groups and institutionalised interaction systems (regions, nations, international border region co-operations, trans-national units) and the pertinent value orientations are encouraged and calibrated by virtue of shared social symbolisms, cultural productions and discourse arenas, although every individual member has her/his own personal conception and interpretation of them.

Without the entanglement in the dealings, i.e. co-operations and conflicts, with other fellow interactants, we-groups, and the overall interaction systems and the resulting confrontation with "me"-images the individual could not develop her/his own self-identity. But on the other hand, in order to reach a consistent and flexible self-identity the individual must also become enabled to, again, re-distance herself or himself from the various positions of fellow interactants and the generalized other. The individual has always to realize that the generalizations and standardizations of the world-view and the types of social expectations will not totally fit the factual experiences of her/his life. The results of action and interaction are always partially – and sometimes even dramatically – different from incipient expectations and intentions. In addition, the tasks and forecasts of we-groups and (speakers of) interaction systems can never be perfectly met by the individual, because she/he is different from the others in mood, in gusto, in knowledge, in capacities. And there is a constant – sometimes more, sometimes less fervent – desire of the individual of being different from the others and the general public: otherwise the individual would lose her/his sense of being a uniquely existing unit with self-consciousness of its own – unique in relationship

to others and apart from common causes. The differences between expectations and the factual outcomes are resulting from the hidden obtrusive and creative ingredients of individual identity (the “I” in the language of George Herbert Mead 1934) and the unexpected courses of collective and individual histories: i.e. the concatenations of events in the social and individual sphere occurring at odds with their incipient forecast. Therefore there is the permanent necessity for biographical as well as collective-historical work of re-specification of general expectations, outlooks and assumptions at the same time.

Collective identity work and development is as much a dynamical social process as biographical identity work and development. They very much intersect with each other – both on the level of factual events and of fact-transcending images. On the factual level, collective history has a vast impact on individual biographies, and individual biographies contribute to the shaping of collective history. But the level of images might be even more intriguing. Bestowed on the common causes of we-groups and their interaction systems are historical tasks with their own “gestalts” to think about and to work on the change and development of collective identities. These images and notions of collective identity change and development are very important and helpful for recognizing and understanding the tasks and chances how to change and develop one’s own personal identity. On the other hand, circumspect notions how to deal with ongoing collective history and its tasks can only be raised on the grounds of experiences of, and reflective insights in, one’s own personal identity.

Up to here it has been explained, why biographical identity work is only possible by references to several types and levels of collectivities (including national and international ones). Now there should be the focus on the problematic condition – the factors of power and force set aside – that social collectivities and interaction systems of all kinds can only be upheld, if they are grounded in the biographical work of the individual participants.

Collective identities – and this also applies to national identities and European identity – can only be upheld if they are backed by individual support, biographical engagement of group interaction and we-group co-operation. Especially important in this regard, however, is the individual participation in social worlds and social arenas that bridge the gap between the several we-groups. The communications, reflections and discourses in their special frames of references are pivotal for mentally representing and developing the overall interaction systems of co-operation and competition as constituted between the various participating we-groups for tackling general problems and tasks. By virtue of social arenas the individual can imagine and grasp the positions of neutral analyticity: she/he can

take the perspectives of the referee, the arbitrator, the liaison worker, the negotiator, the cultural hybrid, the critical observer. These are the perspectives of those generalized others, who transcend the traditional milieus and/or ethnic borders of the we-groups. The mentioned perspectives are indispensable for reaching at positions, which are suitable for gaining reflective distance towards the self-understandings, goals and stances of the we-groups and their idealized generalized others. This does not mean to abstain from common causes but to participate in them in a refrained, reflective and critical way. It includes the reshaping of the images and the goals of the involved we-groups. – All this must be based on the complicated biographical work of individuals, which have to come to terms again and again with several types of “me”-images of themselves and internal and external generalized others of we-groups and of interaction systems.

The active participation in social worlds and social arenas is indispensable for arriving at a democratic political quality on the level of the nation state as well as on the level of trans-national communities. Especially important in this regard is the biographical work of comparing the expectations of the various generalised others with whom the individual has to come to terms with in the course of her/his social life and the biographical work of transgressing the demarcation lines of tradition-based milieus and of ethnic we-groups via all sorts of “intercultural” communication. Trans-national identities like European identity – if they are not artificially superimposed by power or force – are only possible on the basis of trans-cultural communication, of mutual acceptance and positive evaluation of the collective national identities or minority identities of the others, the “strangers”; on the basis of acceptance on equal terms, of respectful treatment and of supporting the negotiation capabilities of small, peripheral and/or even minority type national we-groups; as well as on the basis of stressing the importance of regional and institutional identities to be found on both sides of the borders and of cherishing the special multicultural qualities of the border regions. All these new attitudes of orientation to several types of collectivities that are not one’s own must be founded on the circumspect individual biographical work of becoming partially knowledgeable and able to move freely in other, “strange” national and regional cultures and interaction areas.

2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS USED

2.1 A Minority Nation Society as a Laboratory for European Identity Work

As mentioned above there is an intricate relationship between individual or biographical identities and all sorts of collective identities conceived of as imagined communities (Anderson 1991). Collective concerns regarding these imagined communities (with their symbolic power of binding their individual members) are getting incorporated into individual biographical identity; and collective concerns are not kept alive without individual biographical involvements. The nation as such an imagined community and the nation state as its organisational structure have been two of the most central collective concerns during the last three centuries, and they have been of utmost importance for personal biographical work, for the construction of individual identity involved in it and for the fate and management of individual life courses. But at the same time the going concerns of the minority nations (i.e., imagined communities without their own separate statehood and its gamut of organizations) had to give way to those of the powerful nation states. Today, due to the current frameworks of orientation in a unifying Europe and a globalised world society, the big change is that the going concerns of the nation state tend to be more and more transgressed by European and world society concerns. And at the same time the minority nations regain to a certain amount bits of their former potency for orientation as imagined and symbolic communities; in addition, they become social arenas and organisational structures of political power in their own right. Due to such a tremendous historical change of orientation and joint historical change of political organization, the intricate relationship between biographical and collective identities becomes even more complex than it had been in the historical era of the “sacredness” of the nation state. The biographical work of personal identity construction has now to deal with multi-layer loyalties and responsibilities, with discrepancies between the several forces of binding the individuals to their different symbolic communities, with paradoxes of moral orientation implied in these various involvements of powerful self-binding within several symbolic communities, and with the values of a universalising discursive ethics of “international mindedness” (G. H. Mead 1964).

During the last centuries, even before the eclipse of the nation state, some of the minority nations were forced to become a historical laboratory for all sorts of experiences and experiments with that multi-layer interplay between individual and collective identities and with its paradoxes. People in these minority nation

societies had to learn early in history how to manage the complex task of multi-layer (biographical and collective) identity work from which today all the other inhabitants of a unifying Europe can profit a lot. Therefore, the project will start with research on a minority nation society on which some exploratory research has already been conducted: the minority nation society of Wales.

2.1.1 Research Questions on Minority Nation Societies

The following substantive phenomena connected with the interplay between biographical and collective identity constructions shall be studied:

- 1) peripheral socio-structural positioning of a society at the European fringe and its conditional relevance for life situations;
- 2) hybridity, marginality, bilingualism;
- 3) cultural centre versus cultural periphery and their mutual relationship or “figuration“;
- 4) dealing with “otherness” and “strangeness”;
- 5) socio-cultural movements, social arenas, social worlds and public discourses, which can inspire and foster various collective identities;
- 6) visual, i.e. pictorial, ritual and performing art as well as mythical symbolisms of collective identity; and finally
- 7) historical cultural resources (especially “social dramas” and moral debates) of collective identity work;
- 8) professional work dealing with the creation or fostering of collective identities on the one hand and with the biographical suffering from collective identities on the other.

Connected with these substantive research topics the following basic theoretical phenomena have to be scrutinized:

- basic features of autobiographical narratives of all sorts of persons who either do elaborate collective identity work or severely suffer from it;
- social categorisations of otherness and strangeness of peripheral and marginal persons, on the one hand, and of familiarity and „we-ness” of centre persons, on the other;
- the „figuration work” of centre persons and of periphery persons, which is conducted through their mutual social categorisation as empirically shown in narrative interviews, group discussions/focus groups, novels and/or public discourse materials;
- the interplays and interfaces between individual biographical and collective historical processes (e.g., the dynamic self-empowerments and creative metamorphoses of biographies effected through the interaction, communication,

orientation and working within social movements or social worlds that focus on creative cultural production; or the impact of a disastrous collective trajectory – as, e.g., a long lasting unsuccessful strike – on individual life courses with the result of biographical trajectory processes becoming dominant in the latter);

- ways in which collective images and public discourses shape the orientation of individual life courses and the biographical work involved, and, vice versa, ways in which the biographical work of creative single persons can change collective images and public discourses (e.g., how the individual biographical work of a national movement changed the public discourse, social world and organizational milieu of paradigmatic persons several times);

- “protective” or even “self-delusory” textual practices of fading out, of denying, of repressing, of rationalizing and of producing vague or even void formulations of theoretical generalization (“empty formulas”) in order to circumvent the recollection of guilt-stricken activities, of encounters of shame and/or of hurting experiences of severe suffering or to disguise or to legitimise them, on the one hand, as well as to reconstruct the biographical work of recollection, working through, self-realizing, coming to terms, redefinition of one’s biographical situation, self-critique and self-theorizing – these self-illuminating activities are often pursued and accomplished in cooperation with a supportive significant other or an understanding biographical advisor – , on the other;

- the symbolic power of historical resources of culture for the shaping, support and intensification of present day collective identity orientations (by looking at their inbuilt potential for the symbolic appresentation of collective identity);

- the circumspect historical reconstructions of cultural elite persons (e.g., historians, writers, politicians) by means of narration and argumentation regarding the emergence and change of the self-definition of collective identities or – at least – of some of their essential features;

- the expressive and symbolic character of paintings, photographs and other visual materials as artistic means or products of collective identity presentation, of symbolic (idealized) belonging to imagined communities and of remembrance of social dramas; as well as to realize the unavoidable epistemic dependence of their interpretation on narrative texts.

2.1.2 Methodological Implications

The first research on the minority nation of Wales will focus on the important substantive phenomenon of the interplay between individual biographical work, on the one hand, and constructions of collective (and especially national) identities, on the other, as an instructive example for the accomplishment of

European identity work. The necessary research strategies of biography analysis and the analysis of collective identities will be situated in various traditions of social research: Chicago Sociology and Symbolic Interactionism (Fisher and Strauss 1978, Blumer 1969, Fine 1995), Polish Sociology of Culture (Znaniński 1952, Kłoskowska 2000), Mannheim's Sociology of Knowledge (Mannheim 1964), Psychoanalysis and Psychohistory (Erikson 1987), the analysis of social movements, socio-linguistics and conversation analysis (Ammon, Dittmar and Mattheier 1987, Sacks 1992, Wetherell, Taylor and Yates 2001), post-modern ethnography or ethno-history (Faubion 2001, Spencer 2001), etc.

The research activities will mainly harness innovative qualitative research approaches and methods – such as biography analysis based on narrative interviews, the analyses of written autobiographies, written historiographic reconstructions and realistic novels, the analysis of published public discourses as part of the dynamics of social dramas, the conversation analysis of argumentative debates in the electronic media or in group discussions (focus groups) on central societal issues; as well as the iconographic analysis of visual materials of historical relevance for collective identity constructions. The analytical work of the projects will be based on qualitative or documentary (Karl Mannheim) empirical materials, such as autobiographical narrative interviews, group discussions/focus groups, historical documents like a debate regarding the relationship between the minority nation and the majority nation and literary productions (e.g. pieces of autobiographical writings), visual representations and historiographic re-constructions. The pivotal research capacity will be to produce overall single case analyses of autobiographical or historiographic materials or of group discussions, to realize and to overcome the specific difficulties of analytical writing about texts with the necessarily “hypostatic” or “oblique” perspective of this type of (meta)writing; and to master the required stylistic devices in writing up the single case analyses. – Connected with it are the following elementary abilities:

1. The capability to assess and define the complex interaction situations of autobiographical story telling and of group discussions.

2. The capability to establish a trust relationship between the conversation partners or interview partners as strangers – a trust relationship that is required for sharing one's own autobiography or one's own personal opinion with the communication partner.

3. A sense for the extempore production of verbal texts with its formal structures of orderly and chaotic features; this sense will be enhanced by the ability to meticulously transcribe extempore text productions.

4. A sense for the careful presentation work of written texts that attempts to make them logical, impressive, convincing, legitimate, important or harmless, non-offensive, etc.

5. A sense for the stylistics and the artistry of verbal and written texts about (individual and collective) identity developments in all their diversity of conditions for text production, of strategies for presentation, of genres, of orientations in style, etc. – in order to understand the presentation work of those (identity focussed) texts to express essential features, the “gist”, of social and biographical processes.

6. An attitude of open listening and sensitive understanding regarding the textually presented activities and suffering of the protagonists encountered in the texts, who will, then, emerge as quasi-interaction partners of the analyst.

7. An ability of looking at, sequencing, contextualising and retrospectively assessing the presentation activities of the text in order to grasp the faculty of the text production to express social and biographical processes in a (partially) “oblique” or “indirect” way.

8. An ability to withstand the pseudo-sociological suggestiveness of ready-made (but often quite misleading) general statements of the informer’s theorizing found in the text material and to “refract” them through looking at their embeddedness within the sequential and contextual order of the formal text structures.

9. A sensitivity for analytical coding in order to continuously interrelate empirical data, on the one hand, and theoretical categories (and propositions), on the other; a sense for the openness and fallibility of social science theorizing as well as for the hidden “theoreticity” of the empirical text materials.

10. A sense for the processual, perspective-bound, interpreted, symbolically represented, interactive, negotiated, subjective and, at the same time, objective character of social reality.

11. A sensibility for, and understanding of, the dialectical relationship between the production of social reality by individual biography incumbents, on the one hand, and the forceful structural restrictions for their production activities by obligations, constraints and mechanisms of collective processes (*within* collective identity units as well as *between* them) on the other.

12. The inclination and openness for cooperative research work in the sessions of the research workshop: first, looking at the empirical (textual or visual) material together, i.e. structurally describing, coding and abstracting the textual and/or visual data collectively by harnessing the communicative scheme of description; second, formulating various, often discrepant, perspectives of interpretation in the workshop group, mutually criticising them by referring to empirical data in

the textual and/or visual material and triangulating the different perspectives of analysis; and third, utilizing the dynamics of the communication scheme of argumentation in the session of the research workshop for joint theorizing.

The latter capability can only be developed within the social arrangement of qualitative research workshops. Qualitative research workshops are always constructed in such a way that new empirical materials (e.g., autobiographical narrative interviews with protagonists of social movements like the Occitan nursery school movement) are related to the central theoretical concepts (e.g., on social movements and social worlds). Thereby it becomes possible to gain a deeper analytical understanding of these materials as well as to criticise the theoretical concepts on the basis of the empirical materials and to further spell them out. One must always reserve considerable time for a more detailed structural description and analytical abstractions of the data according to the principles of textual analysis and the analysis of visual materials as they have been developed within qualitative social research, e.g., in the fields of narrative analysis, the analysis of argumentation and the analysis of visual and symbolic materials. In these contexts, participants of the workshops are always encouraged to explicate their respective presuppositions, e.g., the presuppositions on “nationalism” in their respective societies. – Thereby members of the research workshops are also enticed to reflect upon and to analyse common sense knowledge with regard to “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991).

The research workshops also are social arrangements of a fast exploration of, and getting acquainted with, important features of the respective other cultures and societies of Europe: arrangements which break up the traditional hetero-stereotypical categorisations and superficiality and create a special sensitising potential. The development of such a deeper perspective is especially stimulated by structural descriptions and the related contextualising and process-analytical look at qualitative empirical materials like texts of off-the-cuff story telling, detailed descriptions, argumentation’s in group discussions/focus groups, institutional records, historical and fictitious (belletristic) presentations of social change, etc. Arrangements of “fast” exploration and learning are an important condition for all levels of co-operation in a Europe, which is growing together. It is fair to say that the expected multi-national collaboration in the research workshop seminars will play a significant role in fostering an atmosphere of trust in the co-operation between the mixed-national scientists involved in the research.

2.1.3 Preliminary Analytical Dimensions of Studying Collective, and Especially European Identity Work

The preliminary qualitative research on the minority nation society of Wales provided us with four main analytical dimensions:

- Collective identity constructions: cultural periphery and cultural centre as well as hybridity, marginality, images of the stranger, and bilingualism;
- Figurations of socio-structural periphery and socio-structural centre;
- Biographical work: individual identity constructions and the impact of collective endeavours and social collectivities; as well as
- European identity work proper.

Due to the multi-level qualitative research using the various methods of data collection and data analysis mentioned before (in chapter 2.1.2), these main analytical dimensions could be broken down into additional five to six sub-dimensions each:

1. Collective Identity Constructions: Cultural Periphery and Cultural Centre as well as Hybridity, Marginality, Images of the Stranger, and Bilingualism

- images, definitions, and arena debates of collective identity: the different impacts of cultural centre on the one hand and cultural periphery on the other and their mutual relationship or “figuration“;
- definitions of belonging to minority and majority groups;
- social arenas, elite discourse and symbolic universes of collective identities on the level of the nation state and on other (sub-national and trans-national) levels;
- visual and mythical symbolisms of collective identity; paradigms of merger and clash of collective and biographical identity (e.g., in cherished high culture texts as “El Poema de Cid” and in autobiographical writings of elite persons like R.S. Thomas’ autobiographical writings).
- projecting the past: the role of historians and men of letters in shaping images of collective identities.

2. Figurations of Socio-Structural Periphery and Socio-Structural Centre

- social structure of periphery, peripheral social situatedness, and personal as well as collective identity constructions;
- socio-economic conditions of peripheral regions and new cultural developments in the management of firms (including the problems of cultural tradition, cultural otherness/ethnicity, morality, and cultural creativity),
- socio-economic conditions of peripheral regions, the quest for cultural creativity and the paralysis of discouragement;

- migration from peripheral regions and to peripheral regions; its impact on life on constructions of (individual and collective) identity, and on the “figuration” between cultural centre and cultural periphery;

- the impact of socio-economic conditions on peripheral regions, on the exploitation of their natural resources and on the rising of a sense for geo-mindedness.

3. Biographical work: Individual Identity Constructions and the Impact of Collective Endeavors

- neutral positions dealing with collective endeavours: generalized other, arbitrator, referee, liaison worker, critical observer;

- me-images (assumed pictures of others – “we people” as “related” to myself and “they people” as not “related” to myself) and self-definitions in terms of belonging to collectivities and of implied personal responsibilities,

- biographical conditions of getting sensitised towards collective endeavours as well as the impacts of collective endeavours and we-groups on shaping self definitions and personal responsibilities,

- dealing with otherness and strangeness: conceptions of collective and individual strangeness as well as conceptions of the familiar and the unfamiliar foreigner;

- loose and tight bonding mechanisms connecting personal identities and collective identities.

4. European Identity Work Proper

- bi- and multiculturalism: hybridity, marginality, bi-lingualism, the well-informed citizen of Europe, the professional stranger in the social worlds of the professions in Europe;

- cultural hybrids, marginal people, and creativity; the pivotal role of marginal people, cultural hybrids in transcultural endeavours (in politics, management, scholarship and the arts);

- hidden and focussed collective identity work towards Europe (e.g. the various conceptions of familiar national “othernesses” in Europe as contribution to a concert of voices of European identity; everyday way of practicing intercultural communication in Europe);

- European identity work which is focussed on conceptions of national identity, on the one hand, and on conceptions of transgressing national identity on the other; the multi-layer characteristic of European identity work;

- distortions of collective identity work (e.g. xenophobia, ultra-nationalism, right wing extremism; individual disappointment and disengagement; void ritualism of European identity work).

- institutional symbolism of Europe.

The just mentioned analytical dimensions will be put to use for the ethnographic field-work and the data analysis connected with it in six societies:

- two minority nation societies without their own separate statehood (Wales and Northern Ireland);
- two smaller nation societies with their own statehood (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic or Ireland);
- two larger nation societies with their own statehood (but with a totally different history of establishing and using their own statehood – Poland and Germany).

Since two societies of the same type each can be compared as well as the societies of the different types in general, the research strategies of minimal and maximal contrast (Strauss 1987) will be used. Thereby it will be possible to take into account historical specificities as well as systematic differences of alternative cultural conceptions and structural conditions. Due to the open, abductive research process the roughly twenty research dimensions will probably be differentiated, partially revised and amended.

2.2 The General Topic of European Identity Work

Collective identity work becomes pivotal in unifying Europe. *Grosso modo* speaking, there are three features of it. First, nowadays the automatic tendency to refer to collective and societal issues just in terms of nationality and the nation state, which was so typical for the last two or three centuries, has forfeited its base of moral legitimisation. The nation state lost its status of overall meaning resource due to the experiences of many conflicts and wars in the 19th and 20th centuries. Second, due to the extremely varied European experiences, traditions, and philosophies, there are extreme differences between the various national conceptions of nationhood, citizenship, and the nation state in the European Union, which make the single conceptions questionable in themselves. Third, there is the growing importance of biographical and collective sense making practices regarding one's own inclusion into several (territorially bound) we-groups referring to regional areas, to Europe and to world society (as symbolically represented by the United Nations). There are new questions of content and of hierarchy regarding the numerous layers and frameworks of complex biographical work referring to these different collective identities. The differentiated collective concerns and their gradation are very much linked to the biographical work focussed on individual identity construction. The following might sound overly optimistic, but with regard to the layer of sense making practices referring to the

collective identity of Europe, we are at least under the impression that in many parts of Europe there is an underlying, subliminal concept of belonging together in Europe, which essentially excludes any individual willingness of going to war with each other anymore and which includes the individual desire to take the perspectives of the culturally others and therefore to overcome the language barrier by learning at least one foreign language. We could say that a specific European international-mindedness has increased – notwithstanding the fact that certain parts of our continent are marked or threatened by civil warfare. This international-mindedness includes a specific understanding by many individual persons and we-groups in Europe of a European collective (cultural and political) identity in diversity, which should be supported and developed (without excluding a strong feature of trans-European international-mindedness).

The professional producers, designers and mediators of culture who are pivotal for the construction, support, fostering, vulgarisation and change of collective identity images tend to position themselves in the socio-cultural centre field of national and/or European society, and at least some of the receivers of cultural products and services feel forced to position themselves in areas of socio-cultural periphery. (The latter positioning might be connected with suffering.) However, under certain societal conditions, professional producers, designers, and mediators could also intentionally prefer to take a periphery stance which is often a trans-national one, and develop a hybrid/marginal personality.

But not only the professional producers, designers and mediators of culture should be scrutinised regarding the interplay of their biographical and collective identity work (as outlined in chapter 1.2). It is equally important to study the interrelationship between the biographical and the collective identity work of *ordinary* persons of the general public, who might adopt, reformulate, criticise or reject the formulas of the professional elite. In addition, it might be seen that the ordinary citizens have developed their own conceptions of the interplay between biographical and collective – especially European – identity work that are utterly different from the formulas of the cultural elite. If this would be found, one explanation for such a phenomenon could be that Europe might be seen by them as far away from their own centre of live or, to the contrary, it might be envisioned by them as a matter of the heart. Another explanation could be, that the nation state might have lost the “spiritual” meaning for them, which it still might have for the cultural elite, etc.

The research project will focus on a topic of the social sciences which is important in terms of basic theory: collective identity work – especially the interplay between national and European identity work – of lay people, professionals

and members of the cultural elite. In addition, the research line is prone to be very innovative regarding the further development of qualitative social research methods: biography analysis, analysis of argumentative contexts of collective discourse, analysis of social arenas and social worlds, analysis of “historical tales”, mythical symbolisms and social dramas, analysis of socio-cultural movements for the construction of collective identities as well as analysis of historiographic narratives and their productions of pertinent images, concepts and background knowledge regarding collective identity.

2.2.1 Research Questions Regarding European Identity Work

2.2.1.1 Hidden European identity work

Most of the European identity work is still disguised by references to other types of collective identities. The hidden European identity work is embedded in the following phenomena:

- in the existing different types of national we-conceptions,
- in the impact of collective concerns of all sorts (referring to regional, national, international administrative bodies, institutions and territorial spheres with a distinctive culture) on individual biography constructions and biographical work,
- in the conceptions of cultural and national otherness and strangeness (especially in the mode of national hetero-stereotypes),
- in the ways of practicing intercultural communication,
- in social worlds and social arenas of societal core activities of European relevance (e.g., those of professionals and scientists as modern times itinerant scholars), as well as
- in all types of allusions and references to Europe and trans-national affairs within the public discourses on „going concerns” of the respective national societies.

2.2.1.2 Collective identity work that is focussed on conceptions of national identity

As already mentioned, most of the collective identity work in Europe deals with conceptions of national identity. This is always connected with conceptions of “we-ness” as juxtaposed to cultural otherness, of cultural centre as contrasted with cultural periphery, of cultural purity as opposite to cultural hybridisation, of cultural restriction to an in-group image of the primordially, self evidence and absoluteness of the position of one’s own cultural group as juxtaposed to cultural marginality or hybridity in the sense of bi- or multi-culturality with its

concomitant qualifications. These contrast sets of typifications are firstly based on a social figuration of the contrast between social centre and social periphery positions, and secondly on a social figuration of the interrelationship between cultural production workers (as writers, poets, historians), cultural design workers (as language purifiers and developers, politicians, cultural advertisers and propagandists, educational programmers, law makers, etc.), of cultural mediation workers (as journalists, teachers, lawyers, business administrators, social workers, etc.), and of the ordinary recipients of the cultural products, i.e., the individual members of the general public.

2.2.1.3 Distortions in collective identity work

There are several typical distortions in collective identity work observable all over Europe. First of all, on the one hand, there are powerful attitudes and activities of xenophobia, ultra-nationalism and right wing extremism. On the other hand, the general population of Europe is not only disappointed by the organisation, management, and handling of their own political concerns within the European institutions and by their widespread lack of democratic legitimacy, but, in addition, it seems to be always lurking and feasible for politicians to elicit anti-European sentiments in their respective national constituencies. Last but not least, people all over Europe are fed up with superficial, ritualised scenic productions of European intercultural exchange.

2.2.2 General Remarks Regarding the Research on European Identity Work

Generally speaking, the research on European identity work will, on the one hand, emphasise the work that cultural elite persons and culturally mediating professionals do in order to construct and reconstruct collective (regional, national, trans-national, European and globalised international) identities in Europe and how this is linked to their own biographical identity work and to their educational (meta-)work of modelling the interplay between individual and collective identity work of the general public. Cultural elite persons and culturally mediating professionals are especially sensitised regarding their incumbency of positions either of cultural centre or of cultural periphery. Whereas in the 19th century the transgression of the mental and emotional confinement within the horizons of national identity forced cultural elite persons and culturally mediating professionals into marginality and peripheral political positions, in the 21st century their work of shaping collective identities must be contextualised within a trans-national European and international frame of orientation.

On the other hand, the research on European identity work will focus on the mental and emotional work that ordinary persons of the general populace in Europe do in order to connect biographical and collective concerns and let them get informed by each other. Quite often this double identity work is in the background of awareness. But sometimes it proceeds to the foreground as a focussed concern. This happens not only in situations of public thematization (e.g. as in the case of the public discussions on the enlargement of the European Union as voted for or against it in Ireland), but in biographical situations of deep involvement or confrontation with persons from other nations of Europe – e.g. in a situation of studying abroad, in situations of falling severely ill during a vacation time abroad and getting rescued by medical professionals of a foreign European nation, etc. In addition, it is extremely interesting to find out, whether ordinary citizens of the European Union will – more or less critically – use the formulas of the cultural elite regarding European identity work at all or will develop their own concepts that have little to do with those mentioned first.

In order to empirically scrutinise the collective identity work on the levels of national and European loyalties, symbolisms and debates, the biographical and discourse work (as, e.g., seen in autobiographical narrative interviews and group discussions/focus groups) has to be studied as performed by (a) creative cultural elite persons versus receivers/consumers of cultural productions, (b) socio-political centre persons versus socio-political peripheral/marginal persons, (c) several types of cultural professionals (especially the clear-cut „centre purists” on the one hand and the committed “marginality defenders” on the other hand) and (d) several types of ordinary persons of the general populace in Europe.

2.2.3 Further Methodological Implications for the Advancement of Qualitative Research Methodology: The Link with the Methods of Cultural Studies

The analytical work of the research platform will be based on empirical materials such as autobiographical narrative interviews, group discussions/focus groups, productions of the printed and electronic media, visual, pictorial and musical symbolizations and dramatizations as well as literary productions of cultural elites (poets, historians, politicians, etc.). – Since great emphasis will also be laid on the analytical utilisation of the latter types of empirical materials which are uncommon in social research up to now, there must be again some innovation in qualitative research methods. Therefore, in addition to the necessary methodological implications regarding the utilisation and analysis of autobiographical

narrative interviews and group discussions/focus groups as mentioned in section 2.1.2 already, there have to be refined methodological steps and procedures:

- to select pertinent pieces from productions of the printed and electronic media and to perform structural descriptions on them in order to accomplish the analysis of social dramas (Victor Turner), social movements, public discourses, social arenas and social worlds (Anselm Strauss);

- to study musical, emblematic, pictorial, theatrical and otherwise visual presentations and symbolisations of historical social dramas and social movements, which shape, change and/or support collective identity constructions; and especially to assess the expressive and symbolic character of pieces of music and of stagings of the performing arts, as well as of emblems, paintings, photographs and other visual materials as means for presenting collective identity work in its connection to biographical identity work; and, in addition, to realise the epistemic dependence of their interpretation on narrative texts; as well as;

- to perform the textual analysis of the literary productions of cultural elites (e.g., poets, historians, politicians): regarding their styles of constructing historiographic narratives and their ways of creating, supporting or changing collective identity images and conceptions; regarding their ways of enforcing, legitimating and/or criticising the collective identity work in regions, nations, supranational units by means of elaborate argumentation; as well as regarding their approaches to working through the interplays between individual and collective identity work.

These further methodological implications, which of course are basic-theoretical ones at the same time, demonstrate that in our research project qualitative social research (and the pertinent basic theories like Symbolic Interactionism, Ethnomethodology, Ethnography of Communication etc.) and cultural studies as conducted by scholars of literature have to mutually influence each other. This will result in important basic-theoretical and methodological pieces of innovation (cf. Wallerstein et al. 1996, part II).

3. OVERALL HEURISTIC STRATEGIES OF OUR RESEARCH PROJECT

A complex qualitative research project needs the adoption of heuristic strategies that enhance the conditions for creativity and effectiveness. The following heuristic strategies will be used in our project on European identity work:

3.1 Starting from and getting sensitised by the problematic

The research will start from conscious constellations of problems connected with collective identity work – problems that are experienced as difficult to manage, which are sometimes hurting and which always must be reflected. (Dewey 1929) These conscious constellations of problems of collective identity work can be found in situations of *explicit* relating to we-groups and their difficulties – especially difficulties in finding or keeping satisfying relationships with other we-groups – within minority nation societies, especially in life situations of hybridity and marginality. Thus, the research outlook will get sensitised (Blumer 1969) towards the much *less* distinct and much *less* marked collective identity work in life situations of nation countries that have their own sovereign statehood – life situations which are more or less unproblematic or just an “of course” in terms of relating to we-groups.

3.2 Adopting an attitude of refractive self-reflecting

The research project will harness the potential of creativity implied in confrontations with the unfamiliar, i.e. looking from the perspective of the other as a stranger. (Simmel 1958) Observing from the perspective of the unfamiliar other sheds a new light on oneself and on one’s mundane affairs: as something, which has to be thought about, which is not without doubts anymore, as well as which is questionable and can even become strange to oneself. To look at one’s own self-conception and self-representations, at one’s own collective affairs and at one’s own biographical processes from the points of view of the culturally other is extremely enlightening. In epistemological terms, the heuristic strategy of refractive self-reflection, i.e. looking at oneself from the standpoint of the culturally other, is much more powerful than to reflect about oneself and one’s affairs from an *autochthonous* standpoint. The culturally unfamiliar or even strange becomes a medium of refraction, through which a creative perspective on oneself, one’s history and one’s future can be won (Dewey 1934, chapters 3, 4). By having arrived at such a refractive stance of self-reflection, the researcher will also be able to look at culturally unfamiliar or even strange phenomena in a much more circumspect, balanced and differentiated way than from a homogeneously autochthonous stance: since she or he has learned that even the familiar phenomena in one’s own sphere – including features of oneself – are not an “of course” and that they are based on non-obvious (“deep-structural“) *universal* mechanisms, on the one hand, and on quite complex biographical and historical – and therefore *singular* – prerequisites, on the other.

Hence, the heuristic research strategy of refractive self-reflection is pivotal in ethnographic fieldwork (Dumont 1978). Ethnographic fieldwork from the same cultural (or even ethnic or national) background as that one of the persons and groups researched on can be expected to be weaker in terms of generating new social science insights than an ethnographic fieldwork that includes the culturally other as at least part time researcher (compare Bellah et al 1985 and de Tocqueville 1835 and 1840). Therefore the fieldwork will be jointly conducted by autochthonous data collectors and by those from one or even two other nation states, especially from those that are different in type. (E.g., ethnographic research work within a minority or ethnic nation society will be jointly conducted by a researcher from that very society and in addition by a researcher from one of the small nation societies as well by one from one of the large nation societies. Out of financial reasons, this will not be feasible everywhere, but it will be mostly manageable to have at least one autochthonous and one foreign researcher in the field.) The autochthonous fieldworker and the foreign one will look at, understand, recall, reflect and talk about identical social phenomena, which they will approach together, in a quite different, sometimes utterly different way. Therefore, in their field conversations, they must compare, triangulate and calibrate their perspectives, and that is the reason, why they will be able to recognise and understand the phenomena in the field in a much deeper and circumspect insight than just in a culturally totally homogenous situation of fieldwork. – Another social arrangement for taking the perspective of the culturally other and for triangulating the perspectives of the autochthonous and the culturally other is the multi-national research workshop of qualitative social research (see next paragraph).

3.3 Mutually taking the respective perspectives of the others in epistemic dialogues on “third things“

Our planned research project will exploit the dialogical principle of confronting, interchanging and calibrating the perspectives of the conversing research interactants in looking at “third” phenomena at the outside of their social relationship. Through intersection of participants’ various perspectives of looking at “third phenomena”, which are topically outside of their own interactive relationship, the partners of the communicative interaction will learn about the personal “indexicality” of their own perspective and of those of the others and can gain by imagination the epistemic circumspection of third, “neutral” perspectives. (Mead 1934 refers to the “generalized other”.) The dialogical principle also implies that participants imaginatively take the different stances of the various protagonists

and actors coming up within the “stories” of the collected text materials, explore the situations of action and the predicaments of suffering that are referred to in the narratives told, analyse and assess them from different angles, compare the different pictures coming out of it, triangulate their constitutive perspectives and features, and arrive at multi-perspective images that are much more circumspect and much denser than the images of the individual persons acting and suffering within the stories told. - In terms of epistemic advances, this circumspection in terms of insight and density of images from situations of action and predicaments of suffering, reached at through intense communication about observed “third” processes, are even more productive, if these observed phenomena outside the interactive relationship (and quite often even outside the *world*) of the participants of the dialogical conversation are of a kind that is not familiar to the them. For, participants will then detect that the “third” phenomena will be shed in an utterly different light of strangeness and familiarity for each of them. The differences in terms of familiarity and strangeness for each of the partners must therefore be explored, discussed and reflected on.

The most suitable social context for dialogical dealings with processes of third parties is the research workshop arrangement, in which participants from different cultural (especially different national or ethnic) backgrounds will take part. These dialogical workshops of qualitative social research deal with cases presented through the medium of empirical primary materials (e.g., transcriptions of autobiographical narrative interviews or ongoing verbal interactions, written or even published text materials like autobiographies of politicians, visual materials like series of photographs, etc.); the primary materials will be structurally described by starting from the formal (especially: sequentially ordered) features of the texts (or pictures, etc.) and then adding the coding of the pertinent textual contents; the unravelled features of the materials will then analytically commented upon by differentiating between the general features of the involved social mechanisms, on the one hand, and the biographical and historical singularities of the analysed single case, on the other; and by delineating possible analytical dimensions of comparison between single cases, the analytical dimensions will then be used for selecting the next cases to be analysed by taking into regard the optimal comparative contrasts in order to gauge the theoretical variety in the topical field under study (theoretical selection of cases); the analysed single cases will then be compared with each other in terms of the (more or less preliminary) analytical dimensions and the theoretical categories generated yet; and finally the different perspectives of the participants will be theoretically discussed by means of dialogical argumentation; and in a later session - after having contras-

tively compared several single cases – a theoretical model of the social processes under study will be generated. (Strauss 1987; one finds similar arrangements for dialogical data presentation and discussion procedures in the professions like the “training cum research” groups of Michael Balint 1968)

3.4 Using a multi-layer approach

Our research project on European identity work will use a multi-layer approach of looking at questions of collective identity work in Europe. First of all, there is the intricate relationship between individual and collective identities as mentioned above (Giddens 1991). All collective identity work must be conducted by individuals as members of respective social we-groups; otherwise that work would not take place and the groups would even cease to exist after a while. But on top of that, the collective identity work of the individual members of we-groups gains its energy and takes over parts of its images and its meaning from the biographical identity work of the individual members. And vice versa, the autobiographical identity work receives much of its ideas, images and enthusiasm from the arena debates and symbolisms of collective identity work. Hence, on the one hand, all notions of collective affairs belonging to social we-groups and their respective collective identity work occurring in the empirical data of the project will be explicitly indexicalised (Garfinkel 1961) by referring to individual experiences and individual biographical work as it is shown in, e.g., autobiographical text materials of all sorts. And, on the other hand, it must always be demonstrated, how biographical processes of the protagonists and ordinary “practitioners” of European identity work receive their resources for imagination and meaning from collective models, endeavours, symbols and arena debates (by empirically referring, e.g., to pieces of “sacred literature” or to group discussions/focus groups).

Secondly, processes of collective identity work take place within various layers of social reality: within the layer of everyday interaction (e.g., by using European instead of national money), within the layer of joint action projects (e.g., organizing a multi-national ethnographic excursion), within the layer of meso-structural social worlds and social arenas (e.g., NGOs discussing European environmental issues and projects), within the layer of macro-structural and macro-historical processes (e.g., the process of devolution in Great Britain or the socio-economical transformation in Eastern Europe) as well as within the layer of life history and biographical work (e.g., the making of an European minded politician as Jacques Delors). The processes of collective identity work within

the various layers of social reality are very much linked to and conditioned by each other; therefore they must be studied in their intricate interplay.

Thirdly, collective identity work is conducted in we-groups of different quality and size, in different constitutive units and different entities of territorial control. These collective bodies influence each other considerably (e.g., social movements on the local level can be counteracted by national politicians and again, in contrast to this, encouraged by European institutions). The research project will demonstrate the intricate relationship between the relevant processes on all these levels, but it will also take into account that the detrimental *disintegration* between some of these activities on different levels of territorial and constitutive units is still a predicament of European identity work, citizenship and politics.

3.5 Doing cases studies on European identity work processes and contrasting them

Collective identity always is a task that must be worked on by the members of the respective collectivity. Like individual identity, collective identity is not a fixed state or even an unchangeable essence, but a permanent process of change and a developing product of practical and reflective activities (Strauss 1993). Processes of collective identity work can be studied as ensembles of coordinated *work* activities (Strauss 1985) on different levels of social reality: on the level of biographical work, on the level of project work (in action terms), on the level of professional work in teaching, encouraging and supporting the development of collective identities, on the one hand, or in controlling and reducing the impact of trajectories (Strauss et al 1985, Strauss 1993) of social disorder and individual suffering, on the other, on the level of the communicative work of arena debates within social worlds, and on the level of societal work of legal processes, of politics and of governance (e.g. producing and discussing the draft of a European constitution). These several levels of work can be studied in depths by looking into the multitude of disparate and in-depths study of social processes, especially processes of identity work and identity development. The sequential order of the activities and phases of the unfolding of these cases are pivotal for a processual analysis that also takes into account processes of fading out of awareness, of covering up, of hidden symbolic allusions, even of repression of some features of identity work. The processual and sequential analysis can be accomplished by the structural description of textual (or visual or otherwise symbolic) representations of the single cases, by breaching procedures of the documentary method of interpretation (Mannheim 1964, Bohnsack 1991) and by the triangulation of

the different perspectives of the various actors and experiences involved in the single case.

After the analysis of a first case, there will be the selection of a second case by contrastive comparison within the preliminary analytical dimensions as explored and generated during the analysis of the first case. If the processes of identity work in the first case will have remained opaque to the researcher and difficult to assess, the next case to be chosen will stand in a minimal contrast relationship to the first case studied already, in order to scrutinize the involved processes more closely. If the identity work within the first case under study will have been proven to be transparent, the next case to be chosen for further analysis will be one of maximal contrast in relationship to the first case studied already in order to explore and gauge the overall theoretical variance of the topical processes of collective identity work under study. The contrastive comparisons (and the respective data collection by means of theoretical sampling) will go on as long as new features of processes of collective identity work will show up in the empirical field under study. The ethnographic study of collective identity work in a single nation country will come to an end, when the point of theoretical saturation and theoretical representation connected with it will have been reached (Glaser and Strauss 1967, Strauss 1987). In addition, there will be contrastive comparisons of cases and alternative ways (work processes) of collective identity work *within* the nation countries of the same type (minority or ethnic nation countries, small nation countries with their own sovereign statehood and large nation countries) and *between* nation types – using as criteria for the selection of the contrasting cases or work processes those analytical perspectives and those theoretical categories, which have been generated already.

3.6 Using the zooming procedure of focussing empirical, especially textual, materials

Analysis of primary data in qualitative social research is always quite time-consuming. Therefore our planned research project will start with fast overviews over the materials collected by procedures of open coding (Strauss and Corbin 1990). This will help to decide which interviews and recordings of ongoing interaction and what natural textual units of them should be transcribed and which text materials should be analysed in what order and how meticulously. The research project will start with the analytical work of coding and theorizing almost immediately after the collection of the first data has been accomplished. After having won first overviews and having come across most interesting but opaque

phenomena, the project will also conduct the meticulous analytical procedures of narrative analysis (Schütze 1992) and conversation analysis (Schegloff and Sacks 1973) of the respective natural units of textual (and visual or otherwise symbolical) data.

4. OBJECTIVES OF OUR PLANNED RESEARCH PROJECT

Our research project on European identity work will deliver for the following products:

4.1 Dimensions of Collective Identity Work in Europe

The chapter would spell out the dimensions of collective identity work in Europe, which is done by ordinary individual citizens, members of the cultural elite, educational professionals, politicians, and the pertinent institutions. Most of these dimensions of collective identity work are still activated in terms of national identity work, although they are always done with implicitly taking into account regional, trans-national, European and universal considerations as well as the task of handling intercultural relationships. Collective identity work is intricately linked to biographical sense making practices regarding one's own inclusion in we-groups referring to regional areas, to national collectivities as cultural and organizational units, to trans-national projects, to Europe and its socio-cultural, and political arenas, and to world society. There are new features and arrangements of content and hierarchy of priorities regarding the several layers and frames of biographical work referring to collective identities in Europe. The report would use empirical materials from the first society under study, i.e. Wales, and would uncover roughly 20 dimensions of European identity work. There are four main dimensions:

- biographical work: individual identity constructions and the impact of collective endeavours,
- figurations of socio-structural periphery and socio-structural centre,
- collective identity constructions and the tensions between cultural centre and cultural periphery, cultural majorities and minorities, the cultural straight and the cultural hybrid (“marginal man“) as well as the autochthonous and the stranger,
- European identity work: hidden and focussed collective identity work towards Europe, several layers of collective identity work in Europe, distortions of collective identity work.

The chapter would spell out the (roughly) 20 dimensions by using the example of the minority nation of Wales (exploratory studies have already been conducted). We expect that the collective identity work is most conscious and obvious in the minority nation societies which had to struggle very hard to keep their own national identity, which had to develop patterns of cultural hybridity and multilingualism and which have increasingly developed strategies of turning to European arenas of discourse, action and representation.

4.2 – 4.6 Reports on the five other national scenarios in terms of Collective Identity Work

The dimensions of collective identity work as stated in chapter no. 1 will be put to use in ethnographic case studies on the collective identity work within the other societies focussed on in the project (Northern Ireland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic or Ireland, Poland, Germany). The five reports on the national sceneries would start out from the same set of analytical dimensions and categories as developed in report one. However, since the research is an open qualitative one adopting an adductive logic of research, it could and should happen, i. e., this is something that should be encouraged, that during the research activities for the ethnographic reports on the five additional societies some of the analytical dimensions as stated in chapter no. 1 would have to be differentiated, and some sub-dimensions might have to be added to the preliminary list. In conducting the fieldwork in, and the ethnographic reports on, the five national sceneries, there would be constant comparative comparisons – focussed on the incipient 20 dimensions – between the minority national societies (without their own statehood – Wales, Northern Ireland), the smaller nation societies with their own statehood (Bulgaria, Czech Republic or Ireland), and the larger nations societies (Poland and Germany). Of course, the collective identity work is different in the five societies under study: e.g., the collective identity work in a “conflict” society with two battling halves” consisting of two separate minority nations (Northern Ireland) is different from that one done in culturally more homogeneous minority nation societies (like Wales); it is also different from that one pursued in a larger, quite homogenous society at the geographical periphery of the European Union with a national tradition of collective suffering, of having been occupied for whole periods of history and of having been denied its own statehood for a long time (Poland) as well as from that one enacted in a larger, quite variegated and for a long time separated society in the geographical centre of Europe with a tradition of over-aggrandizement of its own statehood and national identity, of national

aggressivity and entanglement in guilt, of feeling stigmatised and of self-stigmatisation on the basis of an overall sentiment of collective guilt and of getting inclined to distrust symbols of national collectivity at all (Germany). – By means of constant comparative comparison the five reports on the various societies would show their separate specificities in collective identity work and the general features of this work. Phenomena, features and mechanisms of doing collective identity work in the five societies under study would be delineated.

4.7 An Integrated Model of Collective Identity Work in Europe

This chapter would formulate the outcomes of the systematic comparative comparison of the six reports on the countries under study (e.g. of the dimensional report on Wales, and of the ethnographic reports on the five other countries). It would state the general features of collective identity work in Europe, as well as it would specify and explain the unique features of collective identity work in each of the six countries (Wales and the five other societies to be studied). From the latter, conclusions would be drawn regarding social, cultural, and historical conditions of alternatives for collective identity work. Finally the chapter would generate an integrated theoretical model of how the dimensions of collective identity work in Europe are pivotal for the understanding and strengthening of European citizenship.

4.8 European Identity Work and Its Political Pedagogy

First, this chapter would spell out the hidden and the focussed forms of European identity work. Whereas national, regional, and local collective identity work is quite lively, there unfortunately has to be stated the virtual absence of *explicit* European identity work. In the near future this might become a severe problem for the institutions of the European Union (their legitimation, their democratic control, their sense making functions, etc.) – as is being increasingly mentioned in documents produced by them – and for its citizens since all over Europe and in all domains of its everyday life (in economy, especially shopping and tourism, in cultural events, education, in the handling of political duties and political rights) topics, opportunities and issues of European import will become pivotal. Hidden forms of European identity work are, e.g., all types of allusions and references to trans-national affairs within the national public discourses on “going concerns” and their “translation” into the spheres of individual life. Focussed forms of European identity work would be, e.g., international discourses on European identity issues as on the introduction of the Euro or the drafting

work for a European constitution. The report would also deal with the function of bi- and multiculturalism for European identity work (especially including its potential of political creativity, Soysal 2002); with the question of and how collective identity work focussed on the nation will be of help or detriment to European identity work (we take the stance, that sound European identity work cannot be done without a grounding in sound collective identity work focussing on the nation – e.g. Fischer 2000, 2001); and with the several types of distortion of collective identity work (as xenophobia, individual disappointment with European or other collective concerns, and void ritualisms of presenting and addressing European symbols).

Second, the chapter would deal with the possibility of conducting ethnographic excursions of students of the humanities and social sciences from different countries to another country of Europe. It would include ideas on the question how these students from different nations attempt to get a deeper understanding of a foreign culture and society in a considerably short period of time. It would be asked how much the learning experiences of the ethnographic excursions will enhance the sense for Europe as a diversified cultural, institutional and political unit, and what will be the features of this “Europe-mindedness”. From this some general conclusions will be drawn regarding the procedures and social arrangements of teaching European citizenship and “Europe-mindedness”.

4.9 Implications of Collective, and especially European Identity Work, for Legislation and Governance

This chapter would spell out, how the sense for European citizenship could be intensified and predicted by appropriate legal rules and pertinent procedures of governance. It is our strong belief that European-mindedness would only thrive on top of the living “tree” of collective identity work concerned with other social collectivities (as local, regional, national and trans-national social bodies) and on top of the respective biographical investments. The multi-layer engagements have to be transformed by legal means and facilitated by governance procedures. One important legal means certainly is the solemn proclamation of the Charter of the Fundamental Rights of the European Union; but it must still be legally insured and by governance procedures facilitated that the charter will make a difference in the everyday life of European citizens. The multi-layer engagements will also be encouraged and protected by the legal and procedural instrument of subsidiarity which, on the one hand, gives precedence to smaller constitutive units (and their respective we-groups) if this is sensible in terms of impact interest,

accountability, expertise and responsibility and, on the other hand, necessitates a strong and autonomous central (or federal) power which must be accountable to a controlling assembly of constituent bodies and to the individual member of the European Union. - The chapter would attempt to “translate” the empirical findings on the dimensions of European identity work and other types of collective identity work as achieved by individual biographical engagements into legal concepts and governance procedures.

4.10 Implications of Collective, and especially European Identity Work, for the Professions

This chapter would deal with the impacts of the Europeanising process for professional work. After the demise of the isolated nation state and its symbolic universe and after the evaporation of trans-national ideological concepts of state socialism and anti-communism new spaces of orientation, communication, and orientation dealing with sub-national, supra-national and European collectivities and institutions have to be explored. This has to be done by European minded cultural centre professionals like cultural creators (artists, writers, lawyers) and cultural mediators (educationalists of all sorts, media people). But many individual members of European societies also severely suffer from the loss of former meaning systems, from the predicament of being in a minority cultural and social position and/or of living under the conditions of structural periphery and/or from being confronted with the dangers of unexpected and misunderstood strangeness (as resulting, e.g., in xenophobia). Giving counsel and support in this context is the task of liaison professionals (as social workers, psychotherapists, teachers, attorneys); liaison professionals have still to come to terms with those European macro-impacts on the life situations of their clients. They must help their clients in finding new symbolic schematisms for their relationships between individual and collective identities and to enhance their capacities for multi-layered biographical work of relating to complex sets of various collectivities.

4.11 Implications of Collective, especially European Identity Work, for Non-Governmental Organisations, Social Arenas and Social Movements

The last chapter would scrutinise the challenge for the creation of a pan-European civil society. First, two types of social movements can be witnessed which have specific European features: (a) social movements in the small non-state minority nations for protecting and strengthening all types of we-groups, cultural identities, national culture institutions and political representation in them; those

social movements increasingly refer to an emphatically conceived of European identity; as well (b) social movements all over Europe, that are concerned with environmental issues especially endangering peripheral regions, which are used as dumping grounds for industrial (especially nuclear) waste and/or as supply areas for natural resources of all kinds (water, wood, etc.). We still have to wait for social movements that would directly focus on specific task of strengthening European political and social institutions. The just mentioned social movements with their specific European sensitivity are quite inventive in their symbolisms and modi operandi. Second, other important social arrangements of European import are social arenas (Strauss 1978, 1993), which centripetally focus on common problems and shared professional, scholarly or art activities. Those social arenas start to develop their own European styles of communication (including a Europe-specific lingua franca) which are also nurtured by the European institutions themselves. In addition, the organizational nuclei for social movements and social arenas develop managerial features of specific European characteristics. On the other hand, most of the political organizations proper (like European political parties) still tend to understand themselves just as annexes of the respective national organisations and have not developed sufficient features of a European culture yet.

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PRACA NAD TOŻSAMOŚCIĄ EUROPEJSKĄ (ZARYS ZESPOŁOWEGO PROJEKTU BADAŃ)

Streszczenie

Procesy kształtowanie się europejskiej tożsamości są w tym tekście analizowane w kategoriach „pracy nad tożsamością”, w szczególności jako wzajemne oddziaływanie poziomu doświadczeń biograficznych i kolektywnych. Pierwsze części tekstu (1 i 2) są skupione na ugruntowaniu takiego podejścia w rozmaitych orientacjach teoretycznych (interakcjonizm symboliczny i perspektywy kulturalistyczne), zarysowaniu jego metodologicznych implikacji (uzasadnienie użycia metody autobiograficznego wywiadu narracyjnego i szeregu metod analizy tekstu) oraz na sformułowaniu problemów i wstępnych wymiarów analitycznych badania pracy nad tożsamością zbiorową, zwłaszcza w odniesieniu do Europy. Te ostatnie są rezultatem badań autora nad zagadnieniami narodowymi społeczeństwa Walii (np. problem konstrukcji tożsamości zbiorowej oraz figuracji typu centrum / peryferie, hybrydowość oraz marginalność). Stanowią one punkt wyjścia do analizy zagadnienia „pracy nad tożsamością europejską” w perspektywie ogólnej. W części następnej (3) nakreślone są heurystyczne strategie badania, obejmujące postawę refrakcyjnej autorefleksji (spojrzenie na siebie z punktu widzenia ‘kulturowego innego’), zasadę dialogowego ustalania perspektyw przyjmowanych przez badaczy, podejście do relacji między doświadczeniem biograficznym i odmianami kolektywnych zasobów znaczeniowych z punktu widzenia wielowarstwowego charakteru powiązań między nimi, strategię wyboru zasad kontrastywnej analizy badanych przypadków, wreszcie procedurę „zmiennej ogniskowej” w kodowaniu materiału empirycznego. Tematem ostatniej części (4) są cele i spodziewane rezultaty badania: określenie wymiarów i całościowego modelu „pracy nad tożsamością europejską”, a także ich implikacji dla rozmaitych dziedzin społecznej i politycznej praktyki – edukacji, legislacji, praktyki rządzenia / zarządzania, jak również działalności organizacji pozarządowych, aren i ruchów społecznych.

Słowa kluczowe: „praca nad tożsamością europejską”, tożsamość zbiorowa, „praca nad tożsamością zbiorową”, tożsamość biograficzna, „praca nad tożsamością biograficzną”.