

The discursive construction of national identities



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RUDOLF DE CILLIA, MARTIN REISIGL AND
 RUTH WODAK
 UNIVERSITY OF VIENNA

ABSTRACT. The concept of the nation as an imagined community has gained importance in the relevant literature during the last decade. How do we construct national identities in discourse? Which topics, which discursive strategies and which linguistic devices are employed to construct national sameness and uniqueness on the one hand, and differences to other national collectives on the other hand? These questions were investigated in our study on the Austrian nation and identity. Taking several current social scientific approaches as our point of departure, we have developed a method of description and analysis of these phenomena which has applications beyond the discursive production of national identity in the specific Austrian example studied. By focusing particularly on the discursive construction of (national) sameness, this study has broken new ground in discourse-historical analysis, which until now has mainly been concerned with the analysis of the discursive construction of difference.

KEY WORDS: *collective memory, discourse strategies, group discussion, habitus, nation, national identity, topical analysis, tropes, 'we'*

*Introduction*¹

We start our article by quoting from two booklets we recently discovered: *The Xenophobe's Guide to the Austrians* (James, 1994) and *The Xenophobe's Guide to the English* (Miall, 1993).

'When a Stone Age Austrian popped out of a glacier in Tyrol 1991', James (1994: 11) remarks: 'he was claimed by the Italians as one of them. A learned commission established that maybe he was lying just over the border by a metre or two, and a television reporter inquired satirically why they didn't "just look at his passport"'. The moral of this is: even the ice-man after all those years in cold storage is still as confused about his identity as all other Austrians. Of course, this

nationalist tug-of-war between Austria and Italy to which James refers ironically tells us nothing about 'Ötzi's' identity, for questions of national(ist) identification only arose during the age of modernity, centuries after Ötzi's demise. Still, the attempts by both Austria and Italy to adorn their respective 'national past' with a historically highly significant archeological find reveal a typical nationalizing strategy of usurping and taking possession of past contingencies (i.e. casual discoveries) by means of transhistorical and, at the same time, de-historizing (i.e. eternalizing) mythical expansion ex post facto. Making an analogy to the theory of relativity, Rudolf Burger (1996: 40) describes this strategy metaphorically as the 'nationalist dilatation of time'.

'The English' also seem to be worried about 'their' national identity. '[A]s far as the English are concerned', writes Miall (1993: 5), 'all of life's greatest problems can be summed up in one word – foreigners'. He continues: 'English views on foreigners are very simple. The further one travels from the capital in any direction, the more outlandish the people become' (1993: 6). It is obvious that the ego-, ethno- and natio-centric view described by Miall with respect to English people is less an English peculiarity than a general feature of ethnicist and nationalist patterns of perception of others.

Naturally, we could multiply nearly endlessly such more or less serious anecdotal remarks about nationality or the alleged mentalities of nations. But while in a certain sense this might be entertaining, we also know that nationalist attitudes and stereotypes articulated in discourses accompany and also influence political decision-making, and we notice today with anxiety a growing number of nationalist acts of discrimination in many European states.

Far-reaching changes in Europe's political landscape since the end of the 1980s, such as the transformation of the former eastern bloc, Germany's reunification, the expansion and deepening integration inside the European Union (EU), together with the persisting debates on immigration and integration, have called renewed attention to the issue of ethnic and national identities. In the countries of the EU, the propagation of a new European identity has been accompanied by the emergence or reemergence of seemingly old, fragmented and unstable national and ethnic identities. Apparently firmly established national and cultural identities have become contested political terrain and have been at the heart of new political struggles.

As the *Economist* put it in an article as early as 1930 (quoted by the German political scientist Ulrich Beck, 1993: 99–100):

Economically, the world today acts as a single, common unit. Politically, the world has not only remained distributed among sixty or seventy sovereign nations, but the national units are becoming smaller, more numerous, with an increasing trend towards national consciousness. The tension created by these two diverging trends has led to a wave of shock, upheaval and collapse for the world population.

What the *Economist* foresaw in 1930 – apart from the fact that today there are far more than 70 nations – is even more the case today. Nowadays, very opposing

tendencies can be observed: What Beck et al. (1993) name 'reflexive modernisation' does away with boundaries within or between classes, sectors, nations, continents, families, and gender roles. 'Reflexive modernisation,' which Beck (1993: 57) understands as a second epoch of modernity, means the 'self-acting', unintentional, unseen and, so to speak, reflex-like (rather than 'reflexive' in the sense of 'thoughtful') transition from industrial society to 'risk society' which is, inter alia, characterized by increasing geographic, social, political and partner mobility (Walzer, 1994: 164–6) and with the aggravation and individualization of social inequalities which cannot adequately be described by comprehensive sociological categories and 'grand' theories any longer. 'Reflexive modernisation' denotes the more or less automatic, unplanned and creeping processes of change that take place in the course of 'normal' modernizations and that – although the political and economic orders remain quite constant and intact – results in the radicalization of modernity, in the dissolving of the premises and shapes of industrial society and in the opening of ways to other forms of modernity or counter-modernity (Beck, 1993: 67). Counter-modernization, simultaneously a project and result, a structuring demarcation and a (challenged) contradiction of modernity, emphasizes, forms, constructs and reinforces vacillating boundaries anew (Beck, 1993: 100). Directed against the already really existing 'world domestic policy', it falls back upon essentialist key concepts of 'nation', 'Volk', 'nature', 'man', 'woman', etc., and always aims at producing the impression of natural self-evident certainty.

The very interrelated but conflicting processes of nationalist regression and emancipatory, supranational humanitarianism manifest themselves discursively in different modes of legitimation and de-legitimation. Taking Austria as an example for a case study, we try to illustrate at least some of the most prominent linguistic strategies employed to construct nations and national identities. The theoretical framework of our study is that of Critical Discourse Analysis as it has been developed at the Department of Applied Linguistics at the University of Vienna. And though this framework has been elaborated with respect to Austria, the theoretical as well as the general analytical findings yield information about some widespread patterns of discursive nationalization within many (counter) modern nation-states.

In this article we outline first some of our basic assumptions about the discursive construction of nations and national identities and briefly discuss the concepts of 'nation' and 'national identity' in order to provide working definitions which are primarily based on the works of Benedict Anderson (1988); Pierre Bourdieu (1993, 1994a and 1994b); Paul Ricoeur (1992); Denis-Constant Martin (1995); Stuart Hall (1994 and 1996) and Leszek Kolakowski (1995). We then present the distinguishing features of the approach designated as 'Critical Discourse Analysis' and, in particular of the discourse-historical approach, developed in Vienna, which inter alia tries to uncover discursive strategies of dissimulation (aiming at the construction of national differences) and discursive strategies of assimilation (aiming at the construction of intranational sameness)

and which describes a number of context-determined 'national-identity narratives'. This special methodological approach was developed and tested initially on a large corpus of data in the course of a recently completed 2-year study which investigated the discursive constitution of national identities by analysing both the representations and the social rituals connected with national identities. We conclude our article by attempting to establish a relationship between the results of our study and the theoretical assumptions on nation, identity, nationalism and globalization.

First, however, we provide here some information about the data we analysed in our study. Our corpus included (a) 23 speeches of politicians at specific commemorative events (mainly related to the 50th anniversary of the Second Austrian Republic); (b) newspaper articles discussing Austrian neutrality and European security policies in June 1994, just before the referendum of EU membership; (c) posters, slogans and direct-mail advertisements sent out or displayed during the campaign leading up to the referendum on becoming a member of the EU; (d) seven focus-group discussions organized in different provinces of Austria; as well as (e) 24 problem-centered, qualitative interviews in which a range of questions concerning different aspects of national identity were asked and responded to (for more details see Wodak et al., in press).

Most of the examples quoted and analysed in this article are taken from the focus-group discussions which we conducted in order to explore semi-public discourses. With an example taken from a political talk (example 4) we wish to illustrate in passing the recontextualization from public political sphere in semi-public context (for more details about the analysed politicians' speeches see also Reisigl, 1998). We chose to illustrate the eminently political topic of the construction of national identities by means of everyday conversations in groups and not only by excerpts from speeches of politicians or by presenting samples of media discourse. This reflects our use of a wide notion of the 'political' which not only focuses on the discourses of the elites in power, but also on (discursive) actions which, according to Paul Chilton and Christina Schäffner, 'involve power, or its inverse, resistance' (1997: 212) in many other contexts, including non-official and informal ones.

To understand the impact of the discourse of politicians on the public, it is necessary to investigate its reception and its recontextualization (in Bernstein's sense) in other domains of a society, for example in concrete life-worlds. The method of the 'focus-group discussion' (see Bruck and Stocker, 1996; Lamnek, 1989; Friedrichs, 1990) offers a very promising tool for ethnographic research in Critical Discourse Analysis. It enables one partially to study the recontextualization and transformation of specific political concepts and identity narratives which are expressed by politicians, taught in educational systems (e.g. by teachers and in schoolbooks), promoted in the mass-media, etc., and which are expressed in everyday situations and interactions. Specifically, it allows one to observe the local co-construction of meaning of concepts (like 'nation' and 'identity') during an ongoing discussion, by individuals, but under the interactive

influence of group. In short, it provides one possible methodological key to gaining access to the extraordinarily complex dialectics between the top-down procedures of hegemonic public opinion-making and the bottom-up processes of seismographic registering of moods, anxieties and swings of specific groups of voters.

Basic assumptions

Although too detailed an account of the theoretical propositions developed in our study would not leave any time to present the data we examined, we would still like to review briefly a few of the basic assumptions which seem to be of particular relevance for the investigation of national identities.

First, we start from the assumption that nations are to be understood as mental constructs, as '*imagined political communities*' (Anderson, 1988: 15). They are represented in the minds and memories of the nationalized subjects as sovereign and limited political units and can become very influential guiding ideas with sometimes tremendously serious and destructive consequences.

Second, we assume that national identities – conceived as specific forms of social identities – are *discursively*, by means of language and other semiotic systems, *produced, reproduced, transformed and destructed*. The idea of a specific national community becomes reality in the realm of convictions and beliefs through reifying, figurative discourses continually launched by politicians, intellectuals and media people and disseminated through the systems of education, schooling, mass communication, militarization as well as through sports meetings.

Our third assumption draws on Pierre Bourdieu's notion of habitus. In our view, *national identity* can be regarded as a *sort of habitus*, that is to say as a *complex of common ideas, concepts or perception schemes*, (a) *of related emotional attitudes* intersubjectively shared within a specific group of persons; (b) as well as *of similar behavioural dispositions*; (c) all of which are internalized through 'national' socialization. In the case of the Austrian nation, the ideas and schemata in question refer to the imagination of the 'homo austriacus' (see Liebhart and Reisigl, 1997), the Austrian 'as such', to a common national culture, history, present and future as well as to a type of 'national body' or national territory. At the same time, the national habitus also has to do with stereotypical notions of other nations and their culture, history, etc. The emotional attitudes to which Bourdieu refers are those manifested towards the specific national 'in-group' on the one hand and respective 'out-groups' on the other hand. Behavioural dispositions include both dispositions towards solidarity with one's own national group as well as the readiness to exclude the 'others' from this constructed collective and to debase them.

Fourth, the discursive construction of nations and national identities always runs hand in hand with the *construction of difference/distinctiveness and uniqueness* (Hall, 1994, 1996; Martin, 1995). As soon as it is elevated to an imaginary col-

lective level, both the construction of sameness and the construction of difference violate pluralistic and democratic variety and multiplicity by group-internal homogenization (of in-groups as well as out-groups). As Seyla Benhabib (1996: 3 ff.) writes:

Since every search for identity includes differentiating oneself from what one is not, identity politics is always and necessarily a politics of the creation of difference. One is a Bosnian Serb to the degree to which one is not a Bosnian Moslem or a Croat; one is a Gush Emmunim settler in the West Bank to the extent that one is not a secular Zionist [. . .]. What is shocking about these developments, is not the inevitable dialectic of identity/difference that they display but rather the atavistic belief that identities can be maintained and secured only by eliminating difference and otherness. The negotiation of identity/difference [. . .] is the political problem facing democracies on a global scale.

A further premise – and this is the fifth assumption – is that there is *no such thing as the one and only national identity* in an essentializing sense, but rather that different identities are discursively constructed according to context, that is according to the social field, the situational setting of the discursive act and the topic being discussed. In other words, national identities are not completely consistent, stable and immutable. They are, to the contrary, to be understood as dynamic, fragile, ‘vulnerable’ and often incoherent. However, we do assume that there are certain relations (of transfer and contradiction) between the images of identity offered by political elites or the media and ‘everyday discourses’ about nations and national identities. This is why our study considers five different corpora from public, semi-public and private areas.

The concepts of nation and national identity

Nations – like all other communities that are larger than face-to-face groups – are what Anderson (1988) calls ‘imagined communities’. Members of even the smallest nations do not know the majority of their fellow-citizens, do not meet, do not hear from one another. And yet they are convinced that they belong to a unique national community – not least because they read to a large degree the same newspapers, watch widely the same television programmes, listen widely to the same radio programmes, etc. Nations are perceived as limited by boundaries and thereby cut off from the surrounding nations, because no nation identifies with humanity in its entirety. The nation is perceived as a community of congenial similars and regarded as sovereign, which partly can be traced back to its secular ‘roots’ in the era of Enlightenment and of the French Revolution when the sovereign state came to equate and symbolize the concept of liberty.

The construction of national identity builds on the emphasis on a common history, and history has always to do with remembrance and memory. Maurice Halbwachs’s (1985) notion of ‘collective memory’, the selective recollection of past events which are thought to be important for the members of a specific community, allows one – despite the danger inherent in the meaning of the adjective

'collective' to reify abstract, ideational concepts (see Burke, 1991: 290–91) – to identify a connection between rather theoretical discourses on national identity and myths, symbols and rituals of everyday life (Breuss et al., 1993: 553). National consciousness makes use of group symbols (from different areas of everyday life) and defines conventionalized structures as group-specific rules which are presented on the symbolic level in the form of re-presentations, re-symbolizations and theatrical manifestations as well as in objects and materials (Hunt, 1989).

Collective memory, according to Halbwachs, maintains historical continuity by recalling specific elements from the archive of 'historical memory'. Halbwachs's concept is of particular interest for an analytical approach to the subjective discursive construction of national identity, especially regarding the question of which 'national history' is told by a nation's citizens, what and how they recollect, and between which 'events' they make a connection in their subjective 'national narrative'.

While Halbwachs focuses on the concept of memory, Stuart Hall (1994) emphasizes the role culture plays in the construction of nations and national identities. Hall describes nations not only as political constructs, but also as 'systems of cultural representations' (1994: 200), by means of which an imagined community may be interpreted. People are not only citizens by law, they also participate in forming the idea of the nation as it is represented in their national culture. A nation is a symbolic community constructed discursively:

A national culture is a discourse, a way to construct meanings which influence and organise both our actions and our perceptions of ourselves. National cultures construct identities by creating meanings of 'the nation', with which we can identify; these are contained in stories that are told about the nation, in memories which link its present to its past and in the perceptions of it that are constructed. (Hall, 1994: 201)

In a similar vein, Uri Ram (1994), drawing on Clifford Geertz (1975), claims that 'nationality is a narrative, a *story* which people tell about themselves in order to lend meaning to their social world' (Ram, 1994: 153). National narratives do not emerge from nowhere and do not operate in a vacuum. They are, rather, produced, reproduced and spread by actors in concrete (institutionalized) contexts.

The designers of national identities and national cultures aim at 'linking membership within the political nation state and identification with national culture' (Hall, 1994: 205) so that culture and state become identical. All modern nations are, according to Hall, 'culturally hybrid' (Hall, 1994: 207): communities and organizations are integrated and related in new spatio-temporal terms due to today's processes of change such as global homogenization and the parallel emergence of local and group-specific identities.

As far as the relationship between national identities as internalized habitus and their discursive construction is concerned, at least one point needs to be emphasized. If we regard national identities purely as discursive constructs which are made up of specifically constructed national-identity narratives, the question

remains why somebody will reproduce a specific given discursive construction. Martin (1995: 13) offers a convincing answer:

To put it in a nutshell, the identity narrative channels political emotions so that they can fuel efforts to modify a balance of power; it transforms the perceptions of the past and of the present; it changes the organization of human groups and creates new ones; it alters cultures by emphasizing certain traits and skewing their meanings and logic. The identity narrative brings forth a new interpretation of the world in order to modify it.

However, we assume that we are not only dealing with representations and discourses about national identity, but also with national identity as internalized structuring impetus which more or less strongly influences social practices. This leads us back to Bourdieu's concept of the habitus we introduced earlier. In this view, national habitus can be understood both as structured result ('opus operatum') and as forming force ('modus operandi').

In his essay 'Rethinking the State' (1994b), Bourdieu describes the contribution of the state, or, more precisely, of its political agents and representatives to the creation of national identities as follows:

Through classificational systems (especially according to sex and age) inscribed in law, through bureaucratic procedures, educational structures and social rituals (particularly salient in the case of Japan and England), the state moulds *mental structures* and imposes common principles of vision and division [...]. And it thereby contributes to the construction of what is commonly designated as national identity (or, in a more traditional language, national character). (Bourdieu, 1994b: 7 ff.)

Although we have not adopted Bourdieu's conceptual equation of 'national identity' and 'national character' (as national characters are nothing more than bundles of stereotypes), we regard his other remarks on national identity as relevant in our context. According to Bourdieu, it is to a large extent through its schools and educational system that the state shapes those forms of perception, categorization, interpretation and memory that serve to determine the orchestration of the habitus which in turn are the constitutive basis for a kind of national common sense.

Critical discourse analysis: discourse as social practice

At this point, we would like to explain how our discourse-historical approach can be used effectively to analyse discourses about nations and national identities.

In our approach, the historical dimension of discursive acts in historical and political topics and texts is addressed in two ways: first, the discourse-historical approach attempts to integrate all available information on the historical background and the original sources in which discursive 'events' are embedded. Second, it explores the ways in which particular types and genres of discourse are subject to diachronic change, as has been shown in a number of previous studies (Wodak et al., 1990, 1994; Matouschek et al., 1995).

Critical Discourse Analysis perceives both written and spoken 'discourse' as a form of social practice (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Wodak, 1995, 1996; Titscher et al., 1998). It assumes a dialectical relationship between particular discursive events and the situations, institutions and social structures in which they are embedded: on the one hand, the situational, institutional and social contexts shape and affect discourses; on the other hand, discourses influence social and political reality. In other words, discourse constitutes social practice and is at the same time constituted by it.

Through discourse social actors constitute knowledge, situations, social roles as well as identities and interpersonal relations between various interacting social groups. In addition, discursive acts are socially constitutive in a number of ways. First, they play a decisive role in the genesis, production and construction of certain social conditions. Thus, discourses may serve to construct national identities. Second, they might perpetuate, reproduce or justify a certain social status quo (and national identities related to it). Third, they are instrumental in transforming the status quo (and national identities related to it). Fourth, discursive practices may have an effect on the dismantling or even destruction of the status quo (and of national identities related to it). On the basis of these sociological macro-functions, we distinguish between constructive, perpetuating, transformational and destructive macro-strategies of discourse (more about these distinctions later).

To explore the interconnectedness of discursive practices and extra-linguistic social structures, we employ the principle of triangulation (Cicourel, 1974), i.e. we combine various interdisciplinary, methodological and source-specific approaches to investigate a particular discourse phenomenon. For example, in exploring the discursive construction of national identity, our interdisciplinary approach combines historical, socio-political and linguistic perspectives. The principle of triangulation implied for our case study employing various methods of data collection and the analysis of five different corpora, i.e. political speeches, newspaper articles, posters and brochures, interviews and group discussions. Consequently, we were able to provide a detailed picture of Austrian identity in public and quasi-private settings of various degrees of formality, and to identify and contrast divergent concepts of national identity as well as divergent identity narratives.

Categories and analysis

Here we describe some of the discourse-analytical tools employed in our study and illustrate the main categories with sample extracts from the seven group discussions.

Analytically, we distinguish between three interrelated dimensions:

- (1) contents/topics
- (2) strategies
- (3) linguistic means and forms of realization.

CONTENTS/TOPICS

To start by illustrating our matrix of topics, we distinguish between five semantic macro-areas related to the discursive construction of Austrian identity and nation:

- (1) the idea of a '*homo austriacus*' and a '*homo externus*'
- (2) the narrative of a collective political history
- (3) the discursive construction of a common culture
- (4) the discursive construction of a collective present and future
- (5) the discursive construction of a 'national body'.

'*Homo austriacus*' can be identified with the help of the following criteria: (1) one's emotional attachment to Austria; (2) Austrians' alleged national mentality and their supposed national behavioural dispositions/habits; (3) various aspects of the biographical genesis of national identity/nationality (destiny, chance, origin, place of birth, place of upbringing and place of residence, socialization); as well as (4) the 'activation' of national identity in a certain situation (for instance while abroad, in a foreign country).

This last aspect, together with the emotional ties to the native country and national pride, may be illustrated by example (1) which is, as all other examples, an extract from our corpus of group discussions:²

(1)

and u:mm – for me it's really the love for this country maybe I'm exaggerating a bit now because - I came back from France three days ago I was there for ten months - and -/you know it's only when you leave the country you realise how proud you can be of this country.

[und a:m – für mich is es wirklich die Liebe zu diesm Land vielleicht is das jetzt ein bißl übatriebn weil - ich bin vor drei Tagn aus Frankreich zurückgekommen ich war dort zehn Monate - und -/ also wemma das Land verläßt merkt ma erst wie stolz ma auf dieses Land sein kann]

We have identified the following main topics which relate to the construction of a *collective political history*: myths of genesis and origin, mythical figures, political triumphs, times of flourishing and prosperity, decline, defeat and crisis. In addition, we have looked more closely at the aspect of victim–victimizer reversal and at the issue of what is known as 'Wiedergutmachung' (reparations) within the context of Austria's past as part of the Nazi Third Reich. Example (2) refers to the central myth of genesis of present-day Austria associated with the 'State Treaty' and the declaration of neutrality in 1955.

(2)

the State Treaty in 1955 is the most important event for me and I also think that actually (umm) for Austria -/ umm in -/ that / that that document is why you are conscious of being Austrian because really umm it is the foundation stone for the Second Republic. and I hope will stay that way. in it neutrality is anchored.

[Für mich is der Staatsvertrag von neunzehnfünfundfünzig das wichtigste Ereignis und ich mein auch daß eigentlich (ah) für Östarreich -/ ah in -/ daß / daß das Dokument das das Östarreich-Bewußtsein ausmacht. weil es eigentlich äh der Grundstein für die Zweite Republik ist. und ich hoffe auch bleibm wird. darin ist fixiert die Neutralität]

The headings we found most relevant for the analysis of the construction of a *common culture* were 'language', 'religion', 'arts', 'science and technology' as well as 'everyday culture' like 'sports', 'food and cooking', 'drinking', 'clothing', etc. (this is further explored later, in a group discussion in Carinthia at the end of this article).

We analysed the construction of a *collective political present and future* according to the topics of 'citizenship', 'political achievements', 'present and future political problems', 'crises and threats', 'prospective political aims' and 'political virtues/values'. In particular, we looked at Austria's accession to the EU and Austria's 'permanent neutrality' separately, as these subjects are very important subjects for discursive construction and discursive transformation. Example (3) suggests that some citizens consider Austria's neutrality, hitherto one of the widely unquestionable, singularizing state emblems inviting to national identification, to be obsolete.

(3)

M7: well that / I'd have to say it's a hundred percent clear to me that neutrality is a non entity: that is empty that:

M1: right

M7: has no function any more - today

[M7: *nja des / do muaß i hundertprozentig sogn für mich ist die Neutralität ein Hohlkörper: der leer is der:*

M1: *richtig*

M7: *keine Funktion mehr hot - heute mehr -]*

Knowing that the two male speakers M7 and M1 sympathize with the views of the Austrian Popular Party (ÖVP) and the Austrian President Thomas Klestil which – like the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and the Liberal Forum (Liberales Forum) – pursue the dismantling or transformation of neutrality, the questions of politicians' influence and of interdiscursive connexions between the public-political and the semi-public discourse arise. Looking at the different contributions of politicians to the public discourse about Austria's neutrality, it turns out that the recontextualization of the same political convictions in semi-public and quasi-private discourse does not always involve a simple repetition. Out of consideration for voters with possibly slightly different or ambivalent convictions (with regard to neutrality), politicians' statements against neutrality are metaphorically less drastic and often less explicit than statements like those in example (3), though the message may be quite the same. To quote just one example from a talk given by Friedhelm Frischenschlager from the Liberal Forum on 1 July 1995:

(4)

As security concept for a single state embedded within the security architecture which was created after 1945, neutrality was definitely meaningful (though it was, thank God, never really challenged). It cannot however, in the future count as a suitable recipe for political security.

[*Als einzelstaatliches, in die nach 1945 geschaffene Sicherheitsarchitektur eingebettetes*

Sicherheitskonzept war die Neutralität durchaus sinnvoll (sie ist allerdings gottseidank niemals wirklich herausgefordert worden). Als taugliches sicherheitspolitisches Rezept für die Zukunft kann sie jedoch nicht gelten]

Our fifth topical main focus was on the local, geographic and physical dimension, metaphorically speaking, on the 'national body', i.e. on the national territory with its boundaries, its natural resources and its landscapes, but also with the materialized results of 'development planning', the artificial structuration and arrangement as well as the architectural artefacts of national importance. In a certain sense, even the bodies of prominent top sportspersons who compete in international championships as living *partes pro toto* for a specific nation are conceivable as parts of a 'national body'.

STRATEGIES

The second principal element involved in our discourse-analytical approach is the strategies involved in the discursive construction, perpetuation, transformation and dismantling of nations and national identities.

Generally, we use the term 'strategies' to refer to plans of actions with varying degrees of elaborateness, the realization of which can range from automatic to conscious, and which are located at different levels of our mental organization. We may assume that in the data we studied the degree of intentionality varies greatly, depending on causes and origins of the discourses about Austrian identity and nation.

We distinguish between four types of *macro-strategies*, in accord with our definition of discourse as social practice. These are: (1) constructive strategies; (2) perpetuation and justification strategies; (3) transformation strategies; and (4) dismantling or destructive strategies.

These four types of macro-strategies subsume a range of more local strategies which relate to the respective macro-function. These latter linguistic strategies – which we illustrate here – presuppose or emphasize sameness and/or difference (the two most important characteristics of identity formation) as well as uniqueness, autonomy/independence, inclusion, unity and continuity on the one hand, and heteronomy, exclusion, fragmentation, and discontinuity on the other hand.

What we describe as *constructive strategies* encompass those linguistic acts which serve to 'build' and establish a particular national identity. These are primarily linguistic procedures which constitute a national 'we-group' through particular acts of reference, for example by using the pronoun 'we' in connection with the de-toponymical labelling 'Austrians', i.e. 'we Austrians', which serve as a basis for appealing directly or indirectly to national solidarity and union. Expressions such as 'to take on something together', 'to cooperate and stick together' frequently occur in such contexts. Components of constructive strategies are all persuasive linguistic devices which help invite identification and solidarity with the 'we-group', which, however, simultaneously implies distancing from and marginalization of 'others'.

Perpetuation and justification strategies attempt to maintain, support and repro-

duce national identities. Perpetuation strategies are used to emphasize the need 'to hold the course of the ship of state' (the assimilatory metaphor of being in the same boat is very common in this context), i.e. to support continuity, to discursively construct immigrants as a threat to national identity (e.g. by an *argumentum ad baculum*). Justification and legitimation strategies are specific types of perpetuation strategies. They are primarily employed to defend and preserve a problematic narrative of 'national history' which refers to controversial acts or events of the past. They help justify a social status quo ante, for example Austria's highly problematic handling of the crimes of the Nazi regime.

With the help of *transformation strategies* one can discursively attempt to transform the meaning of a relatively well-established aspect of national identity into another. The speaker, moreover, may already have an idea of this new meaning. For example, some Austrian politicians have been pretending that it would be possible to re-define the Austrian neutrality in a way which would integrate the modified geo-political conditions, without abandoning neutrality altogether.

Finally, *dismantling or destructive strategies* serve to de-mythologize or demolish existing national identities or elements of them. In our context, Austria's neutrality is quite frequently an object of dismantling. Apart from a rather direct dismantling, as excerpts (3) and (4) suggest, the strategy of heteronomination serves to dismantle the neutrality myth more indirectly. One example of this strategy is when speakers stress that Austria's neutrality is not traceable to an autonomous 'national' decision, but rather was dictated from 'outside' (by the allied occupants, especially by the former USSR), in other words, that it was 'the price of independence'. The implication is that neutrality does not deserve to be retained.

We would like to illustrate some of these sub-strategies that serve the macro-strategies, those that help in linguistically constructing, perpetuating, transforming or destructing nations or national identities, with five examples taken from our data.

Example (5) shows how the very frequent strategy of *presupposing intra-national sameness or similarity* is constructively as well as reproductively employed:

(5)

that we are in the mentality - umm really umm - very broad on the one hand: that I think we are quite hard-working: but then on the other hand that we also umm know how to relax and enjoy holidays in Austria.

[*daß wir in der Mentalität - ähm durchaus: ähm - sehr breit sind einerseits: daß wir glaub i doch strebsam sind: andererseits aber doch auch äh das Feiern und: Gemütlichsein auch äh kennen in Österreich*]

The 'we' used in this quotation in association with the toponymical adverbial qualification 'in Austria' is clearly identifiable as a 'national we'. By this, the speaker presumes to speak for 'the Austrians' as such. Although the mentality traits attributed to 'the Austrians' include such heterogeneous stereotypical qualities as diligence and unhurriedness, the speaker does not presuppose inner-national heterogeneity, but inner-national sameness. His utterance unquestion-

ingly takes for granted that there exists a homogeneous we-group with a shared mentality and that the traits of industriousness and conviviality would characterize each single member of the imagined national group equally.

The strategy of *emphasizing national singularity* is a strategy which can also be understood as a specific dissimilation strategy (for the relationship of uniqueness is nothing but a relationship of difference to all other elements involved in the comparison). Example (6) illustrates this strategy:

(6)

well I think: that the Austrian is somehow different: from anyone else otherwise we wouldn't be an own / otherwise we wouldn't be Austrians, would we? we just wouldn't all be one people, would we?

[also i glaub: daß si der Österreicher von jedn ondern irgndwie unterscheidet: sonst war ma ka eigen / sunst war ma net Österreicher net? war ma jo olle - kein ein Volk net?]

Here, the collective singular 'the Austrian' which is quite typical for hasty stereotypical generalizations introduces an imaginary referent subsequently picked up by 'we'. This referent group is singularized by ascribing to it the very vague characteristic of being 'somehow different from anyone else', and the distinctive feature of peculiarity touched upon by 'eigen (own)' is presupposed as a prerequisite for the existence of 'the Austrian' and the 'Austrian people'.

The *presupposition* or *emphasis of differences between nations* often serves the negative, debasing delimitation from an outgroup considered to be a different national collective. In example (7), the male speaker emphasizes the difference between Austrians and foreign residents with respect to mentality and form of life. As in example (6), the speaker's use of the collective singular 'the southerner' indicates the stereotypical verbalization of a prejudice which attempts to give argumentative plausibility to environmentalist explanations of possible conflicts between 'Austrians' and 'foreigners', that is, as a preprogrammed, unavoidable consequence of climatically determined differences in everyday forms of life and behaviour:

(7)

there are really bas.. / these basic - umm mentalities and because of the different ways of life I mean this is because - umm simply because probably the southerner - because of the heat down there is used to during the day - umm taking a siesta and lying around and he really only livens up in the evening, right? of course those are differences that: - - automatically lead to conflict in our country

[es san ganz grund / diese grundlegendn - öh Mentalitätñ und aus den untaschiedlichn Lebensformen i ma:n des - lieg schon - öh allein darin daß vielleicht da Südlända - bedingt durch die dort herrschende Hitze ebn mehr unta togs - öh Siesta mocht und herumliegt und eignlich am Obnd erst munta wird. nein? des san natürlich Gegensätze die: - - automatisch bei uns zum Konflikt fñhrn]

Example (8) illustrates that difference can play an eminently important role in delimiting a (powerful) neighbouring nation from one's own, in this case precisely because of the similarities between them. This is analogous to the phenomenon Freud (1982: 243) described, as 'narcissism of small differences'. In

example (8), distinguishing Austria from Germany is explicitly referred to as a 'problem':

(8)

well the problem of distinguishing: doesn't bother me from Italy there I don't need to distinguish myself or from Slovenia I don't need to distinguish myself - umm - that what: somehow - umm torments me is this relationship with Germany.

[also das Abgrenzungsproblem: bekümmert mich nicht gegenüber Italien da muß ich mich gar nicht abgrenzn oder gegenüber Slowenien muß ich mich nicht abgrenzn - ähm - das was: irgendwie - äh nagt in mir is dieses Verhältnis: zu Deutschland]

Another strategy employed for constructive and perpetuating aims is *positive self-presentation*, as in the following example:

(9)

[. . .] that here simply everything: so - / umm is less complicated umm much - simpler let's say easier to understand - it is / there is not as much - hypocrisy but everything is so somehow - obvious and tangible you understand it right away - and: - it's not so rationally - comprehensible and so completely classified and: categorized umm - in politics / in politics - or also in - social life that you /- that you - would have a certain distance from it but - umm you feel emotionally closer and: you can - understand it easier with your heart say / so to say mm umm / more than with the head

[. . .] daß hier einfach alles: so - / äh unkomplizierter ist äh viel - einfacher sagn wir verständlicher - es is / es gibt nicht so viel - Heuchelei sondern alles ist so irgendwie -, offensichtlich und greifbar man versteht es gleich - und: - es ist nicht so rational - faßbar und so vollkommen klassifiziert und: kategorisiert äh - in der Politik / in der Politik - oder auch im - sozialn Lebn daß man - eine gewisse Distanz dazu hätte sondern - äh es ist etwas emotional näher und: man kann es - leichter mit dem Herzen verstehn sagn / sozusagn mhm eh / eher als mit dem / mit der Ratio]

In this example, the role of the emotions is emphasized. It is claimed that in Austria there is less distance between everyday life and 'the system' compared to elsewhere. Ex negativo, the speaker in excerpt (9) also pursues *negative other-presentation* without an explicit referent. Although the repeated comparative indicates the relationship of comparison, the 'others' remain nameless.

LINGUISTIC MEANS AND FORMS OF REALIZATION

In this section, we briefly address the various linguistic forms involved in the discursive construction of nations and national identity.

Our analysis focuses primarily on the lexical units, argumentation schemes and syntactical means which express unity, sameness, difference, singularity, continuity, change, autonomy, heteronomy, etc.

The use of the personal pronoun 'we' – including all its dialect forms and the corresponding possessive pronouns – appears to be of utmost importance in the discourses about nations and national identities. 'We' can have very different referents according to the respective situation. In most cases, however, 'we' refers to 'the Austrians' of today, as in example (10):

(10)

. . . that you can be happy that you were born here - and y - / you / that we are able to live here.

[. . . daß man froh sein kann daß man hier geboren wurde - und m - / man / daß wir hier lebm kennen]

But 'we' may also include Austrians no longer alive, in which case, as in example (11), one may call it a 'historically expanded we':

(11)

The history we have been through . . .

our two wars that we lost . . .

we were certainly roped into it . . . (into the Second World War)

[die Geschichte, die wir hinter uns ham . . .

unsere beiden Kriege, was ma verloren hobm . . .

mir san do sicher mit einigrissen worn . . . (in den Zweiten Weltkrieg)]

'We' can also be found in reference to particular subnational groups such as the Carinthians, Slovenians, or Croatians. In a wider, EU context, 'we' can also apply to the group of 'Europeans' ('We have to form a front against the United States and Japan'). The prevailing implication, however, of 'we' remains the national collective of 'the Austrians'. The connotations and persuasive force of the 'national we' are so strong that even those participants in the discussions who critically address nationally motivated generalization cannot avoid its usage: sooner or later, every participant resorts to 'we', thereby implying 'the Austrians'. Volmert (1989: 123) comments on this pronominally expressed assimilation, unification and possessiveness:

A speaker has at his [sic!] disposal a whole range of clever options with which to present the interests and affairs of 'we-groups'. Within the context of election campaigns, for example, a speaker can unite his [sic!] audience into a single interest group by replacing differences in origin, confession, class and life-style with a simple 'we'. This interest group may be bound by different degrees of intimacy and familiarity: from the common economic interests of society as a whole to the emotional needs of a family-type community.

The first-person plural pronoun 'we' is the most complex among its type and can encompass all other personal pronouns. Possible references are shown in the following referential matrix:

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) I + you | partially/totally addressee-inclusive |
| (b) I + he/
I + she | addressee-exclusive |
| (c) I + you (plural)
(= I + $n \times$ you) | partially/totally addressee-inclusive |
| (d) I + they
(= I + $n \times$ s/he) | addressee-exclusive |
| (e) I + you + he
I + you + she | partially/totally addressee-inclusive + ? |

- (f) I + you (plural) + he/ partially/totally addressee-inclusive + ?
 I + you + she
- (g) I + you (plural) + they partially/totally addressee-inclusive + ?
 (= I + $n \times$ you + $n \times$ s/he)

Linguistic studies³ usually distinguish between an addressee-inclusive and addressee-exclusive 'we', and between a speaker-inclusive and speaker-exclusive 'we'. The categorization remains fairly general, as in some cases the references cannot be clearly specified (see items e, f, and g in the list, where the question mark implies the additional reference to a third-person singular or plural, as, for example, in the case of a historically expanded usage of 'we' in item g).

The three tropes of *metonymy*, *synecdoche*, and *personification* are of relevance here, as they can create a sameness between people that is particularly apparent when constructive strategies are used. The particularizing synecdoche (*pars pro toto*) described as 'collective singular' in the previous section of this article, is a means of referential annexation, assimilation and inclusion just as the generalizing synecdoche (*totum pro parte*, e.g. 'Austria' in an utterance like 'Austria is world champion'). Particularizing synecdoches like 'the foreigner', 'the Austrian' (example (6)) and the 'southerner' (example (7)) serve, as we have suggested, to generalize and essentialize stereotypes that apply to a whole group of persons, as in 'the Austrian is really a bit slow' [*der Österreicher ist schon ein bißchen verschlafen*], or as in example (12) where a male speaker invents a fictitious scenario which allegorically expresses his fears of being 'swamped by self-confident foreigners':

(12)

only it surely shouldn't go that far then - that the Austrian and his family has to get do:wn from the pavement
 [nur s derf dann bittschön nicht soweit kommen - daß da Österreicha mit seine Familie den Gehsteig verlo:ßn mueß]

Metonymies enable the speakers to dissolve individuals, and hence volitions and responsibilities, or to keep them in the semantic background. Abstract entities – as for example nations – are given a human form through the use of personification (anthropomorphization) which links different semantic fields. Example (13) contains one personification (Austria not born to wage war), example (14) contains two personifications (the mentalities of Switzerland and Germany). However, all the three personifications are metonymies of the substitution type 'land/country instead of inhabitants' as well, which suggests a tropological criss-crossing of memberships:

(13)

- well Austria is not born to wage war that: / well we've lost every war so far - / we've lost every war, haven't we?
 [- also Österreich is nicht - geborn zum Krieg führn des: / also wir habm no jedn verlorn - / wir habm no an jedn verlorn an jedn Krieg ne?]

(14)

the mentality how we / how we live here a:nd how we organize our lives / well this way is different I really do think umm in many respects from / from Switzerland and also from / from Germany

[*die Mentalität wie wir / wie wir hier lebm u:nd wie wir unser Lebm gestalten / also diese Art unterscheidet sich glaub ich doch öh in vieln Punkt n von / von da Schweiz und auch von / von Deutschland*]

*The co-construction of meanings:
Slovenian-speaking Austrians, Carinthians and Germans*

With our final example, taken from a discussion recorded in the Austrian state of Carinthia, we would like to illustrate briefly the way in which the participants in the group discussions co-construct and negotiate the meanings of important concepts related to national and ethnic identities.

(15)

F4: [...] well for the first time I somehow: realized that Austria somehow is something different when I was in France for the first time then I was eighteen - and when I was working in a French family and: they then - / the first question was 'are you German?' and I 'no no I am Austrian' and the others 'thank God' you know? - and then it somehow happened - 'aha: thank God:' yes - just like that - see? - so. that / I / I can somehow only describe experiences in this way: umm - so. 'well so there must be something' you know? - and umm I now simply think on my part / I mean it is / I live in this country and what now maybe makes me so: consciously an Austrian after all is simply this - that I / it's not only politics and the culture which influence me in this country where I live but that I also try: to stick my oar in the politics and culture of this country and to get critically involved, you know?

M0: mhm

F4: I don't know that is - now just a first somehow / I don't know / theoretical: definition for myself and I also have a lot of that - emotional stuff as well

M0: umm - - okay

F5: My: my name is XXX ((name of F5)) - now comes the first now I think / yes some say what a kind of Carinthian one is. yes and what kind of Carinthian am I? right? am I: A Slovenian:-speaking Carinthian? well I would say - Slovenian / I am a Carinthian Slovene, right? - and then: / really a Slovenian-speaking Carinthian - but I also speak German, don't I? - only, you're already defining yourself this way

M0: why?

F5: right? - because - if someone says just Carinthian: one thinks that he can only speak: German 'only' in inverted commas now

M0: mhm

[...]

F5: really and as to my being Austrian - umm - I'd say I am / well I like to be Austrian - I have been fed on it - since I was a small child one is taught that in primary school: 'Austria this is my country dadada' well: that's because - really I am Austrian that's what I like to be it is completely natural for me - - really.

M0: right - o / okay - if: - / yes?

M2: the more difficult this is the simpler the solution ((laughs)) as everything that:

F5: no

- M2: you take in from the beginning comes into my mind and which is so complicated in the end ((laughs))
- F5: yes. maybe / umm yes. I could add - umm - the idea of distinction from Germany which: has been mentioned - I've never really thought about this problem in this way - well I'd say - the distinction German not:-Germany that for me is further away - well Austria right. - it is interesting
- M1: the distinction is only / - it's / is only arbitrary or that is
- F5: well well
- M1: only an arbitrary distinction: from Germany I'd say
- M0: yes? - mhm
- F5: well what I mean now in my mind well - mhm
- M1: because I myself as: - / well because I see / I see Austria rather - so as a whole it is a political construction - nothing more - because I can't / for instance if I take the distinction from Germany I can also: easily: include Bavaria in Austria can't I? I could also: add South Tyrol to Austria - but only: bec / well because of the: present borders this is not the case - but this doesn't intrinsically make any sense for me: why a border is in a certain place or if there is no border
- M0: could one also say that Slovenia for example could also: be added to Austria?
- M1: yes o / of course and also: I don't know
- M0: - well in the same sense - / well because /
- M1: well in this sense you can even include the whole of Kranska Gora to Austria, or Ljubljana - I think
- M0: mhm
- F1: I had at that time /
- M1: because the / the thing surely not - the: / it's the regions that are so precious - for example Carinthia - I think - or / or Salzburg / or Upper Austria - I don't know or / or - umm - the / umm - umm - the area around Königssee is / belongs to Germany they belong so smoothly to Austria / umm - as maybe it is also the other way round -
- M3: umm but there you have - you'll instantly have / umm I think a very big problem that's the problem of borders: principally the question is also: how did a border come about and how did they actually come into existence - I mean if you look at the history of Austria - then it happens like this doesn't it? well in one place it separates in another it converges and meanders here and there and at the moment it is where we have it now
- M0: mhm
- M2: thus this is I think a very difficult question - umm if one wants to say what else one can - umm count as a part of Austria - I think one / one once: used to include umm the whole of Northern Italy to Austria down to Triest - and: right now one doesn't you see well this for me is / this is a very - delicate story somehow that's how it seems to me

This passage – when the last two participants explicitly express their perception of Austria – is an extract from a discussion recorded in Carinthia. It is temporally located towards the end of the first question-and-answer session. F4 had previously talked about the difficulties she had feeling primarily 'Carinthian', although 'rationally being of course . . . primarily an Austrian'. She defines her Austrian identity in terms of distinguishing herself from Germany (experience abroad, a topic which had been discussed earlier in this group) and in terms of

political and cultural socialization. She introduces the element of active political participation as a constitutive component of her Austrian identity. Further, she rather vaguely points out the importance of 'that emotional stuff'. Modifying particles such as 'somehow', 'so', and 'maybe' occur frequently, as do mitigating formulations including *verba sentiendi* and *hedges* as, for example, 'like that', 'I think', 'I mean', 'I don't know', which generally emphasize subjectivity and uncertainty of the speaker.

Participant F5 starts by clarifying her regional (Carinthian) identity. However, she is not at all certain whether she is primarily 'Carinthian' or 'Slovene', and finally decides on the order 'Carinthian Slovene [...] and then [...] Slovenian-speaking Carinthian'. In any case, she argues, bilingualism is an essential factor for her, as 'just Carinthian' means that one 'can only speak German'. Here, the lexical differentiation made between differing Carinthian identities such as 'Carinthian Slovenes', 'Slovenian-speaking Carinthians' and 'just Carinthians' is a very interesting one. F5 defines her Austrian identity on the basis of emotional attachment and socialization through school. At the same time, she denies that the distinction between Austria and Germany might be a problem for her, if she considered it rationally.

M1 takes this up and interprets it literally. He comments on the ostensible arbitrariness of the Austrian–German borders and claims that both Bavaria and South Tyrol could be added to Austria. Asked by M0 (moderator) whether this would also apply to Slovenia, he agrees, but continues his argument by remarking that 'it's the regions that are so precious', and offers another example which demonstrates the similarities between Austria and Germany ('the area around Königssee' could belong to Austria). All in all, he appears to take up a position based on a cultural and linguistic nationalism which, however, he formulates rather cautiously (modified by particles, by use of the subjunctive, by verbs of opinion and conjecture such as 'I think', 'I know').

At this point, a potential conflict, in particular because of the presence of the Slovenian-speaking Austrians, is prevented by interventions of other group members. M3 generalizes the issue of identity as a completely abstract 'problem of borders'. His whole turn is characterized by great vagueness. M2 finds the question as to what 'one' may allocate to Austria and what not 'very difficult'. By using the impersonal 'one', M2 attempts to lift the discussion to a more general level, thus defusing the 'somehow very delicate story'.

This extract clearly shows how group members co-construct national and ethnic identity. It also shows, however, that potentially controversial positions may be mitigated through group intervention. A potential conflict between the concept of state-based nationalism and a cultural/linguistic nationalism, which, *inter alia*, is propagated in the shape of regionalism, is prevented by group control. Linguistically, this passage is characterized by frequent use of modifiers which stress the subjectivity of the respective positions expressed. It is interesting to note that no 'we' occurs in this extract (only M3 uses 'we', which once refers to the discussion group and once to the Austrians).

Conclusion

In a short summary, we would like to highlight some of the conclusions suggested by our analysis of the discursive construction of Austrian identity. Even without presenting discursive sequences from each of our different analytical and topical domains (which, for reasons of comparison, should be applied in the context of other Western countries too), the examples presented all underscore the importance of context-dependency in the definition of the 'nation'.

The range of meanings associated with the concept of nation is very broad and encompasses, on the one hand, a notion derived from definitions of citizenship and other legal and democratic institutions (*Staatsnation*), and on the other hand, the traditional culturally and ethnically connotated understanding of nation (*Kulturnation*) (see also Billig, 1997). The term 'Austrian nation' often does not occur explicitly in our data often, although Austrians undoubtedly perceive of its existence. The perception of Austrian identity in semi-public and quasi-private contexts contains both state-specific and cultural elements. The majority of discussion participants and interviewees not only draw on the concept of citizenship and the positive interpretation of political and institutional achievements, but also on language and the notion of the *homo austriacus* as well as stressing common socio-cultural features and outstanding national-cultural achievements.

The 'affirmation of faith in Austria' (*Bekanntnis zu Österreich*) is a central theme in all the data we analysed. In the official political 'festivity discourse', politicians both stipulate and solemnly declare it. In semi-official and quasi-private discourse, it manifests itself as the result of successful inculcation of nationality through state, school, media and family socialization. In this context, declarations of unquestionable national pride and patriotism go hand in hand:

(16)

what makes me into an Austrian is that I / is / this is interesting because I lived through the rebuilding - of Austria - - first as a little boy - and then - as a working person, right? - and I think - you shouldn't you can't you really have to be proud to be an Austrian, I can't imagine it differently

[*wos mich ols Österreicher mochn tuat is daß i / is / des is interessant weil ich den Wiederaufbau - Österreichs - - erst ols klaner Bua - und nocher - als Berufstätiger erlebt hob ne? - und ich glaub - man soll nicht man kann nicht man muß sogor - stolz sein Österreicher zu sein, anders kann i mir s net vorstelln*]

In the light of our discourse-historical analysis, the traditional ideal-typical models of the *Staatsnation* and the *Kulturnation* appear to be inappropriate for the description of a specific empirical nation state, if one assumes the two concepts to be mutually exclusive. Both state and culture almost always play a role in the construction of national identity, though in official discourse, culture is of slight importance. In semi-official and quasi-private discourse, however, cultural ideas (mentality, character, behavioural dispositions of the *homo austriacus*, language, etc.), reaching to the imagination of a common descent and to ideas of an 'innate nationality' come to the fore. Thus, our study reveals that the distinction between

the two concepts of nation is best understood as illuminating differences in national self-image *within* one and the same nation state, i.e. differences between different political and ideological orientations and affiliations within this state.

Let us return to the beginning of our discussion, to the tensions between globalization and nationalization and to the context-dependence of designs of discursive identities which we have identified as being dynamic and unstable. Global complexities and late-modern insecurity seem to feed the need for national identities which in turn form kinds of social enclaves. The process of globalization seems to be accompanied by a rediscovery and revitalization of the past and a pre-modern sense of community, of deeply emotional and atavistic patriotic feelings towards one's nation. As Dubiel (1994: 208) argues, 'every enforced disillusionment of the world is replenished by new forms of mystification and creation of myth'.

By collecting data from different social contexts (political commemorative speeches, political advertising campaigns, press articles, group-discussions and interviews) against the background of a broader notion of the 'political', we have been trying to take into account that the discursive construction of national identities is a multidimensional phenomenon. In fact, our study shows the importance for Critical Discourse Analysis, and especially for research on political discourse, of including data from everyday life and experience; to complement the study of elite discourse with ethnographic research, in order to grasp the tensions and interdiscursive relationships within and between official, semi-official and quasi-private discourse as well as between discursive and other forms of social practice.

NOTES

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2. As far as the transcripts of the quoted examples in their Austrian German original are concerned, they differ from the standard orthography, as they stick closer to the pronunciation. In the transcripts, full stops indicate every clearly discernible falling pitch movement at the end of a tone unit, not just at the end of a sentence. The oblique stroke symbolizes sentence ruptures and word ruptures. Colons depict lengthenings of sounds; dashes represent pauses. Inaudible discourse passages are indicated by 'xxx' in parentheses. Conjectural auditory identifications are also placed within simple parentheses, comments within double parentheses. '[. . .]' stands for omissions; 'F' for 'woman'; 'M' for 'man'. The respective numbers after 'F' or 'M' stand for the chronological order of having the floor for the first time in the discussion.
3. See, among others, Volmert (1989).

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 RUDOLF DE CILLIA is Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Vienna where he teaches post-graduate courses for teachers. As well as studying German linguistics, romance languages/literature and applied linguistics, his research work focuses on

foreign language didactics and teaching methods, foreign language teaching research, language policies, language and politics, and discourse analysis. ADDRESS: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Wien, Berggasse 11, A-1090 Vienna, Austria. [email: rudi@ling.univie.ac.at]

MARTIN REISIGL is currently studying for his PhD in Applied Linguistics at the University of Vienna. The subject of his discourse analytic thesis (supported by a grant from the Austrian Academy of Sciences) is the linguistic construction of Austrian national identity. His main research interests are discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, rhetoric and argumentation theory. Since 1993 he has been involved in several research projects carried out by the Dept of Applied Linguistics at the University of Vienna. ADDRESS: Eggerthgasse 9/6, A-1060 Vienna, Austria. [email: a8803822@unet.univie.ac.at]

RUTH WODAK is Professor and Head of the Subdepartment of Applied Linguistics at the University of Vienna. Beside various other prizes, she has recently been awarded the Wittgenstein-Prize for Elite Researchers (1996). Very widely published, her books include *Disorders of Discourse* (1996); *Gender and Discourse* (1997); *Die Sprache der 'Mächtigen' und 'Ohnmächtigen'* ('The language of the "powerful" and the "powerless"', with F. Menz, B. Lutz and H. Gruber, 1985); *Language, Power and Ideology* (1989). She has also co-authored numerous publications, among them, 'Wir sind alle unschuldige Taeter!' *Diskurshistorische Studien zum Nachkriegsantisemitismus in Oesterreich* ('"We are all innocent perpetrators!" Discourse-historical studies on post-war anti-Semitism in Austria', with R. de Cillia, H. Gruber, R. Mitten, P. Nowak and J. Pelikan, 1990); *Sprachen der Vergangenheiten: Oeffentliches Gedenken in oesterreichischen und deutschen Medien* ('Language of the past: public memory in the Austrian and German media', with F. Menz, R. Mitten and F. Stern, 1994); *Communicating Gender in Context* (with H. Kotthoff, 1997); and *Zur diskursiven Konstruktion nationaler Identitaet* ('On the discursive construction of national identity', with R. de Cillia, M. Reisigl, K. Liebhart, K. Hofstaetter and M. Kargl, 1998). ADDRESS: Universität Wien, Institut für Sprachwissenschaft, FB: Angewandte Sprachwissenschaft, Berggasse 11, A-1090 Wien, Austria. [email: ruth.wodak@univie.ac.at]

Martin Reisigl and Ruth Wodak are currently working together on two new books: *Discourse and Discrimination: The Rhetoric of Racism and Anti-Semitism* (Longman, 1999) and *The Semiotics of Racism* (Passagen Verlag, 1999).