Daniela Gronold

Identity Matters

Different Conceptualisations of Belonging from the Perspective of Young Slovenes

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Introduction

Identity questions, feelings of belonging, particularly in regard to the nation, have always been areas I have been interested in and this was my impetus for conducting, a research on Irish identity. This previous research only increased my interest in this topic and I began to wonder how nation states involve individuals and how they make them feel committed to and even part of the national community. Somehow, despite influences diminishing national sovereignty, "Western" (European) nations still have the authority to decide on who is allowed to enter and stay, enter and visit, enter and temporarily stay, or not enter at all. At the same time, citizens of a nation usually seem to agree on such practices and respect or accept them as part of their nations' rules. After all, it appeared to me that most people perceive nationality as "natural" and therefore do not question this as a source of belonging. However, considering that Slovenia was a young nation state of only 13 years, which was just about to join the European Union, when I began investigating in early 2004, it is hard to imagine that "nationality" is a priori perceived as "natural". As a former part of a communist Federation state Slovenia had to implement a commitment to democratic and free-market values and to raise national awareness among future Slovenes before claiming independence from Yugoslavia. After its segregation Slovenia had to maintain a sense of "Sloveneness" and, at the same time, it had to prepare the entry to a supra-national alliance and to give up a part of the recently achieved sovereignty. Slovenia has been going through several transitions in a very short time and in these processes it has been challenged by contradicting concepts of identity and belonging, which constituted in my eyes a very interesting case in regard to tracing and understanding identity matters.

When I first started this research project, I did not plan to collect empirical data in Slovenia. In fact, I was interested in European politics and initially planned to take a year off and go to France in order to learn French, which is considered as an "important" European language. The reason for my going to Ljubljana for a year in 2004 was influenced by the decision to be involved in the European Voluntary Service. Talking to the people who were in charge of the programme in Klagenfurt, I quickly found out that some countries, like France, were more popular than others. People, who applied to go to Slovenia in Klagenfurt, were often from the Slovene speaking minority in Carinthia, but other people were rarely interested. This was the main reason why I finally applied for Ljubljana. I then began to think about my particular access as an Austrian, from Carinthia, from Klagenfurt/Celovec to the – from this standpoint – closest neighbouring country, Slovenia.

As a child, I knew Slovenia as a country where we could go out for dinner and pay less for our meals in the restaurants than in Austria or Italy. The 10-day-war in 1991 also

affected me in the sense that we could not go on our school trip close to the border because of the shooting. Otherwise, I rarely went to or thought about Slovenia. Later, Slovenia was presented as the model student – "*Musterschüler*" – in Austrian media regarding its quick adaptation to "European standards" after its independence from former Yugoslavia. For a time, I was not aware of two things concerning that public discourse, one, how and why was Slovenia considered a model student, and the other was what do "European standards" mean. As an Austrian, I saw "European standards" closely connected to the Austrian culture, related to the legacy of high culture of the Habsburg monarchy, which was for me always associated with the first district in Vienna, where I took courses in theatre studies in one of the buildings of the *Wiener Hofburg*, where musicians played Mozart's music. The sound usually echoed out the gateway to the *Heldenplatz* and invited the passers-by to feel as if they were taken back to the heroic times of Maria Theresia, or maybe of Franz Josef and Elisabeth, or at least to Karlheinz Böhm and Romy Schneider in the wonderful and idealised remake of the "Sissi"-movies of the 1950s. The sound was comforting to the ears of us students, who were sitting in the classrooms, enjoying a lecture with the beautiful sound in the background, while learning about the history of Viennese/Austrian theatre and arts. This is, however, more a dream or an imagination than a "European standard". It is even very particular to Vienna, and specifically the first district, which is filled with images from the past. The idea does not fit into my idea of Carinthia or Klagenfurt, the place where I was born and where I have lived for most of my life, and also live today. This particular idea is not even necessarily intertwined with other European countries, although Habsburg is somehow broader than Austria and should, at least in theory and dependent on the particular era, include Slovenia and Croatia, parts of Serbia and Bosnia as well as of Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, etc.

In my investigation for this book into theories on nationalism I could not, unfortunately, overlook Ruth Wodak's (1998) work, where she exemplifies Habsburgian notion of the Austrian "high culture" as a mere invention of Austrian national identity after the Second World War in order to create a difference to Germany. I write "unfortunately", because reading that was irritating for me and my considerations of belonging. Thinking about cultural heritage as an "invention" or as a privileged discourse in Austrian history is somehow inconvenient. Of course I had recognized the tendency of exaggeration the "old times", mostly identified with Mozart in Vienna. Those men, and sometimes women, who wear baroque costumes and white curly wigs, trying to sell tickets for an opera or a classical music concert around the *Michaelerplatz* at the entrance of the *Hofburg*, the former residence of Austrian rulers … Well, of course they are more a tourist trap, a way of selling the image of Vienna, and a particular viewpoint of Austria. Despite this, reading Wodak's analysis

made me aware of my emotional attachment to a certain version of Austria, of Europe and European history and I did not find that a very comfortable new perspective. Certainly, from this location I did not understand the meaning of the "European standards" realised in Slovenia, obviously ignoring the fact that these "standards" were mainly narrated over economic characterisations in the Austrian media context. Although I was supportive of Slovenia's membership to the European Union, I was not particularly interested in the country. Thus, I was not aware that I was not necessarily supportive of including Sloveneness into a sense of "Europeanness". As an Austrian with an emotional attachment to – and I still do not know why – 17th, 18th and 19th centuries Europe, my associations of "Europeanness" were more related to France, Germany or even Great Britain than to Slovenia. Certainly, I also associated Slovenia, Bosnia, Serbia or Croatia with the Habsburg monarchy, but from the dominant representations of Europe in Austria this image was closer to Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. This image persisted, despite my knowing about the aims of the panslavic movement in the 19th and early 20th century to equal rights with Hungary and the ignorant attitude of both Franz Josef and Franz Ferdinand, who was shot in Sarajevo.

I was confronted with the "tacit" commitment to France as being at the "heart" of the European idea and Slovenia on the periphery by the opinion of other people who applied for the European voluntary service. I met them in a pre-meeting for Austrian volunteers before going abroad, where my decision to go to Slovenia was perceived as "exotic" or at least as "unusual". Only one other girl took an even more "exotic" step by going to Moldavia. The majority of the volunteers went to countries such as Spain, France, Italy, Great Britain, and so on. In this process, I felt a sense of responsibility to go beyond a dominant perception of Europe and European countries and to revisit the EU-European idea from the values and perspectives of Slovenia. As a person who did not have much contact to Slovenia, Slovenes or with the Slovene language, which I started studying at that time, I felt this responsibility growing when I entered Slovenia. As well as working as a volunteer in an anarchist environment, I was also enrolled at the Faculty of Social Sciences (fdv) in Ljubljana and had to deal with a lot of new information and contents. It was also the time, when I was touched by exactly those uncomfortable feelings I had through my theoretical engagement with Women's Studies and Postcolonial Studies, when writing *about* Slovenia as a non-Slovenian person. Was I really able to write about the situation in Slovenia *from* a Slovene perspective? After all, the answer is a clear "no", but a clear "yes" for the importance of a situated perspective that I had to take on as an Austrian who writes about Slovenia.

From the background of standpoint theory, I decided to carry out a discourse analysis, in order to look at the production of belonging and the investigations of individuals in identifications with the nation state, the European Union, the "Balkans", local, regional and global influences and political frameworks. Therefore, I decided to conduct group interviews with young Slovenes from different social and cultural backgrounds. The title of the book "*Identity Matters – Different Conceptualisations of Belonging from the Perspective of Young Slovenes*" tries to incorporate this tension between different providers of identity without reducing such identifications to a limited number. Taking a discursive approach also allows an analysis of emotions and the interviewee's adaptations of available discourses in their personal identities and positions. In the empirical research, which I explain in chapter 7, I chose to interview four different groups of young people in Slovenia from presumably different discursive locations. As I was working and studying in Ljubljana, the groups were also located in Ljubljana, which does not necessarily mean that they were born in Ljubljana. The analysis and outline of the selected groups, which is discussed in chapters 8 to 11, does not intend to give a full account of Slovene national identity located in the tension of local and global identities, but aims to trace negotiations of identity positions in order to shed light on the discursive production of more or less powerful identity positions. In doing so, I also hope to largely overcome generalisations and an over-emphasis of some identity positions over others. At the same time, I aim to develop a standpoint that allows me to go beyond the essentialist claim of modern identity formations in favour of a multiple possible belonging within post-national circumstances. Therefore, in chapter 1, I discuss the term "identity" and its contemporary usage and sketch the broad and multiple meanings of the term in present "Western" societies, where discussions on identity often correlate with the discussion on "identity crisis". Here, I also theorise my use of the term "identity" for the purposes of the understanding of the analysis. In chapter 2, I extend the depth of the discussion by introducing the theoretical framework found in Women's Studies, Postcolonial Studies and Cultural Studies, which helped me to deal with definitions of "culture" and to revisit the dominant "Western" ideas on social and cultural values and "standards".

In chapter 3, I look at the meaning of identity for a nation. Here, I aim to revisit the meaning of "good" and "bad" nations from a "Western" point of view, before moving on to analyse identity politics in Slovenia. Certainly, I do not focus on nationality as the only or the most important identification for people in present-day societies, but I try to raise awareness of the ways in which people deal with and incorporate "nationalised" perspectives into their everyday lives. This is the position from which they consequently encounter and understand non-national discourses. Chapter 4 focuses on issues relating to the nation state and the European Union. The media as

providers and distributors of representations play an important role in the analysis. Thus, chapter 4 offers an overview of crucial points in the history of the European Union and outlines implicit and explicit identity politics, and the cultural meaning behind the European Union. This section is also influenced by the discussions taking place in relation to the Constitution of the European Union, and my reading and interpretation of legal texts of the constitution. Although I refer to Slovenia in all chapters, especially in chapters 3 and 4, in chapter 5, I specifically and distinctively analyse Slovene identity politics on the basis of the work of Slovene researchers and academics in relation to the European Union. Chapter 6 takes a serious look at international and globalised circumstances. Here, I look at whether global discourses offer identifications in a post-national sense and challenge national providers of belonging or whether they become translated or incorporated into the national imagination. The starting point from which an analysis of a sense of "globality" is carried out is the neo-liberal and "Western" perspective.

Based on the responses of those who (proof-)read and discussed the book in advance of its publication, I want to explain the usage of some words in the book. Due to my commitment to a situated theoretical standpoint, I try to avoid speaking for others and try to clarify the perspective from which I speak as a researcher. Therefore, I often use the term "I" and sometimes refer to "my" work or "my" theoretical standpoint, emphasising my own position in the text in particular throughout the chapters where I analyse the interviews of the discussion groups, I tried to be very clear about my perspective, in order to avoid "exoticising" the empirical data. Furthermore, I also tried to raise awareness of the gendered perspective and wrote for example "she and he" instead of including both genders in the masculine expression. Here I also turned away from the common usage of saying "he and she" in order to introduce a kind of "irritation" into the flow of reading, hoping to be able to evoke a little "extra-thinking" in the reader. In order to continue with that strategy, I used, for example, "gendered" as a way of saying that the dominant thinking in "Western" societies is narrated upon masculinity and femininity alone and therefore "gendered" in a particular way. The same was intended by my use of "minoritised" viewpoints instead of minority viewpoints. Here I think of women, who are often "minoritised", but never a minority in numbers or groups whose views and positions were minoritised in a particular context. Although this might be one possible reading of the term minority, I want to make the process in this dichotomy to majority more explicit. This is also transferable to the "Western" perspective and its universal claim over other viewpoints, whereas people in the so-called "Western" countries to whom this idea applies, are not a world-wide majority. Other terms such as "ethnicised" or "racialised" should indicate a certain power-relation between those who are "ethnicised" or "racialised" and those who are not aware of their own "ethnicity" or "race". In order to not generalise the

United States of America by using the term "America" or the European Union by using simply Europe, I sometimes write "US-American" or "EU-Europe" to highlight the particular cultural context. In doing so, I am aware that many people in the "West" would automatically accept, for example, "America" as the "United States of America". However, talking about "Western" perspectives, I usually mean the dominant representation of "Western" values and I unfortunately did not think about finding a different way of expressing this term "Western" in a more distinguished way. This is also true of the use of the term "Eastern", although I do not consider this term to hold such a broad meaning as "Western", because its meaning is in the process of change. Therefore, I might not have been consequent with such a "strategy" throughout the book and have unintentionally implemented an "extra-irritation" by not doing so, but I hope the readers might take these as starting points from which to extend the "strategy".

Since it is impossible for an Austrian researcher like me to take up a "Slovene perspective", I tried instead to find a way to revisit the "Western" perspective which is closer to my cultural knowledge, and look at negotiations with "universal" "Western" values. In this regard, I aimed at looking at the influence of such a viewpoint on the self-perspective of, in this book, Slovenia and Slovenes. Of course, I cannot be sure, whether I overlooked important points for the Slovene situation or whether I gave too much meaning to certain other events. In order to reduce such errors, I frequently discussed the latest stage of the analysing the empirical data with Slovene university professors from Slovenia or teaching in Slovenia and coming from a traditionally "Western" European country. In autumn 2006, I interviewed Sonja Lokar, a left wing feminist politician, Janez Justin, a professor of media studies and discourse analysis, Matjaž Hanžek, the former Ombudsman for Human Rights in Slovenia and Rado Riha, a philosopher, in order to access their opinions on Slovene identity politics. Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin spoke about the changes at that time in the Slovene media laws.

As a reading guide for the book, I want to draw attention to the tension between essentialist and non-essentialist identity positions in the book. One aim of the analysis was to find ways of going beyond exclusive and essentialist identity positions, which I consider as very important for an EU-European dedication to a multicultural condition, while we experience certain tendencies of the EU turning into a larger nation state. For this reason, I found it necessary to revisit values and representations of culture promoted by the European Union in order to raise awareness of the domination of some discourses that prevent multiple identities or a multicultural condition. Having referred to my emotional entanglement with Austrian "high culture" and my disappointment regarding the "invention" of the same, revisiting one's own secure

cultural position is not easy. From this perspective, forcing individuals out of their secure positions is necessarily accompanied with resistance. Therefore, my emphasis is on positions that allow the cross-over of exclusive cultural expressions, which I try to examine in the section on the group analysis and to stress once more in the conclusion. The book particularly focuses on Slovene discourses and questions of identity in the year 2004 and can be understood as a document of an important historical moment. For the final publication, I made a last up-date in the first half of 2010 in keeping with the particular state of mind in 2004.

Uses of the Term "Identity"

Calling the book "Identity Matters", is based on my observation of identity being one of the key words when talking about belonging in "Western" societies. Stuart Hall (1996: 1) even speaks about a "discursive explosion" regarding identity matters and suggests that this has been accompanied by an enormous interest in conceptualising individual and collective identities. The wide spread use of the term "identity" in contemporary "Western" societies is also accompanied by various meanings depending on an individual's experience, certain public discourses, (political) attitudes and interests, the strategic and "tacit" use of the term in intercultural or international encounter, etc. At first glance identity might appear very clear in its meaning and function, but its complexity is affected by different historically, culturally or scientifically developed knowledge and ideologies inherent in the term (cf. Gilroy 2000a: 97-8). As such, various definitions of identity are possible. In this chapter, I will briefly sketch important historical viewpoints in order to shed light into the present discussions around identity and then turn to explaining the particular usage of the term in this book.

1. Historical Background

In order to explain the present use of the term "identity" in "Western" European democratic nation states, I take the transition period from pre-modern to modern age in Europe as the major starting point. Stuart Hall (1999a: 402) refers to that period as the time, when the individual's entanglement with Middle Age values, such as religion, tradition and magic beliefs, secured a person's place in the community, but were increasingly challenged by industrial progress, new inventions and new knowledge in sciences and therefore, by a more rational definition of belonging. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000: 84-6) locate this period in the *Renaissance* between 1200 and 1600, and see secular tendencies as a consequence of the new beliefs that defined humans and not God as the creators of knowledge and the world order. This implemented the idea that the attempt to rule nature and rational thought can be seen as the precondition to secularism. From Negri's and Hardt's (2000: 85) perspective, European modernity started when humans discovered their powerful influence in the world. However, although democracy and secularism are seen as being in the heart of modern thought, modern conditions did not emerge immediately. On the contrary, the two authors (Negri and Hardt 2000: 89) highlighted that the struggle to implement modernity in Europe led to centuries of wars over power relations and ideologies, which were accompanied by several revolutions. Therefore, the description of major changes through the implementation of modernity remains only random in this book

and focuses mostly on philosophic considerations for today's understanding of identity.

When talking about a modern conceptualisation of the subject and of identity, René Descartes is often taken as one crucial reference point (1596-1650). He was a French mathematician and natural scientist and is frequently pointed to as the "father" of modern philosophy (cf. Hall 1999a: 402). The term "Cartesian subject" goes back to his name. Descartes is frequently appointed to as the first one who formulated the idea of the "sovereign self" which is rational, powerful and indivisible. This perspective rejects the omnipotence of an almighty and all-powerful God (cf. Hall 1999a: 403). Hence, Descartes' work is considered the basis for 17th century *Rationalism* and *Enlightenment*, which is supposed to have left magic and superstitious beliefs behind and moved towards today's *scientific order of nature* (cf. Foucault 1971/2003: 87). To distinguish between mind or "reason" and the body, allows framing "individuals" to be able to constitute their identity and actions, and "matter". The dominant interpretation of the famous and much analysed sentence "Cogito ergo sum" ["I think, therefore I am"] has been taken as the beginning of the mind-body dualism, which is prevailing in "Western" analytic thought today (Hall 1999a: 402-3). The German, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) is another well-known philosopher, whose legacy on morality and values is still referred to in "Western" culture (1724-1804). Today's understanding of his concept of "reason" allocates humanity the ability to reach "*maturity and autonomy, as opposed to its childhood and heteronomy*" (cf. Lechte 2003: 160). With such thought modernity laid the ground for the idea that humanity, and not God, is responsible for democracy and morality. Based on the philosophical impact of Kant, such a viewpoint on identity is defined as being "humanist". The accomplishment of such a discourse legitimised the increased secularisation of the state systems in Europe from the early modern age (Lechte 2003: 160).

With the emphasis to reason and thought in "Western" philosophy in the era of *Enlightenment*, Foucault (1971/2003: 88) locates the major changes of social and cultural conditions in a new *order of things*, where there was a stronger emphasis on *identity and difference.* This is in contrast to the Middle Ages, when the relation between things was not strictly defined and determined. While the older order of thought, according to Foucault's argumentation, was open to expansion as its logic was grounded on similarities, the new order supported the manifestation of countable facts. For these reasons, mathematics became most important for grounding the rationalist thought and continued to hold the status of being the most important approach until the end of the 18th century (cf. Foucault 1971/2003: 85, 89-91). In the 19th century, biology and Darwin's theory, the "origin of species", were taken in as new viewpoints on a non-divine and again statically perceived conceptualisation of

humans. Because of the acceptance of new scientific thought, the human's ability to develop knowledge and reason could then be explained by means of the brain function. The movement towards biology in "Western" understanding of the truth also supported a new conceptualisation of social and cultural hierarchy from which "white" Europeans defined their place as being at the top of the human species (cf. Hall 1999a: 404-5).

Stuart Hall (1999a: 403) argues that the sovereignty of the modern subject has never been as coherent as it seems to be. It is "born" in an era of metaphysical doubts, in a conflict between religious and secular questions and this does not maintain its unimpeachable description. Social and collective forces of modern societies identified in a commitment to class or to the nation state stood, and still stand, in contradiction to their foundation on individual rights and individual agreement. The focus on the individual also laid the basis for (market) liberalism and democracy (cf. ibid: 404-5). As another consequence of individualism, community values have decreased. The law of capitalism (based on individualism and liberalism) is not only supportive of decentring traditional life concepts. It increasingly questions the stability and continuation of a person's identity. The principles of capitalism support the flexibility of the markets, require flexible individuals and consequently decentre individual life-scripts (cf. McGuigan 1999: 1-7). Thus, the onset of modernity in the "Western" world brought identity into question again. This is additionally supported by the different available discourses of thought. From the perspective of the Latin America intellectual Nestor Garcia Canclini (1995: 2) present, traditional, modern and post-modern positions of identity are co-existing and are mixing within one society simultaneously.

Some philosophers celebrate the end of the modern condition as the end of the *grand narratives* of modernity. From their perspective, modernity was the age of "identity" and describes postmodernity as the era that "*does not have an identity and may even be opposed to the very idea of identity (modernist idea) in the wake of difference*" (Lechte 2003: 182). Jean-François Lyotard (1984: 37-8), for example, sees evidence for such a development in the explosive growth of new theories and knowledge since the Second World War that work against the universal claim of modernist thought. The weakening of religious rules, imperial and royal authorities have pushed individuals into a position of insecurity, and opened up the possibilities of making different choices, essentially raising new questions of how to define identity, if it has ceased to be "sovereign". Due to the difficulty to *think* fragmented and decentred identities, as I will outline in the next section, Stuart Hall (1999a: 407) claims that the attack on a "core" identity and the fragmentation of the subject does not necessarily abandon the premises of modernity. Based on that criticism, I would even claim that the most crucial difficulty in contemporary "Western" societies is not to let go of a modern,

sovereign and essentialist idea of identity. The *crisis of identity*, which is often postulated by different scientists and philosophers (cf. Woodward 1997: 15-7), can be seen more as the crisis of a modernist view of identity.

The modern humanist model of the true self does not seem to be applicable in post- or late-modern theory. Different fields of science, such as *Cultural Studies, Women's Studies* or *Postcolonial Studies,* reject an essential idea of identity. Thus, it would be inadequate, according to Hall (1996: 1), to try to find a "truer" notion of identity from another essentialist perspective, because post-modern and post-industrial settings put former key concepts, like that of the "sovereign subject", increasingly "*under erasure*", when pushing subjects into fragmented, contradicting and quickly changing conditions. It is problematic in that relation, as Hall (ibid) makes us aware, that there are no new terms in which to *think* of those entirely new concepts. It is very hard to make clear distinctions between overlapping uses of terms and paradigms. There are essential or humanist beliefs of identity, that take the notion of humanity for granted (cf. Lyotard 1989: 12). While at the same time there is non-essential or anti-humanist critique of the same, especially emerging in so-called post- or late modernity (cf. Eagleton 1996: 189). Being "inhumane" is seen by some philosophers as a necessity in order to turn against the humanist model of reason and knowledge. Lyotard (1989: 14-5) argues that humans are not born as humans with attributes of the paradigm of humanism. Certainly, there are some people, above all people in "Western" "white" societies, who were raised and educated to become human. Therefore, being "human" is not inherited and not shared by all human individuals, but it is the convention of considering a "humanist human" as being of entirely human character. The process of becoming human, as Lyotard (ibid: 17) sees it, is "inhumane" in the sense that people are forced to suppress part of their emotions and desires in order to adapt and subordinate to ideas of humanism and the humanist sovereign subject. Anti-humanist concepts are not against "humanity", but against the very idea of the inhumane encompassed in inhumanity, which forces one to have an identity and keep it. Here I refer, as many others, to the Holocaust as an act of inhumanity based on the humanist idea of equality, which requires a certain typology of identity, from which Jewish people were represented as non-human. Anti-humanist models offer a deconstruction of sovereignty, which is agreed to be implemented in identity from a humanist perspective. Therefore, anti-humanist perspectives prefer the term subjectivity to identity (cf. Eagleton 1996: 189).

2. Discursive Understanding of Identity

Hall argues that "[I]t seems to be in the attempt to rearticulate the relationship between the subject and discursive practices that the question of identity recurs" (cf. Hall 1996: 2). While people in "Western" European countries particularly want to believe in a stability of the self, the world around does not hold the promise any longer. Writers like Rosi Braidotti (2001: 10) and Gerd Baumann (1999: 84) observe an interesting paradox in current investigations into identity position: We live, at least to some extent, in post-modern and post-national conditions, but our minds are still occupied by modernist thought. The effects of globalisation, the centralisation of power in economic metropolis, and cultural homogenisation are destabilising our identities. Furthermore, advanced information technologies, scientific, educational and cultural exchange within, for example the European Union, pushes us out of our immediate cultural context. The world around us is characterised by changing social circumstances that are played out in national or global spheres and which affect identity formations on a local or personal level (cf. Woodward 1997: 21). Nonetheless, we need some sense of wholeness to be able to "function" in the world, to remain sane (cf. Eagleton 1996: 190), but in a less totalising manner. Therefore, it is not the destruction of the term that is needed, but reconceptualisation of the subject and new ways of thinking about it that are necessary in order to include displacement and fragmentation into the concept of identity (cf. Hall 1996: 2). For this study, I found the concept of discursive identity formations as most applicable to trace questions of belonging. In the following passage, I will focus on the work of the French philosophers Louis Althusser (1977) and Michel Foucault (2003) and then turn to Judith Butler's (2001) adaptation of their theories in view of the discursive subject.

From its Latin roots, the term "subject" (from the verb subicio, or subjicio: to place under or near) carries a sense of subordination in its meaning and refers to its cultural component of existence (cf. Strozier 2002: 11-2). The subject is disciplined by the regulatory system of the society in which it was brought up. The sovereign self, for example, was subjected to reason, knowledge and political maturity supported by the high value of education and *ratio* (cf. Lyotard 1989: 19, Strozier 2002: 11). Louis Althusser was one of the pioneers who established this particular notion of the "subject". He (cf. 1977: 119) sees a stabilising and regulating function in the state. In his point of view, state power is repressive. There are legislative, executive and juridical forces with the connected bodies like the police, the army or the administration. He defines this kind of power as repressive, as it can be executed through immediate physical violence, fines or in a less obvious manner through the administrative work involved in, for example, getting a passport (cf. Althusser 1977: 124). Thus, from an Althusserian perspective, state power is accomplished and carried

by external instances, the Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). In contrast to the former, the latter does not have state authority. These are groups, institutions and associations that usually work along with state interests, including for instance schools, family, churches or church related associations, political interest groups, the media, or institutions in the cultural sector. Even though they could be seen as "private matters" they intersect with public interests (cf. ibid: 119-20). The number of such ISA was not the same in all eras. Until the 19th century the Christian churches in European states claimed many of these functions (such as schools or publishing houses) as part of their activities. Later, other interest groups began competing for them. In Althusser's view, the educational system which accompanies people up to eight hours a day, five to six days a week from their early childhood, is crucial for the reproduction of the existing system. It is most successful, because it seems to be neutral. An identity position evolving within those structures does not facilitate the development of critical subjects who fundamentally question their system. More often those individuals turn out to be supporters or advocators of state values and norms, as they recognise them as their own (cf. Althusser 1977: 126-130). Althusser (ibid: 140-1) argues that individuals need ideology to constitute themselves as subjects and, vice versa, ideology needs individuals to come into material existence. Ideology produces knowledge and truth and needs to be recognised, concealed and accepted in order to function. Individuals are called into subject positions through ideology. Here lies a very important concept in Althusser's theory which is often incorporated into post-structural work, the concept of *interpellation* (cf. ibid).

Interpellation describes how ideology reaches individuals in order to turn them into subjects or *subordinate* them to the ideology. The reader might remember the famous example of the policeman, who calls an unknown individual from behind. In 90 per cent of such cases, as Althusser (1977: 43) claims, the targeted person will turn her or his head. Interpellation only works if individuals feel personally addressed by such a call that recruits them into a certain position. This happens within a certain ideology providing several subject positions which people can take up. Hence, a subject already exists before she or he is born, because of the pre-existing structures she or he will live in. The child, for example, does not choose her or his gender and its attached compulsory heterosexuality (cf. ibid: 142-4). The Althusserian model explains subjectivity as the result of the individual subordination to ideology, where Althusser sees the individual confronted with such ideology through the state, through the Ideological State Apparatus and through individuals, including parents, friends or teachers of a person.

Althusser's concept of ideology and its complicity, the Ideological State Apparatus, had a fruitful impact on theory about identity. With the model of interpellation he

shows that individuals need a cultural framework or ideology as well as other people who hail them into a certain position within such a cultural framework. Therefore, ideology, or the term "discourse", which Althusser sometimes uses, is able to transform individuals into subjects and makes them believe they have a distinctive personal identity (cf. Althusser 1977: 145). Nonetheless, Althusser's concept is often criticised as not being broad enough to explain social change (cf. Hall 2004: 64). Even though he refers to some aspects of possible resistance, his concept is instead applicable in explaining the reproduction of a system and not its change (ibid).

Michel Foucault, a student of Althusser, is obviously in keeping with Althusser's theoretical framework of ideology with his concept of the discursive production of the subject. In contrast to his teacher, he would find it too easy to say that an individual can merely be "hailed" into a subject position (cf. Butler 2001: 10). Althusser's ideology is based on a hierarchic, one-sided distribution of power, and the reproduction of social structures (cf. Hall 2004: 64). Foucault's discourse, however, allows a multi-directional model of power, and this has positive connotations. In Foucault's view, power is not only repressive, but also active and productive. This does not mean that power is not formative, nor does it mean individuals that are not subjected to power. In that sense he links the productive and regulative side of power and opens it up to encompass a theory explaining changes in society (cf. Butler 2001: 23). In his oral lecture on "Orders of discourse" (cf. Foucault 2003: 11), he focussed on the function of discourse in society. Discourse transports knowledge and truth. Therefore, the production of discourse is controlled, selected and channelled in every society in order to monitor danger or unwanted mobilisation of forces for the protection of an existing order (cf. ibid: 11). The discourse then cannot be neutral or transparent. Individuals should not know the interest behind the discourse or the power direction of a certain discourse. Hence, its production has to be concealed from a subject's consciousness. The existence of a discourse has to be denied in order to sustain certain ideas of truth and knowledge; otherwise discourse would lose its normativity (cf. ibid: 31). Outside of (one) discourse one could doubt and question its truth and transported knowledge. In particular societies and in different periods a different field of discourses carried a prevailing "order of things". This includes other ways of defining truth and knowledge or of acknowledging the world, or the will to truth and knowledge (cf. ibid: 14-6).

Hall believes that Foucault slips too easy from an archaeological framework, where power is everywhere, to a disciplinary concept, where power is very similar to ideology accompanied by monolithic force (cf. Hall 1996: 12). Foucault argues that discourse functions differently within different eras of history. Contemporary "Western" societies, from a Foucaultian (1978b) point of view, are held together by

the power model of "governementality". In contrast to earlier ages, the government in democratic societies follows a different scheme. It does not act as the punishing or controlling force, but erects its power over the "interest" in the health and wealth of its people (cf. ibid: 61). While the state and other social institutions distribute discourses on health, hygiene, environment protection, family life, social values, etc., individuals engage with self-disciplinary techniques in order to take over such discourses as their own and "function" according to the implemented rules. Therefore, state authority is covered by the appearance of the self-interest of individuals to invest in and obey such rules. Foucault (ibid: 62-3) calls that model "economy of politics", which does not give up its authority nor its disciplinary mechanisms. Also Foucault (ibid: 63) refers to institutions like schools, armies, the psychiatry, etc. that developed in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, suggesting that the administrative apparatus of the state was more complex than it was before. The inhabitants *appear* as subjects of "needs" and "endeavour", but at the same time they are also in the hands of their government (cf. ibid: 61). They do not necessarily comprehend the complex machinery behind state control, nor do they realise their dependency on the state. In that way, individuals even accept their own responsibility for their well-being. For Foucault (ibid: 64-5) "governementality" means: the totality of institutions, techniques, analyses, reflections, calculations and tactics that make such a complex system of ruling work. This system aims to nurture the inhabitants of one society with a specific version of truth, the main form of knowledge is the "political economy" and the main disciplinary net can be found in the safety net of the society (ibid).

While the ancient world defined "true" discourse as the will to desire and power, later periods were signified through the attempt to hide the will to desire and power behind the will to truth and knowledge (cf. Foucault 2003: 17). From that perspective it is more difficult to uncover the artificial moment of discourse production. Modern age is marked by a new network of discourses (medicine, biology, etc.) and disciplines (pedagogy, psychology, etc.) to which subjects are submitted (cf. Strozier 2002: 12). Discourse, similar to Althusser's ideology, does not exist outside materiality, outside the subject as the materialising force (cf. Foucault 2003: 31). Whereas Althusser talks about the subjectivation of the individual under the prevailing ideology (*interpellation*), Foucault's idea of subjectivation evokes a double subordination (*assujettissement*): that of the subject under discourse and that of discourse under the speaking subject (cf. Foucault 2003: 29, Butler 2001: 81). Subjectivation in that sense is an effect of power that works within a subject while at the time coming from outside the subject. The individual does not generate its subject position(s) based on just one (dominant) discourse as Althusser suggests with his idea of ideology. On the contrary, everybody grows up in a network of discourses that influence the subjectivation of the

individual to different degrees, from that perspective. In other words, we can speak of a "discursive subject" (cf. Strozier 2002: 12).

From a Foucaultian understanding, power is the living condition of an individual through which it can enter a subject position or narrate its identity. Therefore, power is vital to our existence and explains why we invest so much in it. Without our knowledge, we are dependent on it. Keeping this understanding in mind, a discourse we did not choose allows us to become capable of acting (cf. Butler 2001: 7-8). Foucault challenges modern subjects in their belief in reason and causality, when he points out that discourses, within which individuals are subjected, always leave something out of control. Therefore, if comparing his concept with the modern idea of identity, then origin, nature and integrity are only possibilities of meaning in one discourse of truth (cf. Foucault 2003: 35).

Judith Butler is critical of the concepts *interpellation* and *assujettissement*. She criticises the lack of explanation for why individuals would subordinate themselves either under ideology or discourse. From her feminist perspective of power, she acknowledges such concepts as supporting the powerful in arguing, that it is the responsibility of the subordinated to be ruled because they want to be ruled. For her, the ties of the individual to power and power operation can instead be explained by the effects of power on the psychic existence of subjects. She includes aspects of psychoanalysis and Nietzsche's concept of "conscience" in their understanding of that process (cf. Butler 2001:11). Subjectivation means the turn of the individual against her- or himself and what is usually perceived as the "founding moment" of the subject (cf. Butler 2001: 9). The subject has to suppress that foundational moment in the future to not question her or his genesis and the subject occurs then together with the subconscious. The subject comes into being with a strong emotional passion attached to her or his first objects of love. This results in the subject's dependency on their first love objects, which is absolutely vital for them to desire to be alive. As a consequence for this dependency, the subject is sensitive to exploitation and subordination.

Subjectivation to power and discourse is also important for one's psychic and social continuation. Children do not choose their first loved people, but they are bound to them in order to become subjects. Later memories of their first love relation can cause embarrassment. Therefore, the scandal of such an impossible love is often suppressed in order not to threaten one's self-understanding, where continuation is grounded in misrecognition of the self. From this point of view, the subject remains dependent on her or his initial desire and the reiteration to suppress this desire. The genesis of the subject can never be fully understood by oneself (cf. Butler 2001: 12-7). Against existing prejudices of Butler's theories, she also recognises pre-existing social

structures as crucial for the subjectivation which limits possibilities of self-constitution. Here she acknowledges the thin line between not falling into cultural determinism, when identity is not a choice, and understanding the performative part of identity (cf. Butler 1993: x). A subject's subordination can only happen within existing power relations and subjectivation means incorporating a certain kind or version of power. As a circular process, resistance against suppression leads to new suppression, but, and here Butler adopts a non-causal perspective, power of subjectivation and power performed by the later subject do not logically intersect. Appropriation of power leads to both continuation and resistance of the kind of power. Growing up within one cultural set of meanings, does not mean that later in their lives individuals would not be open or even exposed to knowledge and discourses that are new to them (cf. Butler 2001: 17-8).

2.1 Representational Order: Identification and Exclusion

In the previous section I referred to theories that link individuals and identity with social and cultural realities. I also described the process of subjectivation as subordination to power and the subordination of discourse to the subject. The kind of identity here is not normative. It is dependent on entrance into the symbolic system of a particular society. Such systems contain sets of representations, including ideas, myths, pictures, values or norms, from which people produce meaning. Systems have discursive and symbolic character and cannot necessarily be consciously accessed. They are materialised in social practices, as they are conditional to each other: they would not exist without each other. At the same time, there is not just one system. There are systems of representation that exist next to each other and interdependent. Usually, cultures have hegemonic structures. Some sets of meaning dominate others. People of one culture are strongly interwoven in those structures and cannot interpret or experience their lives outside of the categories, discourses or ideologies they are subjected to. Nonetheless, against such an idea of closure, Butler's concept that allows *identity* being seen *as a process* would support a perspective from which subjects are open to new discourses through the encounter with new knowledge, people, and more general, with new discourses. From such a perspective, mechanism of "closure" of identities within societies or the "closure" of communities cannot be explained as simply being in the "nature" of humans, but supportive for a specific discursive order. Therefore, only the resulting "common sense" seduces us into feeling safe in a naturalistic attitude towards our own culture. Modern philosophy anchors the perceptions of "self" in our ability to think and reflect upon ourselves. That explains why we experience ourselves as the "same". After having different experiences and perceptions throughout our life time, we have the capacity to re-write and re-think

contradicting experiences (cf. Friese 1999: 31). Consciousness about ideology is dependent on the situation. We would prefer to acknowledge the ideological interest in the national anthem than to identify them in the structures of our own language (cf. Hall 2004: 50-5).

Even within one culture competing discourses exist and offer different possible subject positions to one individual. Individuals will never be subjected to all different positions. People identify with discourses that they do not choose in advance and have then to exclude others. Identification and exclusion are two sides of subjectivation. Identification is a tricky concept and at least as ambiguous as the term identity itself (cf. Hall 1996: 2). It contains elements of a psychoanalytic legacy facilitating better understanding of an individual's affiliation to certain categories. Furthermore, it is based on a person's acknowledgement of certain common origins or shared characteristics with other groups and ideals. Identification is able to produce solidarity among people, but identification does not allow subject to be "completed" at some time, nor is the identity one which has something that can be simply won or lost with identification. Because people are not capable of understanding their own "come into being", they cannot just leave behind their initial forming or change it to another. There are also determining forces in material and symbolic conditions of existence (cf. ibid: 2-3).

Everybody's existence is built in connection to others and individuals are subjected to groups through the location one lives in and the particular discursive practice of those group identities. Here I am referring to the family, but also to groups determined by gender, sexuality or "ethnicity". We obtain the sense of ourselves by means of how "belonging" to these identities is valued within the hegemonic structure of our environment. In other words, in the process of subjectivation we always invest in some positions, exclude others and experience ourselves in belonging and from distancing to others. At the very beginning, the child has to recognise her- or himself in distance to her or his mother. For example, even though one group has always to negotiate its meaning with "other(s)", the non-hegemonic "other" might slide into a "non-position", such as the "abject" position from Kristeva's point of view (cf. Lovell 1997: 13) or turns into the "body, that does not matter" in Butler's sense (cf. Butler 1993: 15). Such a position has to be understood from a very specific perspective. One (e.g. an illegal worker from a non-"white", non-"Western" cultural context) can be defined as criminal, a violator of the law (because of her/his illegal status in the "Western" country, the suspicion of foreigners possible exploitation of society's sources or to commit a crime), in one place (the rich "West"-European country) and a hero on the other hand (in the country of "origin", where the same person supports her/his family with money and where she/he is considered as somebody who "made it" to the

"West"). Unfortunately, the devaluation of a person who inherits a "non-position" in a particular context can also lead to the violation of the person's human rights. Her/his life and dignity might be less valued than the life and dignity of people who hold a "normal" identity-position. This is not only evident with the crimes and genocide committed against Jewish people before and during the Second World War, but also continues today with the treatment of refugees in "Western" Europe, or of the conditions of Roma-communities in contemporary Europe.

Kathryn Woodward (1997: 29) argues that "[i]dentities are forged through the marking of difference. This marking of difference takes place both through the symbolic system of representation, and through forms of social exclusion". Identities are not necessarily exclusively in opposition to others, but they are dependent on difference. This is partly organised by the classificatory system of social relations. Classifications are important for us to produce meaning (cf. ibid: 29). In "The order of things" Foucault (1966/2001) illustrates that classificatory systems are implemented in time and space. Knowledge is bound to a specific order. Foucault (ibid: 25) argues that it is not reason that changes, but the way things are related and how they can be acknowledged in certain cultures and eras. Hall (2004: 145) refers to Dyer and points out that ethnocentrism is part of the process of categorisation. Rules and values of one culture are more important than those of other cultures. Such unequal power-relations are not peaceful. They are rather part of the hegemonic struggle. The "Western" culture of the 19th invested great effort in categorisations and in creating hierarchic structures in favour of their own supremacy. Darwin's evolution theory is only one aspect that was used to legitimise imperialism, slavery and the exploitation of peoples, countries and continents. People were stigmatised and stereotyped as "the other" resulting in open discrimination against them (cf. Hall 2004: 153).

Douglas (1988: 12, see also Woodward 1997: 34) uses the notion of "dirt" to explain our tacit knowledge of belonging and exclusion. For her "*[D]irt is a 'matter out of place'*" (Douglas in Woodward 1997: 34). Humans usually attempt to organise their environment and remove dirt, but Douglas makes us aware of the relation of "dirt" to its (cultural) environment. Shoes, for example, would not be considered as "dirt", as long as they are not on our dining table. We would not store toiletry items in the bedroom or in the kitchen. "Food" is not considered as dirt, as long as it is not on our clothes (cf. Douglas 1988: 53). Many more examples could be listed here. What is important to highlight is that we develop a certain feeling, tacit knowledge, from which we simply *recognise* "dirt" (cf. ibid: 12-3). The term works as a category, which creates and sustains a certain order of what has to be included in a culture and what has to be removed, at least to another place. Closing down borders to stop migration into one culture is another example of the same process. It helps to avoid one culture

being "polluted" with foreign norms and values (cf. Hall 2004: 119). Culture then, is largely organised on a symbolic level, but closely connected to the immediate material existence of people. Not all of us are necessarily privileged enough to make any choice in the food we consume. The dimension of our economic status in the place we live in is ever present. Nonetheless, that does not undermine the symbolic order. Pierre Bourdieu (1987: 298-301) refers to the entanglement of food, gender and age with social status. There is a difference between children's food, men's food and women's food.

Dirt and food are only two ways of comprehending the wide range of classificatory systems, and providing identifications within available representations in support of the production of difference and hierarchy. Representations are important tools within classificatory systems and the game of difference. They carry cultural meaning and are crucial for a discursive production of identities and categories of identity. In the age of technology and global information, the media plays an important role in the distribution of representations and the selection of contents, aimed at specific communities. Media carry representation in language and pictures that obtain meaning through conventions. Nonetheless, such messages contain ambivalences. People do not simply understand the information around events or occurrences. They also read messages together with cultural symbols and myths. Therefore, media audiences are always able (consciously or unconsciously) to recognise "the other" in the media text (cf. Hall 2004: 112). Based on stereotypisation (cf. ibid: 143), representations are always incomplete, but very effective in binding strong emotions and evoking identification. Woodward (1997: 29) illustrates that classificatory systems in a modern sense embrace both, identity and difference, in "Western" cultural representations and divides them on the us/them-axis. As Foucault (1971/2003) makes us aware with his investigation of different power-knowledge networks during different historical periods, such an "order" or "classificatory system" is not eternally fixed. The social, cultural, scientific, political, etc. struggle over power can change the relation between the superior and the subaltern.

2.2 Bodies that (do not) matter[1]

"Look, a Negro!" It was an external stimulus that flicked over me as I passed by. I made a tight smile.
"Look, a Negro!" It was true. It amused me.
"Look, a Negro!" The circle was drawing a bit tighter. I made no secret of my amusement.
"Mama, see the Negro! I am frightened!" Frightened! Frightened! Now they are beginning to be afraid of me. I made up my mind to laugh myself to tears, but laughter had become impossible .... (Frantz Fanon, "A Dying Colonialism", 1995: 323-4)

What Frantz Fanon describes here is the witnessing of his own racialisation. As a Black person from Dominique he was educated in France as a psychiatrist. There he had to experience how his becoming of a Black body was related to a change in the dominant "white" majority perception on his identity and how this had material effects on life. While "Western" philosophy largely dismisses the body in theories of identity, the body enters the discussion when talking about deviations of so-called normality. Ethnicised, racialised, sexed bodies are put at the centre of attention. Dependent on the degree of marginalisation from the dominant view of a "Western" society, identities of the marginalised may be reduced to just that body without giving any meaning to such a person's mind. In contrast to that, the possession of the mind is held by privileged people and allows them to "gaze" at other people, while their own bodies are absent from the gaze of other people. In "Western" societies, and more importantly *to* "Western" societies, it is usually the body of a male, "white", middle class and heterosexual person that remains invisible and who is in the position to determine an aberrant position of others.

Keeping Michel Foucault's work on power in mind, a closer examination of the body-mind dichotomy allows certain insights into the construction of classificatory systems in order to maintain reality. If power is the main force in the creation of a certain world order, somebody or some groups must have interest in deviant bodies in order to sustain his[2] or their superiority in society. Suddenly it becomes important that some people can be recognised by their bodies and identify or are identified by them. Fanon points very clearly to the artificial moment of becoming a body through the definition of others. By saying "I made up my mind to laugh myself to tears, but laughter had become impossible ….", when constantly being "hailed" in that deviant position, he recognises the loss of his ability to articulate himself. This might be considered an

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1   Title is a reference to Judith Butler's book "Bodies that matter".
2   Here I want to emphasis the male interest as regards the question of superiority in society.

important example of how people are not able to define meaning, not even the meaning of their own identity, but always have to negotiate meaning in relation to others, always within a hegemonic system that legitimates some identities over others. Foucault helps us to better understand the struggle in hegemonic positions (cf. Ewald 1978: 10-1), when he says that every power, even repressive, causes resistance. Resistance does not mean class struggle, as we learned from Marx, but the counterpower of a single person, of groups and subgroups against dominant structures. At the same time Foucault (1978a: 35) defines the circulation of power that started in the 17th and 18th centuries as tricky in the sense that it is also productive – it involves the whole body of the individuals, it steers desire and aims, it enables certain types of new knowledge and thought, etc., while control of the whole population of a country is the focus. Here Foucault (1978a: 41) refers to the collection of birth rates, morality, migration and other demographic data from the beginning of the 18th century, which defines for the first time "the people" of one state. Such documentation imposed certain norms of how one person has to be within one state or culture. This type of power is very difficult to abandon. The single inhabitant becomes a complicity of normativity, when she or he accepts the rules for her- or himself and expects them also from others. If the ruling power defines "Black people", as Frantz Fanon observed from his own experience, as deviant, "normal" people tend to adopt that point of view.

Leaving aside who is actually targeted as the "other" and who is made visible as the "other" in a specific context, the representational work of "othering" affects those who are hierarchically privileged as well as those who are subordinated or even exploited within a certain system. It is the "white" man's interest to keep his dominant position. This is what Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) is referring to, when she asks "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak's work focuses on women in a postcolonial context. For her it is the contemporary "West" that has an interest in conserving "*[t]he subject of the West, or the West as Subject*" (Spivak 1988: 66). Connected to her concept of the subaltern is the very thin line between two possible meanings of representation: representation as "speaking for" and representation as re-presentation. In that relation Spivak (1988: 71) refers to Marx' opinion that people and groups who cannot speak for themselves must be spoken for, as he described with the case of the "simple peasant" who needs, from Marx' perspective, an educated advocator to push him (or her) out of his (or her) inferior role within class relations. Spivak points at the executive as the last instance in "speaking for" the society. Therefore, the executive has the power to subordinate society to itself. For various interest groups it is crucial whose voice is represented and who is spoken for, as well as whose voice can be found in mass (commercial or public) media and who is relegated to so-called alternative media (e.g. NGO or student media). Dominant representations in the media and in media reports are particularly influential in providing the imagination of one society

(cf. Thomas 2002: 159, cf. Morley 1992: 122). Furthermore, there is a distinctive problem when talking about individual and collective subjects, especially if people who have or are supposed to have collective interests have no collective consciousness (cf. Spivak 1988: 70-2). I am referring here to Black people in particular, who migrated from different countries to the "West" and who have different backgrounds, but who are considered as one community from a "Western" perspective. Spivak (ibid: 76) points at the violent gesture of the "West", when constituting the [colonial] other, imposing definition upon others instead of giving a voice to the "subjugated knowledge". Therefore the question could also be: "Can the subaltern be heard?" The so-called "First World" created a system of standardisations and regulation of which many might not be aware of, but which enables them to invest, gaze, talk about and speak for the "other".

The "Western" control over non-"Western" "others" or the "other" within the "West" might not result from the inability of those individuals and groups to speak for themselves, but rather from their inability to find words to be heard in the dominant culture, as well as the "West" may not be interested in listening to them. Foucault (2003: 33) says that leaving the secure position of a discourse is always connected to the fear of losing a specific order. From a secure "Western" social order, including "other" voices instead of speaking for them, may lead to unpredictable and unwanted consequences in the "Western" society. Therefore, every discourse is embedded in rituals, symbols, religious, literary or juridical texts (cf. Foucault 2003: 18). Discourses oblige people to accept rules and limit the access to the participation within a specific discourse. In each discourse truth is only acknowledged, if it is in keeping with the compulsory discourse of truth (cf. ibid: 25-6). As I explained before, subjectivation only happens through subordination to certain discourses. As a consequence, that process enables one to speak as a subject. Whenever discourse excludes some people or some groups of people, I would argue they are objectified within a certain context, unable to be heard. Frantz Fanon realised in the example above that he was increasingly thought of in terms of his skin colour. His acknowledgement allows us to see that identity is not fixed. Fanon describes a (French) society, where anxieties and hostilities towards Black people were in the process of changing to racism. First it was possible for a person who was considered as Black to work as a psychiatrist, later the Black skin colour was the only signifier of the person's character.

Consequences

The concept of discursive identity formations is a non-essentialist approach and offers a way of looking at identities as being in a *process* because of their entanglement in

different discourses. Foucault's (2003) work on discourses is helpful to understand the artificial, and nonetheless, powerfully naturalised construction of reality that materialises in certain ideas of identity. He leaves us with the unsatisfactory claim that there is nothing outside discourse. With reference to Foucault and Althusser, Judith Butler (2001) explains subjectivation, the sense of ourselves, as a double subordination. First, the subordination under discourse, and second the subordination of discourse under the subject. She defines human cultural abilities as being too complex to trace back to some determining factors such as biology (see Butler 1993: x). This does not mean she would claim that identities were something to take on and off. On the contrary, she raises awareness regarding the strong determining characteristics of one's subjectivation. Butler (1991) sees the performance of social roles and identities as an important aspect for the continuation of social and cultural rules. "Performing" in that relation means that the individuals learn social roles through the imitation and repetition of the behaviour and activities of people around them until such roles appear "natural" to them and they accept these roles as parts of their identities. In contrast to an Althussian model, Butler offers a possibility of explaining (social or cultural) changes with the subjectivation of discourses under the subject. Because individuals are exposed to many discourses in their societies, there are different possible combinations of subjectivation for a person. Change also occurs through the reiteration and performance of social roles carried out by different discourses and cause deviations and shifts from the initial model. From Butler's (1997) political engagement, she suggests that the exaggeration of traditional (gender) roles can be used to raise awareness of the artificial moment of identity, where performativity constitutes an important part of learning different social roles.

Nevertheless, the discursive way of understanding identities acknowledges that people may perceive their identities as singular and sovereign while they are embedded into fragmented and contrasting life scripts. Differences are therefore often evident in one's personal identity, as, for example, being Catholic and homosexual in Ireland. Usually such differences within one's identity are attached to differently accepted meanings. Some aspects of one's identity might be less accepted by the society than others. Being Catholic in Ireland is a "normal" identity position, while "homosexual" is often perceived as an "aberrant" identity position, which is also a discourse supported by the Catholic Church. Therefore, an Irish homosexual Catholic believer can be expected to have a troublesome relationship with her or his own identity. Furthermore, such a possible conflict is generated within a society that promotes a certain set of dominant rules along many other discourses as providers of identity. One extreme example is the case of Otto Weininger, who, as a Jew, wrote about the deviant identity of the Jewish community, in which he adopted the perspective of National Socialists (von Braun 2001). As a consequence of his, from his perspective, deviant identity, he committed

suicide and Hitler defined him as the only respectable Jew. However, differences or contradictions within one's identity are not always causing such striking personal problems, but the examples above should make the meaning of contradictions within one's identity from a discursive position clearer. Additionally, difference as an aspect of identity stresses the point that (individual and collective) "identity" is a contested area with many contradictions and a site of struggle over power.

Theoretical Framework – An Inquiry into Movements and Models

The development from a structuralist to poststructuralist[3] conceptualisation of identity in "Western" philosophy shows an increasing deconstruction of the subject and the deconstruction of the integrity of the modern idea of identity. From such theoretical perspectives, oneness of self(-identity) is no longer fixed a "truth" or (evolutionary, biological, historical, divine, etc.) ancestry (cf. Hall 1996: 4). In that relation Hall (1996: 2), looks for premises in which the concept of identity emerges and talks about the two most extreme poles of interest: *identity politics* and *politics of location*. In the following section, I provide some examples of identity movements and types of identity conceptualisation that aim to answer the question of how to articulate identity or subject positions and aim to show alternative ways of "thinking" identity from non-essentialist perspectives. In order to do so, I refer to political movements, to take up views of reflected experiences of displacement and discuss the limits of collective identities and origin. This is also the theoretical framework on which I have based my research questions and which I consider as crucial and constitutive for the background of this academic work.

1. Feminist Movements and the Re-Articulation of Group-Consciousness

A significant period in the history of identity was the emergence of "new social movements" in the 1960s, specifically after 1968 in the "West" (cf. Woodward 1997: 24). Due to the political situation of the time – the "East"/"West" division, the war in Vietnam, and the violation of human rights – traditional concepts of community were brought into question. Certain groups, for example women, Black people or homosexuals, allied in order to highlight the situation of disadvantaged and discriminated identities. These groups were politically active by demonstrating against the violation of their citizen rights and they pushed forward research that re-wrote history by taking in their perspectives on the dominant majority narrative. Such strong identity politics were able to mobilise political movements and raise awareness of the inequality of society. At the same time, identity politics forced people into simplified group characteristics.

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3   Generally Althusser is seen as structuralist, Foucault is sometimes identified as a structuralist or post-structuralist thinker, but personally never identified with that labelling, and Butler is usually perceived as post-structuralist.

Discussions from feminist movements at that time are interesting for the re-articulation of a rigid perception of identities, known as Second Wave feminism (cf. McLaughlin 2003: 1-2). While at the end of the 19th century the First Wave fought for the democratic rights of "white" women, property ownership, the right to vote or to obtain education, the Second Wave gave new insights into the patriarchal organisation of society and the production of power. Based on a Marxist idea of class consciousness, there was the attempt to create a collective consciousness among women. However, the idea of "as a woman I have no country", as Virginia Woolf claimed at the end of the 19th century was not to last for long (see Kaplan 1994: 137-9). It turned out that only a privileged minority of educated women had obtained certain rights, whereas most poor women, women of Colour or women from disadvantaged (socio-cultural or economic) areas did not have access to those movements and remained excluded from a so-called agency between women (cf. McLaughlin 2003: 4-5). Thanks to the legacy of Enlightenment – grounded on democracy, individualism and equality – women in the "West" initially tried to include "herstory" into the existing order until they realised their own blindness towards such values (cf. Woodward 1997: 24). The idea of global womanhood as a universal claim was soon disturbed by the critique of the "other" woman. Especially women from a US-American background whose age, ethnicity or social status deprived them from the idea of "eternal sameness shared by women" challenged women's politics. Resistance was also expressed by women in non-comparable (cultural) situations of "Western" women. They largely disagreed with the attempt of "Western" women (and men) to "free" them from their subordination to men (in Algeria or more recently in Afghanistan), or for instance, from their duty to be veiled (cf. Hof 1995: 9). Here the logic of democracy is detrimental to those who are not the "same" because it treats everybody as if they were the same (cf. Mc Laughlin 2003: 5). It forgot to acknowledge different needs or desires of individuals within the same cultural spheres and from or in different cultural contexts. Feminist movements (of middle-class, "white", heterosexual feminists) in the late sixties opposed and contested the "middle-class, "white", heterosexual" patriarchal *"Western"* society, but their demands were neither transferable nor applicable to the interests of all women in the "West" nor of non-"Western" women. At the beginning of the 1980s, many Second Wavers were at the stage of re-thinking initial demands and also began to realise the impact of "Western" universalism in "Western" and non-"Western" societies. They had learned that group consciousness cannot be reached by simply ignoring differences (cf. ibid: 6).

After the strong movements of the 1960s, feminism became more cautious. Claims for collective identity and common rights were substituted by the question "Who can I speak for", "Who do I include when I speak of 'we'". "Politics of location" instead of "identity politics" signified the new approach of formulating a less exclusive and rigid

idea of identity *and* difference. This notion also includes the reflection of one's initial location in society. In her "Notes towards a Politics of Location (1984)" Adrienne Rich exemplifies the concept of cultural situatedness with her childhood manner of writing the address on letters to one of her girlfriends: "*Adrienne Rich, 14 Edgevale Road, Baltimore, Maryland, The United States of America, The continent of North America, The Western Hemisphere, The Earth, The Solar System, The Universe*" (cf. Rich 1987: 211-2). This example should make clear that each person, also women, speaks from a specific location and cannot make universal claims on the situation of – in that case – all other women. There is a country, a culture, a history connected to the place where one comes into being and in which one can create (cf. ibid: 212). New inquiries point at the impossibility of women to generalise on global matters and go along with the understanding that humans are more diverse than it was possible to make universal claims on *acting like a human* and *human needs*. With such new insights comes a deep anxiety of speaking for other women and presuming own needs and experiences versus the empowering moment of women speaking together. More recently, saying "we" requires considering a location (cf. Eagleton 1996: 209). Women's experiences are set in plural to be able to go beyond universalism and to look at individual belonging to class, race, ethnicity or culture. Identity politics, for example, enable groups of (American, African) Black, Asian, Caribbean or lesbian women and others to raise group consciousness. Hence, the question of fragmentation cannot be excluded from a feminist theory (cf. Harding 1987: 8-9). As a woman with Caribbean descendants could be a lesbian with Black (or "white", or any other) skin colour, individuals are likely to belong to different group identities. Multiple group-belonging of a person consequently marks and delimitates differences within individuals as well as within groups. Therefore such a perspective does not support the sovereignty of the subject. Thinking about identity rather means considering which identity is first, gender, profession, location, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality (cf. Eagleton 1996: 209) or which of them prevails in which kind of situation.

The turn to the *politics of location* certainly influenced feminist theory. The new attitude made it necessary to situate the researcher's voice in scientific writings which was in contradiction to a universal and objective point of view. Background information on the author became common in feminist research and challenged dominant methodologies in science (cf. Harding 1987: 9). This is unlike practices in the 17th century, when the scientific authors started to disappear in order to conceal the discourse of meaning production. The "nowhere" perspective meant that scientific knowledge appeared self-evident and independent of a particular author (cf. Foucault 2003: 20). So-called "objectivity" releases the author from his (rarely her) impact on knowledge production and disconnects the research interest from personal history and affiliations. Donna Haraway (1991: 189) describes such practices as the *god-trick* – the

perspective from *nowhere* and therefore untouchable. Also Sandra Harding (1987: 9-10) is a crucial figure who argues against an objective stance that illuminates the collection of data. She considers the beliefs and behaviour of the researcher as part of the investigation and analysis of scientific work. Men and women (of different background) produce different characteristics of reliable knowledge. There are limits of accountability, not all experiences are exchangeable, and not all information is transferable. Haraway (1991: 184) suggests a re-formulation of "objectivity". As a substitute for the "law of the father", which is about split subjects, absent referents, deferred signified and the endless play of signifier (cf. ibid: 184), a women's methodology does not aim at omnipotence or immortality (cf. ibid: 188). It is not bound by the relation between mind and body, objectivity turns out to be particular, a specific embodiment of knowledge (cf. ibid: 190). Knowledge has a location, it is *situated* somewhere. Therefore one has to take responsibility for it and acknowledge that it is not an innocent position from which one sees the world, or talks about it, even if the position is that of a subjugated person (cf. ibid: 191-3). The closest geographic location from where one can speak is the body (cf. Rich 1987: 212). In fact, it does not matter from which position one starts to speak, it is important that she or he can be held accountable for her or his position, only the *god-trick* is forbidden (cf. Haraway 1991: 195). Any analysis privileges one vector of power at the expense of others and consequently means the others are attacked, but at the same moment a perspective from nowhere runs the risk of "epistemological imperialism" (cf. Butler 1993: 18).

Certainly, there are other – albeit few – self-critical fields of science besides feminist studies in the "West" that break with relativism and the common understanding of objectivity. In the case of feminist studies, it is interesting to see the movement for strong (female) identity has been transferred into a large and very critical, self-reflexive discussion about identity, agency and accountability, which contributes to a larger discussion of ethnic, racial, female, male, class (and other) identities on different poles of power. Women had to acknowledge that the mere claim of global sisterhood does not create a feeling of belonging among women. It takes more than just being a woman to speak for other women. Largely the women's movement did not fall into a new kind of essentialism. The step away from a movement of tolerance for specific identity positions and towards a picture of static identities is easy. Many feminist researchers were able to confront the arrogant universal position and took the challenge to avoid falling into the other extreme: that of radical constructionism from which objectivity as a perspective from nowhere was too easy to dismantle (cf. Haraway 1991: 184). The alternative between these two extreme positions was the so-called "strategic essentialist position" of "situated knowledge", which enables one to take responsibility for a very specific group interest (cf. Eagleton 1996: 211-3).

Since feminism is not about "global sisterhood", it was insufficient to generalise on women's epistemological achievements. Most of the discussion I embraced in this chapter stems from an US-American context and cannot be transferred into every other context. Non-English-speaking countries in "Western" Europe entered such feminist debates through different angles with different social, political or cultural backgrounds. Inge Stephan (2000: 63) makes us aware that the translation of Judith Butler's book "Gender Troubles" in 1990 into German initially caused confusion and resistance. Her work, which was part of the US-American theoretical discussion, was alien to a continental European context where feminism and postmodern thought were less accepted and lacked institutional tradition. While Butler's main arguments are against any kind of essentialism, a collective "we" of women or the "Western" logic of social organisation, she even questions the heterosexual matrix of society. German philosophy showed a significant attempt to fix identities instead of their deconstruction. 1989 was the year when many certainties of identity crumbled – the passing of communism was accompanied by an increasing development and professionalization of technology and information technology, or the anonymisation of identities in the web. Nonetheless, the theoretical implementation remained. Younger scholars took up Judith Bulter's ideas to re-work the definition of gender, whereas older feminists often strictly rejected the new point of view. This is symptomatic for the generational conflict between feminists in German-speaking countries and between clashing notions of identity (Stephan 2000: 64-9).

2. Subjugated Knowledge and the Critique on "Western" Superiority

Postcolonial Studies embrace a wide field of discussion: They deal with issues starting from the time of imperial colonialism of European nation states since the discovery of the American continent until the influences on present day societies. Colonialism was most obviously exploitive and dominant in the 18th, 19th and the first half of the 20th century. In the late 20th and early 21st century colonialism has transformed into more subtle relations to former colonies. A remaining dependency of former colonies becomes evident in the discussions regarding the debt release of so-called "Third World" countries, or in the various ways of talking about, dealing with and limiting the access of migrants to Europe. After the Second World War, European nation states "released" most of their former colonies and also refused any responsibility for consequences of their imperial ruling (cf. Hall 1999a: 431-2). Until today, "Western" (and) European countries use former colonies for their markets and take advantage of the economic dependency. Many people in former colonies suffer from the dominance of European countries on the infra-structure, social system, and organisation of culture.

They are also seduced into believing in the paradise of wealth of the European continent which they know from exported customs and media images. At the same time, Europeans turn out to be hostile towards the "unplanned" migration of people from those countries to Europe. Refugees from former colonies or already existing migrant communities in European nation states are treated with the disrespect and arrogance that Stuart Hall (1999a: 431) refers to, when he is talking about "the West and the rest". Often a distinctive discussion on a public agenda towards "the rest" is missing and prevents a broader recognition of problems in current politics, because of the homogenisation of the "other" in every-day representations.

Postcolonial does not mean anything outside Europe. It starts from Europe and returns at the same moment. Postcolonial Europe is closely connected to the European Union and its attempt to implement common rules and regulates laws regarding migration, usually in agreement with common strategies of the US. Postcolonial Studies are a critique of the present situation of "Western" policies and their effects on other cultures and places. Postcolonial Studies contain voices of the subaltern and subjugated in order to find different ways of seeing the world. They emphasise the need to point at interpretations of social and cultural events and developments that are not colonised by the dominant view of "Western" (European) countries (cf. Denzin 1999: 136-8). A postcolonial perspective stresses alternative views on society than the seemingly compulsory belief in a market-oriented and liberal democracy as the most advanced social model. "The West and the rest" enacts a dichotomy between so-called developed countries and so-called developing countries, the "Westerners" – North America, and Europe – versus China, Indochina, the Near East, Africa and Latin America (cf. Said 1979/1994/2003: 46). "*The former are recognized as rational, peaceful, liberal, logical, capable of holding real values, without natural suspicion, the latter are none of these things*" (ibid: 49).

Postcolonial Studies want to work against such simplified generalisations and are therefore not based in the centre, but on the periphery. They criticise the fetishisation implied in terms like Orientalism (as Edward Said wrote about) or Balkanism (Todorova 1997), or in, for example, African and Aborigine art or cultures foreign from the perspective of the "West". They raise awareness to the fact that such items support a kind of essentialism that makes it difficult to build upon positive representations of people alien to a European culture (cf. Ang 2003: 190). If terms already have a rich connotation in a certain context, it is difficult to find an individual voice, as Ien Ang (2003) notices in her position as a feminist, but non-"white" and non-"Western" woman. Difference in the context of nation state is too easily reduced to stereotypes of difference. Even if difference is somehow acknowledged, it is still necessary to take another step to look at what "*kind of difference is acknowledged and*

engaged" (Chandra Talpade Mohanty in Ang 2003: 193). As I pointed out earlier, the question of difference has to be taken seriously, because it neither happens in neutral spheres, nor does it deal with equal rights and needs. Instead, the question should be how those issues are to be addressed and by whom. Edward Said (1979/1994/2003: 53) illustrates that "Western" scientists started to establish different fields of studies – anthropology, ethnology, Oriental, Slavonic, East European, African studies and so on – to observe "the other". This is how they created categories, representations and imagination of how to think about "the other" from their point of view and prevented them from seeing their involvement with "Western" thought.

Homi Bhabha (1994: 85-92) illustrates with the concept of mimicry that resistance of the suppressed is not necessarily accessible to the dominating culture. Thus, mimicry emerges from the suppressive and regulatory force of the colonisers and plays with colonial power and knowledge. It goes along with the desire of the coloniser to reform the colonial "other" into a subject of difference that is the same, but not quite, because it is not "white". Mimicry is an ironic compromise of the colonised to be something that they are not, whether it is mentally or physically. Thus, it is a highly ambivalent character. For Bhabha, the colonial subject is partial because it is limited to and dependent on the representation of her or him offered by the authoritative discourse. However it is not, as colonial observers often want to understand it, a mere appropriation of the inappropriate. Bhabha (1994: 89) emphasises the view that "*the look of surveillance returns as the displacing gaze of the disciplined, where the observer becomes the observed and the 'partial' representation rearticulates the whole notion of identity and alienates it from essence*". Complete take-over remains impossible, because of the visibility of mimicry – a Black person can act as if she or he is "white", but not to look like a "white" person. Mimicry resists signification through the ambivalence of "act like, but look different" and is played out in many ways which are disturbing for the colonisers. The question of difference of representation is consequently also the problem of the colonisers, who are not able to fully control the effects of their disciplinary power. Subjectivation of the colonised is not quite the same as subjectivation of the colonisers and opens up imaginary for them as being inhibited by the colonisers. The fear of the dominator lies in the similarity of identity which is not the same, but also does not pretend or hide anything, as it is rather unpredictable in its genesis. Mimicry deeply questions the mere reduction of the colonial to an object of regulatory power, as a subject to racial, cultural and national representation – and it questions the history of superiority of "Western" society as an attempt to control and minimise the colonial subject to the "other". The racist implementation occurring in stereotypes, jokes, myths or any kind of statements are not the Freudian notion of the "return of the repressed", but a disavowal of difference

that would question normality, which Bhabha (1994: 91) describes as the "*twin figures of narcissism and paranoia*" of the "Westerners".

Bhabha can be relatively positive with his argumentation, because he remains quite abstract in his analysis, he neither talks, like Spivak, about the possibilities of expression, nor would he claim rights according to the needs and interests of the subaltern or, as Frantz Fanon, reflect his own position within a racist society. Nonetheless he opens a discussion on the multidirectional influence of different cultures in the struggle over power and he refers to fear of the dominant not knowing the colonised. Hence, I want to look closer, in the context of European nation states, at the means of dealing with migrants and how this occurs in order for migrants and other people who are considered as non-"Western" to protect their own identities.

In contradiction to a long history of migration and minority groups, many European nation states established their distinguished identities on the discourse of homogenous communities. In France, for example, for a long time the "right of place" granted full citizenship to incoming people on the basis that they would fully assimilate to the French culture, language and customs (cf. Melotti 1997: 76-9). In Britain the integration of foreigners was based on the "right of majority" (cf. ibid: 78-80). Migrant communities did not only receive the right to maintain a separate identity from the British or English folk, they were expected to remain separated from the dominant British/English group. In this way they would not be represented, nor would they interfere in the British culture on a public level. Germany (cf. ibid: 80-2), as another example, largely did not recognise itself as a country of immigration. Foreigners, who mostly came as so-called guest workers were also refused citizenship in the second generation. Hence, citizenship was granted on the basis of the "right of blood" (cf. ibid).

Migration is not a new phenomenon, whereas in Europe, people have emigrated to other countries rather than immigrated from other countries. In the 1940s for example, foreigners partly from non-"Western" (European) countries were "imported" in order to compensate the male absence in the reparation period after the World War II. Many foreigners at that time arrived as guest workers and remained in the countries with their families. Compared to the situation today, immigration of the 1940s was easier to integrate, as France, for example, preferred to invite people with Latin or Roman roots as guest workers (cf. Modood 1997: 1). Another reason for a less troublesome integration of the 1940s-migrants might have been the possibility to control the number of incoming people as well as the free choice to invite people from abroad. Next to other cultural components and differences to contemporary social values, one has also to keep in mind that mass media today have a crucial impact on the

representation of foreigner and are able to construct the "other" in powerful manners[4]. After the end of the Cold War, the old "East"-"West"-division of Europe crumbled and left Europe with new identity questions. "Eastern" European countries were not included in the conceptualisation of a "Western" defined European identity (cf. Kürti 1997: 30). The "rest" of Europe, which was previously kept safe behind the closed borders of the Soviet bloc and former Yugoslavia, was imagined as invading "Western" European countries after 1989. The first people came in search of better lives or because of the wars in Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Kosovo, political disturbances in Armenia, Afghanistan, Czech Republic, Georgia and other countries. Later the "Eastern" countries became applicants and new members of the European Union and had to be re-considered as contributors to a sense of Europeanness. Europe is also surrounded by the fastest growing populations: the Middle East and Africa. Many migrants arrived from former colonies and remain as a magnet for other asylum seekers, refugees and migrants to join them. Together with an increasing gap between rich and poor, those who have access to modern (information) technologies and labour markets and those who have not, the demographic background of people coming to "Western" Europe has changed within approximately 20 years (cf. Ponzanesi 2002: 205). An uneven growth of the world's population affects the political situation of "Western" Europe, it has obviously transformed it from a continent of emigration to a continent of immigration (cf. Brah 2003: 613-4). With this backdrop, I want to closer examine two examples from a German and Austrian context and to look at specific practices of demarcating difference.

The first example is taken from Harald Welzer's book *Transitionen* (1993), he is a ("West") German sociologist, who observed the personal integration of 48 immigrants from East-Germany to West-Germany. The participants were employees of a VW-factory in Hanover in early 1989. Welzer and his research group accompanied them over a period of two years, over which time they conducted three interviews with each person. The first interview sessions took place shortly before the change of the system in East-Germany and they were accompanied by great enthusiasm from "Western" researchers about "their" East-German participants, who were quickly defined as "winners" (cf. Welzer 1993: 79-83). Welzer's interpretations are interesting because of his self-critical reflection on the outcome of the first interviews. He stumbled over the overwhelming positive reactions of the research-group and searched for deeper explanations before coming to the conclusion that he and his team were deeply

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4 For further readings see: Karmen Erjavec' (2001) essay on the representations in Slovene print media on the Roma-community supporting discrimination among the Slovene inhabitants; Jelka Zorn's (2005) essay on ethnic citizenship in Slovenia, where she also stresses the role of mass media in order to prevent non-ethnic Slovenians to obtain citizenship.

influenced by media reports at that time. Immigrants from the "East" were represented as the parasites of the West-German social system, motivated by consumption and wealth, but because of different (working-) attitudes in East-German education and companies they proved incapable of fulfilling "Western" working criteria. As a result of the researcher's implicit attitude of "knowing" people from East-Germany, they were positively surprised that none of their prejudices were visible in the first interviews. Then Welzer went back to the original interviews and started to analyse the conversations, commentaries, spontaneous questions and reactions of the interviewers and interviewees. He found out the researchers' reactions to their interviewees carried their opinion and ideas on life in East-Germany. At the same time the East-German participants seemed well informed about the current discussion about them (at that time the media was repeatedly reporting about them) and tried to avoid stereotyped images in their self-representation. Welzer went even further and argued in his later analysis that the term "winner" was based on the underlying assumption that life in the East is a "lack" compared to life in the "West". Coming to the "West" consequently meant "winning" something and ignored the losses of those who were forced to leave their country for different personal reasons (cf. ibid).

A similar example in a different context can be found in Emo Gotsbacher's (2000) discourse analysis on hate-speech against foreigners in Austria. He works on prejudices and stereotyped imaginations in *common sense* conversations of Austrians about foreigners. He defines structures of social control in existing social systems in the tension of indigenous and foreign groups (cf. ibid: 62). Gotsbacher's examples are taken from "out of court settlements" (außergerichtlicher Tatausgleich). My main focus is the family case with an Austrian and a Serbian immigrant who negotiate their problems with a mediator. Generally, regarding the conflict the "foreign" party explained motivations and reasons for acting in a very detailed manner mostly to argue against prevailing stereotypes of foreigners (cf. ibid: 68-9). In contrast to that Austrians usually positioned themselves as the caretakers of law and order, no matter whether they were prosecutors or defendants. Gotsbacher (ibid: 62) sees such behaviour grounded in the self-evidence of the *common sense* of people who are bound to the available discourses of a society to explain their own situation and from which perspective they define and discriminate against alien social perspectives. Such every-day knowledge has to be accepted and understood in the social context the conversation takes place. Often "in-groups" of a culture or society do not have any other categories than stereotyped representation of foreign groups or people, to which they can refer. Often they take tacit knowledge for granted. The case taken out of Emo Gotsbacher's (ibid: 62-7) essay is interesting because stereotyped images are not only employed within "in-groups", but directly confronted with people who are affected by the stereotyped image upon them. The conversation to which Gotsbacher refers is

between Mr. Bogdajarević from Serbia who was attacked by Mr. Pichler, an Austrian man. Conspicuously Mr. Bogdajarević had to defend himself against the prevailing stereotypes of Serbians before he could explain why he was in need of being protected by the police and not his counterpart. The two men's acquaintanceship resulted from a relationship between Mr. Pichler and Mr. Bogdajarević' sister. Hence it was easy for Mr. Pichler to come up with well-known stereotypes of "Balkan" family relations in order to constitute "a constant interfering of Mr. Bogdajarević into their relationship" as the reason for his attack. Interestingly enough, it was the sister's decision to end the relationship, she was divorced from her Austrian husband before she met Mr. Pichler. Although such background information contrasted with Mr. Pichler's allusion of the "Balkan habit" of male relatives being worried about the virginity of their single sisters or cousins, he did not feel the need to explain that point. It was much easier for him to bring existing stereotypes against Serbians into the conversation. The unequal position of the two parties during the court case was obvious. Through the dominant structure of the common sense knowledge, Mr. Bogdajarević had to be clearly distinguished from the negative characterisations of a so-called "Balkan mentality" and it was to be easy for Mr. Pichler to come up with well-known stereotypes without being obviously hostile to foreigners. Mr. Bogdajarević could not have pointed to the Austrian man's violations of rules, as it was vice versa possible for Mr. Pichler. As he was not part of the Austrian "in-group" or dominant majority group, he had much more to lose. If they had lost the trial, the Serbian family might have lost their permission of residence. Therefore, Mr. Bogdajarević was simply forced to reflect on his self-representation (cf. ibid).

The two examples are based in different contexts. One analyses the process of interpretation within a scientific situation and reflects on the embeddedness of researchers in social, cultural and public discourses (Welzer 1993) and the other is concerned with the question of how available categories of "the other" are played out in every-day life (Gotsbacher 2000). In both cases the "foreign parties" were familiar with possible prejudices against them and were able to understand expectations and allusions the dominant culture had of their culture. Both times, for different reasons, they tried to resist such simplifications. With reference to Alfred Schütz' work, Welzer (1993: 82-3) recognised that foreigners stand outside the regime of knowledge of the dominant culture. They have to learn artificially what "insiders" of one culture already know. Inside one group *thinking as usual* is not reflected, because it is taken for granted as a normative rule. Foreigners who learn about those structures acquire an additional knowledge in reality and this highlights what Postcolonial Studies understand with the "*subaltern know better*". Nonetheless, such *double consciousness* does not push foreigners into a more powerful position, they also have to recognise that in-groups would not change their thinking as usual, because of them (cf. ibid: 83).

Usually dominant groups expect newcomers to assimilate into their culture and feel disturbed or threaten by the *deviant "other"*. To some degree, newcomers of one country can use their cultural competences to find a voice to claim rights or work against stereotypes within the dominant culture. In the example of Gotsbacher (2000: 63-4) it turned out that Mr. Bogdajarević and Mr. Pichler had had a kind of friendship before the court case emerged. Despite that, Mr. Pichler used impersonal categories of South-"Eastern" foreigners to undermine his former friend's position in that particular situation. Welzer's example (1993: 84) contributes to a reflection on a researcher's responsibility and points at their involvement in the hegemonic reality of one society and shows that they are not automatically conscious about their embeddedness into *thinking as usual*. Within these examples the claim within Postcolonial Studies not to allow generalisations and the closure of categorising in a scientific context is crucial. Braidotti and Griffin (2002: 230) agree on the fact that homogenisation is the basis of many, if not all, European nation states and the degree of awareness towards such exclusive tendencies will influence the kind of identity Europe is able to achieve.

Today, switching on television news means witnessing several attempts of politicians – struggling, discussing, and negotiating – in finding solutions for measurements to naturalise foreigners or to allocate residence permits, carried out on local, national, or European levels. "Integration" has become the key word, when talking about settlements of migrant communities in a specific country. This usually concerns the question of: who is able to be integrated in what kind of culture? Which group of the incoming people can assimilate and therefore become invisible in a "Western" framework5? This is not so much intersected with questions of race as it might be in Great Britain, but with ethnicity. Minorities, target groups of xenophobia or racism are not marked by a skin colour other than what we would usually consider to be "white". Insofar, premises of exclusion are less obvious. In their essay "*Whiteness and European Situatedness*" Rosi Braidotti and Gabriele Griffin (2002: 221-36) contrast the "safe" position of "white" Europeans to be targeted at or reflected upon racialisation and racial categories with a relatively long history of reflecting "whiteness" as a racial category. The critique on "whiteness" has come from postcolonial and postcolonial/feminist writers since the late 1970s. The discussion is better known in the US, where culture is assumed to be based on multiculturalism and not on ethnic homogeneity like in Europe. Therefore, the issue was touched on in Europe only in the 1990s (cf. ibid: 224-6) in confluence with the post-communist era.

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5   Of course, as Avtar Brah points out (2003: 623), not all migration issues are under a "Western" prism, but "Western" imperialism and capitalism has largely influenced the present situation of many countries and peoples. Further, the book aims to be particularly located in a "Western" (European) setting.

An increased migration flow constituted racialised violence against incomers from the "East". Later, Europe was confronted with "ethnic cleansing" during the war in Bosnia. Breda Gray (2002: 266) analyses exclusion taking of Irish women as an example. She shows that in contrast to Black people, nobody would have recognised them as different from the dominant group in Great Britain as long as they did not need to speak, because they look the same. Other demarcations of "white" groups lie in the way they dress, the size of the families, the smell of their food, the music, accents, names, etc. Often, difference is combined with a notion of backwardness. Migrants are often expected to fail in capitalist societies, as they come from countries that did not go through the cultural process of Enlightenment and the Newtonian revolution (see Said 1979/1994/2003: 47).

Braidotti and Griffin (2002: 226) understand the notion of "whiteness" in Europe as being deeply connected to anti-Semitism and the use of science to establish the definition of the subjugated other as the biologically inferior race. Talking about "race" and racism in a Black and "white" dynamic is, however, not sufficient to analyse the complexity of exclusion and subordination since "whiteness" alone did not save homosexuals, Roma, Jews or communists from the gas chambers. Braidotti and Griffin (2002: 229-31) argue that sexual identity, religious affiliation, political persuasion and ethnic identity could all, as happened in the Nazi regime, disturb the imagination of homogeneity and result in their members being excluded from the dominant culture or constituting other "homogenous" groups. There is no doubt that many people feel they belong to a specific group, but homogenisation is a dangerous accomplice to racism. Culture, not race, creates impassable differences between groups, but it is still attached with the belief that some biological aspects contribute to these differences (cf. Baumann 1999: 52). Insofar, the meanings of the terms colour and ethnicity sometimes overlap. Gerd Baumann (ibid: 57-67) explains ethnicity as a relational concept. People can cross those boundaries of ethnic belonging at some points or become ethnics due to a shift of meaning and power in one society. Also issues of race are increasingly reflected upon in the term ethnicity. Unfortunately, the practice of apartheid carries the persistent belief that "*god has created color and attributed with a specific culture*" (cf. Baumann 1999: 60). Then, interracial marriages and/or children from interracial couples challenge the discourse of "purity", and work against oppositional concepts of race as well as culture. This creates again, new discourses of the "pollution" of pure identities in essentialist ways of thinking or being able to open restricted dualist perceptions (cf. Hall 2004: 127). Braidotti and Griffin (2002: 233) define opening of rigid and essentialist perspectives on identity as extremely important in an era of genetic research and bio-technology, which could introduce new eugenic politics, to provide people with working strategies based on the politics of location and anti-essentialist notion of identity politics.

Exclusion in contemporary Europe mixes biological, national and cultural argumentation lines of difference (Braidotti 2002: 229). After the end of the Cold War and the ethnic conflict in the Balkans, a new war divides the world in two. With the significant date of 9/11 2001, dominant representations employ once more the "West and the rest"-ideology as Stuart Hall defines the "Western" dominance on cultural interpretations and values. Edward Said (1978/1994/2003: xix-xx) sees European accomplishment to US-American politics legitimated through modernity, Enlightenment, democracy or freedom as sources of powerful normativity. Contrasting such values, Muslims are narrated in close relation to totalitarianism and terror. Stories about them are feeding the bookstores of "Western" societies since 9/11. Said (1978/1994/2003: xx) argues in his new foreword to his famous work "Orientalism" in reference to the Iraq war in 2003 that: "*[...] without a well-organized sense that these people over there are not like 'us' and didn't appreciate 'our' values – the very core of traditional Orientalist dogma [...] there would have been no war*".

Stereotypes and homogenisation of Muslim groups are employed and reiterated in many public representations and are not yet reflected as a cause of racism against various people and groups unified under a religious faith. Postcolonial research and reflections help us to understand power relations embedded in dominant discourses. With the discrimination of Muslim communities, there comes the attempt of certain groups to disconnect from images of deviation that continuously force them into visibility, either by attachments of sexuality, lack of civilised behaviour or economic poverty. Reflections of superiority and inferiority as well as claims on power are important to understand the present situation in Europe. These reflections accompany negotiations within European countries and also between old and new members and applicants of the European Union.

3. Hybrid Identities and Diaspora

Cultural Studies offer another angle from where I want to discuss and analyse questions of identity. In many respects, as Lawrence Grossberg (1999: 44) makes us aware, Postcolonial Studies and Women's Studies as well as communications studies, pedagogy, anthropology, sociology, Black and ethnic studies or literary studies contribute to and widen the field of Cultural Studies or provide grounds for different specialisations (as it happens, when starting from a national or ethnic location). Norman Denzin (1999: 118-9) explains the open character of Cultural Studies in their various aims, interests and emphasises that they are grounded in British, American, Latin American, Afro-American, Canadian or Australian traditions. Above all, the paradigm of Cultural Studies was crucial for the contemporary understanding of

culture, which is very useful for the later analysis of my research. Some locate the definition of culture in the "cultural turn" (cf. Winter 1999: 8-10), a definition of *culture as a process*, because it is not understood as homogenous or essential, but signified by the struggle over power and meaning. Examples of field research in Cultural Studies help to understand that culture is not consensus based or reliant on common shared norms and values. Culture is rather a constant struggle of various interests supporting and supported by the categorisation of people into classes, gender, age, ethnic belonging within specific power relations and in an attempt to maintain certain norms and values. Culture then is not seen as separated from power relations, in the same way as power relations are not the cause of culture, but constitutive for the kind of culture in a specific time, space and history. From that point of view it might be easier to understand why culture is a constant process (not progress, *my emphasis*). This necessitates looking at people's everyday life and experiences and recognising different group interests/identities behind constructions of meaning. When targeting a European identity, such a view point offers crucial possibilities to understand the relations of a rich diversity of meaning, related networks and disagreements, while simultaneously helping us to understand why so many Europeans do not feel comfortable with the present interpretation of European culture. Furthermore, culture does not mean high culture, but the sum of all available expressions of societies to express and experience their common cultural experiences (cf. Kögler 1999: 220). But, to return to Grossberg (1999: 44-8), one definition of Cultural Studies does not exist. There are several traditions due to the strong demand of the discipline to acknowledge and work with changing (socio-geographical, historical, political, institutional, intellectual) circumstances. From that rich background, Cultural Studies might not be recognisable by their issues (which often target popular culture) or texts. Their specificities are rather found in the methodology of staying (relatively) open for various influences in a defined cultural field.

It is particularly interesting for my own research to look at the perceptions of postmodern and poststructuralist thinker and identity formations, where global influences, national/regional/local belongings, migrations, etc. confront differing concepts of identity on an every-day basis (cf. Grossberg 1999: 47, Hörning 1999: 101-4). Karl H. Hörning (199: 111) sees here the possibility of leaving an essentialist, homogenous view of traditional dualism, putting the relations between different interest groups in the centre of observation, facilitating an understanding of the dynamics within a cultural frame of reference without reducing them only to process or only to effects of power relations. Stuart Hall (1988 and 1997), Paul Gilroy (1997, 2000a and 2000b), Marie Gillespie (1995), Avtar Brah (2003), Sandra Ponzanesi (2002) among others offer useful research as a starting point for thinking about cultural identities and change, when looking at formations and negotiation of identity

in connection to migrants and second generations of migrant communities. Diaspora identities and hybridity are often celebrated as less essentialist concepts from which homogenous self-imaginations of, for example, national communities can be critically revisited. Thus, Cultural Studies acknowledge "normality" as a powerful discourse in culture in order to maintain a certain status quo (cf. Hörning 1999: 89). Those who are inside specific structures are less likely to be aware of the values and norms they are subjected to, whereas "*[...] those who are simultaneously in and out of the mainstream group often make the best sociologists, judges, and other professionals, precisely because they are different and at the same time like everybody else*" (Meštrović 1994: x).

Earlier in the text I provided some examples to support that argument, when showing how (feminist) identity politics transferred to critical reflections of one's own position through the protest of those who were excluded, or how foreigners have to deal with a double consciousness of their old and new culture's realities and "know better" than in-groups of one society and might even endanger the self-evidence of the dominant majority group by mimicry, in being the same, but not quite the same. However, I share Karl H. Hörning's precaution (1999: 89) that we might be tempted too easily to theorise the "mixed", the unusual, the conspicuous as the "better" location of a more critical and self-reflective access to culture and construction of identity. With the reflection on diaspora and hybridity I want to analyse the impact and the consequences of such knowledge, to touch on contemporary struggles of the European Union and discuss the danger of closing identities to a possible hybridisation.

Indeed, statements like that of Stjepan Meštrović suggest that intellectuals alien to or alienated from the country or culture because of their intellectual activities widen perspectives on culture and often contribute to scientific circles with new concepts, theories or methodologies. Similar effects do have migrations in a larger sense, like Sandra Ponzanesi (2002: 205) points out, "*migration has always represented the most unsettling and yet enriching force of human civilization. It has redesigned geopolitical boundaries, economic structures and cultural identities*". In this connection the term "diaspora" and "diaspora identities" established concepts of displacement in a material sense and possible intellectualisation of existential dispersion (cf. Ponzanesi 2002: 216). Yet in this work I have largely been targeting an intellectual diaspora as a position to destabilise essential notions of culture, identity and belonging, which would best be explained, as Hall sees it (1999a: 435), in the attempt of writers, scientists or new identity politics to "translate" between cultures, disconnect "home" from territory or national boundaries which allows – not necessarily in a physical sense – a travelling perspective on identity. At the same moment, in its materialised sense, diaspora is exactly about settling down, building roots somewhere else or is

connected to the hope of returning one day to the country of "origin" (Brah 2003: 615-6). People's migration in Paul Gilroy's (1997: 318) perspective is often a forced one due to *"wars, famine, enslavement, ethnic cleansing, conquest and political regression"* and is, as Gilroy argues further, *"more than a voguish synonym for wandering or nomadism"*. Global trends contribute to larger movements through multinational corporations, trade liberation, revolutionary information technologies as well as the distribution of products and production. Sandra Ponzanesi (2002), Avtar Brah (2003), Paul Gilroy (1997, 2000) or Stuart Hall (1988, 1999a) acknowledge diaspora as situated occurrences, differing in the motivation of migration and circumstances of settling in the new culture. Sometimes migration does not necessarily mean a permanent change of location, some people return, if the political or economic situation, for example after a war, has changed. Others decide to stay in the "new" community, while in some cases people do not have a choice, if they want to survive and they have to leave their cultural context. They even take the risk of paying traffickers to reach another location.

Diaspora comprises identity positions (Hall 1999: 435) that are disentangled from their so-called "homelands", which are attached to the places and traditions they come from without the illusion of coming back. For that reason members of diasporic displacement have to abide by new rules and values, but they do not necessarily abandon initial cultural heritage. New migrations cause new displacement and new diasporas. Hence, diaspora is not to a homogenous experience of people living in diaspora. Avtar Brah (2003: 614) talks about tendencies of "feminisation" of diaspora due to new working conditions, which make more women leave their countries. She points out that diaspora experience is strongly intervened with class, religion, racism, ethnicity, gender or age, embedded in shifting cultural, religious and linguistic boundaries, as well as journeys across geographical and psychological borders (cf. ibid: 629). Hall (1988: 164) refers to people of dark skin colour in Great Britain as an example and illustrates that only talking about "Black experience" as an aspect of diaspora would be too simplified, although it is a very common way of unifying Black people's experience. Hall talks about the British context where "Black" communities from "white" people's perspective are summarised as singular, no matter if they were first, second or of following generations of migrants. Even people with other non-"white" skin colour across differing cultural and national backgrounds are included in the notion of "Black" communities in a British framework.

Stuart Hall (1997: 53-6) as a scholar who emigrated from Jamaica to London analyses the Caribbean case as another interesting example for intersecting discourses of identity. Contemporary Caribbean inhabitants are from different parts of Africa (as well as from India, China, Lebanon, etc.), they speak other languages, know differing

religious or cultural traditions and are "unified" in a "Western" setting with memories of Europe, America and of course Africa. No matter, if they are Black, "brown", "mulatto" or "white", they are connected with an African heritage, despite the fact that the "original" Africa has ceased to exist on the Caribbean islands. It is only present through the imagination of what Africa means in the Caribbean space and is often the most repressed site of identity. An Afro-Caribbean identity and the consciousness of being descents of "slavery" were only re-discovered in the 1970s (Hall 1997: 55). Bob Marley is one famous figure in the context of Caribbean diaspora and its African relations (Gilroy 1997: 337-8). In his lifetime, he and his band performed in numerous countries all over the world where his music and messages remained unforgettable. He managed to carry a transnational image, where notions of identity or more specifically his identity, could not be fixed. He could signify a Jamaican or a Caribbean, an African, a pan-African for somebody, and he goes across cultural and national borders by the empowering messages of his texts that speak to marginalised groups all over the globe.

Another kind of diaspora experience is the focus of Marie Gillespie's (1995) research on migrant communities in Southall/West London. She investigates the possibilities of media to create and support diaspora consciousness. Her target group of investigation were young people from heterogeneous Asian groups with different social, class, caste, religious and linguistic backgrounds. With the help of modern information technologies migrants can stay in contact with relatives and friends, even if they live 1000 of kilometres away from them and support a symbolic sense of belonging (cf. ibid: 6). From a distance people can talk about the latest movies or arrange marriages with the help of video letters. This does not mean that those young people lack an understanding of their location in London, but they constitute it with the attachment of temporality. Without any doubts, a new cultural settlement changes the self-imagination and identity of the young people who recognise contrasting attitudes to a "Western" way of thinking and the effects on their own belonging (Gillespie 1995: 16). At the same time media representations and increasingly cheaper mobility support a "re-invention" of mother-, father- or homelands and incorporate the imagination of blood lines into the experience of diaspora identities (Gillespie 1995: 21).

The second, third and following generations of migrant communities in one country face a different situation. Unlike the incoming generation, they have no direct cultural connection to the country of their parents or grandparents. Stuart Hall (1999b: 96) analyses that using the example of his son, who was born in London. He could not say he was from Jamaica, even if one part of his identity belongs there. He has to learn to tell his own story of belonging and find out about aspects of the Jamaican cultural reality to include it into his perception about himself. Hall argues that diaspora

existences are narrated by stories, memories, but also through cultural re-discovery of their stories. And yet, we step again onto the slippery grounds of opening and closing identities. Hall (1999b: 97) thinks that as long as people can find support in their initial cultural location and are able to explain their cultural belonging, without imagining themselves within these places, the concept is not endangered of falling into essentialism on the notion of "origin" in a determining way.

Diaspora is connected with the effort of "translating" into a new culture or between two and more cultures. Diaspora experiences are not homogeneous, because of the different ways of translating. The word diaspora itself is largely associated with the Jewish diaspora. Jewish people were collectively forced to leave their country at one specific point in history (Glissant 1992/1997: 345) and they spread all over the world without losing their Jewish identity. Together they carried the idea of returning to Israel and included that imagination as one part of their cultural identity. Compared to that, Black diaspora is a result of forced slavery and works on different premises. People do not come from one African country to which they would imagine returning to, nor could they maintain a distinctive African identity. Nonetheless, communities from African diaspora also find stability when imagining themselves as "chosen people" as Paul Gilroy (1997: 319) makes us aware. They adapted biblical narratives to create a bonding between Black people beyond national differences and aimed at political and individual freedom rather than for religious reasons. In contrast to Jewish people, who never lost their concept of Judaism, the African people's forefathers and mothers had to leave countries that are to a large extent still in existence, but have transformed to something else. People were forced not only to translate between cultures, but to transfer into something new as well (Glissant 1992/1997). The last point in particular is applicable for many recent and future diasporas. Countries of origin have or will have changed over the years, because many people leave in political crisis or unstable situations. Similarly, migrants have or will have changed through their experiences abroad.

Somewhere at the junction of translation and transfer, the concepts of diaspora and hybridity overlap. Diaspora is about displacement, mingling with different notions of history, space, homes, and cultures. Hybridity might be closer to the consequences of diasporic experience, maybe the every-day life of diaspora identities. Hall (1999a: 435) describes hybrid cultures as such that have ceased to belong to a specific "home" or "*Heimat*" and work against old perceptions of purity or ethnic homogeneity. Even though foreigners are usually interested in getting along with indigenous groups, they will not lose their old identity or completely assimilate to a different culture. Within an English/British society, Hall (1988: 164) sees these tendencies expressed in the articulation of "new ethnicities" caused by a limited scope of representation in

dominant English media. Traditionally Black people were objects of representation and not re-presented by themselves, which allowed the dominant English society to exclude them from national imagination like "Englishness". The present-day politics of contesting such stereotypical images focus on the access to and the relation of representations in British society, which is important because representations do not only play a reflexive, but also a constitutive role (cf. Hall 1988: 165). The aim is, similar to the politics of location in Women's Studies, to show that there is no single "Black identity". As I pointed out earlier, there are many different Black identities without a totalising essence between Black people, who might not be Black in their own understanding, but "blacked" Asian, Philippine "brown" or from any other non-"white" dependency. The new "politics of representation" goes beyond the battle between Blacks and "whites" over power and homogenisation of people who "all look the same". New ethnicities do not require eternity in matters of solidarity between them, at the same time old "essential" ideas of ethnicity haven't ceased to exist (cf. ibid: 166-7). Frequently British society is pointed as being racist because they struggle about issues of race (cf. Phoenix 1995: 27) and Black people who target issues of racism have not necessarily overcome old ideas of, for example, the "good" "Black" and the "bad" "white" subject (cf. Hall 1988: 166). Hostile and discriminating behaviour of the majority against incoming or already immigrated foreigners provokes essentialist identity politics on both sides and affects old and new identities. Racist attacks on diaspora communities can cause a defensive attitude among migrants against racism, again on racist premises (cf. Gillespie 1995: 17).

Hybridity and diaspora identities do not only offer the possibility of working against totalitarian, essentialist or fundamentalist forms of identity. The most demanding challenge can be found in the closure of the dominant society as a counter-reaction to larger migration (Hall 1999a: 436). Many examples could be listed here: the success of right-wing populist parties and leaders all over European nation states, stricter conditions for asylum seekers and applicants for visa and citizenship, etc. Such tendencies are often seen as signifiers for the slow transgression of the European Union from its democratic foundation to a "Fortress". Supported by a "West and the rest"-ideology, there is an increasing number of people from former colonies constituting the "rest within the West" (Hall 1999a: 431-2). The demarcation of diaspora often goes along with a "majority/minority"-axis based on unequal power relations (Brah 2003: 620). If one thinks of the practices of the former "West"-European imperial empires or nations like Iraq, or more generally, if one thinks of the treatment of women, it becomes obvious that the term "minority" does not only define a smaller number of members than that of the majority. No matter what the reason, people become minoritised and are pushed into inferior positions. Document control, policing, racial violence, inferiorisation and discrimination have become a part of the

daily life for the members of those groups. As such, minoritised groups are attributed with ethnicity and practices of difference, (re-)enforcing eternal and impassable boundaries between different groups (cf. Baumann 1999: 62).

As a counter-reaction, many post-colonial countries or communities, as well as so-called second and "Third World" countries have re-discovered their cultural "roots", which provides them with powerful counter-identifications to dominant "Western" values. Independence movements in Asia, India or Africa have relied on such homogenous viewpoints. The Middle East is increasingly troubled with fundamentalist movements from an Islamic background, working against democratic foundations. A never-ending conflict between Israel and Palestine (cf. Said 1974/1994/2003: xvii-xviii), suicide bombings, terrorist attacks, 9/11, the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan all seem to support the notion of Samuel Huntington's "clash of cultures" within an increasingly globalised world. Hence, Edward W. Said is very critical about this notion, because of its essentialising effects on a "West"/rest dichotomy. Theoretical demands can offer a different access to perceived cultural dichotomies. Instead of maintaining difference, diasporisation or hybridisation should aim exactly at these specific locations of translations, on displacement and dislocation, without losing the sense of the particular location where identities are negotiated.

As Edward Said, Avtar Brah (2003: 618) does not believe in any eternal differences between cultures, for her it is the most interesting to investigate some particular binaries and to find out when and why they were shaped and how they were stabilised. She thinks that such opposition can be imagined differently in different contexts (Brah 2003: 619). Hence diaspora and hybridisation should not lead to a concept based on unified experiences, but to a critical concept analysing power relations, acknowledging the specificity of culture, communities, diaspora, translation and power. And because diaspora and hybridity work on the relations of other categories such as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, "race", culture, generation, age, etc., it can help to make premises on which one identity is narrated or valued as visible (Hall 1988: 168). To change the meaning of one category certainly affects the relation between other categories, therefore race or ethnicity cannot be looked at without considering the implementation with, for example, gender relations, sexual orientation or social statues. In a European context, traditions, cultures, histories are thick and multiple. Therefore, discourses can have unexpectedly different meanings from one context to another. To define European identity based on diversity would require investigations into power relations on local levels. From the background of studies on diaspora and hybridity, one could find it useful to work on a diasporic notion of the "self" as Rosi Braidotti (2001, 2004, Ponzanesi 2002: 215-6) suggests with the "nomadic subject" or Deleuze and Derrida with the idea of "becoming minoritarian" (Braidotti 2004: 131). Idealistically a

position separated from the notions of home would push people away from a natural ease of belonging and overcome determinist cultural concepts. Especially for the understanding of the chapters – the nation state and Europe – such considerations are crucial. Through the book, I will return to some points and ideas in more details.

Consequences

The distinction between Women's or feminist studies, Postcolonial Studies and Cultural Studies is not clearly defined. Often, one scholar could be recognised in two or even all three disciplines – Avtar Brah, as a feminist from a postcolonial setting contributed with her work on diaspora also to Cultural Studies, Paul Gilroy might be known to Cultural Studies students as well as to anybody engaged into Postcolonial Studies. Feminist Studies then, the theoretical outcome of struggles over identity, is implemented in the work of Cultural Studies (Hall 1996a: 1-17) and Postcolonial Studies, when not the critique on previous identity politics comes from a Postcolonial discourse. Next to intersecting elements, the approaches are highly interdisciplinary. Insofar, a feminist scholar could be known as a linguist and contribute with her research or theories from Cultural Studies and Postcolonial Studies.

However, this is not about labelling, since all fields theorise against essentialising and simplifying representations. I would rather claim that a common interest of all three disciplines lies in the focus on identity matters within existing power relations and considerations of deconstructing a "white", masculine and heterosexist order (cf. Braidotti 2004: 132). It might lie in the different identities a scholar in feminist, Postcolonial or Cultural Studies has to take on that makes them invest into less determining concepts of belonging and identity and new articulations of the same or vice versa. The complexity of the issues made such studies impossible to be reduced to one single paradigm or field. This is a difficult project, if one considers that dominant representation systems do not leave space for "non-identities" or identities that are different from the ones already known. People need to know whether one is female or male, Black, "white" or of any other colour, homo- or heterosexual, religious or non-religious, in order to know how to talk to somebody, although meanings attached to such characterisations change in different cultural, national, social, class, etc. discourses. Here we enter one crucial problem, introduced already at the beginning of chapter one: When defining new existences or constructions of identities, there are no new terms to talk about the renewals (cf. Hall 1996a: 1), new articulations can easily be covered by old connotations and allow essentialist interpretations as well as new identifications. Therefore, it needs more than a feminised, a colourised, ethnicised, or minoritised person who is engaged in questions of identity to go beyond binarist

notions of difference (cf. Hall 1988: 166). Such consideration is again addressed in all three disciplines. A change within the symbolic order would be needed to cause a shift between the relational constitution and between elements of ones identity and negotiations of new positions. The "identity in crisis" discussion occurs to no surprise at the moment when old guarantees started to crumble, when Women's movements in the "West" have watered down distinctive role models of men and women have questioned the nuclear family ideal, not only from a theoretical perspective, but also through an increase in divorces, single parents, the transfer of work to low paid (mostly immigrant, illegally employed) workers, the need for child care and homes for old or disabled people (see Hall 1996a, Woodward 1997). Such changes require re-definitions of "needs" or "care" in shifting social structures as well as new notions of "identity".

Thinking about European space and the building of a European community, reflections and observations of shifting identity relations are crucial in understanding the increase in conservative politics and the closure against new identities and cultures. Identity issues then, do not only matter on an individual scale, nor are they determined or negotiated on individual levels. Today, societies are mainly organised within nations, without nationalism as the embracing force of individuals "*no society could possibly be anything more than an aggregate of individuals who are perpetually hostile to each other*" (cf. Meštrović 1994: 9). On the contrary, the political project of the European Union tries to overcome nationalist organisations of society and grounded hope and great expectations among intellectuals, politicians and peace makers to establish less exclusive communities. In the following chapters, I will analyse the bridge between the concept of a nation state, nationalism, the European Union, national and European identity within an idealist democratic framework. I will sketch a relational network of insiders and outsiders, the visible and the invisible, to define a certain structure of power, and in the end, I will turn to Slovenia as a nation state and a member of the European Union negotiating on discourses of identity.

In Search for Identity – European Nation States

[T]o claim that the nation-state is an all pervasive model of state organization [..] is almost an understatement, since it is the only way that any state is organized. For those that, until recently, did not operate within that model, it was assumed that the ticket to civilization and modernity included in the journey through the process creating a nation-state. The price was contingent on many circumstances, the primary one being whether the territory claimed by the future nation-state was ethnically mixed, making possible the emergence of multiple, mutually exclusive territorial claims. The price of becoming a nation-state also depended on the degree of linguistic, religious, cultural, and historical diversity of the inhabitants of the territory. (Daša Duhaček 2006: 298, sic).

The first nation states, which are comparable to modern states, emerged around 1500 AD in Europe and served purposes – more or less successfully – of overcoming internal boundaries. Often, different ethnic communities were embraced by the nation state, which created a kind of superethos (cf. Baumann, 1999: 31). The idea of the modern state was then born in the 18th century and connected state organisation with a particular identity. It is nationality that people understand as part of themselves, when they identify with their nation, participate in cultural traditions and are proud of products, customs or characteristics, which they perceive as nationalized. They are willing to fight, and even more, to die for "their" nation (cf. Anderson 1988: 142-5). This love that people have for their nation is called nationalism, which is considered a pathological behaviour in the eyes of many cosmopolitan intellectuals since it is likely to turn out as a destructive, exclusive or defensive force. The phenomenon of nationalism that comes into play in the 19th century is not as old as it might seem to be.

National awareness and nationalism gained importance when Christian religious orders and aristocratic hierarchy in Europe were no longer accepted and therefore, had to be substituted by something else. According to Foucault (1999: 166-7, 193), it was necessary for such a process to re-organise established power relations, the concept of governing a society and after being "released" from a sacred order, it has to be based on the question of "Who are we?". For analysing such a transformation in society, Foucault (1978a: 75) introduces the triangle of *power*, *law* and *truth* as important principles to understand regulating dynamics in a society. A specific perception of the individual (truth) requires a certain economy of discourses on a public level that is able to introduce and legitimate new or existing power systems. At the same time, it requires a set of rules and laws according to the current understanding of truth in a particular society to engage people in the continuation of that kind of truth (cf. ibid: 76-7). Feudal societies in medieval Europe were ideologically grounded in ethic codes

of Christianity. People were called into engaging with salvation (*Seelenheil*) and Christian pastors functioned as organs of control in societies. Church power, Foucault (1999: 168-9) argues, had the function of making people believe they would find their happiness within a specific truth for which they had to obey the rules set by the church. In this way, it was also the individual's interest to respect the rules and values of the church and they did not have so much the impression that they were forced to follow such a set of rules. Thus, this particular economy of power was successful, as it turned individuals into advocators of its underlying truth, and they accepted the Christian truth as their own truth. The controlling power of the pastors was therefore not necessarily based on punishment, but on the distribution of values and contents and on the social control of individuals who ensured each others respect of the rules.

From the 16th century onwards, the political and legislative power of the state was slowly taking over church power. The new mechanisms of power did not focus solely on affecting and involving people on an individual level with political "truth". Discursive state power also addressed people on the more general basis of class, or groups. State power is consequently based on two different mechanisms: it works on an individual level and it is totalitarian power at the same time. Foucault (1999: 169-70) defines the incorporation of Christian churches power that addresses and includes people on an individual level as a mechanism of governing into the new state system as "new pastoral power". While the Christian churches focus on after-life, the nation state presents itself as a care-taker of the national collective and works on improving living-conditions and health *during* the life-time of the inhabitants. The substitution of a divine order with a secular system also lead to a slow shift of responsibility based on a different kind of knowledge nurturing the set of believes. New knowledge of medicine or hygiene makes individuals, not God, responsible for their health condition and therefore triggered new forms of social surveillance. Although changes of the system were significant at the end, individuals did not perceive as being radical. In contrast to taking advantage of individual self-control, the police apparatus, as part of the executive, was new in the 18th century and ensured social control within the nation state on an authoritarian level based on punishment. With the complexity of modern societies, such institutions grew from the 18th century onwards and also turned into more subtle forms of controlling instances as: the family, medicine, psychiatry, the school system, employers and so on (cf. ibid: 170-1).

As outlined earlier, the mode of power in modern societies, organised in nation states, can hardly work regressively alone, or reduced to bans and censorship (Foucault 1999: 173). Power in respect of the nationalist movement was grounded on the idea of liberating individuals from suppressive and authoritarian rulers, and aimed to substitute the previous truth about state systems based on hierarchy and punishment as

the regulating forces. The nation state as a location of power, truth and law (Foucault 1978a: 78) needs to offer strong identifications (power), provide a working state apparatus (law), and, similar to Christian church power, it needs to make individuals believe in the truth of this organisation of society. Since the nation state rules a large number of people, it would need a far too complex bureaucracy in order to control them all on an individual level. In contrast to feudal state organisation, where control was exercised by the landlords, the members of the national collective need to identify with the nation in order to make the particular power system work. For the understanding of the development and change of systems, it is important to understand that it is power that is always in the process of changing, it is power that changes societies and as a consequence, power works differently in human collectives at different periods of time. In "Western" societies today, the legitimisation of states is closely connected to national identity, which is rooted in a modernist perception of democracy and the individual, and originates to an ideology as well as through a movement (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 16). It consists of a hierarchical order of available discourses within societies and is deeply connected with the institutional practices of legal state organisations, along with the socio-economic processes (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 284).

Only a few states have been continuous administrative entities and geographical locations from 1450 AD onwards (cf. Billig, 1995: 28). Some nation states like Poland have changed their shape, size and location various times, others, specifically in the so-called "Balkan" area appear and disappear, they sometimes even re-appear, and sometimes they do not. Germany, for example, (cf. Räthzel 1995: 185) did not have a central administration until the year 1871. Before that, it was divided in different states, where inhabitants could chose in which way they identified with the German lands. In the case of an Austrian national consciousness, historians see different points of origin, some localise emerging national consciousness in the 15th and 16th century, others in the year 1867 with the announcement of the Austria-Hungarian Empire, or, as a third point of origin, the resistance against the Nazi-regime and the following emigrations from 1938 onwards (cf. Wodak et al. 1998: 104-5). Other nations exist without ever having a state (like the Jewish state over a long period of time) (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 11). Slovenia, which I deal with in this book, is a young independent European state only 19 years old[6], but which has a long history of Slovene identity. Dependent on the source, the first Slovene state dates back to the 7th

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6   Only 13 years old at the time the interviews were conducted for the study.

or to the 9th centuries. Mostly right wing voices[7] refer to the Carantania as the first Slovene state that is considered as the forerunner of the later Duchy Carinthia that unified parts of Slovenia and Austria. This source of "origin" for both countries is highly contested among them even today (orf.at 2006; Geary 2002). Another reference is made to a very short period of time – 869-74 AD – in which all parts of Slovenia were comprised in a state for the first time. This 'state' was reigned by Bavarian, Frankish, Czech and Habsburg masters (cf. Milanovich 1996: 26) until (this is highly contested by Austrian right wing policy) the 6th century and as the province of Carantania. The first independent Slovene state formation dates from 26 June 1991 (cf. Milanovich 1996: 26). Except for a short period from 1809 to 1813, when Slovenia was the Illyrian Province under Napoleon, the territory of contemporary Slovenia was continuously part of the Habsburg Monarchy from 1335 until it crumbled in 1918. It included for the first time all parts of present Slovenia. From 1919 it was part of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Slovenia was the administration unit Drava, but was dependent on the central power in Belgrade. During the Second World War, the state was divided between Germany and Italy. After that, until 1991, it was one republic within the Federation of Yugoslavia (ibid: 28-9).

By today, nation states turned out to be the most successful and dominant systems of social organisation in (post-)modern times and appear as "natural" to the majority of their inhabitants. Belonging to a nation is likely to be perceived as a destiny and is often grounded in the belief of common decency or in shared culture of the national collective to which one is bound through birth (cf. Baumann 1999: 31). The concept of a nation state is based on the belief that the national boundaries and the national belonging of inhabitants completely overlap. Some people, as Nira Yuval-Davis (1997: 11) points out, will always be assumed to belong to another national collective. Membership to a state cannot be seen as simply voluntary, as Renan postulated in 1882 (cf. Renan in Räthzel 1995: 162). Especially in the wake of nation building, many people were forced into one nation, while others who wanted to belong in a particular nation were rejected (ibid: 162). When looking at "Western" European nations, the US or Australia the founding moment of a nation was often artificial, despite different theoretical backgrounds and attitudes, as theorists like Anderson (1988), Gellner (1997), Hobsbawn (1983), Hall (1999a), or Yuval-Davis (1997) agree. In many cases, the founding moments of nations were a fight between highly educated upper-class people over power than a movement of a people that formed a state. For this reason, the nation state frequently came before nationalism was established among

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7   Right wing voices in Slovenia refer to this state as a source of origin for Slovenia, Austrian right wing discourses are opposing this view by emphasising merely the links to the Austrian past (see e.g. Standard.at, 2002, or Patrick J. Geary (2002: 17)).

the inhabitants (cf. Anderson 1988: 159-60). This type of model which explains the relationship between the nation state and nationality is not applicable to national consciousness and national movements outside the "Western" historical framework. This line of argument stands in contrast to the examples of the Palestinians or the Kurds and other nations without legal state systems. Nationalism and national consciousness were also essential for the later demand for independence in the case of Slovenia. I will return to the different meanings of "nation" later, in order look at different (pre-)conditions, motivations or movements of nation building in "Western" and "Eastern" nation states.

1. "Origin" of the Nation State in the "West"

Looking at "Western" genealogy of nation states first, there is no theoretical foundation that would claim the existence of any determining premises for the building of a nation state. There is nothing like an "objective" criterion (cf. Billig 1995: 24, cf. Räthzel 1999: 162, cf. Wodak et al. 1998: 22) such as language, religion, or geography that can be considered as determining for the borders of a nation state. Depending on the specific political, historical or cultural situation of a nation, the processes in which a nation state emerged and the relation to other nations, particularly the relationship to the neighbouring countries, supported the importance of some components over others and influenced the way nationhood was constructed within a specific state. Thus, the particular version of nationality invited the majority of people to identify with the nation, whereas some others were excluded from the specific nationality. Austria, for example, did not emerge as a nation just because of the language; Germany has clearly a larger German speaking community (cf. Pelinka 1995: 28-30). Switzerland does not have a unifying language either, since it consists of German, Rhaeto-Romanic, French and Italian speaking communities. In contrast to other European nations, Switzerland is not troubled by religious differences, although there are significant numbers of Catholic and Protestant believers. This considerably works, because one half of the German speaking and one half of the French speaking population is Catholic, and the other half is Protestant and shows that such identifications do not necessarily challenge the nation state as the more general unifying category (cf. ibid: 30). Belgium and Lebanon are based on bi- or multi-nationality. Catalonia and Scotland are different cases. They are not independent nations, but aim to establish regional autonomy rather than announcing a separate state (cf. Nira-Yuval 1997: 16-7). People can also live within one state and consider themselves as nationals of another state, and others are recognised as an ethnic minority within a particular state. The specific relations between various communities, interest groups, the minorities and the majorities, immigrants and "indigenous" inhabitants are constitutive for the stability within the

national community and the way nationality as a provider of belonging is able to include or exclude different groups of people. National identities, from this perspective, are forms of social organisation caught up in historical processes of nationhood.

Ruth Wodak et al. (1998: 20-1) refer to two concepts "Western" nation states traditionally take up in order to legitimise their existence and from which they are able to maintain differences to other nation states: the idea of "nation of will" (*Willensnation*) is a French legacy and is based on the political commitment of a community to a certain state formation such as democracy. In contrast to that, the definition of a "nation of culture" (*Kulturnation*) locates its strength on the solidarity between people through a shared culture. Nira Yuval-Davis (1997: 12) extends these distinctions with another analytical category: it is the "*mythical notion of origin*" (*Volksnation*), next to "*the myth of common culture*" (*Kulturnation*) and "*the myth of equal citizenship in states*" (*Staatsnation*). According to Wodak et al., the political commitment to a state is evaluated as "good", whereas solidarity based on origin or culture is connoted with "evil", because of the exclusive tendencies it is perceived with. The authors (Wodak et al. 1998: 23) see the differentiation between "good" and "evil" grounded in the tension between the contrasting concepts of Germany and France. As I explained earlier, Germany consisted of many independent states over a long period, where ethnocultural similarities paved the way for a later common nation. Contemporary France deeply connects solidarity between its citizens with the revolutionary movement against aristocratic suppression at the end of the 18th century. This suggests a political motivation behind the force of belonging, while culture is seen as an expression of the nation (ibid: 22-3). The German concept of culture is closely connected to bloodlines and therefore to race, which explains the "evil" component of such a conceptualisation.

Nora Räthzel (1995: 167) acknowledges that nations are always constructed in two ways: either through culture or blood lines or through a political order. She describes the latter as being essential for the emergence of a dictatorship like National Socialism in Germany. She argues for the artificial construction of both concepts and highlights in support of this that not even Hitler believed in the mere existence of racial division and exclusion based on race. The Nazi-regime considered Jewish people as dangerous and counterproductive to the German national entity because they did not behave in a state-loyal way. The imputed self-interest of Jewish people was considered as exploitive and their political attitude was paradoxically narrated as capitalist *and* socialist. This means, Jewish communities were referred to as revolutionary on one side and responsible for unemployment on the other side, which were both seen as contraproductive to the social order of the community. Hitler employed the concept of

race to maintain a certain order within the state and to legitimate the execution of the targeted enemies (cf. ibid: 167-8). However, the two concepts are not clearly demarcated. Ruth Wodak et al. (1998: 23-4) analysed the French self-perception as being a "nation of will". Based on Francis Emmerich's work on post-revolutionary France in 1965, they show that the term *Kulturnation* was implemented into the concept of the French nation. Believing in a common culture does not necessarily need to correspond with the background of people living within the state. It is the emphasis of one concept over the other, which makes a nation appear like a cultural or a political entity (cf. Pelinka 1995: 28). In the end, the differentiation between concepts of citizenship and concepts of culture, between "good" and "evil" state formations becomes blurred.

A state that bases membership on citizenship is, on the surface, the most inclusive mode for joining a collective (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 24). Unfortunately, citizenship requirements depend on a set of hierarchic rules that function as preconditions for one's eligibility for citizenship rights. Usually there is an implicit agreement on the categories and characteristics of possible incomers to a community based on socio-economic obligations as well as on race, ethnicity or religion. The same treatment cannot be blinded out in French politics. It would not be fruitful to maintain a clear distinction between different concepts of nations since it is most unlikely that pure forms of one model ever existed (cf. Emmerich in Wodak 1998: 25). In the opinion of Ruth Wodak and Sonja Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 285), the deployment of one state concept is usually dependent on the emphasis of one discourse over another. This is expressed in the support of public speakers, its importance on the public agenda, the participation of people, and their definition of belonging to a state or culture.

The state systems in "Western" nation states are mostly democratic in their constitution and according to Anton Pelinka's (1997: xii) work, they claim they are "*antithetical to the politics of missionaries*" and would not promise something like "truth" to the inhabitants. From such a perspective, he sees democracies as being entitled to power because the democratic system allows different political and interest groups to find consensus based on their political aims and not based on "truth". As soon as one discourse or one attitude is promoted as the "true" system of values, it moves onto the slippery ground of totalitarianism and authoritarian regimes with limited cultural expressions. With this in mind, one might think of the attempts of recent alliances between the United States of America and some European nations to democratise totalitarian systems like that of the Taliban in Afghanistan or Iraq. Such military attacks are usually justified in the name of human rights and egalitarianism. Democracies do not necessarily act "democratic", when it comes to their relationship with non-democratic nations.

Taking a democratic commitment seriously, most democracies would struggle over their own existence (cf. Pelinka: xiii), at least when interest groups within the political agenda, based on ethnic, religious or cultural matters, are strongly contradictory. In these types of situations, there needs to be something such as a consensus, a basis, perhaps even the "truth" from which the political struggle over interests is able to function. In doing so, nation states cannot rely solely on their political commitment. In order to maintain national specificities, nation states need the differentiation to other nation (Wodak 1998 et al.: 25). "Good" nations, for example, have to rely upon negative stereotypes against others (and/or positive ones towards others). Non-essentialist theorists frequently employ the term "myth" to explain the misconception of such self-imaginations (ibid; Yuval-Davis 1997; Hall 1999a), without undermining the material effects of such images. The mutually exclusive self-understanding of France and Germany is crucial in understanding the relations between the two and their influences on a European identity, especially as core members of the European Union.

1.1 Imagination as a Side of Collective Amnesia and the Role of the Mass Media

One well-known concept explaining the commitment of individuals to a nation and their perception of belonging is related to Benedict Anderson's (1988) work on "*Imagined communities*". Many theorists who engage with concepts of collective identities – among them Ruth Wodak (1998, 2003), Stuart Hall (1999a), Nira Yuval-Davis (1997), Rosi Braidotti (2001) or Kathryn Woodward (1997), refer at some point to Anderson's concept. Anderson's (1988: 49) basic idea is that communities, larger than their members are able to know each other through face-to-face contacts, have to *imagine* their sense of community because most of the members will never meet. There has to be a shared idea of what, for example, citizens of one nation have in common (cf. Woodward 1997: 18), and a sense of what makes one nation different from other nations (cf. Hall 1999a: 414). Benedict Anderson (1988: 52-4) sees the emergence of such *imagined communities* in conjunction with advanced media technologies in the print sector in the 16th century. From this point onwards, the increasing distribution and broadening reach of newspapers played a crucial role in homogenising local accents and establishing one national language, and in constituting solidarity between people (Woodward 1997: 18). As such, national communities do not have something essential in common, but they are *imagined* as distinguished entities. The negotiation of a particular identity is often connected with surrounding countries or at the junction of differing cultural zones. The *imagination* of one community privileges the community character over other markers of identity like the

region, class, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, etc., and is often based on a particular relation with other aspects of identity. Such a symbolic order helps members to accept the political framework of the society, identify with particular moral and ethic rules, as well as to constitute feelings of belonging to a certain nation (cf. Gilroy 2000a: 99). National identity is therefore generated over inclusion and exclusion. While nationality may offer a rich source of identification for those who are included, people and groups of people who are outside the national discourse consequently face difficulties or even hostility when attempting to enter a particular community (Woodward 1997: 18). Here I certainly address the problematic situation of migrants who come from so-called non-"Western" countries, but also people who are excluded from certain rights, for example, due to their sexual orientation. Although the concept of *imagined communities* clearly outlines "nationality" and the nation state as constructed, it also allows us to understand that it is the kind of imagination inviting people to believe in an essentialist community character.

Mass media are crucial for the notion of the *imagined community*. Besides unifying effects on national languages, they are able to fill the imagination of people with national stories, and representations (cf. Anderson 1988: 47-8). With new technologies in the print sector, information has become cheaper and easier to comprehend for a larger circle of people. Around the end of the 19th century, newspapers were able to unite a large group of readers in the act of reading the same contents in newspapers (cf. ibid: 45-6). More recently, TV and radio stations bring together even larger numbers of members of one nation with the same programme at the same time. However, such a viewpoint is far too simplified to explain processes of identifying with provided representations. This is supported by an extremely powerful industry of cultural representations. Unlike a very pessimistic attitude towards the broadcasting sector and its ability to manipulate the audience and spread around ideology taken up by the Frankfurt school (Adorno and Horkheimer 1993: 29-43) in the post-WWII era, communication theory has encompassed a perspective that reduces the viewers to passive mass consumers. Mass media is not anti-democratic per se since media reception is no longer based on a simplified and one-dimensional model of encoding and decoding messages (compare Fiske 1990: 6-23).

Every – non-authoritarian – culture provides various discourses in the media, from which people can produce meaning and in which people are situated. Therefore, media texts leave a wide range of possible meanings for the audiences (cf. Morley 1992: 76-7), although one media text is then open to many differing and even opposing interpretations. The content does not allow endless possible decoding, which would otherwise completely undermine its manipulative effects (cf. Kellner 1995b: 13) and would not explain the important role of media in constituting, supporting and carrying

the national project. Brigitte Hipfl (2001: 56-8) offers a point of view that allows us to understand the relationship between media representations and the individual by arguing that media content corresponds to our unconsciousness. Media contents involve our emotions and support our attachment and agreement to particular norms and values in a society based on hierarchical power relations. By doing so, the media carry implicit or explicit social expectations that correspond with our own social status from which we can explain our position in relation to social and cultural ideals. At the same time, it is important to understand that media representations – neither the information nor the entertainment sector – do not correspond with the "real" social formation of one society (cf. Maletzke 1996: 122). They rather transport stereotyped images to the public in order to reach a wide audience.

When Benedict Anderson revisited his concept of the "imagined communities" regarding the print sector in 1998, he acknowledged that he had missed two important points in his initial concept (cf. Anderson 1998: 120-1). He discovered that reading media texts always appear "natural" to the recipient. This effect is independent from incomplete readings of the news or a particular understanding of media contents and therefore makes media reality part of social reality. Furthermore, Anderson explains that newspapers have created a standardised language of talking about events and assume, for example, that the term "revolution" in South America is understood in a French context similar to the meaning of "revolution" in French history. The media, Anderson argues, would be able to attach terms that differ due to their historical information with the same meanings. By producing a grammar of representation, media language suggests that nations have something universally in common. The close relations of mass media to social life, including political practices, is due to the fact that mass media play such an important role in our every day lives (2003: vii-viii). Norman Fairclough picks up a similar line of argument as Anderson and refers to the context of advanced mass media, where he observes the effect of "technologising" or colonising language for a specific purpose. He even goes further by saying that economic or political profit makers who follow certain political aims are usually aware of such effects and use them for their purposes. Certain aims of the producers hidden in linguistic or semiotic effects are incorporated in public representations. Hence, I would argue, that this influences the perception of the viewer's reality. While media produce a simplified version of reality, and neglect especially those who are excluded from media production (cf. Kellner 1995a: 60), they are very successful in evoking natural realism through pictures and sound by which they cover ideological distortion in the representational work (cf. Hall 1999c: 96).

Foucault (1999: 189) sees communication technologies as a very specific mechanism for introducing a particular type of power. From his point of view, communication

always has certain aims. Even if one person informs only one other person with any content, it will change the field of knowledge of the other person. Communication becomes an important currency in which signs and symbols can be exchanged. The media carry such messages to a large audience and generate a certain language from which meaning has to be decoded. Although media messages do not determine meaning, they are at least influential in providing a specific perspective or world view. For that reason, media ownership is a very sensitive issue, particularly if one considers the powerful impact of content regulations and the consequences of its possible abuse. It is not surprising that media conditions are important for a society and require a high awareness of media ethics in democratic organised states. The model based on liberalism and free market policies, as promoted in the USA, has also reached "Western" European states. Critical voices like Douglas Kellner (1995a: 336) doubt that such a system would support the reflection on distributed representations, because of its commercial foundation and the market-driven interest in contents and styles. In contrast to this, the public broadcasting sector in "Western" European states was excluding people by charging fees for using the broadcasting media over a long period of time. Today, public broadcasting in Europe increasingly has to compete with private media companies. This supports the plurality of opinion and circulation of discourses in societies, but also the commercialisation of contents. A monopoly of any media, such as a state media monopoly, would jeopardise democratic values and leave room for associations of the authoritarian regimes, where all content is strictly controlled. As a side note, Austria was one of the last "Western" European countries with a public broadcasting monopoly until the European Court instituted legal proceedings against the state in 1993 (cf. Dorer and Baratsits 1995: v).

Besides a flourishing media market, the establishment of a public school system and an increasingly free access from the 18th century onwards, was another important development that allowed the European states to take influence on their cumulative nationalised populations. Public schools were extremely effective in implementing a national language and in taking over the curricula of history in order to fill it with stories and legends of the national glories. In this way, the nation states offered identifications which were very similar to religious services, but on the basis of the new secular states. From Gerd Baumann's perspective, such politics were also supportive in generating a strong emotional involvement of the people with their nation (cf. Baumann 1999: 37). Also Foucault (1999: 181-2) locates in state-related institutions, such as the schools, the greatest organisational change from monarchies to national communities. The structures of monarchies were complex and required a huge apparatus of control and surveillance. Modern nation states developed a much more effective, but also more subtle, system to reach people within one nation. National

discourses in modern nations can reach any aspect of one's life and involve one in the national system.

Anderson (1988: 55-8) acknowledges, that the development of nation states could also have been possible under different circumstances. For example, in the case of the United States, resistance from slaves and Native Americans happened without a common written language or consciousness of a shared history. Next to the role of media, another aspect of the imagined community is the idea of a specific pastness in which societies emerged. The kind of "pastness" does not necessary correspond to the "real" past. The past has multiple histories and starting points to explain the status quo of a society. In chapter two, I referred to the example of women who attempted to include "herstory" in the dominant representation of history. In contemporary (populist) political discourses, a certain version of pastness is used as a tool to narrate national identity. This makes it possible that the social past is changing as fast as the present discursive circumstances and strategies are required (cf. Wallerstein 1988: 78). The process of re-writing history is particular for cultures with long[8] historical memories, and is not necessarily valid for a nation such as the US or Australia, where a community had to be invented without referring to a common history. In Hall's (1996b: 250-1) point of view, identity constructions are always narrations of historical and cultural events that are referred to as original sources and are in fact, emphasises within numerous historical events being taken as points to maintaining some kind of origin. Searching for pastness in a non-exclusive way should, according to Woodward (1997: 18), include the question whose past, whose version of history is incorporated in the official narration of the nation, and who is interested in transmitting a specific story to the population. Aspects of the past are selectively used to support and implement a certain imagination of a nation (cf. Wodak et al. 1998: 24).

Sometimes, if two nations claim the same symbol as the origin of their current nation state, the essentialist idea of nationhood in each country becomes disturbed and, from a conservative nationalist perspective, this has to be defended or protected. As already indicated before, Slovenia and Austria are fighting over separating their relationship to the region of Carantania. Carinthia, the most Southern province of contemporary Austria and bordering with Slovenia, is embracing the former Carantanian territory

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8   Here it is difficult to locate "long" in a specific time frame. The United States, for example, are not imagined with the history of "Native Americans" whose history goes beyond a specific documented or "remembered" starting point, but on the history of European migrants. Although the discovery of the continent of America – 1492 – could be considered as being a "long" time ago, there is too much written evidence of the diversity of the people in the country. However, the most applicable definition of what "long" means in context with national history is a time before written documentation of history.

which is highly symbolically loaded and therefore often at the centre of any disagreement. The conflict is cumulating from time to time, whether it is because Slovenia printed the Prince's stone on the notes of their transitional currency in the time after the declaration of independence in 1991 or in integrating the same symbol on their 2-cent-Euro-coin, both of which has provoked great resistance in Austria (orf.at 2006). In Austria, this conflict is reflected in the attempt to "monopolise" history by putting great effort in the denial of being related to Slovene history. One example is the refusal of recognising a shared pastness with bilingual street signs in Carinthia that is currently stagnating over the discussion regarding the final number of signs needed. This number is based on a particular percentage of Slovene speakers living in Carinthia today, while neither the percentage nor the criteria of how to assert the number of speakers is really agreed on by the different groups negotiating this matter. However, it is a struggle over minimising the number of individual speakers of the Slovene language as their first language and reducing any legacy related to Slovene or Slavic ancestry to those who speak the language. Another example concerns the dealings of the discovery of pre-medieval settlements in Carinthia. The one archaeologist who was publicly sharing his assumption that the settlements could possibly be Slavic, was publicly offended by right wing Austrian politicians who interpreted his statement as support for Slavic groups claiming for rights in Carinthia (see Geary 2002: 17).

Paradoxically, as Renan (in Anderson, 1988: 15) already argued in the 18th century, the imagination of the national community includes forgetting parts of the nation state's history. Other aspects become more important instead, especially those we repeatedly encounter in popular media productions (cf. Baer 2001). Rosi Braidotti (2002: 232) frequently points out that through the thickness of cultural memory in European nation states, where historical and cultural memories go back to the antiquity, the activated memory of political actions can be described as the desire "forget to forget". With a sense of sarcasm, Todorova highlights the following: "*In the Balkan they were killing over something that happened 500 years ago; in Europe, with a longer span of civilized memory, they were killing over something that happened 2,000 years ago*" (Todorova, 1997: 6).

1.2 Nation-building in the South-East of Europe: Slovene Independence and the Role of National Media

The model of state formation promoted by the communist movement tried to establish a new social order disentangled from nationalism and based on the equality of people, where ethnicity, religion, language, social status, gender identities etc. do not function

as makers of difference. The initially idealistic projects led to authoritarian State Socialism and dictatorships. Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, for example, were organised as Federations, but insisted on centralised governmental power. The differing demands and interests of single republics in the Federation state or any groups were largely ignored and caused great resistance to and disagreement with the centralised government. Nationalisms coming out from increasing antagonism, which Stuart Hall (1999a: 436) defines as an unsuccessful competing of the "virus of nationalism", can also be analysed as a shift in power relations. Suppressed groups became stronger and more demanding, but centralised governments did not want to let them go (cf. Heinrich 1994: 141). At the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s, the communist era in Europe collapsed and was transformed into a powerful revival of nationalism and ethnic consciousness (cf. Hall 1999a: 436-7). The wars following this collapse were struggles over power and clashes of differing interests taken up in the name of nationalism (ibid).

Power within states, either in nation states, federation states or certainly in any totalitarian regime is unequally distributed. There will always be groups that are more privileged than others and groups that challenge the dominant narration of national identity. Rainer Bauböck (2003: 117) even argues that disagreements and inequalities have strong effects on the collective memory of a group. Such perceived inequalities might even appear stronger than shared economies or geography. Groups or communities who feel inferior or feel they have fewer rights are more likely to protest against or even try to split from the rest of the group. The attempt to establish a symmetric relationship within a federation is extremely important in order to ensure security and stability. Bauböck (2003: 118) compares such a split with a divorce: There is shared property or debts which have to be divided up among the former couple, and there might be "children" who would prefer to stay with both of the parents. Similar were the results of the last national census in Yugoslavia before its segregation: There was a clear consciousness of "ethnic" and religious collectives among the population, people identified themselves as "Slovenes", "Croats", "Serbs", "Macedonians", "Montenegrin" or "Muslims" and a considerable number of people announced themselves as "Yugoslavs" which can be interpreted as a commitment to the federal state (cf. Pelinka 1995: 29). In this way, identifications and interests within former Yugoslavia cannot be seen as homogenous and indicate that religious, ethnic, national, regional and political belonging co-existed.

With the founding of the communist Federation of Yugoslavia, Slovenia had entered a new era. The organisation of Yugoslavia showed different features than those of other socialist countries, although the first constitution, dating from 31 January, 1946, was inspired by the Soviet constitution of 1936. Tito and Djilas, who were crucial figures

for the politics in the emerging Federation State of Yugoslavia, carried the fate of the country. The decision not to include the Red Army led to the split between Tito and Stalin in 1948 and was supported by the "Western" European states. For that reason Yugoslavia, and therefore Slovenia, was considered as being on the western side of the Iron Curtain (cf. Foucher 1996: 121). The federation state of Yugoslavia consisted of six republics that were independent in linguistic and administrative matters. Nevertheless, the ruling power was highly concentrated (cf. Vucković 1998: 353-75). As the state system was based on a centralised authoritarian leadership with one-party domination, it was difficult to respond to contrasting claims of the various ethnic minorities. Tito did his best in recognising distinguished groups within the state, when he allowed different groups to obtain the status of a single republic or a special status within Yugoslavia. In this way, Yugoslavia was more open to ethnic diversity than other socialist states, and as a consequence, the constitution changed several times (1953, 1963, 1967, and 1974). The most important changes occurred in the 1970s, when Yugoslavia was defined as a federal state with six republics and two autonomous regions (cf. Foucher 1996: 121). That decision led to an increasing autonomy of the republics and the state was consequently less centralised, and agreements were to be based on consensus (cf. Milanovich 1996: 29-31).

After Tito's death in 1980, there was no successor with the capacity to lead the country. The situation became more difficult, also because of differing interests of the republics. Whereas Slovenia and Croatia strengthened their relations with the European Community and the EFTA countries, Serbia tried to insist on the centralised power around Belgrade. The idea of party-pluralism was rejected until 1990, when the first democratic elections since the Second World War took place (cf. Milanovich 1996: 30). Following that, referendums for independence took place in Slovenia in December 1990, in Croatia in May 1991, and in Macedonia in October 1991. On 25June 1991, Slovenia and Croatia declared independence from the federal state. One day later, the 10-day-war against Slovenia started. The new constitution followed on 23 December 1991 together with a new currency (SIT[9]) (cf. Milanovich 1996: 34).

From the implementation of the socialist rule to the transition to nation states and democracy, the media played an important role in circulating new ideas (cf. Splichal 1993: 8). The process to change the social order deeply affected the everyday life of the population. In order to accompany chance, it was necessary to develop powerful propaganda and to take care that the media was able to reach the largest possible audience. Since the society was viewed as a homogenous mass, the concept of mass

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9   Since January 2007, Slovenia is the only former communist country in the EU that entered the Euro-Zone.

communication was used to create an asymmetric relationship between those who lead and those who have to be led. Slavko Splichal (1993) introduced the term "distorted communication" for the communication system in socialist countries. The audience was treated as homogenous followers blending out any diversity. Particular groups or interests did not find space to be articulated. For that reason, the communist idea quickly turned into a conservative reality (cf. ibid: 8-9). Communism from the point of view of Splichal (ibid: 9) could not survive as a political concept, because it did not include a positive heritage of capitalism and it later even destroyed its own positive heritage. Socialist reality lacked the flexibility to keep up with global changes and ended in an economic dilemma. Such unfruitful developments were followed by a number of revolutions at the end of the 1980s. This went hand-in-hand with the activities of modern media, which were influential in the crumbling of many communist regimes in east and central European countries (cf. Bašič-Hrvatin 1998: 267). New national media introduced a new point of view on the political situations and valued them differently than media that was supportive of the socialist system (ibid). The media turned into the most important tool in promoting nationalism and in expressing the need for the establishment of independent states (Splichal 1993).

The important role media played in the processes of leading Slovenia from being a part of the Yugoslavian Federation to an independent nation state is visible in the five significant phases conducted by Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin (1998). Between 1980 and 1984, it was the first time, when the media publicly put in question the authority of the system made by reporting about the economic crises of the state and by revealing its political disagreement. In the years between 1984 and 1986, the countries in the federation received national media, and in particular, the print sector provided a broader political discussion. Broadcasting media were more limited through news programmes and national affair programmes that had federal interests. From 1986 to 1988, the federal order was increasingly unsettled by the circulation of political scandals, corruptions, economic mismanagements, misuse of police power and civil rights. Therefore, the media played an important role in revealing misgovernment and power abuse and in reinforcing a sense of distrust among the population in respect of the federal government. The period from 1988 to 1990 signifies the integration of the media into the new nation state and foreshadows an independent Slovene nation state with the nationalising of the public sphere by subordinating the media system to the national interest. The period from 1990 onwards was marked by certain troubles in the state, like multiparty-elections and the declaration of independence. Back then, the press was officially independent from the state (ibid: 269-70).

The tendencies of the Slovene media to separate the Slovene national and economic identity from that of the federation state Yugoslavia, dates back to the eighties and are

very similar to the political development in Croatia. At that time, Slovene politics and the Slovene economy were often criticised in public by other states of the federation. Serbia in particular, stressed the problems resulting from its exploitation by the richer federal states, including Slovenia and Croatia. The Slovene media emphasised a different point of view and explained changes in the state structure as a part of the process to democracy (cf. Bašič-Hrvatin 1998: 272-3). In Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin's (ibid) point of view, the left-wing weekly newspaper Mladina and Radio Študent, a radio station in Ljubljana, were among the few that provided a more critical assessment of an increasingly nationalised public sphere. Both clearly supported a democratic political strategy in Slovenia. Unfortunately, their recipients were (and still are) a small minority in Slovenia with minor interests (cf. ibid).

Somehow, the collapse of socialist regimes in the south and east of Europe and the Soviet Union was accompanied by a belief that tolerance and democracy would emerge from the ruins of communism. Even though both political concepts, democracy and communism, were based upon a modern philosophy, former socialist countries were inflicted with communist rules and culture and should have neither been expected to easily turn in new forms of modernism, nor to transfer smoothly into democratic, capitalist states (cf. Meštrović 1994: 1-2). Former socialist countries did not necessarily need to adapt to democratic models of "Western" countries, they could have invented or developed into different systems. Unfortunately, with the crumbling of one state system there was the need to quickly establish new state systems. It was certainly easier to adapt a system which had already proved its stability. People were also prepared to support a transition to a "Western" oriented type of state, since Slovene politicians of all parties and orientations stood for the same idea from the beginning. By demonstrating their agreement, they transmitted to the population what was the "right" thing to do (cf. Chapman 1996: 109). Therefore, a typically "Western" system based on democracy, capitalism and economic liberalism was introduced within a short time. Civil society and democracy were expected to be born over night (cf. Splichal 1993: 5).

The fact that little time was invested in thinking about useful temporal state regulations did not help Slovenia to make the transition from a former socialist country to a democratic state easier. The actual impact of the new political orientation was not clear from the beginning and also required a certain maturity of political decision-making. As a result of the lack of democratic tradition, a lot of problems arose between politicians, when discussing and negotiating the orientation towards values, and political, social, or cultural attitudes, (cultural, economic) co-operations and so on. Communist characteristics could not be abandoned over night (cf. Milanovich 1996: 35-7). One feature of the communist tradition in the young democracy can be seen in

the behaviour of politicians, who were rather acting like individuals and not like representatives of one party. The first Slovene Minister President, Peterle, for example, agreed with Italy on property matters without the approval of the parliament. Despite an increasing support of the Slovene National Party, especially at the early stage of independence (cf. ibid), the support of a left-wing political direction was very strong, which allowed a centre-left government to be very secure in being re-elected. Slovene voters proved to be especially critical of neo-liberal tendencies and protested against such a direction from the very beginning (as in 1992 and 1994, see LabourNet.de 2008). Change was implemented with the national election in 2004. At that time, voters expressed their dissatisfaction with the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Anton Rop and the Liberal Democrats that were implanting neo-liberal regulation in order to fulfil the EU-requirements (World Socialist Web Site 2005). The election was at the time when the interviews for the research of this book were being conducted. The successor government was led by Prime Minister Janez Janša and the Slovene Democrat Party (SDS). Janša's outcome can be interpreted as a protest against the previous government and its promoters who were also accused of having acted in a very communist and nepotistic manner during the election campaign. The new governmental period was signified with a turn to right wing politics, following a neo-liberal route and open hostility against migrants and Roma communities expressed in a growing cooperation between the SDS and the Slovene National Party (World Socialist Web Site 2006; LabourNet.de 2008). After two larger protests (2005, 40,000 protesters, 2007, 70,000 protesters) against announced shortages in the economic and social systems, the Slovene Democrats lost their leadership position in the national elections of 2008. They were superseded by the Social Democrats (SD) and by Borut Pahor as the new Prime Minister who were able to triple their previous result in a national election (see for example wieninternational.at 2008).

To return to the time of political change after independence: Next to implementing a multi-party government and democratic election, the most important step of the new democratic state was the separation of the state/government from the media. The independence of the media was included in the declaration of independence of the Slovenian State (cf. Splichal 1993: 6). Slovene media experts, among them Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin (1998), were rather critical of how the transformation of the Slovene media system was put into practice. From their perspective, the change was neither prepared nor radical to start with. Media coverage rather mirrored the political attitude in times of radical change without foreseeing the complexity of social implementation. Even though formerly, the most crucial changes, such as the independence of the press from the official state were realised, media continued to speak in the name of the government and political parties for a long time and was encouraged by the state (cf.

Bašič-Hrvatin 1998: 268). At least on paper, journalists were considered completely independent from political attitude, but again this did not involve them changing their previous affiliations from the times of State Socialism (cf. ibid: 270). Certainly, the transformation of a political system cannot smoothly transfer to something else or immediately abandon prevailing structures of the previous system. Occurring problems might be easier to understand, if one considers that Slovenia entered a period of transition by actually taking on the name of the new system before this was possibly implemented in social and public life. One has to bear in mind that Slovene politicians were not simply newly brought in with the democratic era. On the contrary, they were the ones who carried the country into independence. The same counts for the journalists. In order to cause radical change, new laws and new management were missing, and new media innovations. An initial stagnation of social order, as Slavko Splichal (1993: 6-7) observed, can be explained in the lack of money as well as in a lack of reflection on the previous system.

Regarding the separation of the media system and the Slovene state, the most important decision was the privatisation of the media sector. Clearly from the perspective of a post-communist country, a new model of public services, although being based on democratic values, would not have been acceptable. In the early 1990s, the government decided to offer to internally buyout the media sector. That means that employees, but also retired employees, their family members and relatives of a media company could buy a share of the socialist property. In this way, the state wanted to avoid individual legal persons or groups of shareholders taking control. Paradoxically, 40% of media shares were transferred to state controlled funds, such as the Pension and Disability Fund (10%), the Indemnification Fund (10%) and the Development Fund (20%) in order to privatise them (cf. Bašič-Hrvatin 2004: 465-6). However, the initial concept did not work out. The employees did not necessarily take the chance to share the ownership between them, and quite often sold their holding to third persons (cf. ibid: 467). A new law on plurality was enforced with the Mass Media Act, Section 9, Article 11 in 2001, and defended the protection of media plurality and diversity by limiting media concentration and ownership stakes (see Bašič-Hrvatin 2004: 465-7; Bašič-Hrvatin and Petković 2008: 109-10).

In a small country like Slovenia, it is certainly difficult to avoid economic concentration, if only a few large companies exist. Therefore, many companies that invest in the media sector are somehow connected. Bašič-Hrvatin and Petković (2008: 17-18) are provoking with the hypothesis that precisely the policy "Slovenian media to Slovenian owners" led to a situation where the three private broadcasting stations are in foreign hands, while 90% of the print media and half of the radio stations are belonging to only two owners. Quite often, a single person is responsible for the

ownership of the media company, but behind her/him there is still her/his business or enterprise. Sometimes one person, who holds a share in one Media Company, is connected with an influential firm. At the same time, another person from the same business group might be a supervisor in the same media company or in another one. Such factors make the Slovene media concentration less transparent and extremely difficult to comprehend, despite the fact that it is necessary by law to reveal all related partners to anyone who is interested (Bašič-Hrvatin 2004: 476-7). Additionally, many larger companies are owned by the state or by someone who is related to the state (ibid: 465). Certainly it is difficult, when the same state claims to have introduced laws to avoid any kind of concentration in the media field, while it is obvious that giving up media holdings means having less influence on the media agenda, means less power in society.

With the change of government in 2004, the influence of the state and the Roman Catholic Church in the media sector became more obvious and alarming than before and led to some changes in the legislation (Bašič-Hrvatin and Petković 2008: 9). The 2006 amendments were made to the Mass Media Act (Amended Mass Media Act) through which the government re-defined public funding based for the programming content and allows an expert appointed by the Minister of Culture to choose which contents are going to be financially supported (ibid: 110). In the same year, changes in the Public Service Broadcasting Act ensured a more direct political influence in the broadcasting actor – in the supervisory board and in the programme board (see also RTV Webpage 2006). Both changes were legally confirmed. The amendment of the Mass Media Act required a 50% majority in the parliament and the adaptations in the Public Service Broadcasting Act were secured with a referendum. According to Bašič-Hrvatin[10], it was only a very small majority that decided on the important changes in both cases. In November 2006, I interviewed her on the changes of the media laws and back then she criticised the marginal information of the government on the actual changes and the mere emphasis of their importance in maintaining media independence from the state. At that time, she and her colleague Brankica Petković were involved in a civil resistance group formed around the peace institute (Mirovni Inštitut) in Ljubljana, sending in their own amendments to the Mass Media Act. Their suggestion remained unheard. In their common book, published in 2008, they postulated that the media system in Slovenia is still in a transition in conclusion to

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10   On 23 November 2006, I interviewed Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin on the changes in the Mass Media Act and Public Service Broadcasting in 2006. She is an expert in the field of media ownerships and media laws, and is engaged in civil resistance to compete with current Slovene politics, which she considers detrimental for the plurality of public opinion as well as for minors and minorities. She is also a professor for media and political studies in the faculty for social sciences at the University in Ljubljana.

their observation of "*the continual (and systematic) lack of media policy, and the synchronicity of political, economic and media elites*" (Bašič-Hrvatin and Petković 2008: 17).

2. In Search of the "Nature" of People in a "Normal" Nation

In spite of uncertainties in defining the premises of a nation and the question of what makes nationalism function (cf. Räthzel 1995: 162), and in spite of contemporary theoretical observations that de-stabilise the common belief that nations are natural entities (cf. Wallerstein 1988: 81-82), nations and nationalism show an astonishing persistence. This is in contrast to socialist states and communism. Nation states continue to succeed against repeated prophecies of their death (cf. Räthzel 1995: 162). We witnessed and still witness, for example, new forming states, also in Europe, fighting over religious, ethnic issues, trying to establish "pure" nations based on homogeneity (cf. Hall 1999a: 437), despite the fact that some nations never existed before now. Michael Billig (1995: 37) warns us not to neglect the self-evident manner in which people are involved with their nationality. It is not easy for intellectuals to analyse nationalism, because everyone in a contemporary society is affected by nationalism in their way of thinking. Nationality strongly links to belonging, and is part of one's identity. It might not be the first characterisation with which one would introduce her- or himself. One might not even think of her or his nationality, when answering the question "who are you" – at least not within one's "own" country. Nonetheless, nationalism persists to be something natural to possess or remember for the vast majority of people.

Normality is an extremely powerful discourse from which people can measure and compare things or people, and defines values. A sense of normality is also supportive in sustaining a certain order within collectives such as national communities. This is dangerous for those who are not part of a certain version of normality, as "normality" is carried by members of the dominant group who do not necessarily reflect consciously about standards, as well as norms and values they have incorporated in their lives. Mere reflections on concrete experiences are not sufficient to understand social phenomena relevant to people's lives (cf. Räthzel 1995: 164), as this would, as I argued earlier with reference to Butler, require that we would understand our own subjectivation. The national dimension remains extremely important, because in order to engage people in nationalism the state has to be involved in all personal experiences and in all areas in which people invest their emotions. Certainly this goes against the postulated freedom on which nations claim to be built upon. Many people are anchored (cf. Phoenix 1995: 33) in "primordial terms", which means that they believe

in essentialist matters of ancestry and nature in support of a naturalised image of the nation. Landscape, for example, is extremely helpful in constructing "durability" and "continuation" (cf. Breuss et al. 1995: 35). It legitimates claims of power for a state. Elements from landscape are used as national symbols, heraldic features or on flags. The Slovene flag, for example, incorporates "Triglav", the highest Slovene mountain. Nature and landscape become part of the collective memory of a nation and as well as being geographical images, they carry connotations of cultural and socio-political belonging (cf. Breuss et al. 1995: 36-7). Similar to Austria and Switzerland, Slovenia refers to the memory of "Alpine-culture", which constitutes a cultural link to the so-called "West". Within former Yugoslavia, Slovenia was the "skiing nation", which emphasised, among other memories, differentiation to other Yugoslav republics. In this respect, Slovenia is (and likes to be seen as) extremely diverse in geographical regions and natural richness (cf. Klemenčić 1999: 49). A small country of 20,256 square kilometres, Slovenia embraces the Alps, the Pannonian plain, the Dinaric mountain range and the Adriatic Sea, features, all signifying the important situatedness of Slovenia in Central Europe: "*[S]lovenia shares borders with Italy, Austria, Hungary and Croatia. Traffic from the southwestern European states of Spain, France and Italy crosses Slovenian territory towards the landlocked countries and the former Soviet Republics. Traditionally, the northern Adriatic ports Venezia and Trieste in Italy, Koper (Capodistira) in Slovenia, and Rijeka (Fiume) in Croatia served as a gateway for landlocked Austria and a German state of Bavaria*" (Milanovich 1996: 25). Nature and landscape were important images in introducing the new nation state, next to national symbols, like the flag and the national anthem, mountains and well-known Slovene features of nature accompanied reports throughout the independence movement (Hardt 2004). Interestingly enough, landscape and nature in media, more specifically in early sound films, were very successful tools for propaganda in transporting notions of "home" and "homeland", for example, during the Nazi-regime in Germany and Austria (Sontag 1974). One of the most successful filmmakers of the time was without any doubts Leni Riefenstahl, whose documentaries supported the fascist ideology. Her early movies employed Alpinist epics (1929-1933), in which she showed the pure and supreme beauty of nature, in which one could only survive if she or he "listens" to nature. Hence, Riefenstahl promoted a deceiving and powerful representation of the natural order. Here, the media plays a crucial role in creating a relation between features of landscape and the nation state, further, linking them with representatives of one country nationals and therefore implementing them into a symbolic order. One, Hanno Hardt, is a German scientist who has been living in Slovenia for about a decade. He concentrates on visual images, which he might be more aware of than anybody else whose mother tongue is Slovene. The second one is from the Slovene researcher Breda Luthar who examines representations of normality.

In an observation of different daily newspapers before, during and after the independence of the Slovene nation state, Hanno Hardt (2004) emphasised the role of photographs as one important source of reality. Photographs offer a certain authenticity and reliability, when they are used to represent reality. The kind of reality, which is presented, is embedded in and covered by the convention of journalistic practice and editorial decisions. Photographic images are able to catch a certain moment in history and to save it from disappearing. They are considered as "true" sources by the readers. From that background, Hardt analyses the use of the pictures in Slovene dailies during the period from the declaration of independence to the end of the Slovene war. He discovered that front page pictures were crucial for narrating the most important events in that period. The newspapers[11] were able to position one event as the most important issue of the day. Apart from their function of illustrating news stories (on Sundays more photographs can be found), they are also statements on their own. The selection of the pictures on the day of independence included a range of well-known politicians that promised security and change. Showing serious politicians evokes a certain sense of stability within the changing situation. The Slovene flag, together with a picture of the parliament, proves that the ideology of the Slovene State was already in existence. The "well-known" accompanied the transition from Yugoslavia to the independent Slovenia (Slovene nature, Triglav, the flag). With the start of the war, pictures of dead and injured people being carried away was at the top of the agenda. At the same moment, the uneven balance between pictures and written text was weighing more on the side of the photographs. However, after only one day of showing pictures of violence, the photographs again focused on well-known faces from the national sphere. After that, pictures about the war were only shown in distance to the events and increasingly narrated at a distance of Slovenia to the war. Material destruction rather than violated humans was shown. The (implicit) aim was seemingly to show the violation of national borders, attacks portrayed as physical violation of the state and no longer of individuals. The civil population pursued on both sides of the new border, Croatia and Slovenia, passively, as observers of what was going on. The representational work of the photographs carried strong identifications with the new state, with the collective history and the collective democratic praxis and the sharing of cultural customs. The content of the photographs and the media in general, often reflects the point of view of a certain authority, politician or military. Hence, the reporting is closely associated with strong social, cultural and political power. Slovene media strongly supported the new national ideology by engaging national symbols and signs and showing well known public representatives and natural features. National politicians were important signifiers indicating that "the world is not going to fall apart". They were portrayed as well-

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11   He refers to Delo, Dnevnik and Večer.

known, reliable people who were taking good care of the country in transition. The portrayal of natural landmarks stood for the "safety of the natural order" in politically unruly times.

A second example in which media played an important role of transmitting "normality", focuses on the production of normality after independence in Slovenia, which is extremely useful for a young sovereign nation, but exclusive of other expressions of existences. This works by placing increased emphasis on presenting celebrities as national figures and promoters of Sloveneness. Reference should be made here to a study of content analysis in Slovene women's magazines (Jana and Lady) by the Slovene researcher Breda Luthar (2004). She focuses on the personalised language of journalism after the fall of communism and the role of personalised representation of celebrities and politicians as presenters of "normality". The analysed articles often depict single public persons in their home environment. As such, the stories have a highly ideological function, due to the public representative importance of the person. She or he (usually "he") introduces community values. Local celebrities are closer to the Slovene reality than, for example, global reality, because they belong to the same cultural framework and share similar values. Luthar reflects that the very concept of narrating a national family began in the 1980s. Stories about Yugoslavian celebrities disappeared and were substituted with Slovene people. Yugoslavian representatives were increasingly situated as the "other" and the media content became more local and less considered as "high culture". Over the recent years, it has become even more difficult to distinguish between local celebrities and local politicians. Popular culture entered the political field. More recently, politicians have had to prove a personal reliability, which seems to be even more important than political competence. Mass magazines played an important role in defining a "we-community", especially in the 1990s. Most stories are interview based. Jana, for example, reserved one special place for these types of stories. Some people are frequently portrayed in the magazine, which reinforces their important position. Once again, pictures play a crucial role in presenting the person in her or his own "natural" environment. The crucial point is to show normality. Celebrities are "normal" people in "normal" home situations, when away from the public eye. This allows the reader to "know" the people who she/he frequently sees in the magazines. This is helpful in establishing the sentimental effects of identification. As the interviews stress the private life of national celebrities, their family life and personal emotions are at the centre of the story. The representation of the politician or the public person in such contexts is only available to Slovene people. Celebrities from abroad are given only a little space. Their images are mostly positive, but bizarre and part of a variety of global celebrities. They remain outside the national sphere. Slovene celebrities are used to create a "hyperreality": they are treated like national symbols of national normality and they are portrayed in a

way that creates the impression that they are in transmitting values, ideas, ways of life, myths, knowledge and so on. At the same time, those symbolic effects are hidden in the presentation. It appears as if their public position does not play a role in the report.

With the two examples outlined above, I point at the powerful role the media plays in transmitting "normality", where the symbolic use of pictures, features, events or public figures are hidden in the messages. The examples also show the strong power of *imagined communities*, whose members have forgotten, after some time, what separated them in history, because this is no longer part of the nation's narrative (cf. Anderson 1988: 158). Foreigners and newcomers have to learn the cultural codes and values artificially and "forget" them afterwards. There is a tendency in present European policies that applicants for citizenship in certain states have to pass an examination[12] which proves their will to integrate, and shows their knowledge of the "new" nation's language, history, traditions, characteristics, geography, politics and politicians, national symbols, etc.

2.1 Deconstructing a Naturalised National Order

The danger of naturalising nations, cultures, state systems, traditions, etc. lies in its normativity. While things that are "normal" for us are rarely part of our conscious reflections, we have a good feeling for what is not "normal". Such processes of normalisation are not merely generated over geography. Homogeneity among members of one community can only correlate with the acceptance of role models based on natural features. Even though our society is based on so-called equality (cf. Räthzel 1995: 165), it is the acceptance of social inequality that makes our society work. Which society would send women to war and leave men to do the child rearing and take care of household matters? Men usually go to war and women take care of the family and the household, also in European cultures. Nira Yuval-Davis (1997: 15) sees the "national family" as a "natural extension" of family and kinship relations on the grounds of sexual labour division, where women are the caretakers and men the money suppliers.

Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) offers a broad analysis of the issue of "gender and nation". In contrast to prevailing academic discourses, she considers gender relations as constitutive of nation states, and sees that grounded in the naturalised assumption of a heterosexual gender dichotomy (ibid: 3). Since gender and nation have usually been

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12 Here I particularly refer to Austria and the Netherlands. Slovenia, for example, does not have such tests.

analysed as separated phenomena, Yuval-Davis's work was particularly important for understanding the accomplishment between the two concepts. I introduce four of her five argumentation lines on the following pages and link them with Slovene national identity: "*Women and the Biological Reproduction of the Nation*", "*Cultural Reproduction and Gender Relations*", "*Citizenship and Difference*", "*Gendered Militaries, Gendered Wars*" and "*Women, Ethnicity and Empowerment: Towards Transversal Politics*" (ibid: 22-5). I leave out the fifth point since it is similar to the concepts of the politics of location that were discussed in a previous chapter.

"*Women and the Biological Reproduction of the Nation*" relates to the woman's ability to give birth, which is widely acknowledged as a natural function, neglecting political, cultural or legal discourses narrated around birth control (Yuval-Davis 1997: 26). There are always pressures on women to have or not to have more or less children. Foreign families in European countries are usually criticised for having too many children. Nora Räthzel (1995: 178-9) says this is often narrated in such a way to suggest that "their" offspring is crowding out the schools. At the same time, many European nations consider "true nationals" to be endangered of dying out. Strangely enough, especially in those "Western" states where women are expected to rear children, care for the elderly or sick family members and even for their healthy partners, they are discriminated against in the job-market for having children and often have problems with employment after parental leave. Countries such as Sweden or Norway have much higher fertility rates (cf. Esping-Andersen, 2003: 7), accompanied by higher female employment than Spain or Italy, where female employment is low. Comparative data from 2003 shows that the European average for the number of children per family is 1.48 (cf. Eurostat 2005). Slovenia has an average of 1.22, Austria 1.39, the Netherlands 1.75, and Sweden 1.71. Iceland with 1.89 children and Ireland with 1.98 are among the highest birth rates in Europe. However, none of the birth rates represents enough children to sustain the number of inhabitants of any country listed. An average of 2.1 children would be needed Europe wide (cf. Eurostat 2005). Prognoses of population development are rather pessimistic and forecast a decline in inhabitants in almost all countries until 2050. Especially countries like Ukraine, Poland, Bulgaria, but also Germany are affected. In spring 2006, German politicians even thought of cutting the pension of citizens who have decided not to have children. The discussion, which spread out to other European countries, expressed the fear of a dying European peoplehood.

Certainly Esping-Andersen (1998: 8) is right, when he states, that the welfare state has to harmonise work and family objects, because the welfare state needs children. The question is: Whose children does a nation state want, if immigrated foreigners are insulted for having too many children and women belonging to the dominant group of

a nation are indirectly criticised for not having enough children. It was not only Nazi Germany that awarded the mothers of the German *Volk* with financial rewards and honour, also, for example, Japan doubles child support on the arrival of the third child (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 29-30). Contemporary Austrian politics are moving in a similar direction. After establishing their state, Israel even awarded "heroine mothers", mothers of ten or more, for their contribution to the country. Whereas socialist politics in Yugoslavia legitimated women's rights to abortion, this was among the first things which women had to struggle for after the collapse of the Communist regime (cf. Duhaček 2006: 302). In 1991, important Slovene politicians seriously considered forbidding abortion to avoid the decline of "future defenders of the country" (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 30), but was finally implemented in Article 55 of the Slovene constitution. At the other end of the scale, people in China and India are confronted with laws on birth limitations. Due to the cultural value of males in those societies, there are myths of villages with a population of 100 per cent males (ibid: 34). When looking at family stories, there is a large discourse on "origin" within Westerncentric[13] countries. Adopted children often search for their "real" parents to find out about their "real" identity (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 28). In case that a specific ethnicity is the entrance card for being accepted by the national community, birth does not guarantee full membership. It is no surprise, when racial discourses are still constructed as bloodlines, "one drop of blood" of inferior members is considered as a possible threat that could pollute that of the superior race, which is very similar to a National Socialist ideology (cf. ibid: 23).

In the second point, Yuval-Davis (1997: 43) looks at "*Cultural Reproduction and Gender Relations*". Here the imagination is built upon culture rather than on race. In that concept, specific religions or languages are considered as more or less advanced within "the borders of one nation", which does not have less essentialising effects than the concept of "race". From Yuval-Davis' (ibid: 47) perspective, the discursive construction of a nation offers quite an ambiguous position to women because they symbolise the collective unity through their reproductive function. However, at the same time women are largely excluded from politics. It can be said that women hold a sense of "otherness" within the nation and have to be the under control of men (ibid). A certain relation between men and women is crucial for the continuation of social order. Each nation produces a specific notion of womanhood and manhood as the expression of a cultural collective, but also to ensure the existing order (ibid: 67). "Western" European countries often cover the asymmetric power-relationship between

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13 Yuval-Davis substitutes "Eurocentric" with "Westerncentric" to go beyond a limited perception of the "West".

the two (keeping with a heterosexist norm) genders behind the legal foundation of equality.

Milica Antic and Ksenija Vidmar (2006: 219) analyse the gender relation in former Yugoslavia against the backdrop of a contemporary "Western" understanding. They argue that it was a particular phenomenon in the so-called "West" that women had to fight to be freed from their "*domestic containment*" and to work against their absence in public and political representation (cf. ibid: 219). The case in former Yugoslavia was different. Communism in its initial implementation was friendlier to women's participation in labour and politics than capitalism. The Yugoslavian Communist guerrillas, for example, supported women's involvement in feminist activities during World War II. This was at least true for some privileged and educated urban women, as Svetlana Slapšak (2002: 301) writes, until it was disregarded a few years later. Socialist ideology was also based on equality across differences in nationality, race, gender, sex, language etc. People were all considered a part of the working class – physical *workers*, scientist *workers*, pedagogical *workers* and others (cf. Antic and Vidmar 2006: 223-4). Women were included in the imagination of the worker and were entitled to education and labour. They also enjoyed political rights, but they did not enjoy any *special* rights, for which reason the *Antifascist Women's Association* was rejected in 1953. Even though motherhood was seen as part of the private identity of women, the state provided a functioning welfare system for women; paid child leave periods, daily child care centres or housing and also supported single mothers. In this context, Antic and Vidmar (ibid: 231) refer to the role of media as supportive of narrating women in their new roles. Until the 1950s, public discourses promoted women's participation in the labour market and emphasised better life conditions of socialist women than of those in capitalist societies. This was based on the assumption that working women had richer family lives. From the 1950s onwards, Antic and Vidmar describe a change in media language and public representations started addressing women in their social role as care takers and sexual objects (ibid: 232). The authors point at the fact that socialist ideologists invested a lot of energy in narrating women's labour participation and then "forgot" about the reconstruction of domestic labour or sex and gender relations. Patriarchal order remained untouched. Instead, women had the triple burden of being full-time workers, responsible for household matters and caretakers of children and the elderly (ibid: 235). Today, women in former communist countries are more positive towards feminism than women in "Western" states, due to their negative experience with the communist state they are less supportive of institutionalising feminism and are rather active in NGOs (Jalušič and Antić 2001: 17-8).

Slovene family policy today is, as Alenka Švab (2003: 69) critically observes, established along the child-centred family policies of many European countries. Such models are based on the idea of the nuclear family (cf. Švab 2003: 53, 57) and the traditional bread-winner model of the working husband and the house/-wife who cares for children, grandparents and elderly relatives (cf. Fraser 1989: 149, cf. Sevenhuijsen 2003: 15). They do not only support well-known gender roles, divide families in two separate spheres and are usually detrimental for the situation of women. They are also most beneficial to people who live in such family structures (cf. Fraser 1989: 149). This framework is further supportive of the notion of "protective childhood" (Švab 2003: 69) and influences the relation between parents and children, but also the relationship to elderly or disabled family members by turning the latter into passive dependants, which is also reflected in the Slovene Resolution of Family (cf. Švab 2003: 70-2). Vesna Leškošek (2003a: 43) analysed the Resolution on the Principles of Formation of Family Policy in the Republic Slovenia (1993) and came to the conclusion that the resolution covers its traditional implementation by innovative intentions. Hence, the paper reveals a whole range of hidden stereotypical and rigid ideologies (cf. ibid). While the policy makers deny having let any gender inequality into their legal formulations, Alenka Švab (2003: 58) criticises the fact that Slovene politicians and law makers are far from conscious reflections on any of the ideologies included in the paper. This is also visible in a release conducted by the Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia that is supportive of this argument, by showing that, of 35.000 people who went in parental leave in 2005, two thirds were women and one third were men (Statistical office 2007:4) and by highlighting that far more women use part-time arrangements in order to be able to care for family members (Statistical office 2007: 2). This tendency is reflected in the imbalance between women and men on the labour market and in their salaries. In one of latest opinion polls conducted by the EU, it was evident that women and men in former communist countries that are EU members today are more likely to perceive gender equality as rarely realised in their own country[14] than inhabitants from traditionally "Western" nation states (Eurostat 2010: 10).

Yuval-Davis (1997: 23-4) describes another aspect on which state order is constituted, this is the matter of "*Citizenship and Difference*". She acknowledges citizenship as a concept which is increasingly incorporated into the political discussions of all political camps, in national, international and most interesting for this paper, within a European context. It signifies, besides the formal definition of having a passport, the relationship

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14   48% of Slovenes consider gender equality as widespread or fairly wide spread, whereas 49% see it rarely realised. France (77%), Spain (71%), Austria and Sweden (69%) see gender equality widely realised in their country (Eurostat 2010: 10).

of the individual to the state and organises the legal status of almost all the populations in the world (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 68, 83). In an Aristotelian sense, the notion of citizenship is based on the size of a city or a city-state (cf. Habermas 1994: 28) which allowed an active membership to a political entity. To explain today's concept of citizenship, Bert van Steenberg (1994: 2-3) refers to three phases which he considers are crucial for the meaning of citizenship. The first type, civil citizenship, emerged in the 18th century and granted rights of freedom to the individual, such as property rights, personal liberty and justice. Political citizenship, mostly known as the right to vote, goes back to the 19th century and facilitated the participation in political power. The third type, social citizenship, was crucial for the establishment of the welfare state in "Western" Europe as discussed above. The individual gained the right to economic and social security. Nonetheless, there is a distinction between democratic and liberal forms of "Western" nations. Liberal states are based on the idea of individual freedom, social security is acknowledged as a negative form of dependency on the state. Democracy formulates a positive definition of social *rights* which provides individuals with material wealth to enable them to exercise their political and civil rights. Otherwise, it indicates "*the end of the history of citizenship*" (cf. Steenberg 1994: 3), if one is fully dependent on the state, such as what happened in the most rigid form of state socialism. However, van Steenberg blurs an ethnic as well as a gender dimension among other social implications connected to full citizenship. This explains why citizenship rights were initially only available for men of a certain status within the national community. The legacy of the French revolution (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 78-9) implemented fraternity, male bonding among citizens, as a form of social reality and remained constitutive for a public/private separation of society. Males functioned over a long period as representatives of the family and deprived females from political participation as part of the family. A mere distinction between the "public" and "private" sphere of a society is not sufficient, if we consider the important role of families to maintain the state system (Yuval-Davis 1997: 81). Active citizenship then is not guaranteed to all members of a state, but usually only a small minority of the population enjoys full citizen rights (cf. ibid: 83). Jürgen Habermas outlines that active citizenship in "Western" democratic countries as it was postulated at the beginning has transformed into a "clientelization" of citizens. On the surface it may look like the realisation of personal freedom, but in social reality, citizens are pushed to the periphery of organisational membership (cf. Habermas 1994: 32).

The practice of active and passive citizenship is not only the result of a certain constitution of the state, Nira-Yuval Davis (1997: 84-5) offers larger considerations of how to understand the active/passive-axis in democratic countries. There are various determining factors which encourage or discourage individuals from participating in citizenship, which might simply affect the question of voting or not. "*[G]ender,*

sexuality, age and ability as well as ethnicity and class are important factors in determining the relationship of people to their communities and states" (ibid: 84). From the 18th century, through the legacy of Enlightenment and the work of philosophers like Rousseau and Kant, definitions of nation and citizenship were gradually approximated (cf. Habermas 1994: 22). Women might have been discouraged from civil participation due to their traditional allocation to the private sphere. Citizens of other nationality might feel excluded from the imagined community, because of the closeness of citizenship and nationality (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 70). On the other hand, immigrants might remain excluded from full citizenship, because of the incompatibility of ethnic, religious or national background with the country of destination. Citizenship in its democratic tradition assumes equality. It suggests that people can choose their belonging to a state, an understanding which is not applicable in real-life practice.

Jelka Zorn (2004: 1) makes us aware of the ideological implementations into the notion of citizenship by analysing the policy of providing citizenship in the process of independence of Slovenia. At that time, "ethnic" Slovenes were automatically given Slovene citizenship after the disintegration of the Slovene nation state. Many people with non-Slovene origin – mainly people from former republics – remained in the country. Indeed, the majority gained Slovene citizenship, but in contrast to "ethnic" Slovenes they had to apply for it. The political policies directed towards ethnic minorities and immigrants are significant for the kind of national identity that emerged (cf. Sanguin 1999: 61-9). Despite initial protests from Italy, the Slovenian treatment of minorities was seen by national politicians as being "above the EU-standards". Through the shifts of borders in the last century, two minorities remained in the west and east of the country: an Italian minority is recognised in Slovene Istria and a Hungarian minority in Prekmurje. After independence, the Republic of Slovenia granted special rights to Italians and Hungarians in the country. The most important points regarding this are that the Slovene language and the minority language are equal and that all public services are bilingual. Furthermore, the use of national symbols is free, information services in the minority language and school networks are available, and representation in the Slovene parliament was granted (of 90 seats in the government, one is represented by the Italian and one by the Hungarian minority). Article 64 of the Slovene Constitution grants these rights to the minorities and also provides minorities with moral and financial support. The minorities are not isolated groups in everyday life. Schools in the minority language are also largely attended by pupils of Slovene ethnic origin. The minority culture can be found in various museums, schools, libraries, on television and radio programmes and stations (ibid).

The Hungarian minority, who was isolated from Hungary for many decades through the Iron curtain, is with the support of Slovenia, about to strengthen its relationship to Hungary. Also the Italian minority is seeking contact with the Italian minority in Croatia. Even Italy pays more attention to the Italian minority in Slovenia. In this case, I can refer to a total number of only 11,000 people who enjoy a privileged status (cf. Sanguin 1999: 68-9). At the same time, Amnesty International (2005) reported 18,305 individuals who were removed from Slovenian registry of permanent residents on 26th of February 1992. Most of them are residents from other parts of the former Yugoslavian Federation State, including a significant number of Roma community members. Some of these people did not apply for citizenship or residency due to a lack of information. Others were refused citizenship. In general, this happened mostly without the knowledge of those who were affected. 6,000 remained without any legal status and had to either leave the country, to stay illegally or to stay with only foreigner status. Especially Roma people, who cannot refer to a country of "origin", suffer from the consequences of not being able to regulate their status elsewhere in Yugoslavia. Even though it is important to note that Slovenia made some recent attempts to legalise the status of a national minority for the Roma community. One achievement was made in 2005, when Roma communities were recognized "*as a special community or a minority with special ethnic characteristics (its own language, culture and other ethnic specificities)*" (see Government of the Republic of Slovenia. Office for National Minorities, 2010). Finally in 2008 (Human Rights Ombudsman 2009, 34), Article 65 (Status and Special Rights of the Romany Community in Slovenia) of the Slovene constitution made the status as a national minority of Roma in Slovenia official, by saying "*The status and special rights of the Romany community living in Slovenia shall be regulated by law*" (Human Rights Ombudsman 2010).

A community is not, as Jelka Zorn points out (2004: 1), merely imagined, but codified in documents. Or vice verse, imaginations of the "other" are included in the legal systems of states that failed to overcome the boundaries of ethnicity (cf. Baumann 1999: 31). This is supportive to minoritise some groups of people without giving them a "minority status" and consequently turn them into second class citizens (cf. Lutz et al. 1995: 13). In such politics, Slovenia is not an unusual example. It is quite a common practice that members of communities who are for some reason marginalised within the hegemonic system are somehow deprived from citizenship (cf. Yuval-Davis 1997: 71) – here I am thinking of migrants, refugees, "old" and "new" minorities, in this case Yugoslavs of other members of the ex-states, or indigenous people who are excluded from the moral community, the treatment of Roma communities might fit in here, and settler societies, and other examples might be listed by the reader.

In the section on "*Gendered Militaries, Gendered Wars*" Nira Yuval-Davis (1997: 24-5) explores responsibilities and duties connected to active citizenship. Hence, next to integration into the labour market, military participation can be seen as a precondition for women to obtain full citizenship status. War history in general plays a minor role in my paper, because Slovenia does not refer to war heroes in its imagined national past, but it remains a crucial point for a non gender ethnicity-blind understanding of the nation state. Despite this fact, there is still a real or imagined connection between Slovenia and the Balkan Wars through the shared history with the former Yugoslavia. This is reflected in the Slovene self-image as well as in how Slovenia is seen by other nations. Although the available strong counter images such as the Greek Amazons or the French war leader Joan of Arc, going to war is narrated as a masculine activity and is attached with an imagined "masculine character". Indeed, women have always played an important role in wars, although their participation is often memorized as a "passive" one. Women are usually represented as nurses or care takers of the economy in times of male absence. They were sometimes used and abused as national symbols during times of war, for example, as rape victims. Such images overshadow the fact that female soldiers are employed by the armies (ibid: 93-7). Especially new war technologies have allowed women – despite a "*lack of physical strength*" – to take on "*male roles*" of war activities (ibid: 114).

Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) emphasises that there is no homogenous society such as a national community claims to be, because there are always groups and communities who identify with something else. On the contrary, women in peace movements often use subversive elements against an existing patriarchal or fraternal society. Peace movements and the participation of women during the wars in former Yugoslavia show how women encapsulate non-nationalistic thoughts in their activities. Ghislaine Glasson Deschaumes (2002), Svetlana Šlapšak (2002), or Daša Duhaček (2006) neither show essentialist pictures in their analysis of women's peace activities, nor do they refer to those activities as part of their "natural" emotional constitution, women's role as caretaker or any other well-known female characteristic. The authors rather emphasise women's activities that are consciously dis-loyal to the national project (Duhaček 2006: 303-13). They refer to women of the different former Yugoslavian countries who co-operated during war time for which they used the stereotypical picture upon women in order to travel during war time without being expected to travel because of a political motivation (Šlapšak 2002: 305) and who used various languages and dialects from the ex-states and other European languages to write letters, publish booklets or communicate on a more general basis (Duhaček 2006: 305). Despite their actions against the nation state or the new rising nation states, their activities cannot be seen as disentangled from the location, because they tried to be accountable for the same state to which they were disloyal (ibid: 307). A call for a

women's agency of many feminist intellectuals during the Balkan Wars was not essentialist in its conceptualisations. It was the call for a possible diversity contrasting the patriarchal call for homogeneity. This can be seen as a counter position of women who might be more sensitive to the consequences due to their prior exclusion from a patriarchal state order. Indeed, in the Milosevician regime, women's political and public presence declined tremendously (ibid: 310), and might appear contradictory to the stories of female resistance. Here, it is important to keep in mind that an existing patriarchal order of nation states would not have been sustained without the large support of the majority of women and their desire to keep their "safe" role in society. Simone de Beauvoir (1992) examines in her impressive work "The second sex" (*Das andere Geschlecht*) how a woman's desire is trained from early childhood to identify with her duty as a woman and women then continue to manifest sex and gender roles in their daughters and sons. Repetition of certain (gender) roles and habits in Butler's (1995) point of view is never complete and is to some degree open to change. Also de Beauvoir does not forget about resistance and alternative concepts to "docile female bodies", but she acknowledges their function as part of the regulating normality of society.

2.2 The Sexualised "Other" within the Nation State

Accompanied with the particular power conducted by nation states, there comes an increased focus on gender relations and sexuality as a regulating force of society in maintaining a certain order in the countries with a heritage in Christianity, Enlightenment and modernity (cf. Foucault 1978a: 85). Foucault (ibid: 96-100) particularly stresses the repressive character of sexuality in contemporary societies grounded in Christianity and the attachment of guilt. He makes us aware about the dealing of present societies with children's sexuality and its control and the control of women's sexuality and reproduction function (ibid: 101).

Concerning national order, women's bodies often function as symbols of the national body. Christina von Braun's (2001) shows how reproduction and child bearing is becoming related to *pure* national bodies and how women are consequently being accused of being hostile towards those who disturb an established social order (ibid: 335). Women (and the nation) have to be protected from the unknown "other", the *Fremdkörper* (ibid: 337, 447), which establishes a whole system of regulating mechanisms to control women's sexuality. Women were initially excluded from rationality and reason. Therefore, sexuality and materiality of bodies are closely connected to these concepts. Men are associated with rational fertility and therefore with eternity, in contrast to that, women are associated with bodily fertility and death

(ibid: 344). Sexually transmitted diseases such as syphilis, or more recently, AIDS support the discourse of pollution and deviant sexuality. Christina von Braun (ibid: 345) who focuses on Christianity and Judaism refers to the fact that Hitler used syphilis as a metaphor for deviant influences from Judaism and Jewish people on human (= Germans) sexuality. He employed the notion of purity of blood as a racial ideology. In this connection it is also interesting that misogyny and anti-Semitism have common origins (Lampert-Weissig 2009: 171). This is, for example, due to the representation of incompleteness of both, women and Jews, from the perspective of Christian universalism (ibid: 175-6). With the increasing attempt of Jewish people to assimilate to the national traditions of the countries they live in and male Jewish sexuality, especially in the German-speaking countries, it was increasingly referred to as being similar to female sexuality in order to continue to maintain difference. Such representation supported the inferior status of Jews as a feminised collective attached with uncontrolled sexuality and incestuous relations, as well as being supportive of tightening the circle of the purity of the German *Volk* and racialising the group of Jewish people at the same time (ibid: 447-53). The Jewish case in Germany is crucial for the understanding of mechanisms of racialisation, but it is not an isolated phenomenon, which explains Rosi Braidotti's criticism that Europeans have not learned anything from the ruins of the Holocaust. Nationhood in the "West" is constructed not only over the bodies of women, but also on imperial and colonial masculinity (Braidotti 2006: 83).

The image of "white", middle class, European men as rational and controlled is based on "Western" ethnologist observations from the 19th century onwards (Foucault 1999: 173) that constructed a whole ideology on the deviant sexuality of the "others". This was accompanied by fantasies of veiled female bodies (Fanon 1965[15]), the Harem (Said 1979/1994/2003), the hypersexual (black) Hottentot woman and her physiognomic closeness to prostitutes (Gilman 1985). Furthermore, "white" men were struggling with the feeling of a sexual "lack" in comparison to the colonised masculinity (Stoler 1991). In her observations of 19th century Victorian India, Ann Laura Stoler (1991: 54-5) argues along with Edward Said that such constructions of "white", middle class European men served to maintain male dominance intertwined with male fantasies of sexuality and power. For her, sexuality and sexual domination is not only a minor accessory to colonial ruling, it is a crucial marker of class and race and inseparable from power relations. Also here, the "demasculation" of the colonised men and the idea of the colonial woman as a passion were extremely important in males maintaining dominance over females (ibid: 56). Subordination of a society often goes hand in hand with the idea of conquering the women (Fanon 1965: 37-8). In the

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15   The following authors are all critics of the colonial discourse. See chapter 2.

male fantasy, the female body (Braidotti 2006) is exposed to sexual penetration as well as to symbolic humiliation of the collective in the practice of rape as a war crime (Slapšak 2002). European women's participation in and affection for racism is somewhat different to men's (Stoler 1991: 55). Women have, as Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) argues and which can also be found in the work of Ann Laura Stoler (1991: 51), an ambiguous position in society, because they are part of a symbolic fantasy of the nation and excluded from active politics. Although they are more likely to engage in anti-nationalist movements than men, the borders of a national community are narrated using their bodies. The protection of that body can turn them into conservative thinkers as Räthzel (1995), Phoenix (1995), or Yuval-Davis (1997) critically observe.

Nora Räthzel (1995: 180-1) held group discussions on "*Heimat*" (considerations of home) with German women who are involved in feminist movements and she worked out ambiguous tendencies in the statements of those women. For example, there was general agreement on males posing a threat to (their) women's security. The same was said of non-"Western" male foreigners, who turned out to be in the eyes of these "white" women, a major source of social conflict. Although considering themselves as "anti-nationalist" and state-critical, the women were expecting the nation state to provide security measurements against these male "others" in order to protect them. Nora Räthzel helps us to understand the complexity of relational networks in which power and powerlessness is negotiated by showing that ("white", educated, feminist, state critical) women cannot easily leave their inscription into the narration of the nation state. In this example, women feel expelled by masculine sexuality and adopt themselves a sexist point of view on "others", which contrasts their consciously reflected academic standpoint and make them call for protection by the state from (imagined) male sexual domination. Women share a collective memory of the nation. Therefore, female memories include rape and violence against women. Or to point to the blind spot of such an attitude with Nora Räthzel's words: "*[R]acism becomes a means through which sexism is fought*" (Räthzel 1995: 180).

Consequences

In this chapter, I focussed on the influence of European nation states on individual identity positions, as well as outlining the battle over the powerful identity position on a state level. I introduced the nation state as one ideological framework that tries to embrace and bind people's identities. In its most rigid narration, nationality tries to manifest identities and fix them on essentialist grounds. In this way, it turns out to be extremely exclusive as regarding "other" "disturbing" elements. These "disturbing"

elements are most often defined in foreigners who have different concepts of life, religious faith or practices, and gender or family relations than the national "average". Other differing characteristics from the so-called *imagined community* can be found in people's attitudes, political affiliation, and sexuality. This is a result of the strong emphasis on "normality" in the discursive work of national identity. National identities are bound to specific places, incidences, symbols and histories that provide people with a feeling of home and security (cf. Hall 1999a: 429). Michael Billig (1995) introduces the notion of "banal nationalism", where people of one nation express a certain belonging to each other and are able to experience a positive relationship to their environment. Hence, they are not necessarily invited to be conscious about the national dimension of such a relationship. The "natural" commitment of people to their nation might come to surface, when they feel, for some reason, endangered as a national collective. Therefore, "banal nationalism" is also related to an exclusive concept of identity. One example can be seen in the conflict between Austria and Slovenia (or mostly between the right wing parties and their supporters in both countries), as Slovenia planned to use a particular symbol for one of their Euro coins, which Austrians, and here distinctively Carinthians, have defined (or re-discovered) as one of their national symbols and as their property. Seeing as both countries share a long history, it is only natural that symbols and memories from the past can be similar or even identical. With the definition of national borders, histories, symbols or cultural heritage, are all considered as the cultural property by one state and are rarely shared by both or more states. The same example of the symbol on the Slovene Euro coin offers insights into why nations do not succeed in completely determining people's identifications. Inhabitants of one country have always found identifications outside the state as well. Therefore, belonging to an *imagined community*, as Benedict Anderson works out in his influential model of cultural belonging, is based on the misrecognition of identity, because it stresses some parts of history and leaves out many others in order to promote "homogeneity".

Identity of nation states has to be seen in the relation to the existence of other nations and the power of other nations to "value" other states. Within Europe, I outlined the "Western" understanding of social and cultural values, such as a democratic leadership, the respect of Human Rights, a liberal market orientation, etc., as being crucial for a nation to be accepted as "normal". These implicit, but also explicit, requirements are constitutive for the reputation of a nation in the relationship to other nations and influence the self-imagination of a national collective. In this chapter, I distinguished between "good" and "bad" nations based on the commitment of the population to the nation. In this relation, a political commitment to democracy as the basis of solidarity in a country, such as France, is acknowledged as "good" and solidarity based on "bloodlines" or "culture" is seen as bad, because of the obvious

exclusive foundation of the national identity in such states. This concept can be extended by arguing that nation states which base the sense of community on communism are from the perspective of "Western" democratic and capitalist nations "bad" as well. However, dependent on the geographical size, the political and economic power, the number of inhabitants, etc., one nation is more or less vulnerable to images laid upon it from other nations. In the next chapter, I will have a closer look at such unequal power relations between European nations and the attributions of "good" and "evil" as regards the supra-national building of belonging within an enlarging European Union. I also look at different political and theoretical position of if and how "Europeanness" is generated through such a political project and what possible outcomes for providers of belonging and identifications there are.

The Project of the European Union

While the previous chapter looked at different definitions and ideas of the nation state, this chapter focuses on the relationship between nation states and the political project of the European Union. It is concerned with the question whether the European Union as a project is capable of offering alternatives to essentialist identification provided by nation states and it reflects upon different ideas – "Europes", "Europeannesses", "Europ-isms" – that envision current discourses of Europe. However, with the foundation of the European Union and its continuous enlargement, European nation states have to re-position themselves in relation to the European Union. Furthermore, benefits and responsibilities bound on EU-membership and discussions on future members contribute to different alliances between nations and affect political strategies within countries. The very concept of the European Union also brings up the question of which "Europe" are we talking about. Do we mean the territory of the continent? Do we talk about different Europes, the Europe of the North, West, South, East or South-East? Which role do political discourses play? What do we mean, from which perspective and to which purpose, with "East" and "West" Europe and how does that influence a united Europe today? Maybe it is the Europe of the European Commission, the European NATO-members or non-NATO-members or the Europe of the European Union that we target.

EU-Europe is deeply involved with the question of what is a European identity while it itself is based upon different groups and different interests that are all contributing to the definition of such an "identity". At the same time, as Rosi Braidotti (2001: 4) points out, European identity is something that does not necessarily have to coincide with any of the suggestions above. It does not have to coincide with the European Union, or with the continent. It rather opens a contested field of questions about belonging and not belonging, or being excluded (cf. ibid). My analysis of European identity and the European nation state will mainly target the question of European identity in connection to the European Union. I will start with its foundation in the early 1950s in the west of Europe, before looking at the consequences of enlargement to the east of Europe, and furthermore, I will critically approach the EU-dedication to democracy and Human Rights. Again, the issue stresses the tension between essentialist and non-essentialist values implemented in identity formations and identity politics. To track down questions like what is going on in contemporary Europe and how this involves individuals, I will take Braidotti's consideration that we need to go beyond a "What is it?"-question serious and ask *[H]ow is it constructed? By whom? Under which conditions? For which aims?*" (ibid: 5). By raising this perspective she opens identity questions to the struggle over power, from which considerations of belonging or delimitation of people, groups or national communities can be analysed.

1. (No) European solidarity – Who are the Europeans?

In 2001, the German- French parliamentarian Daniel Cohn-Bandit clearly stated that talking about Europe means thinking about who are the Europeans (cf. Cohn-Bendit in Weiss 2003: 183). The question is not new. A European identity, if it exists, is always challenged by differences between and among Scandinavia, Southern Europe and *recently* "Eastern" Europe. I do not write *recently*, as I would not consider "Eastern" European countries as being important for European identity until the end of the Cold War or as possible members of the European Union. On the contrary, due to the former "East"/"West"-division, the "Eastern" European countries had an enormous influence on the self-image of the "West" and vice verse. From a conservative perspective, the alliances between the former socialist countries were crucial for the foundation of the European Communities[16], which were constituted as a counter-power to the Soviet dominated East (cf. Braidotti 2002: 132). I write *recently* because of the universal claim carried by the "West and the rest"-ideology that is influential in regard to the self image of the "Western" European states, and crucial for the "Eastern", previously socialist states' self-understanding. The "Eastern" European countries have been, as Kürti (1997: 30) writes, largely underrepresented in scientific work of the "West" and are still considered as an insignificant issue, when talking about European identity, because of a dominating "Western" perspective.

When writing about European identity, it is often reflected upon "Western" perspectives. In this book, I take "Western" viewpoints as starting points when approaching the project of the European Union and reflect them in a critical perspective. The "Western" supremacy that is capable of defining a European identity is also visible in contemporary definitions of Europeanness: institutions, agreements and commissions like the European Council (1949, Strasbourg), OECD (previously OEED, 1948, Paris), the European Union (first version: European Coal and Steal Community, 1950, Brussels) or NATO were founded in the "West" and incorporated into the "Western" (European) value system (cf. Maschke 2004: 19-30). Today these institutions are increasingly opening up to former communist countries or non-"Western" states and have an enormous influence on identity issues in present politics. Certainly claims on power are not one-sided. The ideological separation between "East" and "West" was not merely the interest of "Western" nations. The Marshall-

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16   Initially, the European Union consisted of different Communities, such as the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951, the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) founded in 1957. These Communities embraced the same states and were called "European Communities" from 1965 until 1991. From 1993, the Communities are called European Union. For such reasons I will use the term "European Communities", when I refer to an earlier date than 1993 (cf. Europa 2006h).

plan, for example, suggested by the US as a European Recovery Programme, also included Eastern European countries like Hungary or the former Czechoslovakia. Thus, the idea was rejected by the communist governments (cf. ibid: 93). Instead, the central government in Moscow established its own reconstruction agreement, Comecon. This agreement can be seen as the Soviet pendant to the "Western" OEEC (cf. ibid). However, what is problematic for the development of a European identity within the European Union today is the self-identification of "Eastern" and "Western" Europe based on mutual exclusion. The collapse of Eastern socialist regimes, as I analysed in the last chapter, was somehow accompanied by the idea that the Eastern social model disappeared too. Therefore, in the wake of the membership of Eastern countries inclusion of "Easternness" into the "Western"-grounded idea of EU-European identity might not even be considered. If "Western" Europe sees itself as the centre, as Rosi Braidotti (2002: 132) claims, I consequently have to deconstruct the invisibility of the centre before including the margins. At the same time I am aware that my own personal and theoretical background is located in a "Western" cultural context, and has to be understood as the starting point for my approach.

When Robert Schuman, the French foreign minister in post-war France, introduced the idea of establishing permanent peace between the two major opponents in several European wars, Germany and France, he was well aware of the troubled situation between the European countries (cf. Maschke 2005: 22-4). Despite that, his plan was to create a united Europe. In those times the idea was indeed revolutionary, because it went beyond the sovereignty of the European nation states. Schuman's idea was that a supra-national instance should help to avoid the dominance of some European states to the disadvantage of others. Schuman engaged Jean Monnet as his supporter, who was able to refer to experiences in the League of Nations before World War II (cf. Fontaine 2000: 10-5). Also Monnet was well aware that it was not the time to start such a political project on an institutional level, but to build upon solidarity beyond nationalist and ethnic premises step by step. The foundation of the European Coal and Steal Community in 1950 was introduced as an alliance to secure ("Western"[17]) Europe from the tensions caused by the early Cold War and to stabilise the European economy after an overproduction of coal and steel during war time (ibid).

The aim of establishing permanent peace between ("Western") European countries was taken up in the core of the introductory speeches of the project. Schuman defined it as the first step to a federal Europe in which peace can be secured in only *one*[18]

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17 This is in brackets, because it is my addition to the texts. The author of the European booklet, Fontaine, does not distinguish between "different" Europes.

18 Here "one" seems to target only the "Western" part of Europe.

Europe (cf. Schuman in Maschke 2004: 24-5). He did not explicitly target European culture, or identity, but he foresaw the European Union as we know it today and laid the foundation for a "new" ("Western") Europe. The aim was to find ways of establishing a "peaceful", free, egalitarian and democratic ("Western") Europe (cf. Fountaine 2000: 5). The founding members were France, Germany, Italy and the Benelux States. From Schuman's perspective, the participation of Germany and France were crucial for the start (cf. Maschke 2004: 22). Otto M. Maschke (ibid: 25-6) writes that politicians at that time seemed to be cautious and reasonable. They were able to understand the situation in Europe, which Maschke sees closely connected with the threatening situation of the Cold War and the possibility of a nuclear encounter of the two super powers. When it became clear that the European alliance was a success, the community opened to new members: Denmark, Great Britain, Ireland, followed in 1973, Greece in 1981, Portugal and Spain in 1986 (cf. Fountaine 2000: 21-2). The end of the Cold War and democratisation processes in "Eastern" European countries, as well as the independence wars, changed the situation in Europe and the dimensions within which European unification could be considered. Today, 27 states are members of the European Union: with Austria, Sweden and Finland joining in 1995, it was these states whose neutrality was considered as being problematic for the EU-membership[19] before becoming members. In May 2004, the European Union enlarged to include Cyprus and Malta and to the first former socialist countries: the Baltic States, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Hungary (cf. ibid: 22). In January 2007, Romania and Bulgaria entered the Union. The latest name "European Union" was officially adapted in 1992 (cf. ibid: 40).

The concept outlined above, is only one possible version of or plan for a united Europe. Danica Fink Hafner and Terry Cox (1996: 5) raise awareness to the long period of 16 years in which only six members were the core bearers of the European Communities. Also later decisions on European questions remained mainly in their hands. The alternative suggestion of Mikhail Gorbachev for a "common European home" that goes from the Atlantic to the Pacific is not part of such considerations. Furthermore, other ("Western") European nations remained excluded from accessing the notion of "Europe", because of the European Communities' self-appointed right to define the terms (cf. Maschke 2004: 90-1). Countries like Great Britain, Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Norway or Sweden and later Iceland and Finland that

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19 "Neutrality" of nation states offers many different interpretations and is based on different political reasons. There were other states such as Ireland, Belgium or Portugal that were neutral and could join the European Union earlier. While Sweden, Austria or Finland did not join the NATO, because of their neutral position, Portugal, for example, is a NATO-member. Somehow neutrality was a hindrance for Sweden, Austria and Finland to join the European Communities earlier.

remained (for a long time) outside the European Communities could develop a sense of Europeanness through their membership of EFTA. The economic agreement was founded by the European Communities and the United Kingdom in 1960 in order to include other "Western" democracies in economic exchange, and it was excluding Eastern European countries (cf. Fountaine 2000: 38, cf. Maschke 2004: 94). Otto M. Maschke (2004: 91) also agrees that the leadership on European issues and a definition of Europeanness was held by the members of the European Communities, ignoring other versions of Europeanness.

The three authors, Fink Hafner (Slovenia), Cox (Great Britain) and Maschke (Austria) write from the position of countries that joined the European Union after its initial foundation. Fink Hafner's article about Slovenia and the European Union was published in 1996. At that time, Slovenia's membership to the EU in 2004 was not certain and Austria and Great Britain had always maintained a very critical position as regards the European Union (cf. Eurobarometer 2006). Insofar, it is not surprising that the authors are critical towards the "centre" of European matters. However, Great Britain was among the first states to join the European Communities after its inception. In contrast to states like Austria (cf. Maschke 2004: 92) or Slovenia (cf. Fink Hafner and Cox 1996: 12) Great Britain did not see itself as being at the heart of a European identity. Its economic and cultural connections, especially through the English language, brought the country closer to the US than to other European nations (cf. ibid: 9). Besides that, Britain was not as strongly affected by the destruction of the WW II, which did not create the need for it to strengthen its economic relations to other European countries. The country's problems rather encompassed the loss of imperial power and the independence (movements) of many former colonies (cf. ibid: 10-1). Jean Monnet's proposal to establish a possible Union among France, Germany and the United Kingdom failed because of the disinterest of the UK. Only when it turned out that the European Communities were successful, did Great Britain apply for membership. Because of some rivalries between Great Britain and France, the first British application in 1960 was rejected in 1961. Until today, England has continued to be *an awkward partner* within the European Union, as Hafner Fink and Cox defined in 1996. More recently Great Britain maintained its "awkward" role in its participation in the war against Iraq, in the continuation of its US-partnership, and in the rejection of the European currency.

Austria's membership of the European Union took longer to come into being. From 1956 onwards, Austria applied several times (cf. Maschke 2004: 91). Austrians always felt close to Europe because of the emphasis of its historical legacy as an entity within a multi-cultural monarchy (cf. ibid: 90). The country's insistence on neutrality, the impossibility of providing military support for the community, constituted a

complicated starting position. In this regard, it is also important to note that Austria traditionally had trade agreements with the Eastern European states and was therefore linked with the former Eastern bloc (cf. ibid: 99). Furthermore, Moscow did not appreciate Austria's negotiations with the European Communities. From a Russian point of view, membership would bring Austria closer to the "West" and would endanger its neutral position. Countries like France and Italy wanted to avoid having problems with the Soviet bloc and did not support the Austrian application for EC-membership (cf. ibid: 102).

For several reasons Austrian membership to the European Communities, which were renamed to European Union in 1992, was only possible after the end of the Cold War. With the constant progression towards enlargement and the question of possible future members of the European Union, identity questions and perspectives on Europe came to the fore. Such a discussion was largely dismissed by the public agenda. One explanation for that might be that identity questions did not need to be analysed as long as the well-known structures between European nation states were not under attack. Over a long period of time, Europe was dominantly seen as being divided into "*[a] developed West and North, and underdeveloped South and the undemocratic unruly and backward states of the East*" (Kürti 1997: 31). In the early 1950s membership was only open to countries of the south-west and the north, but not to the ones in the north-east, east or south-east of Europe, with the exception of Greece (cf. Brinar 1996: 26-7). The applications of Turkey and Morocco remain a problematic issue until today. Their possible membership does not only raise ideological questions, but also questions the geographical borders of Europe. Whereas Morocco is not accepted as a possible future member of the European Union (cf. ibid: 28), the membership of Turkey could be possible at one point. Turkey applied for the first time in 1957.

The end of the Cold War brought another new dimension into European politics. EFTA-states, if not yet interested in an EC-membership, were eager to join in the dawn of the events around the years 1989 to 1991. An EFTA-membership did not provide countries with the same rights as the European Communities with regard to market agreements or political rights. For example, each country of the European Communities has the right to veto. In contrast to that, all of the EFTA-members together had only one veto, and it was not even obligatory for the European Communities to consider that veto in the later decision making phase (cf. Brinar 1996: 24). This constituted an asymmetrical division in the "West". Soon after the collapse of the communist regime all "Western" European nations, except for those whose inhabitants voted against it, were integrated into the European Union. At this point, the question of the membership of European states became more compelling than ever

before (cf. Fink Hafner and Cox 1996: 5-6). In this time frame, Turkey and Morocco applied (once more) in 1987, Cyprus and Malta in 1990, and Poland and Hungary, as the first former socialist European countries, submitted their applications in 1994 (cf. Brinar 1996: 25).

Already at the beginning of the post-communist era, intellectuals and politicians tried to invent a new notion of "Central Europe" (cf. Kürti, 1997: 35-41). The concept is not to be mixed up with the German concept of *Mitteleuropa*. "Central Europe" embraces countries that can function as a gate or a bridge between the "real" "West" and the "real" "East". This was supported by many countries, like Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic that considered themselves more central than east. The same states formed the Central European Free Trade Association (CEFTA – the "Eastern" EFTA) in 1992 as a stepping stone on the way to the European Union and the "Western" capitalist market system. This step caused a split between them and the countries closer to the former Soviet Union. Furthermore, it contributed to an ideological division of the "Eastern" countries into a more and a less developed area. CEFTA-states only offered memberships to the Baltic States, Romania and Slovenia in 1995. These attempts of creating economic and ideological allies also reflect the competitiveness of settling and unsettling borders and shows that there is nothing like a clear barricade between the so-called "East" and "West". The intension implemented in the process of creating CEFTA reveals the reproduction of hierarchy based on "Western" European values by "Eastern" countries. As a consequence of overtaking "Western" European measurements for success, development, wealth, competitiveness etc., each country in the "East" and South-East found its worst enemies in their "Eastern" neighbours. Former socialist countries tend to contrast their own "Europeanness" with the other countries' "Europeanness" and use the comparison in order to argue closeness to "Western" European identity. However, writers from a Central European perspective often claim today that the "Central" and "Eastern" European countries were only forcefully divided from "Western" Europe through the Iron Curtain (e.g. Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Croatia and Slovenia) (cf. ibid).

1.1 Slovenia's Relation to Discourses of Europe

The question of "Europeanness" is one of the core issues of many former socialist countries in Europe, especially in the transition period to a democratic country. The processes that led to independence in Slovenia from the early 1980s onwards were characterised by the "Europeanisation" of the public sphere. Danica Fink Hafner calls it the "*Slovenia going back to Europe*"-discourse (cf. Fink Hafner and Cox 1996: 13).

Within Yugoslavia, Slovenia was not locked away from "Western" Europe by closed borders, but rather was locked away from the "East". Slovenes were also able to follow "Western" media. From a historical perspective, the connection to "Western" Europe is merging with a legacy of "high culture" in Slovenia and is related to the Habsburg monarchy of which Slovenia was a part of over a long period of time. "Going to Europe" was synonymous with modernisation, development, growing economy and cultural richness. Despite political problems at the beginning of the transition-period, processes of "modernisation" were initiated shortly after the disintegration of Yugoslavia. The economic situation also improved. Natasha Milanovich (1996: 39) shows: inflation decreased from 267% in 1991 to 18% in 1994. With the start of the war in Yugoslavia, Slovenia had to integrate itself into a European market, because it had lost the former markets in Yugoslavia. Already in 1996 70% of the in- and exports were coming/going from/to members of the EU (cf. Fink Hafner and Cox 1996: 14). Along with that development the population was supportive of integration into the new market. Whereas politicians and intellectuals in Slovenia were highly enthusiastic about Slovene EU-membership, the discussions around the acceptance of the obligatory EU-standards among Slovene inhabitants was ambiguous. The inhabitants were worried about the compulsory adaptation to the previously existing European standards. At the same moment, political representations during the transition were important in implementing European values into the new Slovene national identity. Initially, it was not clear that Slovenia would be among the first former socialist countries to join the EU. In early 1990, Hungary and other Eastern European countries had far better starting positions, although Slovenia was traditionally the country with the best developed integration into the European market (cf. Milanovich 1996: 42-3). This was partly due to the close association of Slovenia with other former Yugoslav countries and therefore with the war. Furthermore, Slovenia had problems with neighbouring countries like Italy and Croatia. Even today, the borders to Croatia are not completely fixed. The conflicts, which arise from this, are given great attention in the Slovene and Croatian media. Italy vetoed against Slovenian possible membership to the European Union in 1994, because of the on-going conflicts around the return of property which once belonged to the Italian people[20]. Austria supported Italy in that matter and asked for more rights of the German speaking minority in Slovenia. Vice verse, Austria has not managed to solve its problems with the Slovene speaking minority in the Southern province of Austria since the 1920s (ibid). Those discussions are still occupying politicians, civil rights groups and the media in both countries.

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20   The Italian/Slovenian border was only fixed in 1954 (Milanovich 1996: 43).

The collapse of the communist East did not only mark so much the celebrated end of the Cold War. Peter J. Opitz (1994: 51) clearly highlights the fact that the end of the "East"-"West" division was accompanied by many overlapping events: other consequences were the collapse of communist ideology, the crumbling of the socialist federation states USSR and former Yugoslavia and the bloody events during the separation war. Maschke (2004: 26) argues that "Western" European countries lost a large part of their enthusiasm to establish peace and equality between European countries after World War II. With the disappearance of an "East"-"West"-division the interests of the nation states became increasingly focussed on power. Larger countries were particularly worried about their supremacy and influence on European matters following the possible membership of a large number of "Eastern" countries. Perhaps that fear contributed to the final acceptance of Austria, Sweden and Finland as EU members in order to strengthen the "Western side". Furthermore, the political changes and wars in "Eastern Europe" had contributed to an unstable situation. The imagination of people in the "western" part of Europe was filled with the fear of unpredictable migration flows and other economic consequences for the west (ibid).

Certainly the Cold War had terrifying effects on the people's sense of security and an impending nuclear war. At the same time, the situation provided a certain stability in the distribution of power. The restructuration of power relation with the end of the Cold War was perceived as more threatening, especially from a "Western" point of view (cf. Opitz 1994: 52). One aspect is related to the fear of migration flows that were formerly largely prevented through the closure of borders. Another aspect is, as Hans-Georg Heinrich (1994: 132) analyses, that the loss of perceived security had a psychological effect on people living in the "west" of Europe. Considering the "West" as the social space with the highest acknowledged system of stability and security, people from "Western" countries tend to see this endangered by incoming people from the "East" and the riots clinging to the "East". The former socialist countries, the so-called "Second World", had been a counter-system supporting the impression of stability on both sides. The permeability of the Eastern borders did not only cause confrontation with Eastern migrants and refugees, but also with incoming people from so-called "Third World" countries. Many refugees from Asian or African states took the route through the former Soviet bloc (cf. Heinrich 1994: 133). The self-appointed social, political and geographical order of the "West" suddenly seemed to intersect and to get mixed up. Laws on migrants and asylum seekers were suddenly a prevailing discourse on the public agenda of the "Western" countries. Also today, traditionally "Western" countries fear immigration and terrorism to a higher degree than the 10 last countries that joined the European Union. Similar attitude can be found regarding the fear of crimes (cf. Eurobarometer 65 2006).

Alongside public discussions, European countries started to define "safe" and "unsafe" countries in order to legitimate the status of an incoming person (cf. Heinrich 1994: 134). Migrants from the "East" were increasingly criminalised as "illegal" incomers, because their countries were considered to be "safe" for their inhabitants and consequently are not offered the possibility to apply as a refugee. It is interesting in that connection to refer to the change of attitude in the "Eastern" and the "Western" European countries. Before 1990, "Eastern" regimes were afraid that people would run away from their countries, if national borders were opened up. Whereas today, as Otto M. Maschke recognises (2004: 179), the "West" closes its borders to "Eastern" immigrants. The fact that incoming foreigners were responsible for higher unemployment-rates among the citizens of the "Western" European states is the most important line of argumentation. The suspicion of the "unknown other" accompanied "existential fears" (cf. Modood 1997: 1).

1.2 The Borders of Europe

The "West" is attempting to create a united Europe with an enlarging European Union. This project, however, is driven by different notions of Europeanness. Europe is not open to any country on the European continent. The application of Turkey to become a member of the European Union stretches a possible definition of European borders. The wars in former Yugoslavia affected ideas on European in a tremendous way, because those wars happened on a continent which had promised to not let anything like that happen again (cf. Meštrović 1994: v). At the same time, as Maschke (2004: 30) points out, public representations of the war made it seem like it happened elsewhere. We could all follow the cruel and traumatic events of our European neighbours on television, which did not seem to have anything to do with us (cf. ibid).

The Croatian/Yugoslavian[21] author Rada Iveković criticises the selective notion of Europe in her book "*Jugoslawischer Salat*" (1992). The war in former Yugoslavia shows, she argues, who is considered as European and who remains outside this notion (cf. Iveković 1992: 38-40). The borders, however, are not fixed. Iveković considers the absence of European reaction to the war and war crimes of Serbia as evidence of a sense of insecurity towards its own south-east borders. In 1992, she was sure that Europe would not punish Serbia because of such insecurities. During an interview in 1993 she stated (1993: 26) that "Western" European culture wants to continue the

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21 As an anti-nationalist thinker, she considers herself without nationality since the name Yugoslavia was recently occupied by the aggressor in the secession war of the former federation which can no longer be significant for her cultural origin (see Iveković 1992: 10-1).

European-Community-tradition. Neither the Balkan mentality nor Yugoslavian culture fit into this picture and certainly not the cruelty of the Balkan wars. It is the attempt to keep unruliness out of the European culture, which Stjepan G. Meštrović (1994) would probably understand as a denial of Europe's own history and present politics. Meštrović (ibid: viii) sees the return of Nazism, the Crusades and the extermination of Islam symbolised in the Balkan Wars. Nonetheless, "Western" opinion makers and also intellectuals "*[c]lung stubbornly to the Enlightenment narratives which predicted the end of history, the end of culture, and the ability to transcend habits and traditions. Only they would not admit that these Enlightenment narratives are themselves habits and traditions characteristic of American, British, and French cultures*" (Meštrović ibid: vii). With this statement Meštrović distinctively targets nationalism and its exclusive tendencies towards "the other". "The other" is certainly needed in a project like the European Union, but the European Union acts extremely hostile against them.

Iveković (1993: 26), for example, does not see Europe as constituted in Maastricht. By highlighting Sarajevo as a point where Islam and Christianity meet, she suggests the city as another perspective on Europe (Iveković 1992: 10). It is such a location from which she regrets that Europe seems to stick to the imagined division of an "East"-"West"-opposition. Although countries in the east and south-east try to join the European Union, the images associated with them carry the "evil" connotation of the previous "Eastern" bloc. Next to a dichotomy between *Willenskultur* (good) versus *Kulturnation* or *Volksnation* (evil) that I introduced in the previous chapter, the idea of democracy in contrast to communism is also important for analysing the "good/evil" constructions of "Western" versus "Eastern" countries. For a more distinguished differentiation, one has to see that the political level of an "evil"-construction has mixed cultural and religious elements. The rhetoric of "Western" representation on the so-called "East", as Kürti (1997) and Todorova (1997) refer to, is still strongly associated with backwardness regarding economies and industrialisation, the bureaucracy of the state apparatus and the "lack" of democracy. From the "Western" perspective, cultural differences are perceived with the Cyrillic alphabet or the Orthodox Church. After all, the communist legacy of rigid and inflexible market systems seems to intersect with other categories like gender, ethnicity or religion. There is a hierarchy of representation within the "Eastern" countries ranks from states such as Hungary and Poland (a little less developed in industry than Austria) down to the least developed Balkan states (cf. Kürti 1997: 33-5). Representations that carry a "Western" value and norm system often homogenise the "East" over poverty, anti-Semitism, ethnocentrism and intolerance (as if only poor people are intolerant). In contrast to this idea of the "East", the "West" is able to strengthen its self-image based on modernity and ethnic order. Not surprisingly, with the rise of new countries and the crumbling of communism, "Eastern" and "Central" European states like Slovenia that

follow the "Western" paradigm, try to push notions of inferiority and backwardness away from themselves and towards the countries around them. This reflects the lack of solidarity between the former socialist states (cf. ibid).

The present situation in Europe constitutes a climate in which EU-enlargement is preceded by exclusive tendencies and stands in contrast to the initial proposal of Schuman and Monnet. Rosi Braidotti (2002: 132) is one feminist thinker who strongly positions herself against such tendencies which she sees grounded in the self-appointed mission of "Western" Europeans to act like a centre and the universal claims of their traditions and values. This she sees going back to the European habit of conquering the "other" in their self-appointed function as a world-power. In relation to this, the work of post-colonial (feminist) philosophers offers important critical viewpoints to see how gendered, sexualised and ethnised pictures were superimposed on "others". The "Western" perception of reality does not leave space for representations from the periphery. In the process of EU-enlargement such questions also affect "the other", non-"Western" European. Indeed, also ("Western") European people had to be "whitened", for example Jewish, Italians or *Irish* people (*my addition*) when immigrating to English-speaking host countries (cf. Braidotti 2006: 72). In my MA-research on Irish identity in 2003, young Irish people still showed evidence of a troubled relationship to the English colonialism of the 18th and 19th century. British newspapers at that time depicted the Irish "race" as inferior, creating allegories to monkeys and "blackness". This worked as a powerful representation to destroy their humanity (cf. Curtis 1997: 179-87). Similar to Eastern and more general Islamic countries today, Irish people were attached with images of "unruliness" and economic backwardness because of the mostly rural structures of the country. Such representations largely ignored the fact that the interference of English colonisers destroyed the infra-structure of the country and prevented an independent development of economy. In order to work against such negative representations the Irish created the "Irish intellectual". The representation of Irish writers and philosophers emphasised Irishness as applicable to the prevailing European discourse of rationality and reason. In this way, they were able to give space to the Gaelic language and to create a positive counter-image to the "language of peasants" as Britain was referring to the Celtic language. I was surprised to find similar practices in Slovenia.

Unlike Ireland, Slovenia has never been a "colonised" country, at least not in their self-perception or as part of the Slovene self-imagination. As it is a small country that was incorporated into other empires for much of its history, Slovenes "lack" a memory of great victories and war history, unlike in the national imagination of some other European countries. Therefore, Slovenes have to refer to different values. Historically, the only real bonding between Slovene people was the persistence of the Slovene

language over centuries. Aleš Debeljak (2004) points out in his collection of essays on Slovene nationality that the great heroes of Slovenia are poets and writers whose statues are placed on the squares of the cities and whose faces were printed on Slovene paper money of the former currency SIT (cf. ibid: 143-4). Also Slovene language was treated as the "folk" language of the lower classes. This perception of the Slovene language was also supported by its usage for training Lipicaner horses. Those horses were usually born and also trained in Slovenia, Lipica, for which the Slovene language became important and then taken to Vienna in order to perform in shows in their adult lives. This was a common practice during the Habsburg monarchy and is still a tradition in Vienna, as well as these horses still being raised in Lipica (cf. ibid: 133). Despite the fact that many Slovene intellectuals were educated in Vienna or Berlin and were familiar with the German language, poets continued to write in Slovene.

In contrast to the Slovene example, Gaelic in Ireland has been largely abandoned in every day life. Apart from 30,000 to 35,000 people that speak Gaelic as their first language, it mainly exists on paper as the first language in the state (cf. Comerford 1989: 37). Otherwise Irish people accept Gaelic as part of the "old" Ireland (cf. ibid: 21-4). For Slovenes, speaking the Slovene language became an act of showing cultural distinctiveness within the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy or later within Yugoslavia (cf. Debeljak 2004: 153), when the question of national consciousness first emerged (cf. Fink Hafner 1996: 12). Using the language was also an act of resistance against the devaluation of their language (cf. Debeljak 2004: 154-5). Although there are only a small number of Slovene speakers, the book market flourishes (cf. ibid: 152), which is, for example, visible in the fact that there are more than 800 newspapers in a country of two million inhabitants (Bašič-Hrvatin and Petković 2008). As Slovene people are very sensitive in regards to language issues, it may explain why they are easily offended by migrants who still have a foreign accent after living in Slovenia for 20 years. Later in the book, I will analyse the importance of the Slovene language in the empirical part.

In the case of Slovenia and Ireland, the population shows a high awareness for their own insufficiency to fit into the picture of "normality", which is based on dominant "Western"-centred values. For that reason, they tried to establish a "civilised" image of their behaviour and attitude in opposition to the "uncivilised" representation put upon them from the outside. Both countries are relatively little compared to other European countries. In the past, they might have been part of larger influential empires, like the United Kingdom or the Habsburg-monarchy, but Irish or Slovene people were neither identified as equal to their rulers nor did they perceive their position as equal or the "same as" the ruling culture. Therefore, both countries cannot refer to achievements or victories of the larger empire to fill their national imagery with myths and stories.

They had to find their own stories in order to narrate cultural distinctiveness. The emphasis on the intellectual character of their country helped them to maintain an "equal" position to the dominating culture and to tear away from the attachment of "inferiority". From that perspective it might not even be surprising that both countries, in order to try to leave such negative images behind them, show off incredible successful developments within the European Union. Both countries established a working economy and high economic growth within the EU. The countries turned into "winners" in the eyes of "Western" (European) countries. With the global economic crisis, next to Latvia and Estonia, Ireland was among the first states that were negatively affected (Eurostat 2009: 32). Slovenia was more stable and its economic situation is comparable to the EU-average. In contrast to this, in July 2009, Irish people were much more convinced that the economic situation would change for the better, while Slovenes rather thought that poverty will slightly grow (Eurobarometer 276 2009: 9). In comparison, people in both countries were more negative regarding increasing poverty in their country in December 2009, but Irish people were still more optimistic than Slovenes (Eurobarometer 286 2010: 9).

As I wrote earlier, images of inferior groups and communities in the "West" were powerfully generated through sexualised stereotypes. Maria Todorova writes in the introduction of her book "Imagining the Balkans" (1997) that the most crucial difference between "Balkanism" and "Orientalism" is the stress on male sexuality. Orientalism is closely associated with the study of females and with negative stereotypes of males that are attached with female sexuality. Balkanism is attributed with "*[u]ncivilised, primitive, crude, cruel and dishevelled*" representations and is therefore distinctively and singularly male (Todorova 1997: 14). Those elements can also be found in contemporary narrations of the Balkan wars. The rapist, the penetrator, or the mass murderer are exclusively male and push "Balkan" women into the position of "victims". Slovenia is painted with the images of the "Balkans", despite a disagreement of geographically situating Slovenia by experts. As part of former Yugoslavia, it is often seen as a part of the social construction of the "Balkans" (cf. ibid).

The location and the notion of the "Balkans" are highly contested by experts (cf. Todorova 1997: 21-7). The term goes back to a misconception of early geographers regarding the location of a mountain aerial between Romania and Bulgaria, known as Haemus or Aemus. The area was known from travel literature dating from the middle of the 16th century. The term "Balkan" was introduced two centuries later. Its existence was always more a myth than a clear definition. It was only from the middle of the 19th century that it referred to the whole Peninsula. Soon after the emergence of the term it was attached with a social-cultural meaning. It was used as a highly negative

stereotype to maintain an opposition between the civil "Western" world and the barbarian "South-East". The perceived brutality of the combat methods used during the first Balkan Wars in 1912 and 1913 remained as an institutionalised ideology in the "West" (cf. ibid: 3, 14). At this point we directly enter the politics of location, which questions geography in its "natural" appearance. The physical borders of a state always bear cultural, political and social connotation. To make it more obvious: In Italy the "Balkans" starts behind Trieste, as the most eastern part of the Adriatic Sea. Slovenia, which is from the Italian point of view a "Balkan" country, locates the beginning of the "Balkans" in Croatia. Croatia refers to the south of their national borders, when talking about the "Balkans". This continues until somewhere, there are people who really identify with the "Balkans" image, whereas such identification is again not based on the geographic location. For these countries, the "Balkans" is the strategic position used to distinguish themselves from the "Orient" (cf. ibid: 20, Resic and Törnquist-Plewa 2002: 10-1).

Todorova (1997) strongly emphasises the spatial and temporal construction of the Balkans in her analysis. She points out that a distinction between the "civilised" and the "barbarian", between the "East" and "West", goes back to the ancient Greeks, who also used that dichotomy to differentiate from the "Orient" (cf. ibid: 11). Balkan countries are well aware of the incompatibility of the "West" and the "Orient" and the identification with Islam (cf. ibid: 18). In contrast to that, the "Balkans" can work as a bridge between the "East" and "West", or Europe and Asia and between two stages of growth. Todorova (ibid: 16) defines this as invoking images of "*[s]emideveloped, semicolonial, semicivilized, semioriental*" and she (ibid: 17) introduces the term "Balkanism" in contrast to Edward Said's idea of Orientalism. In contrast to the latter, the self-perception of countries embraced by notions of "Balkanism" is neither that of being colonised nor does it provoke a strong sense of "victimisation". The emphasis is clearly on "transition". Identification with the term includes the hope of once escaping such negative stereotypisation. Todorova (ibid: 17) points to the contradiction in treating the "Balkans" as "non-European" societies, when they are doubtlessly *on* the European continent.

Over a long period, Greece was the only "Balkan" and Orthodox country that had joined the European Union (cf. Todorova 1997: 43). Although Greek culture is largely accepted as constitutive for the self-imagination of the "Western" European Union, Greeks remain very sensitive towards their position and repeatedly point out the Greek legacy evident in Europe today (also the word Europe itself is Greek!). Greek has played a "*[c]entral role in the Balkan cosmos*" (cf. ibid: 44) and therefore Greek people identify with the Balkan culture, although they do not refer to it as their first identity. This is also reflected in the value of the "Balkans" in Greek academia. Here,

the "Balkans" are treated as being a legitimate and neutral place. From the "Western"-centred perspective the relationship to Turkey is even more ambiguous. Also Todorova (ibid: 48-50) supports the viewpoint that Turkey constitutes a different case than the "Balkans": It is neither European nor Asian nor is it associated with democracy or socialism. Through historical links with the Ottoman Empire and the politics of Atatürk it is seen as leaning towards Europe. Byzantine-Balkan heritage in particular associates Turkey, in its self-imagination, with Europe (ibid). Despite this, it is drawn as entirely different to Europe.

1.3 Unified in Difference and Diversity

Forming an inclusive European *identity* was already in the mind the founding fathers of the European Union, Jean Monet and Robert Schuman, but back then soon after World War II it was considered as being too early to address this as a core issue (cf. Neunreither 1995: 5). Observing current struggles over identity matters, many intellectuals think they should have been addressed much earlier again. Gilbert Weiss (2003: 184) describes attempts of defining contemporary Europe as similar to "soul-searching" and the hope to "discover" Europeanness. Furthermore, he identifies this as a dangerous tendency, because of its closeness to essentialist and exclusive forms of identity. Today it is especially Germany and France that feel particularly responsible for and constitutive of European identity and culture. Gilbert Weiss (2003: 187-9) has pointed out in his analysis of speeches made by German and French statesmen[22] and EU-politicians that they transfer their notions of Europeanness to other countries. This also affects those countries that might not even have joined the European Union yet. Schuman and Monnet, as well as Adenauer or Gaspari are among the most frequently quoted statesmen with respect to European "identity" and are representatives of the very idea of such an identity (cf. ibid). Certainly, there are some problems in linking all European countries of the Union to the European project. These problems lie mainly in the continuous "Western" supremacy of the European project. Exclusive representations of the superior "West" and the inferior "East" or more recent attempts to establish "Central" Europe as an alternative concept remain problematic for contemporary European policies and enlargement (cf. Kürti 1997: 41). Efforts to create a symmetric multi-ethnic European identity would be more suitable for the existing multi-cultural environment. Whereas nation states work quite well on the level of identification, the European Union seems to fail to provide positive identifications, which would allow people to identify with Europeanness. In this context Braidotti

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22   The author did not give any examples of female politicians.

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(2001: 27) refers to Nietzsche, who already claimed one century ago, that people do not feel at home in Europe.

European representatives as well as national politicians, who speak to their national audiences, try to evoke positive associations through the imaginative connection to ("Western" and "Eastern") European cities (cf. Weiss 2003: 188). Prague, Budapest, Warsaw and Ljubljana are well-known tourist destinations and they can be linked to the "high culture" of former European empires like the Habsburg monarchy. Their connection to the European Union is less frightening for "Western" countries than thinking of countries with economic problems, less developed infrastructure and poverty. Of course, the European Union is not a national project. It does not aim to homogenise all Europeans into one culture. On the contrary, the emphasis is on the differences of cultures. Such diversity should be connected with common aims and values (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 283-4), like democracy and economic relations, and united through European citizenship (cf. Neunreither 1995: 1).

Meanings of European identity or culture and citizenship and the relationship between those characterisations are not fixed. Today there are overlapping political concepts transporting the European idea: The European Council with 49 member states, the European Union of 27 and the Europe of Schengen, which includes all EU-countries with the exception of Ireland, the United Kingdom, Malta, Romania and Bulgaria but including Iceland, Norway and Switzerland; the Europe of the common currency that includes 16 EU-countries: with the exception of the United Kingdom, Sweden and Denmark all EU-countries that entered until 1995, and more recently Slovenia (2007), Malta, Cyprus (2008) and Slovakia (2009). Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 284-5) see that as being dependent on the prevailing discourse, which determines a certain perspective on Europeanness and the responsibilities of European policies. From their perspective, a separation of cultural and political elements in the construction would not be useful. Similar to nation states, they are intermingled and present in discourses on the European Union. In its present stage, Europe is in the process of forming an identity and therefore legal foundations are as important as the cultural implementation (Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 284-5). Based on the identity politics as regards Europeanness and the legal implementation of the European Union, I will analyse three possible visions of a future European Union: the "*Fortress Europe Syndrome*", "*Balkanisation*" of the European Union and Europe based on a *multi-cultural* principle.

1.4 Legal Foundation of the European Union

What started as a trade union for coal and steel on May 9, 1949, now celebrated as "Europe Day" (cf. Europa 2006h), developed in 1958 alongside two other economic agreements into the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC). In the following years, the European Communities strengthened their collaborations with agreement on agricultural politics (1962), merged their executive powers and founded one Council and Commission for all three bodies (1965). They created a common exchange rate of their currencies (1972), set up a European Monetary System (1978) and for the first time in 1979, members of the European Parliament with 410 seats were directly elected. In 1987, the Erasmus programme started and a Single European Act came into force following decisions in Luxembourg and The Hague. On December 9, 1989 (two months after the fall of the Berlin Wall) the Community agreed to extend the economic union to a political one. In 1990, the Schengen agreement was signed. In 1991, the former EEC was renamed "European Community" EC. The Maastricht Treaty followed in 1993 and formed the basis of a common policy on security and foreign matters, a closer cooperation regarding justice, home affairs and an economic union – crucial for the common currency. For the first time, the European Union was introduced as an inter-governmental cooperation in the fields listed above as an additional Community System to national bodies, which created the need for an advanced legal body (ibid).

The idea of the European citizen is indeed new. It only came into public discussion with negotiations around the Maastricht Treaty, which was one important starting point for a European Constitution. It was the first time, when an inter-governmental cooperation was included and was compounded in 1987 with the Single European Act. It was also the first reform of the treaties since 1950 (cf. Europa 2006d). The Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997 intensified once more the idea of European integration and formally included the principles of freedom, democracy and respect for Human Rights. The Treaty of Nice in 2001 did not only settle the largest enlargement of the first Eastern countries and Malta and Cyprus, it also based the law of the European Community on 8 treaties, more than 50 protocols and annexes plus it incorporated new texts. All in all, there is a very complex structure of European laws and agreements and therefore it is quite difficult for a European citizen to comprehend. In order to work against the invisibility of such decision making behind closed doors on the part of governmental leaders, the European Convention was founded in 2001 during a meeting in December in Laeken, Belgium. The Convention embraces national representatives of all member states, the European Parliament, the national parliaments and the Commission. In the time between February 2002 and July 2003 discussions of the Convention regarding the European Constitution were made accessible to the

public, in order to allow European citizens get a closer idea of what was going on. At that time, the draft version of the European Constitution was finalised which should have replaced all other treaties from the 1950s onwards except from the Euratom Treaty (cf. ibid). The constitution was originally signed in the Treaty of Rome on October 29 in 2004 by all 25 members of that time. After that it had to be ratified by the member states in democratic agreements, either with the majority of the parliament or in a referendum, or both (cf. European parliament 2006a). The ratification stagnated with the rejection of the constitution in France and the Netherlands in referendums in May and June 2005.

While the website of the European parliament (2006a) defends decisions made in France and the Netherlands as an expression of a lack of satisfaction rather than as a "no" to the European Union itself, the question of the transparency of European politics was suddenly on the agenda. At the time, when the French and the Dutch voted "no", 15 out of 25 states had already signed the contract in parliamentary votes, including Slovenia and Austria. Only two other states, Spain and Luxembourg, made their agreements in a referendum. Other countries that had not proceeded with their democratic agreements postponed it. Although it seemed like the European Union had finally realised that citizens, civil societies and the national governments and politicians had to be included in discussions on a future democracy of Europeans, this is not reflected in further steps taken in order to replace the Constitution. The Lisbon Treaty, in contrast to the Treaty Establishing a European Constitution which is an amendment to and not a replacement of the earlier Treaties, was launched in May 2007 by the EU leaders. However, the ratification of the new Treaty starting from December 2007 was conducted without greater public attention. With the only exception of the Irish Republic where a referendum[23] was held, all other 26 member states ratified the new Treaty in a parliamentary vote (Europa 2010a). The Treaty of Lisbon entered into force on December 1, 2009 (Europa 2010b).

2. Fortress Europe Syndrome

The European Union and its national bodies founded the Treaty of Lisbon on the European inheritance of culture, religion and democracy. From a "Western" perspective, Human Rights and the humanist legacy aim to introduce a multicultural

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23   According to the BBC-website, Ireland was obliged to hold a referendum due to the decision of the Supreme Court in 1987. There were two referendums held in Ireland, the first rejected the amendments of the Lisbon Treaty in June 2008. Only after it was guaranteed to the Irish Republic that the amendments would not affect Irish sovereignty in some defined key areas, the Lisbon Treaty was confirmed with an overwhelming majority in November 2009 (see BBC 2010a).

society as a formal consensus, where everybody is free and equal with respect to others and everybody shows the same generosity to the other (cf. Habermas 1994: 24). Thus, humanist and democratic values appear inclusive rather than exclusive to various identities and carry the hope of a united Europe as well as of a "better world". In contrast to that, other aspects of modernity strengthen the exclusive borders of strong identities and also affect humanist values in their meaning. For example, the legacy of the French revolution is also present through *nationalism*. This was initially the force behind attaining freedom from aristocratic ruling, and even today it is a powerful instrument used to discriminate against non-"Western" foreigners (cf. Habermas 1994: 23). Furthermore, the dynamics of *capitalism* are based on individualisation and self-interest of economic growth. They are therefore not inclusive of everyone (cf. ibid: 29). More recently, the moral heritage and values of *Christianity* is drawing the borderline between so-called "Western" and non-"Western" cultures (cf. Pieterse 1991/1997: 225).

The emphasis on democracy, Human Rights and Christianity creates an "ideological bloc" of ("Western") European countries that consider their legal systems, norms and values as the status quo. Because of that, many intellectuals are afraid that Europe will function as a larger nation state, which is identified as the *Fortress Europe Syndrome* (cf. Pieterse 1991/1997: 227). In this respect, Ruth Wodak and Sonja Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 284-5) compare the discursive construction of nation states with the narration of the European Union. They refer to speeches where people of European nations are addressed as "European citizens" in order to generate feelings of belonging among them. The authors (ibid) point out that such an identification becomes especially useful when one is abroad. Being a "European" also refers to a person's cultural and economic situatedness in order to distinguish them from Japan or the United States. Furthermore, the notion of Europe is imagined in a similar way to how nations are imagined. For example, it can be traced back to a "founding moment", although differing narrations of "origin" carry different ideas of Europe. The latest attempt to identify Europe might be seen in introducing "Europe Day" on May 9. This day celebrates EU-Europeanness, since May 9 is the anniversary of the Robert Schuman declaration of an integrated Europe in 1950 (cf. Europa 2006c). Narrating the 1950s as a starting point of the European project means that this represents barely a quarter of the present members of the EU. Therefore, politicians often focus on the future of the European Union, in order to avoid looking at unequal power relations (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 285).

Another similarity to nation states is evident in the fact that the European Union is imagined along an inclusion/exclusion-axis (cf. Wodak and Puntscher 2003: 285). Nations prefer to emphasise distinctiveness from other nations rather than to focus on

domestic problems (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 284). The attention might be drawn to conflicts with neighbouring countries, or in the case of the European Union, to conflicts with other cultural areas outside the Union. This of course, is based on a mutually exclusive conceptualisation of culture, which led conservative thinkers like Samuel Huntington to speak of a "clash of civilizations", when it comes to conflicts between "Western" and non-"Western" states. Also in the past, European nations focussed their attention on their colonies in order to distract themselves from internal conflicts. The Fortress Europe Syndrome is one means of transferring internal conflicts to external spheres. Such border-drawing is often expressed with ideological and geographical question and the limits of EU-enlargement. Although borders, as Balibar (1998: 217-20) explains, in an increasingly globalised world do not end with the national culture, we live less than ever in a world without borders (cf. ibid: 221). On the contrary, through the unification of Europe, the closing of borders necessarily coincides (cf. Braidotti 2001: 8). Jan Nederveen Pieterse sees the problem related to the end of the Cold War, when "*[E]urope's historic frontier of confrontation with the world of Islam is being reactivated*" (Pieterse 1991/1997: 227). First published in 1991, the article still has relevance and allows us to understand that European borders policy is legitimated through a "security problem" and is in fact based on the question of how to protect European nation states from the economic, political, cultural, religious and demographic "others". This also explains why Etienne Balibar (1997: 219-21) claims that borders neither function equally for all people nor are they experienced the same way by different people of different social status. Furthermore, the relationship between territory and border has shifted in the sense that regions or even countries can function as border zones (cf. Ponzanesi 2002: 215, cf. Balibar 1998: 221). Through the enlargement of the European Union (ideological, economic, political, geographic) borders are not completely fixed. This still goes along with a symbolic overdeterminisation of borders. National borders or, in the case of the European Union, "ideological" borders would not be able to secure identities, if they were not idealised (cf. ibid).

In 2006, the European Website "Europa" addressed the European space as an area of "freedom, security and justice" in which the three elements are promoted as being necessarily related: "*[F]reedom becomes largely meaningless if people cannot live in safety, protected by a legal system on which all can rely equally*" (cf. Europa 2006g). At that time, only eleven EU-member states were part of Schengen. By the end of 2007, 22 states were part of the free border zone. Visiting the same Website in 2010 it was in the course of implementing the changes coming with the Treaty of Lisbon (Europa 2010c), the focus shifted towards an increased importance of free mobility within the Schengen zone, but also to stricter controls of external borders (ibid). Through the Schengen agreement and the decision to abolish internal borders, the

argumentation line in order to strengthen external borders of the European Union is drawn upon the necessity "*to combat effectively the trafficking of people and drugs, organised crime, illegal immigration and terrorism*" (see Europa 2010c). In 2006, the European Website "Europa" defended the security policies against the suspicion of creating a super-nation: "*[T]he aim is not to create a 'fortress Europe' but to make it easier for people to enter the European Union legally and to move around in it freely. At the same time, the EU is determined to combat the activities of criminal gangs who exploit human beings*" (cf. Europa 2006g, sic). In this regard the EU-policies have not significantly changed with the Lisbon Treaty (see for example General Provisions, Article 2, Treaty of Lisbon 2007: C 306/11), but the Website does not address the problem of heading to a "fortress Europe" (Europa 2010c).

Regarding the common treatment of asylum seekers and migrants, the European Union refers to its long tradition of welcoming people from outside the Union. In order to offer immigrants similar freedoms as European citizens, the procedures and rules for applications are in the process of being harmonised. As the example of Slovenia and the "erasure" of the legal status of some people shows, such decisions are often taken without reflecting upon the ideological and cultural pre-conditions to such a law. I mentioned before, that national societies are neither exclusively committed to the cultural nor to the legal aspect of state organisation. As a supra-national alliance, the European Union is inflicted with the same tensions. Legal foundations and their cultural translations cause contradictions, especially in the context of many different nations (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 284). Adding complications to this is the fact that there is always more than only one cultural translation of legal bodies. The Treaty of Lisbon remains highly arbitrary and leaves most interpretations to the member states. Therefore, it leaves a lot of space for interpretation.

In any case, there are different notions of Europeanness and the European Union transports a very specific one and one that is often exclusive of the Europeans "others". The "Balkans" or Roma communities are certainly not included. So-called Balkan countries would have the possibility to enter Europe, if they adapted their civil society and legal system to European norms. The case of Roma seems to be more difficult, because they do not have a country of "origin" or a "nationality". In the refusal of citizenship rights for Roma-communities, Slovenia is not an isolated case. Lutz et al. (1995: 3-4) argues that they were also deprived of their nationality and citizenship in Hungary. However, the Treaty of Lisbon did not solve this problem as it sticks to the definition that people with a nationality outside the European Union are "third country nationals". This is also valid for stateless people, and also often responds to the statues of people who belong to traveller communities as well. This means, it is legally implemented that members of specific communities are likely to be

deprived of full legal rights in any country supported by the fact that there is nothing like a citizenship allowance which is not bound to a particular nationality. Great Britain is another case. It is not part of Schengen Europe and consequently, "third country" nationals face even more restrictions. Lutz et al. (ibid: 13) refer to approximately one million affected women[24] who are permitted to work, obtain education, receive health care and pension rights, and housing in Great Britain, but who are prevented from moving freely to other European countries or enjoying the same rights as British citizens. Passport control at British airports and ports was re-introduced (cf. ibid: 5), because of some court cases against airlines which transported members of countries who did not have entry rights. The three authors see that as a way of preventing the dominant majority (European citizens) to enjoy full rights in order to keep the minoritised groups out of the countries.

More recently, Muslim cultures have become another border in terms of defining Europeanness. This makes the Christian influence on modern "Western" societies more obvious (cf. Huntington 1996: 70). Fortress Europe feels challenged by the growing numbers of Muslim residents and communities who neither fit into neo-liberalism nor advanced capitalism, and who challenging the moral value-system of European countries through their presence. Despite the claim of being secular, Christian morality is at the heart of the European value system. Islamic cultures function as substitute villains to the former Eastern bloc and communism as Modood (1997: 2-3) argues. Furthermore, the negative attitude to Islamic communities is expressed very similarly as racism. From Baumann's perspective the treatment of these groups is most comparable with the way Jewish people were racialised. Hence, it is related to the participation of a country with eugenics during the Second World War. Similar to ethnicity and race, the "other" religion frequently becomes an essentialised characterisation and is considered as unchangeable (cf. Baumann 1999: 69). That impression is supported by religious groups that really do not want to allow any change. Therefore, such practices conceal the fact that religious traditions can be reasserted in shifting political and social situations. The Islam in "Western" imagination is persistently connected to fundamentalism and austerity. Most people are not aware that there are at least three different Islamic movements and 17 distinct communities of Islamic expressions that claim different interests and are based on different rules (cf. ibid). In relation to this, Peter Schwarz (2003) refers to the attempt of some EU-member states to incorporate "Christian" heritage into the Treaty of Establishing a European Constitution in order to avoid a possible membership of Turkey, but such demands were not successful in the end.

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24 The authors particularly analysed the situation of women.

The "Fortress Europe Syndrome" coincides with the idea of Europe being "the centre" and its universal claim bearing the core of civilisation. That kind of attitude affects and challenges members and future members with the request to how they fulfil the obligations of such a civilisation. The European Union in that sense is based on a Greek/Roman heritage of high culture and Christianity (cf. Braidotti 2002: 233). Even in secularised forms this works as a moral background of a common value system cf. (ibid). The Fortress Europe Syndrome jeopardises the political commitment of its foundation to overcome nationalism. Inside it would work on a shared notion of civilisation and act in an exclusive rather than an inclusive way towards minorities and those "who are different". Furthermore, it would draw the borderline to other civilisations (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 283). It would substitute Euro-Centrism with Euro-ism, which is still based on the belief of an ethnically pure Europe (cf. Braidotti 2002: 233) and would keep out anything and anyone foreign or "uncivilised" (cf. Lutz et al. 1995: 7-8).

Not surprisingly, a newcomer to "Europeanness" like Slovenia tries its best to free itself from associations with the "Balkans" and former Yugoslavia. Therefore, what had happened with the "erasure" of non-nationals in Slovenia reflects upon contemporary European politics that try to abandon certain groups from the European imaginery and thus, physically affect members of such groups (cf. Zorn 2004: 2-3). Right wing-oriented Slovene politicians are able to legitimise their requests for stricter citizenship laws and hostile foreigner politics by claiming those were based on the practices of ("Western") European countries. Through the discriminatory border politics in the European Schengen system masses of people are left outside without papers and rights. With the membership to the European Union in 2004, Slovenia transformed into a border zone of the Union and was forced to strengthen its previously open border to the south, while opening up to the north, which was previously less permeable. Stricter laws for asylum seekers were finally introduced in May 2001, along with stricter border control and visas for Bosnia and Iran, because the two countries were considered as "safe" countries (Jalusić 2002: 52). Images of "safe" and "unsafe" countries legitimise asylum politics that criminalise people from so-called "safe" countries. Slovene public interpretations of the need for stricter asylum laws largely viewed this as an appropriation to European standards. Compared to them, Slovene laws had been unusually open (cf. ibid: 47).

Unfortunately, belonging to Europe is only possible through the citizenship of an EU-European nation, where identity is still based on imaginations of homogeneity (cf. Habermas 1994: 25). For these reasons, citizen rights are usually not easily obtained by a person who does not match the idea of a "normal" citizen (cf. ibid: 33) and therefore, belonging to Europe is not possible for everybody (cf. ibid: 25). In principle,

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citizenship is a voluntary commitment, but it is essential for one's legal status. When citizenship of a certain nation is not obtained by birth, one usually has to fight for this. Such tendencies are in keeping with the fear of the Balkanisation of Europe, as seen in the example of former Yugoslavia, where Serbia had dreamed of an ethnic pure Serbian state (cf. Braidotti 2002: 229).

3. Balkanisation of Europe?

The term *Balkanisation*, in contrast to the Fortress Europe Syndrome, refers to the war in former Yugoslavia as well as to the fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Habsburg monarchy. The term derives, as Maria Todorova (1997: 32-3) explains, from an increasingly political use of the term "Balkan" by the end of the 19th century. Although most of the Balkan states as known today existed at that time, Balkanisation stands for the disintegration of countries into smaller states which are not considered viable. Usually they are considered as mutually hostile to each other and implicitly refer to the political disintegration of the Balkan countries at the end of the Ottoman Empire. Later, the term was employed again after World War II with the beginning of the decolonisation processes (cf. ibid: 35). With the recent war in former Yugoslavia, Balkanisation became a synonym for "ethnic cleansing" and the empowerment of regional and local communities. Already in 1994, Stjepan G. Meštrović (1994: ix) acknowledges such tendencies in "Western" Europe, when comparing the actions of the Irish Republican Army, with the practices of the Serbs against Moslems. Indeed, "Western" Europe has experienced a lot of such local mobilisations within its territory, which are not necessarily or not yet expressed in the form of civil wars.

From his observations of the EU-meeting in Rome, Peter Schwarz (2003), for example, complains about the fight over power between the (future[25]) national members. From his point of view, large or at least influential countries tried to absorb smaller ones, using their economic or political power and the number of inhabitants, in order to maintain their own national interests. Schwarz also argues that larger countries used their dominance to "convince" smaller countries of the advantages of political decisions as the European Constitution previously was. Whereas the old opponents, France and Germany, mainly managed to work together in support of the "old core" of Italy, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium and partially Great Britain, a group of smaller countries, above all Finland, Austria and a group of Eastern countries, were not satisfied with the arrangement of voting rights and their influence

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25   The meeting in 2003 was attended by all the members at that time, the ten future members of 2004 plus three other applicants which Peter Schwarz did not explicitly list in his essay.

in the European Union. When one looks at the results of the Eurobarometer 65 in spring 2006, especially Austria and Finland, and also Great Britain traditionally show a low support for the European Union and the highest numbers of oppositional voices among their inhabitants (cf. Eurobarometer 65 2006: 9-10). The perceived benefits for the national community are important in regards to a supportive attitude towards the Union. Germany, Sweden, France and Malta, for example, show a high percentage of negative positions towards benefits. With the exception of Malta, countries of the enlargement in 2004 have improved their opinion on the beneficial outcome of the EU membership for their country. The perception of the Irish people is outstanding in this context with 87% of the population considering the EU-membership as being beneficial for their country. Some 68% of Slovene people would agree the same is true for Slovenia. Only 39% of Austrians see EU-membership as beneficial, the EU-average is 54%. (cf. ibid: 15) Another point of disagreement among EU member states can be seen in defining the relationship to the United States. France and Germany supported the idea of establishing the EU as an equal power to the US. Great Britain, with the support of Poland, Italy and Spain, wanted to strengthen the relationship to the United States and not to focus on a European military power as a counter power to NATO (cf. Schwarz 2003).

Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 286) argue that Europe is divided into countries and cooperation between countries of different interests. Peter Schwarz (2003) thinks that the French-German dominance creates unequal power-relations between the member states. From that perspective, some countries do not see their interests as being incorporated in the European project. Such differences, among other reasons, have caused dissatisfaction in European countries, which is expressed in widespread criticism towards the European Union. Rosi Braidotti (2002: 131) sees the anti-European voices as being located in the extreme left and the extreme right. The extreme and in her opinion *nostalgic* left still maintains class solidarity across (European) frontiers and claims solidarity with, for example, so-called Third World countries. The extreme Right instead tries to mobilise local and national identities, for which in their view the European Union is detrimental. All in all, this happens in a very xenophobic and often racist manner. What Braidotti (ibid) calls *micro-nationalisms* accompany the extension of and negotiations on European borders and they support an internal fragmentation and regionalism. Hence, the phenomenon can be considered as being related to the concept of *Balkanisation*.

Hall's (1999a: 325) claim in an essay, which was first published in the early 1990s, that "Western" European countries have proved to be successful in overcoming nationalism might have been too optimistic. Today, centre right wing governments turn out to be very common in "Western" and in "Eastern" European countries. That

goes hand in hand with the increasing support for extreme right wing parties as well as with an increasing disagreement with such trends[26]. For example, national elections in Austria (in October 2006) and The Netherlands (November 2006) showed a dissatisfaction of the voters with the former centre-right-wing coalitions. In Austria, the Social Democrats won unexpectedly the national elections in October 2006 and built a coalition with the Conservative Party in January 2007. After June 2006, Mr Jan Peter Balkenende, the former and the present Christian-democrat Prime Minister in the Netherlands, was forced to call an early election after the collapse of the former centre-right-wing government over discriminatory immigration. This was followed by a three-party-centrist-coalition in the Netherlands and was expected to take a softer line on immigrants and asylum seekers (see BBC 2007). The government collapsed in February 2010 over a disagreement in deploying Dutch soldiers in Afghanistan or not. From 2004-2008 there was a centre right-wing coalition under the leadership of Janez Janša in Slovenia. Dissatisfaction was already expressed during the legislation period. In local elections in October 2006, a left-wing mayor was elected in Ljubljana. The result also proved to be the reaction of dissatisfied Slovene citizens regarding the xenophobic campaigns of the candidates. Many of them employed negative images of Southern immigrants in polemic speeches. In contrast to that, the new mayor had an "ethnic" background coming from another Yugoslavian ex-state. The new coalition since 2008 is formed by the Social Democrat Prime Minister Borut Pahor (BBC 2009).

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26   Centre-right governments are currently in power in Germany (since 2009, superseding a Grand coalition), Macedonia (since 2008), Italy (with an interruption of 2006-2008), Ireland (since 1997), Latvia (since 2006), Finland (since 2007), Serbia (since 2004), Turkey (since 2002), Sweden (since 2006), and Poland (2006-2007, there was a coalition between centre-right and right wing parties superseded by a coalition between a centre-right and centrist coalition in 2007). There are Grand coalitions between centre-right and centre-left parties in Slovakia (since 2006), Belgium (since 2003, centre-right prime minister), Estonia (frequent government changes, since 2007 there is a coalition between a centre right, centre left and centrist party, headed by a centre-right prime minister), Luxembourg (since 2004, centre-right prime minister), and Hungary (centre-left prime minister since 2006) (BBC 2007, 2010b). Romania replaced the centre-right government 2004-2009 with a centrist in 2009. In the Netherlands, the centre-right-wing government collapsed in June 2006 over immigration policy, new elections in November 2006 paved the way for a centrist coalition, the next government lasted from February 2007 to February 2010, since 2002 four governments were headed by Jan Peter Balkenende, all ended before the mandate expired. After 13 years of left wing governance in the UK, there is a coalition government between the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats since May 2010. After six years of a centre-right/far right in Austria (elections were in October 2006), the government since January 2007 was a Grand coalition with a centre-left wing Prime Minister, new national election in 2008 lead to the same formation. Centre-left wing governments: Iceland (centre-right until 2009, centre-left from January 2009), Norway (defeated a centre-right government in 2005, was re-elected in 2009), Portugal (since 2005, absolute majority of the Socialist party, but in 2006 the first centre-right president came into office), Spain (since 2004). Lithuania has had a four-party centre-right minority coalition since July 2006. Switzerland shares governmental power with the 5 parties from all political camps (all information is available on the BBC-website 2006, and BBC 2010b).

One has to keep in mind that with European Union membership the sovereignty of nation states and particularly of national politicians has decreased. Issues and objectives that were previously in the hands of nations are now European Union matters. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 291) point out that the European Union has become a common trade and currency market, where almost all political areas are affected by European politics. Nation states traditionally think in national terms. Therefore, it is difficult for national communities to think in larger terms and acknowledge decisions on a European level as being beneficial to them. Consequently, national politicians continued over a long period to pretend they were still autonomous. The European Union is often only played out as a political card of each political camp in national politics. When the European peoples started to become suspicious about the political masquerade, as the authors argue, insecurity towards the European commitment to democracy grew. Such disagreement is reflected in the stagnation of the ratification of the European Constitution in 2005 as well as in a growing resistance to applicant countries like Turkey and Croatia (cf. Eurobarometer 65 2006: 15). And in such a climate, politicians like Pim Fortyun were able to become very successful in 2002 (cf. ibid: 292). In Austria, Jörg Haider who was influential in the region of Carinthia played a similar game and continued to jeopardise Austrian constitutional laws when boycotting bilingual topographic signs until his unexpected death in 2008. The visit of European observers in the region in 2006 did not change the situation. Their presence could be interpreted either as "interference" into Austrian (regional) matters or as simply useless, because the situation did not improve or change.

Certainly, "European citizens'" trust in European democracy increased from spring 2005 onwards after significant campaigns on consciousness-raising among EU-citizens (see Eurobarometer 2006: 32). Nevertheless, Wodak's and Puntscher Riekmann's (2003: 292) observations in 2003, namely that a higher level of insecurity among Europeans in terms of European policies as well as global phenomenon leads to the success of right wing parties, are still important to consider in 2007. Local and regional identities act cautiously towards European politics and sometimes try to build upon regional identities, which exclude European belonging. Zygmunt Bauman (2000: 38) sees a similar trend in the media industry that transmits a radical insecurity of the present world and is supportive of the impression that a person has very little influence on her or his own situation. The discourse often corresponds with the feelings of the recipients. Translated into the situation of EU-politics, national media support a perceived exclusion from the decisions of Europe. Especially inhabitants of smaller countries in the traditional "West", such as Austria, feel neglected from the economic distribution of the EU. Economic satisfaction is considered among the most important measurements for a European commitment (cf. Eurobarometer 65 2006: 4) and is a

highly sensitive issue due to the economic crisis. The common currency suffers its credibility single countries' debts, such as Greece, Spain, or Ireland (see for example CNN 2010).

Meetings of the European Union are often accompanied with great expectations on the behalf of the national communities, as their national representatives are expected to achieve the best conditions for their own country. Similar expectations are laid upon the EU-Presidency. The success or failure of national politicians in this period, as the case of Tony Blair shows at the end of the Presidency in December 2005, is crucial for their political careers. Countries that so far have benefited from the European Union are less confronted with anti-European climates. When people experience a real or imagined decrease of their social and economic wealth, they tend to search for possible causes. National or regional interest groups identify these as a consequence of European Union policies and on the other hand the reasons are found in the presence of foreigners or migrants. Especially in capitalist societies (cf. Bauman 2000: 42), where money turns out to be one of the tickets to freedom, foreigners are easily accused of causing unemployment among the "indigenous" groups. In that way, foreigners and migrants can function as the "trash cans" of negative feelings or dissatisfaction. *Balkanisation*, the hostile segregation of the European Union into small entities, would be one negative scenario of countries' tendencies to strengthen the commitment to nationality in order to work against the perceived insecurity and fragmentation of every-day life.

The European Union is well aware of the economic insecurity among its members. In contrast to national media, European politicians usually do not deploy a "good/evil"-axis between EU-countries on the basis of economic success. For example, the Lisbon strategy in 2004, a programme that was enacted to improve the situation on the European labour market, which emphasises the welfare system as a major point of focus and defined certain aims for the single countries in the period between 2000-2010, was evaluated in 2004 after running for five years. The conclusion was that barely anything had changed in the first five years of the programme. Related to this, the president of the European Commission, José Barroso, explicitly took on a standpoint that emphasised the importance of cooperation rather than competition between the EU-member states (cf. Euractive 2004). The European Union also asked the countries of the EU to strongly support the *Lisbon strategy* in order for it to succeed, because the evaluation of 2004 detected above all the lack of political participation of the member states (cf. ibid). At the same time, the lack of support from some national members triggered a certain degree of dissatisfaction among the EU-

members, which has increased with the economic crisis since 2008. For example, the Austrian newspaper *Der Standard*[27] deployed the differentiation of "good" and "bad" countries in a report on March 23, 2006, when referring to the unequal distribution of EU-countries to the economic condition of the European Union. In this report, in particular the Eastern countries which participated in the 2004-enlargement were narrated as "villains" and outlined as being detrimental to European prosperity. On this level nations and regions are competitors, although the *Lisbon strategy* suggests on the surface that nations work on a common aim. That is also symptomatic for the thin line between the unifying and dividing forces of the European Union, which are based on nationalism. In order to compete with such exclusionary tendencies, Pro-European politicians and theorists demand an inclusive multicultural Europe.

4. The Political Project: A Real Chance for the Multicultural Condition?

The first two possible scenarios for the future of the European Union are demarcated by exclusive tendencies and destructive mechanisms regarding the political idea of European integration and its ideal of transporting peace to other countries. Therefore, the present political situation in Europe is challenged by different aims for the future and different definitions of "Europeanness". While nationalism is expressed either in the "Fortress Europe Syndrome", in micro-nationalisms, or even worse, in the Balkanisation of Europe, the real political challenge of the European Union should be based on less exclusionary forms of belonging. As Rosi Braidotti stated in 2001, it is hard to imagine how the European Union could be able to redesign the function of the nation states. She points out that intolerance among European nation states is shown in the history of the two World Wars. For that reason, rethinking the question of European identity is closely connected to diversity and requires a clear definition of where Europe is heading to (Braidotti 2002: 4-6).

Braidotti (2002: 131) is a strong supporter of the European Union and therefore distinguishes between the historical heritage of the Union and the political project. She suggests revisiting European history and working on the political project in order to develop a real chance for heterogeneous societies and post-nationalist commitment. From the background of the Holocaust, Euro-Fascism, eugenics, ethnic cleansing and political discrimination, the European Union should always remember the initial idea of Schuman and Monnet that was developed in the climate of anti-fascism and anti-militarism. Devoted to that idea were among others, and less often cited than Schuman

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27   Der Standard (2006). Österreich fast „Held", Polen heuer „Schurke". (21.03.2006: pp. 19)

and Monnet, Ursula Hirschmann, her brother Albert Hirschman and Altiero Spinelli (cf. Braidotti 2004: 131-2). They were well aware of the exclusive character of identity formation and the need for the raising of awareness in relation to the naturalised understandings of "roots", "origin", or "others" in the context of one specific culture. Feminists, anti-racists and proponents of Anti-Colonial Studies have put great effort into discovering "hidden histories[28]" in an effort to deconstruct fixed categories, and to point out that there is nothing like the discovery of the "real" past or the "real" roots (cf. Hall 1999a: 393). It is important to note that identity is always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth (cf. ibid: 394).

Cultural identity consists of points of identification. It is not, as is often perceived, an essence, but a particular position (cf. Hall 1999a: 394). In that sense the concept of "politics of location" in the view of feminist theorists is a way out of the dichotomy between essentialism and deconstructionism. Situating knowledge in a very specific context allows us to reflect on our place of belonging. In this way, we are less tempted to see our own position as "normal" or "natural", from which it is too easy to consume the observed "other" (cf. Braidotti 2002: 12-3). Feminism also acknowledges that the personal is political and emphasises the importance of looking at everyday experience and everyday life, where public discourses are incorporated and translated into a personal context. In a European context, such insights are necessary to look at the different identity positions within one cultural context. This offers a different way of approaching local or regional identities or other identity formations based on "ethnicity", sexuality, gender and others, and is less likely to make it possible to fall into the trap of *micro-nationalisms* or local mobilisation. It is important to recognise that existing power relations support unequal opportunities and cause resistances based on exclusion. Counter-powers to a centralised status quo sometimes fix identities, empower and disempower groups of people and communities. In the era of postmodernity, as Braidotti (2004) sees it, we need to transfer the discussion of differences between cultures to differences within cultures. When the European Union dedicates its cultural identity to the slogan "United in diversity", nationalist tendencies are extremely counterproductive. Rosi Braidotti (2004: 132) sees these happening on "both" the Right *and* the Left[29]. At the same moment, nationalism, xenophobia and racism are less visible through the cultural components of discrimination, like the insistence on cultural values and the civil society of Fortress Europe. For such reasons, Braidotti does not see European identity as simply emerging with the founding of the European Union. Instead she refers to the ruptures and transformation, which were

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28   "Hidden" does not mean to imply there would be a "truer" history than the "white", male, middle
     class, heterosexual dominated, it refers to the existence of many histories.
29   Especially religious discrimination is carried out by all parties of all political camps.

caused by that political and cultural project. In order to find a strategy to employ against the exclusive tendencies of the European Union, Braidotti (2004: 132) suggests focussing on the self-appointed core of Europe and dismantling its unquestioned existence.

Using the concept of *becoming minoritarian,* borrowed from post-structuralist thinkers like Deleuze and Guattari, Braidotti (2004) wants to offer a possibility to attack the "centre" in its attempt to control the world. Here she considers being important that ("Western") European culture stops deciding upon everybody else's images and awakes from its convenient position as a European subject of knowledge whose "white" skin colour equals humanity. The concept of *becoming minoritarian* has connections with post-colonial and feminist theory, where scholars have emphasised the "double conscious" position of the marginalised to "know better". Traditionally, such voices have to be located at the periphery of society. From Braidotti's (2004: 221) perspective, whiteness should be transferred from the centre to the periphery and would suddenly no longer be a privilege. Certainly, Braidotti's point of view is crucial for awareness-raising on "ethnic", national, sexual, etc. hierarchies in an EU-European context. Her argument that Europe has functioned long enough as a self-appointed centre is important. Especially, when one keeps in mind that racialisation of groups is still a common practice in many European countries. Everybody has to fit into specific categories of colour, origin, sex and religious faith (cf. ibid: 226). Considerations of discrimination usually leave out inter-group diversity as the most frequent cause of ethnic conflicts within Europe. The above listed categories are also used on a European level to define groups that have to be included or excluded from membership of the European Union. Partially this is grounded in the definition of the European membership of individuals in the Lisbon Treaty (2007: 25, 72) who achieve European citizenship through nationality of one member state. This connects the cultural questions with the political project. Hence, one remains embedded in national terms and does not have to reconsider one's position based on European membership. Indeed, that identity is not an individual's task alone. Location is collectively shared and constructed and goes along with the mobilisation of political awareness on a broader level. The dominant discourse of "*[E]uro-centric phallocentrism no longer holds in a civil society that is, among others, sexed female and male, multicultural and not inevitably Christian*" (Braidotti 2004: 134), but its influence on subject positions has to be taken in consideration.

In the long run, the national myth of homogeneity could act like poison for a post-national Europe (Braidotti 2004: 136). Against contemporary political concepts of cultural belonging, Braidotti would demand the disconnecting of nationality, citizenship and national identity "*[I]n favour for multiple belongings*" (Braidotti 2004:

138). She refers to Ulrich Preuss' (in ibid: 138) argumentation in order to outline that awarding citizenship on a European level instead of on a national level would alienate European citizens from their nationality. This, she hopes, would turn everybody into a *privileged foreigner*. Consequently new politics could be considered which are not only bound on the nation state, as well as it would offer identifications beyond nationality. This would also allow foreigners to obtain European citizenship while not being connected to a specific state. Unfortunately, the Treaty of Lisbon does not incorporate such an idea. At the same time we have to keep in mind that Braidotti speaks from the position of an intellectual who has gone through the experience of displacement as a young Italian immigrant in Australia. Through her political and intellectual activities she has achieved a "privileged" position of thinking about belonging. At the level of every-day life, where people are often captured by nationalist belonging, it seems less likely that tolerance and accountability would come with post-nationalist politics. On the contrary, resistance against post-national foundation can be interpreted as having stopped the ratification of the European Constitution. Through the perspective of Foucault's theory on power, we are aware that each power is confronted with counter powers. Taking these considerations seriously, it is unlikely that dominant groups would easily be convinced to share their position. Somehow, this is reflected in the silent ratification of the Treaty of Lisbon which came into force recently and shows once more the technocratic EU-fundament. Political decisions in the EU should not to be discussed or even questioned. Braidotti (2004: 139) is certainly aware of the complex relation between different claims to power and suggests that shifts in identifications and identities need to be accompanied with a changing social imagination. She also points out that such a change has to be accompanied with the pain of loss. The most difficult moment is, as Rosi Braidotti (2004: 139) warns us, to avoid falling into the trap of hopeless nostalgia to return to the past on which nationalism is based on. Consciously or unconsciously, most people in Europe live in different social texts, ranging from local to global and national to European levels. Therefore, most people relate contemporary exclusive tendencies very closely with new ways of translating between different social texts (cf. Braidotti 2002: 10).

Even when the emotional attachment and visionary force of European politicians are largely missing in the European imagery (cf. Braidotti 2004: 139), there are positive examples of a multi-cultural encounter. Such achievements can be found on cultural and educational levels with the establishment of various mobility programmes targeting young people and students such as the student mobility programme Erasmus, technical education and training with Comett and Lingua, which allows young people to learn foreign languages, or additional programmes like Leonardo da Vinci, Socrates and Youth programmes. These programmes are meant to mobilise approximately 10

per cent of European students to encounter other European cultures and countries. Furthermore, the European Union encourages European broadcasting stations to include a certain percentage of European productions in their schedules. Other programmes aim to connect different institutions and individuals engaged in European questions and support European film production, which is small in comparison with the United States (cf. Europa 2006g). With increasing flexibility and mobility within the European countries and the encounter of Europeans on different levels, the concept of "multiple identities", as Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 287) suggest, may be found in people who have achieved certain cultural competences such as speaking more than one language and belonging to different groups. In this way, the authors hope that strict forms of cultural dichotomies will be transcended and allow more possibilities for bonding between groups and collectives. This is essential for an inclusive Europe in the process of enlargement (cf. ibid).

Consequences

As contemporary European policies and in connection to them identity formations show, there are different available interpretations and expressions of a European identity co-existing at the same time, dependent on the location from which Europeanness is approached. In the context of Slovenia, Europeanness is often closely associated with the Alps-Adriatic region, which includes Austria and Italy, but also Switzerland and Germany. This might be due to the cultural closeness to this region from the Slovene self-perspective and its historical relationship with Austria through the Habsburg monarchy. Especially the Habsburg culture is one core point of narrating contemporary Slovenia as having always been at the heart of the "European" culture. European identity and the sense of Europeanness may appear completely different in Sweden, Portugal, Greece or any other European country and are not reduced to a certain meaning. Furthermore, in the context of (EU-) Europe, different futures of identity policies are possible without a clear dominance of a certain form (yet). *Fortress Europe*, the *Balkanisation* of the European "bloc" or *multi-cultural Europe* are the extreme edges of a possible future of the European Union. To some degree, these differently imagined European identity formations are intersected and co-exist with in-between-forms. Increasing awareness of national, regional or local identities as counter-conceptualisations to the European Union can be described as *micro-nationalism(s)*. Some critical voices see here the beginning of a *Balkanisation* and see the enlargement of the European Union as accompanied by a future European war of smaller communities. *Nationalism* might be a result of overcoming or opposing the possible segregation on a regional level due to micro-nationalisms. European *multi-culturalism* can be seen as the other side of the micro-nationalism-coin, where regional

and local identities and various communities are facets of a European culture. Not losing control over (micro-) nationalisms within countries as counter-movements is the slippery ground of a multi-cultural direction of Europe. *Fortress-Europe*, a model which might be most applicable to how people imagine "Europeanness", is most likely to generate certain stability within the European countries, but would work exclusively towards the "other", non-European. Such a climate might lead again to (micro-) nationalism(s), because it pays little attention to regional and local interests.

Certainly, from my academic standpoint the most attractive version of a European culture would be a *multi-cultural* Europe. Through advanced media technologies, the internationalisation of the economy, the project of the European Union and other political, economic or cultural alliances, etc. of contemporary societies, I consider personal, local, regional, national, supra-national or global levels of identity and community as intersecting. Consequently, such levels of identity are related in a particular way although such a relationship has always been seen in processes of change. The dominance of one discourse that carries a certain version of "truth" is certainly influential to the deployment of exclusive or inclusive concepts of identity. Therefore, the dominance of an inclusive concept in European politics would be an important step to establish peace within the European nations and to re-think sharp demarcations by setting cultural, political, religious, ethnic, etc. external and internal borders.

Interwoven in Europe. Positioning Slovenia

Europe is not only divided through different geographical, ideological or economic points of view, it is also a discourse, a normative centre, a political programme. Europe is not simply a Fortress threatened by micro-nationalism. It also carries political ideas grounded on democracy and Human Rights that at least on paper guarantee the equality of people of different origin, educational background, sex, sexuality, age or religion (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 284, Braidotti 2004). Thus, the European communities are largely failing to provide a sense of belonging throughout the member states. This helps to support nationally specific interpretations of the legal system of the European Union and its cultural translation. In the analysis of Frane Adam et al. (2002: 136) support for European membership was highest among Slovene people who had a stronger sense of national pride based on an inclusive nationalism, while Slovenes who have a protectionist idea of nationalism are more likely to express racism and xenophobia and are less likely to support Slovenia's membership to the European Union. The Slovene attitude towards the EU is torn by the imagined closeness of Slovene nationality to "Western" Europeanness and the fact that EU-membership was often perceived as a threat to the short-lived time of national independence. In this regard, the changing attitude of Slovenes towards the membership to the EU is interesting to look at, particularly in the time period before and after its entrance (cf. Velikonja 2005: 97). While in 1997, 57 per cent of the Slovene population considered EU-membership as beneficial, in the second half of 2002, this figure dropped to only 48.6 per cent. At the same moment, voices that considered membership as being harmful for Slovenia increased (1997/15.2% to 2002/19.5%). With the first half of 2003, the agreement with the EU and the EU-membership increased rapidly again. 77.8% defined a European membership as beneficial and only 11.1% disagreed with that. In the second half of 2003, 73% of the Slovene population were supportive of the membership and 12.6% were not (cf. ibid). At the time when interviews were taking place for the research, the support of Slovenes regarding the European Union membership was stable (68% in 2004) (see Eurobarometer 65 2005), because, as Sonja Lokar explained in an interview, Slovene politicians and Slovene citizens know that they (economically) profit through the membership.

Anton Pelinka (1997: xi) points out that contemporary liberal democracies understand pluralism as realised in the competition of interests. The majority decision legitimates a certain leadership for a limited period. It is not about one person or a group of people who want to transport their political concept to the masses, which would be perceived as very similar to the practices of missionaries. Therefore it is impossible to implement any kind of "truth" into a democratic constitution, since truth would correspond to the

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notion of totalitarian regimes (ibid: xii). However, the EU carries a model of civilisation and promotes it as transporting the highest developed human civilization. Taking such a model as the pre-condition and a requirement for EU-membership it acts exclusive upon other social and cultural models of state organisations and very similar to "truth". Additionally, EU-member states of different sizes have different weight in legal decision making. This is supportive of resistances and leads to the perception that some states are dominating over others or other interest groups within the EU. Here lie also the worries of Slovene people of gradually losing their distinctive culture, while larger cultures, as such the English, French or German culture, take over with their national interests. Translated into numbers, such worries were shared by 40.4 per cent of Slovene people in 1997 and 51.2 in 2002 (cf. Velikonja 2005: 25) and supports Pelinka's (1997: xii) argumentation line that democracy is built on the battle over power.

The Janus-headed heritage of the Enlightenment narrative is difficult to comprehend (cf. Meštrović 1994: 70-2), when democracy, Human Rights and equality come along with colonialism, imperialism, universalism, or nationalism. In respect of this, communism too was one outcome of modern heritage, but did not succeed as a state system. In the end, most of the former communist countries of the east and south-east of Europe changed or are in the process of changing their legal systems into democracies which led too easily to the one-directional conclusion that "*[f]ormerly communistic-ruled countries in Central Europe have a lot to learn – especially from Western Europe*" (cf. Pelinka 1997: xiii). Stjepan G. Meštrović (1994: 68-9) makes us aware that particularly Human Rights and the closely associated organisation, the UN, are suspiciously viewed in non-"Western", non-democratic states as the prolonged imperialism of the "West". Rada Iveković (1993: 26) who is an observer of the political development in former Yugoslavia locates the problem in the binary logic of modern thought that excludes all of one system if it decides for another. While she agrees that former Yugoslavian intellectuals and politicians would benefit from intellectuals in "Western" Europe due to their democratic practices and role as critical thinkers within a system, she remains critical towards the idea of the European Union because of its "Western"-centric stance which she sees as additionally legitimised through the defeat of communist-regimes. Together with the failure of socialist states the positive heritage of communism was dismissed as well and supported once more the impression that "Western" democratic states were "good" and the "Eastern" former communist ones were "bad" or at least had to learn from the "West" how to be good. Vice verse, such a viewpoint does not allow reflections on the negative aspects of "Western" European culture from the perspective of the "East". As Barbara Samaluk (2009) analyses in her thesis on the situation of Slovene migrants in the UK, her Slovene interviewees are all the time balancing between advantages and disadvantages

of both living in the UK or in Slovenia. However, Meštrović argues (1994: viii, 72) that former communist states can only learn from the ruins of "Western" moral values, which Enlightenment narratives are frequently jeopardised by nationalism and cultural identity. Eventually, negative characterisations of the "East" were the basis on which the "European" or "Western" people based their own positive image (cf. Erjavec 2001: 701-2). Such a logic did not only confirm the "Western" self-imagination, but it also implemented a hierarchical understanding of culture that was carried into the "East", where all new nations started to compete over positioning themselves closer to the European Union.

Discussions around a European identity and the Constitution Treaty have caused some waves and opened up critique on the "democratic" operation of EU-representatives behind closed doors. Also "Western" intellectuals express their disagreement with these practices. They point at the fact that recent decisions once again ignored the so-called European citizens (cf. Neunreither 1995: 1, Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 289) and they saw negotiations as accompanied by the cultural domination of the "old core" of the European Union (cf. Schwarz 2003). Furthermore, the question of a European identity, especially regarding the Enlargement to the "East", has not been addressed properly. It was new on the agenda in 1992, as Neunreither (1995) argues, with the introduction of the "European citizen" in the Maastricht Treaty. Despite the lack of a clear collective identity in contemporary Europe, Ann Phoenix (1995: 26-7) argues that Europeanness affects the national construction of any European country. Maybe some aspects of the national narrative matter more than before, some others may decrease or shift in meaning (cf. ibid: 41). Or rather, as Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 290) see it, with the "doing of Europe", as Romano Prodi postulated while president of the European Commission, there is no autonomous "*doing Austria/France/Germany*".

New members of the European Union, like Slovenia, might not even have a chance of "doing Slovenia" without "doing Europe". From the beginning the new national identity of Slovenia has been built closely around the idea of "Europe". The Slovene scholar Danica Fink Hafner (1997: 13) has characterised this as a tendency to narrate "Slovenia going back to Europe". In the same book "*Into Europe? Perspectives from Britain and Slovenia*", Adolf Bibič, Marjana Ule, Mojmir Mrak, Irena Brinar and Mitja Žagar (1997) also see Europeanness as one major point of Slovene identity constructions. This is also reflected in opinion polls analysed by Frane Adam et al. (2002: 140), where Slovene people see themselves anchored in Austrian, German and Swiss culture. These countries often function as a major source of defining "Europeanness" for Slovenes and narrating Slovene culture upon it. Therefore, EU-Europeanness is taken as a source of identity for the Slovene nation state, while

countries such as Croatia, the Czech Republic or Slovakia with which Slovenia shares characterisations like language similarities, mutual knowledge and respect and common historical experiences are rarely referred to, when it comes to self-identification.

In the following pages, I will analyse constructions of Slovene identity along, towards or beyond Europeanness and narrations of European (cultural, political or economic) belonging. In this part I focus in particular on identity questions on a public level, in political life as well as from intellectual discussions, from which I try to identify implicit values of the Union and their implications on the Slovene imagination. Such an analysis is important in relation to the empirical part of this book, where I look at identity narrations on the micro-level of society and the negotiation of such public scripts.

1. Economy

From a Slovene cultural and historical point of view, Europeanness and Europeanisation were "*[s]ynonymous with modernisation, development, improving economy of the nation and creativeness in the cultural sphere*" (Fink Hafner 1997: 12-3). Danica Fink Hafner refers to this picture as being part of a strong discourse that has supported the Slovene path towards Europe and towards independence. In an analysis of public conceptions and images of the European Union before Slovenia's accession, Frane Adam et al. (2002: 141) point out among other reasons that Slovenia was aware of its small size and small economy, and this created a certain necessity to join the European Union. Despite some worries regarding the loss of national sovereignty, a distinctive Slovene culture or even the Slovene language, these worries were diminished by the beliefs that EU-membership would in the end be more beneficial (cf. ibid). Therefore, a certain dependency on the European market coupled with the high value of economic competitiveness and growth goes along with narrating Slovenia as being close to "Western" European capitalist and democratic societies.

Integrated into larger empires and state formations, the politically most important being the Habsburg empire and Yugoslavia, Slovenia has always played a minor role (cf. Ule 1997: 167-8, Klemenčič 1999: 51). Slovene national identity, which became an increasing force in an effort to maintain difference to other regions, was formed in defensive negotiations with the dominating culture. As part of former Yugoslavia, Slovenia started to evaluate its achievements in comparison to other European countries, where life-standards and wealth were seen as being higher. From its historical background, Slovenia perceived itself torn between the tension of

modernisation (Habsburg) and ethnic particularisation (Slavic emancipation within the Habsburg monarchy). The imagined closeness to the former Habsburg-states was a trend in contrast to the traditional life-style in Slovenia, accompanied with industrialisation and urbanisation. The connection to Yugoslavia was the trend based on the integration of smaller units into stronger and larger state units based on the Panslavic movement (cf. Ule 1997: 169). Later state-socialism in Yugoslavia even allowed and supported modernisation processes to some degree. State-socialism worked on the premises of industrialisation, but did not integrate social spheres or independent civil societies. The centralised government of Yugoslavia did not allow for the development of an independent national (Slovene) economy (cf. ibid: 170).

Breda Luthar (2006), a Slovenian researcher, investigated every day life during the period of socialism in former Yugoslavia and worked on the example of Slovenia. She focussed on shopping trips to Italy in the period between 1955 and the end of the 1960s, where she sees Slovenian people's imagery as having been affected by the capitalist consumer culture of the "West". From her interpretation, those shopping trips offered a way out of "the dictatorship over needs" in Yugoslavia. Therefore, perceived personal freedom as well as experiencing feelings of inferiority at the borders accompanied those trips. Commodities from Italy were a "must"-factor for those who wanted to be in the in-group back home. Italian shoes, clothes or, for example a scooter, were seen by others as evidence of their good "taste", which corresponded to the idea of "middle class". Insofar Slovenes identified with "Western"[30] taste, and a certain way of life, but recognised themselves as being the "other" in the eyes of the Italians at the same time (see also Hall 1988: 167). Italians disliked Slovenes for bringing their own food and eating it secretly in the streets. The feelings of inferiority were later played out on shoppers of the southern republics from Yugoslavia, who were in the eyes of Slovenes those to be ashamed of. Because of longer distances, they came with their whole families, wore home-made clothes and brought their own food at a time when Slovenes could already afford paying for a coffee.

With independence in 1991, Slovenia was soon acknowledged internationally as a fully recognised partner. Less than one year later it was already a member of the United Nations. Gaining full recognition as an independent unit also meant that it was an independent financial entity and competitive in international financial co-operations. This was also a necessary development in order to be accepted as a "normal" country, as Mojmir Mrak (1997: 251) defines it, separable in economic matters from the rest of Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the Slovene market system had to be

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30   Here "good taste" was found in Italian customs.

viable for pluralist circumstances. As shown with the example of the shopping trips above, during state-socialism Slovene people perceived capitalist consumer culture as personal freedom. Therefore, changes in the Slovene market system were supported by a large majority of the inhabitants (cf. ibid).

Certainly the transition period was difficult. The financial situation in Yugoslavia, especially in the 1970s, was low and only became more stabilised by the end of the 1980s, because of the integration into transnational markets (cf. Mrak: 1997: 251). With the exception of some Slovene banks that had reached a more stable position, the politics in a centralised Yugoslavian system had not allowed for the establishment of independent national markets. Thus, Slovenia had no recognised financial identity when declaring its independence. Among the most difficult problems with the declaration of independence was the sudden loss of former Yugoslav markets regarding Slovenian exports. At an early stage of independent markets Slovenia faced a high rate of unemployment accompanied by a high inflation rate, which was a completely new social problem. The change of ownership often led to temporal unemployment. The era of the privatisation processes of companies was especially sensitive. Through the integration of the Slovene economy into Yugoslavia, the country had to establish new economic relations after independence, which did not provide a favourable economic starting point beforehand. Unemployment rates increased from 1.5 per cent in 1987 to 14 percent in 1993 (Klemenčić 1999: 52-3). Later the unemployment rate stabilised at this number, but summarised great differences between different communes and the inflation fell from 267% in 1991 to 14% in 1994[31]. Already in 1996, 70% of the imports and exports were coming from or going to other members of the European Union (cf. Fink Hafner 1996: 14). Through membership of GATT, the World Trade Organisation, agreements with the EU, and the free trade zone of the CEFTA countries, Slovenia could slowly prepare its financial recovery (cf. Mrak 1997: 252-7).

In 1997, Slovenia was not even recognised as an associated member of the European Union (cf. Bibič 1997: 147). In the early nineties (cf. Milanovich 1996: 42-3) Hungary and other "Eastern" European countries had the far better starting position, even though Slovenia was traditionally the country with the best developed integration into the European market (cf. ibid). This is also reflected in the differing perception of Slovenia and EU-European states regarding a Slovene membership before the Slovene

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31 By early 2010, the unemployment rate on the peak of the economic crisis is comparably low at 6.8%, especially in comparison to the EU27-average of 9.5%, but also to EU15-average of 9.5%. Unemployment-rates in Austria are at 5.3%, 13.8% in Ireland, 18.8% in Spain, 22.9% in Latvia (Eurostat 2010a). Inflation rates are held particularly low: the EU27-average is at 1%, Slovene at 0.9%, the Austrian is 0.4 and the Irish is -1.9% (Eurostat 2010b).

accession. Unlike other applicant countries, Slovenia showed the highest commitment to the European Union, while other states like Hungary or Bulgaria rather stressed a "Western" orientation through identifications with the USA or Germany (cf. Adam et al. 2002: 137-8). Despite the Slovene positive attitude regarding the EU, European Union member states of the time did not welcome Slovene membership in 1999, as one can read in the results of Eurobarometer 51 (1999). Although having a well-developed economy, the Slovene image was overshadowed by images of former Yugoslavia and Slovenia was ranked in second-last place regarding a possible future membership by the EU-countries. Therefore, Slovenian membership was positioned only one place above a possible Turkish membership. It is interesting to point out here that later Eurobarometers do not address a ranking of candidate countries anymore, but ask in more general terms for the attitude of the EU15-countries towards enlargement. Eurobarometer 59 conducted from April to May 2003 only targeted the awareness and knowledge of the EU15-countries about candidate-countries. Here Turkey, Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania exceeded 90% of being known by the EU-countries. 82% of the interviewees knew about Slovenia. People were also asked, if they visited those countries. Spontaneously, 59% people said no. 18% visited Turkey, 6% Slovenia (cf. Eurobarometer 59 1999: 23-6). However, Slovenia was the first "Eastern" country that stabilised its currency and joined the Euro-zone on January 1, 2007. Since December of the same year, Slovenia has been included in the Schengen-agreement. Frane Adam et al. (2002: 139) analysed the low status of Slovenia in the opinion of EU15-states as being a result of having no image. Its excellent economic status and growth was only known to insiders. Information on a European level, like that of Eurobarometer and of the European Commission (see Press Release Slovenia 2006), regarding the implementation of the *Lisbon strategy* seemed to avoid any direct comparison of European countries. Certainly the European Commission (ibid) refers to Slovenia as a country with continuous economic growth, but without any particular emphasis on this. Most likely the use of language and representations, as visible in the discussions around the success of the Lisbon strategy, try to avoid encouraging national competition among EU-members. Mainstream media, newspapers or online news portals are not likely to be more "open" in addressing unequal economic success, as I showed by the means of the example of the Austrian newspaper that distinguished between "heroes" and villains". After all, I found one positive evidence in March 2007, in the German news portal, where A.T. Kearney wrote about the "Baltic Tiger" in order to describe the economic success of Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Romania or Bulgaria, but it does seem to have become a major discourse of presenting "Eastern" EU-countries. By 2010, the discussions of comparing economic growth have re-opened partly due to the economic crisis and partly due to the bad financial situation in Greece.

2. Christianity

One important element in narrating Slovenia along with Europeanness is promoted by Christianity. Christianity, mostly Catholicism, and the insistence on a Slavic identity created a strong link between the Slovene language and religious institutions. Furthermore, Christianity and the Slovene language were useful tools in maintaining a difference between Slovene people and Yugoslavs or earlier between Slovenes and the rest of the Habsburg monarchy. Differentiation to other Yugoslavian states was, next to language, based on religion, differentiation to the Habsburg-countries was mainly based on language (cf. Milanovich 1996: 26-8). In the 16th century, in the era of the reformation, the Slovenes showed a high awareness of their own language and culture. The first book which was – secretly – translated (in Germany) into Slovene, was "Catechismus" by the protestant minister Primož Trubar in 1551. This was followed by the translation of the Bible in 1584. In reference to Christianity, Slovene people like to argue, as Danica Fink Hafner (1996: 12) recognises, that European identity is at the heart of Slovenia, but they neglect then other historical components regarding religion. While Christianity becomes a marker for Europeanness in a contemporary Slovene context, Catholic and later Protestant religious practices were initially extremely important in order to generate a Slovene collective. Religious services in the Slovene language drew a line between Slovenes and other inhabitants in the Austrian empire. However, influenced by conservative thinkers, such as Samuel Huntington (1996), Christianity is frequently narrated as the "*[s]ingle most important characteristic of Western civilization*" (ibid: 70) with which "Western" Christians are able to distinguish themselves from other peoples and cultures. Reformation and Counter-Reformation only affected Northern and "Western" Europe, which Slovenia was integrated into through the Habsburg monarchy. Hence, it remained completely disconnected from eastern and south-eastern Orthodoxy. This was indeed an important fact for Slovene people in order to create closeness to "Western" Europe, because the emphasis on the discourse of (Catholic or Protestant) Christianity is supportive to distinct between ("Western", EU) Europe and the non-Catholic/Protestant Europe. Here, otherness is again played out upon the "Balkan"-states that are traditionally Islamic or Orthodox (cf. ibid).

Today, Gerd Baumann (1999: 52-3) points out that religion largely does not fit any longer into the rational concept of the modern, progressive "Western" states and therefore become increasingly banned from conscious reflections. Through secularisation forces, in many "Western" European states religion became a private duty and is no longer considered as a political issue. The separation of state and church power was crucial in modern, rationalist and democratic societies, as Huntington (1996: 70) claims, and besides "Western" countries, only Hindus chose a similar

division. In Islamic cultures, for example, God is the state and from that point of view not compatible with democracy. Such a point of view is very useful in efforts to undermine the diversity of Muslim societies and is supportive of the idea that there are no secularised Muslim societies. Furthermore, I presume that such historical "facts" once more prevent many people in the "West" from questioning the premises of a mutually exclusive "East"-"West" division. Also Orthodoxy relates church matters with state matters. In reference to this, Huntington (ibid) describes the role of the church as the "assistant" of the state. Along with his determining perception on cultures, Huntington also makes us aware that the battles between "Western" European states and the Christian Church contributed to the self-perception of "Western" societies.

Within the Habsburg Monarchy, Slovenia went through an era of Catholicism and people experienced a strong impact on their lives by Catholicism over the centuries. With state-socialism in Yugoslavia Slovene people faced the opposite ideology, what Marijan Smrke (1999: 202-3) describes as "secularist absolutism". That period was very strict at the beginning, but increasingly opened to "religious tolerance" by the end of the 1980s. In both eras people had to adapt very strongly to what was officially transported as "truth" or "faith". First a person who considered herself or himself as non-Catholic had to cope with pressure from the state, the church and from the people in her or his immediate environment. Later, during communism, people developed a "double consciousness" of a "good" communist and secretly a religious Catholic. With the announcement of independence, the Slovene Constitution in 1991 defined the relationship between the state and religious communities. It made clear that state and religion should remain separated. Therefore, the state would not finance religious institutions, nor would religious education be accepted in schools. At least on paper, religious groups are to enjoy equal rights and are guaranteed the freedom of religion (cf. ibid: 208). Articles 14 and 63, for example, forbid the incitement of religious discrimination, hatred and intolerance. In total, 31[32] religious denominations are officially recognised, while 30 of them are practised by less than five per cent of the inhabitants. Article 41 of the Constitution allows people to choose their religious and other beliefs independent of their profession (cf. ibid: 209). The *right to choose* is seen as an achievement of democracy in Slovenia after the single-party-regime during communism.

Although the freedom to choose religious commitment is implemented in the Slovene law, the official institutions to practice everyone's religion freely are partly missing. In the annual report of the Ombudsman for Human Rights of the Slovene Republic 2004,

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32   in 2002

it is stated that religious freedom is prevented since strong opposition against the construction of an Islamic religious and cultural centre and a Jehovah's Witnesses educational centre anticipate some groups of practicing their religion. The Ombudsman report suspects opponents of covering intolerance behind other reasons (Human Rights Ombudsman 2004a: 9). This would go along with observations of Lokar and Slapšak who describe the strings of argumentation against building, particularly the Mosque, as the following[33]: First, religious buildings in Slovenia should not be close to schools, kindergartens or any other public places, which is in general hard to avoid; secondly, the space that was dedicated for the Mosque belongs to people who have little estates for gardening there and who consequently fear to be expropriated; thirdly, the same space is a parking space, the Mosque would take away too many parking spaces. As a fourth possible reason against the church, people sometimes explain that the Mosque would be seen from the highway, when entering Ljubljana, and would therefore be too visible. Claims were also made by the Catholic Church[34] arguing that that plot of land was previously the property of the Church and should now be returned. The new mayor Zoran Jankovic, who was elected in 2007, is more supportive of the Islamic communities and their interest of having a religious centre and allocated the place for the building from outside the city to the city-centre (oe1.orf.at 2007). However, the Mosque will not exist by the time of March 2010, although a considerable number of Slovene citizens are Muslims. Three-quarters of all Slovene citizens are baptised Catholics. According to the population census of 1991, 1,403,014 people come from a Catholic background, 46,819 belong to the Serbian Orthodox Church and 29,719 are members of Islamic communities. The numbers of the last two are likely to have increased by today due to migration during the wars in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia. Orthodox and Islamic communities are both ethicised groups in Slovenia. Followers of the Orthodox Church are traditionally Serbs and Islamic communities are people of Bosnian origin (cf. ibid: 205).

Due to the absence of a coherent practice of church-state relations in European states, pro-Catholic Slovene voices advocated Austria, Italy and most applicable Bavaria as role-models for Slovenia. These countries would also mirror Slovenia's cultural and

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[33]　These points are from my observation on public discourses during my stay in Slovenia in the year 2004 and in autumn 2006. The discussion was not new in early 2004 and it was still going on at the end of 2006. Furthermore, I discussed the issue with critical observers of the Slovene public sphere, including in particular Sonja Lokar and Svetlana Slapšak.

[34]　There are three major elements to the troublesome relation between religious groups and the state in Slovenia (cf. Smrke 1999: 209): First, religious content in the public sector; second, funding of religious groups; third, the return of church property (mainly property of the Catholic Church) that was nationalised after World War II.

social belonging. At this point the connection between church[35] related questions and questions on citizenship, ethnicity and cultural belonging in Slovenia intersect. Also here, a line is drawn between civilised (Christianity) and not civilised (Islam, Orthodox Church) elements, and, interestingly enough, between enlightened and non enlightened, modern and not being considered as modern at all (cf. Pieterse 1991/1997: 228-9). Since Islam became the substitute villain for communism and the "Balkans" was associated with backwardness, unruliness and rather uncivilised, the problem of abandoning such images was essential for Slovenia and reflects upon European politics.

3. Journalism

At first glance, Slovenia's independence in the year 1991 occurred quietly and quickly. Slovene public self-representations frame this as a consequence of avoided antagonism towards its neighbouring countries from Ex-Yugoslavia and thus, contrast Slovenia from other former Yugoslavian countries. However, Karmen Erjavec (2003: 83) makes us aware of this being certainly not the only viewpoint on the Slovene attitude at that time. Independence processes went along with the search for new national power structures and with new cultural definitions of Sloveneness. In Slovenia, as in all other former Yugoslavian states, the results of elections proved the need to define the new nationalities. In all countries, those parties focussed on the people's ethnicity and pointed at problems with persons and groups of people who had in the past been their neighbours, were the parties to win. Often single persons stood for right wing, post-fascist and populist politics, as Tonči Kuzmanić (2005: 9-19) points out referring to *Janšism* in Slovenia, *Tuđmanism* in Croatia and to *Miloševićism* in Serbia. In accomplishment to that is the practice of inducing or reactivating particular memories on a public level (cf. Erjavec 2003: 83). The national leaders made use of all the advantages of absolute antagonism, the distinction between "us" and "them". Also the media largely based their representational work on exclusive binaries and supported the discriminatory atmosphere. Public hate speeches, as Erjavec analyses, had no real consequences for journalists and media over a long period of time (cf. ibid). This, however, does not mean that there were no counter-perspectives to the trend exclusionary and antagonist viewpoints. Besides Slovene intellectuals, who are far more critical of the situation in their country than anyone from outside, activities carried out by the office around the former Human Rights Ombudsman Matjaž Hanžek

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35   Although Slovenia has 31 recognised religious groups, when somebody talks about „the church", she or he is most likely referring to the Catholic Church, as if there was only one church in Slovenia (cf. Smrke 1999: 213).

also raised awareness to the effects of hate speech on those targeted. At the end of 2004, for example, there was an exhibition called "The never-ending story of intolerance – An exhibition of acts of hatred directed at various groups of people from independence day to the present day" (see Newsletter of the Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia 2004b: 8).

Representations in media for the masses, such as RTV, the national television station of Slovenia, are much more important for generating a certain version of reality than others. Occurrences on the publicly controlled media representations and journalist practices are intersected by interests of policies, economy and civil societies[36] (Erjavec 2003). Here, the imagined cultural relation of Slovenia to Europe is important. Although authors like Mitja Velikonja (2005) or Frane Adam, Mitja Hafner-Fink and Samo Uhan (2002) consider the newly discovered relationship of Slovenia with the European Union as over-emphasised and the result of long-term media campaigns, the dealing with journalist ethics, the value of objectivity, etc. in other EU-countries becomes extremely important for choices on Slovene journalist practices.

As a result of the change from a communist to a democratic state, the style and methods of journalists had to be rethought in order to approach a more balanced reporting of various opinions. Especially at the beginning of the 1990s, journalists were suddenly confronted with criticism from different political parties. Journalists were criticised because of their manner of reporting, which was seen to neglect different point of views. No political party felt *truly* represented, which was symptomatic of a changing attitude towards party-dominated journalism accompanied by unsatisfied parties. For such reasons reporters and editors had to find strategies that made them "immune" to such attacks. They adopted a "Western" ideology of objectivity, which saved them from being questioned in their ability to construct "reality" (cf. Erjavec 2003: 87). Slovene journalists have gone through different professional codes of ethics from 1982. The latest was released in 1991. The latter was the first one that promised significant changes. For the first time, a code was passed, that made journalists reflect of their professional activities. The primary responsibility was now the public. Promotion of the political system, the government of the working class or patriotism was not part of their responsibility anymore (cf. ibid).

Certainly, as Karmen Erjavec (1997: 149-51) points out, there was again a difference between legal texts and journalistic reality. The "objectivity" of Slovene journalists in

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36   I write "civil society" in plural, because there are always different interest groups. In my book I refer at least to two of them that acted in the name of "civil society", a left wing intellectual group and a right wing nationalist group.

Erjavec' understanding is more a strategy than honesty. Despite such claims, the distinction between information and commentary was never clear and was violated by Slovene journalist practice. Karmen Erjavec calls it the "myth" of journalistic objectivity (cf. Erjavec 2003: 87-8). The interpretation of "objectivity" is also problematic in that context. Rado Riha observed that news reports[37] during autumn 2006 display a tendency of journalists to show statements of different interest groups in order to represent extreme opinions, including xenophobic and right-wing hate speeches. Therefore, not only hate-speech, but also news with little journalist investigation, as Erjavec (2003: 90) argues, is safe from attacks because it presents two points of view. Journalists call that *reality mirroring* in order to avoid reflections on the influence of media representations on the perception of reality (cf. ibid). Often the sources of information are hidden behind statements like "*[W]e all know*", "*[A]s a consequence*", or "*[T]hus of course*" (Erjavec 2003: 93). Erjavec (ibid) defines the particular use of language as "*[T]he journalists' colonisation of common sense language*", which she sees as extremely powerful in inducing a sense of "normality". Corrections of articles by editors or other people are rare, and a lot of journalists do not respect professional secrets, advertisements are sometimes not even separable from journalistic texts (cf. Erjavec 1997: 151).

Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin (2004: 488) criticises the fact that journalists often neglect their education. For example, they rarely ever know the domestic political or social situation and so they do not include observations on a deeper level or to give references to their sources in their reports (cf. ibid). With the newly emerging governmental control of the media (with) the new Public Service Broadcasting Act and the Mass Media Act balanced reporting on minorities and "minority opinions" is even shrinking[38]. In keeping to this, Rado Riha observed that the public television station RTV increasingly engages badly educated and inexperienced young journalists to report about sensitive issues like the Roma-community close to Ljubljana in autumn 2006, who were attacked by local communities. He considers this as being a strategy of the media company in order to make right wing discourses public, fully aware that this was detrimental to the Roma-community. Riha sees reporting as being in the interest of the current government and he also acknowledges the recent assaults against the Roma-community as a result of the new media laws. In contrast to that, Bašič-Hrvatin[39] refers to the laws and argues that even the new laws offered possibilities to protect the Roma-community. The missing protection for the Roma-communities in

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37　This is from an interview with Rado Riha on November 14, 2006.
38　Taken from an interview with Bašič-Hrvatin on changes regarding the media laws on November 23, 2006.
39　Taken from the same interview.

public representations might lie in the lack of reflection of the journalists. Here is also to mention that the left-oriented weekly magazine Mladina complained about the treatment of Roma and about the reduced representations of the group in dominant media. Matjaž Hanžek[40], the former Ombudsman of Slovenia (2001-2007), who is known for his controversial attitude towards mainstream right-wing politics, noticed the changes of media laws and the increased governmental influence on journalists and newspapers on the reduced number and length of articles about him and his actions. More often, articles referring to him take up neutral or even positive statements of the Ombudsman about the government and neglect his critical or opposing remarks. Hanžek said that people even asked him what had made him change his opinion towards the (former right-wing) government (led by Prime Minister Janša).

The new economic situation of capitalist leadership in media companies influenced the status of journalists. Media owners, as any owner of other capitalist companies, avoided spending too much money on the wages of their employees. In many cases, journalists were seen as expensive for the company. Due to that, many new and young journalists lacked the safety net like pensions or social insurance. On the increasingly capitalistic road, many free-lance and contract journalists compete by pushing prices down. Therefore, the pressure on journalists is growing and they are becoming more vulnerable being exploited by certain interest groups, and they are also becoming more dependent on the good-will of their employers not to cancel their contracts. This happened a few years ago, especially at the beginning of the transition period (cf. Bašič-Hrvatin 2004: 486), and continues to happen. In connection to changes of leadership at the public broadcasting station in 2006, Bašič-Hrvatin made reference to a journalist who has been moderating the television news for RTV for years. During the previous legislation she was often attacked for her right-wing attitude. In this legislation she is in danger of being substituted, because the new government dislikes her critical reporting on the parliament and the ministry of finance. Keeping all this in mind, one can hardly argue that the autonomy of Slovene journalists has increased since 1991 nor their commitment to so-called "objectivity" and "balanced" reporting. One source of dependency was replaced by others and journalist activities are still marked by the absence of a professional discipline, as Slovene observers like Erjavec (1998: 152) conclude. In reality, journalists do not have a lot of rights. By law, their responsibility should be dedicated to the public above and beyond loyalty to an employer, a political party or friends (cf. ibid 1997: 151). In practical terms, a journalist has to follow the content of the paper. However, that does not mean that she or he would be protected by her or his employers. Nearly all journalists have to sign a contract, in which they lose their rights on what they write.

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40   Interview from October 14, 2006.

4. Escaping the "Balkans"

One important mechanism for constructing a distinctive Slovene nationality was found with the initiation of moral panics for the public. In reference to Karmen Erjavec' (2003) analytic approach, three distinguished periods can be traced since the 1990s. The first was recognised in spring 1992 with the arrival of Bosnian refugees. The next one started in spring 1999 with incoming Kosovo refugees. The last wave of moral panics occurred in winter 2000/01 with an increasing number of illegal refugees (cf. ibid: 84). Maybe, as autumn 2006 was marked by strong civil society movements against Roma-communities accompanied by excessively negative media reporting (RTV) of them, Erjavec would today add a fourth period of moral panics. In a way, as Karmen Erjavec works out, all three periods were major media events. Refugees were used to build upon a national "we" in order to refer to "them" as a threat to Slovene civil society. Similar are the media attacks against the Roma-community in autumn 2006. It is interesting in this context that the discourse allowed a self-awareness of Slovenes as being victimised and that vice verse made it possible for hate speech against foreigners to be introduced in the media. The results were effective and very familiar in the context of European traditions of discrimination: first, bad images were attached to refugees; second: based on a negative characterisation they were narrated as being the "other" in the national context (cf. Jalusić 2002: 46-7).

From Karmen Erjavec' perspective in 2003, the situation was most predominant in the period of winter 2000/01. The media spoke of a "flood" of people, questioning Slovene identity, and taking advantage of the social system. The argumentation line supported the impression that this would consequently lead to an increase in poverty and triggered panic in some areas regarding diseases, criminal acts, robberies and rapes. Here, the journalists' "objectivity" was seen as being realised by giving merely different perspectives of the "we"-community, instead of giving a voice to the affected refugees too. Without the basis of solid information they were feeding the Slovene community with incredible information leading to the impression that the largest invasion of refugees ever was coming in waves to the small country. As a consequence, the attention was drawn to the Slovene asylum and refugee laws that were increasingly attacked as being too open to incoming people. While refugees have a legitimate right to be protected, the invention of the *illegal* immigrant was useful in arguing that incoming foreigners from the South were "abusing" Slovene laws. After all, it was easy for the dominant public discourse to narrate these incomers as violating the law, when applying as "normal" asylum seekers and enjoy Slovene hospitality, although they should not do so (cf. Erjavec 2003: 85-6). *Illegal* incomers consequently are suspected of having illegitimate interests in staying in the country. They are seen as untidy with unknown intentions, uninvited, but crossing the Slovenian national

boarders (cf. Žagar 2002: 38-9). Whereas many local people were in panic, the police and the media "forgot" to mention that there was no increase in criminality and no danger of out-breaking diseases (cf. Erjavec 2003: 86). The perception of local people and of those who were "affected" by the "flood" of foreigners was of course different. Especially in areas close to asylum homes, local initiatives put pressure on politicians. Conspicuously, there was no larger public discussion in the mainstream media about the bad conditions of the refugee homes, although Amnesty International already pointed at that grievance in autumn 2000 (cf. Jalusić 2002: 48).

Exclusive tendencies expressed in religious or ethnic discrimination were certainly recognised by left groups and members of the left-wing civil societies in Slovenia. Especially in recent years[41], intellectuals and oppositional groups defined the public sphere in Slovenia as being highly xenophobic (cf. Erjavec 2003: 83-4). Above all, intellectuals based in the Peace Institute (Mirovni Inštitut) including Vlasta Jalusić, Mojca Pajnik, Tonči Kuzmanić, Mitja Velikonja, Vesna Leškošek, Alenka Švab and Igor Žagar, who I have quoted in this book, expressed their worries in various publications and round table discussions. In November 2000, the first round table discussion in Metelkova mesto[42] defined the public sphere as highly offensive and hostile towards the asylum seekers. In their opinions, the media paid too much attention to the civil resistance groups and their demand for rights (cf. Jalusić 2002 48-9). In December 2000, the government fortified in a very short time the law from 1999 on incoming people, claiming to improve national security. In actual fact, a lot of asylum seekers had difficulty proving their identity. Some of them had lost their identity documents because of the circumstances under which they left their previous location. In this way, it was easier now to restrict them from citizenship rights (cf. Erjavec 2003: 86). They also refused Croatian people the legal status of refugees, because they were considered as coming from a safe country.

Political decisions, public representations and civil protest from left and right wing groups and the criticism of international organisations, such as Amnesty International, put a lot of pressure on those in power. Following on from that, a number of uncoordinated political steps were taken, which only increased the anger of local resistance groups. In the end, in January 2001, the refugees in Ljubljana (Šiška) were

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41 The years before 2003, when the article was published.
42 Metelkova mesto is a place in Ljubljana which was previously a military building. After 1991 local resistance groups from the left and the extreme left have occupied the buildings as squatters. Today most of the groups enjoy a legal status. Also the Peace Institute (Mirovni Inštitut) is based in this area. As well as cultural events, as indicated above, public meetings are held there, usually focussing on asymmetric power relations or discrimination and always in a critical manner towards the existing state system.

transported to a small village near the Hungarian border in a night action (cf. Jalusić 2002: 49). Officially, the health inspector had closed the centre because of bed bugs (cf. Erjavec 2003: 86). Due to the high attention in the media, the reaction of the inhabitants in the village was expressed in a new exploding protest that was, of course, again accompanied by a lot of media attention (cf. Jalusić 2002: 49-50). A few days later the asylum seekers were brought back to Ljubljana. In spite of the minimal medial attention given to the transport, local people protested again and the situation did not leave a lot of options. Everywhere in Slovenia local civic groups wanted to see the refugees leave the country (cf. Jalusić 2002: 50). This case is again very similar to the events surrounding the Roma-community in autumn 2006. Also here, right-wing civil resistance groups pointed at the "threat" of Roma-communities in the neighbourhood, great attention was given to this by the public broadcasting station RTV and the daily newspapers Delo, Dnevnik and Večer, all affiliated closely with the right-wing government of that time. Although the Roma-community was situated on their own private estate, this was narrated as if they were violating the space of the national community. As a consequence, the Roma-community had to be protected against attacks by local groups by the police, although the Roma-people have traditionally had bad experiences with the police. Therefore, the presence of police did not necessarily increase their feeling of security. In the end, the community agreed to move to another place in Slovenia, again accompanied by a police escort. Politicians did not do anything in order to protect the Roma-community – partially because of the fear of local resistance groups[43].

Once again in February 2001 non-governmental groups, researchers and intellectuals met for a conference in Metelkova, where they seriously criticised the political handling of this incident and the kind of representations they allowed to be shown. At the same time, the politicians changed their tone unexpectedly and the Minster of the Interior at that time, Bohinc, started to call for more tolerance from the local groups (cf. Jalusić 2002: 50-1). That step was in direct contradiction to the previous attitude. Previously the main actors of moral panics were the officials of the Ministry of the Interior. The police and the media, as Karmen Erjavec (2003: 86) argues, were the main actors. The action groups were only second actors (cf. Erjavec 2002: 86). Suddenly the refugees were no longer narrated as posing a threat to national security and no longer were treated as criminals. Also the president and Prime minister of the time, Milan Kučan and Janez Drnovšek[44], committed to the new attitude (cf. Jalusić 2002: 51). Almost immediately, similar changes were visible in the media reports.

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43 This information is based on observations of Rado Riha and Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin from the interviews in autumn 2006.
44 Drnovšek, at that time Prime Minister, was later the president of Slovenia.

This suggests that also before the changes of the media laws, Slovene politics had a large influence on media contents and representations. For example, the daily newspaper Delo[45], which is associated with the "true" national character (cf. Bašič-Hrvatin 2004: 470), significantly adapted the reports according to the new attitude. People who analyse media content of that period introduced the term "media U-turn". The turn of opinion was not only reflected in the radical change of opinion, but also in the use of a new rhetoric. The reactions to that from civil societies were, of course, contradictory and ambiguous. The new attitude was appreciated and strongly criticised and even attacked at the same time. While at the end of February 2001, people participated in demonstrations to show their solidarity with the refugees, in March the issue almost disappeared from the media schedule, in April new local resistance occurred in Ljubljana/Šiška, Maribor, Ribnica and Kocevje. In May, the government introduced stricter laws for asylum seekers, more controls on the boarders, the need for visas for people from Iran and Bosnia and stricter controls to avoid abuse of the asylum procedure (cf. Jalusić 2002: 52).

Certainly, the media largely support the xenophobic tendencies of some Slovene groups, although those people might not even be representative for the Slovene national community. By narrating Slovene people as victims and the immigrants as disturbing their national representation, media reports are even mobilising nationalist thinking. Strengthening the effect of "common sense" of Slovenes, journalists often use the "voice of the people". This helped to produce prejudices and to foster strong emotions. Often the same people spoke about the same issues in public, those who generally had a strong opinion against immigrants (cf. Erjavec 2003: 94-5). For example, an often quoted personality was Bojan Oblak who is the leader of the civil resistance group in Šiška/Ljubljana. Frequently, he wrote reader's letters to the newspapers (cf. Jalusić 2002: 53). According to the media analysis of Vlasta Jalusić (January to April 2001), all mainstream media in Slovenia picked up a discourse, in which either a group of Slovene people or all Slovenes were victimised. Mainly they were narrated as being threatened by the immigrants, but as a second possibility they were also seen as being betrayed by the state (= government). In this way, the "voices of the people" were used as an instrument of civil society against the state. For many Slovene people, it was clear that the state was responsible for the suffering of its inhabitants (cf. ibid). The support of "foreign" interests was not appreciated by groups supportive of populist and nationalist politics. When some Slovene media finally supported the state's intentions, the resistance even grew (cf. Jalusić 2002: 54-8).

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45   Delo is the most important daily newspaper in Slovenia with the most readers. With the change of the media law in 2006, the paper is increasingly moving closer to the right wing government.

In February 2002 the question, of whether Slovenes were xenophobic or whether they were just acting in the consciousness of a young nationality, was brought to the public agenda for the first time. The line of argumentation was the following: Since Slovenia is a *cultivated* country, the inhabitants are *cultivated* as well and that rises the question what being *cultivated* or what democracy actually means (cf. Jalusić 2002: 58). The emphasis on the term *cultivated* becomes important, since people from "the Balkans" or Roma-communities are definitely not considered as being *cultivated* from a hegemonic view on Slovene/EU-European culture. In relation to this, leaders of the resistance groups insist on pointing at the normality of such a situation. Anyway, who should know better, what was right and good, if not the average and honest family *man*? That idea is based strongly on the current ideology of the media. The reactions to the immigrants are not xenophobic, only a "normal" reflex and counter-reaction of the people to "abnormal" circumstances. Someone is xenophobic, when she or he is intentionally cruel, but Slovenes are not. Just in case there is something like xenophobia in Slovenia, it is because of the inability of the state to react (cf. Jalusić 2002: 61-8). In that way Slovenia associates itself closely with a European culture and the European Union and considers their treatment of foreigners very similar to the treatment of foreigners in other EU-countries. After all, Slovene politicians came to the conclusion that compared to the rest of ("Western") Europe, Slovene laws for immigrants and asylum seekers were unusually open. Stricter laws as a consequence were then an appropriation to European standards and the responsibility of Slovenia as an EU-member: If Slovenia would let the refugees into their country, they would spread over whole Europe (cf. Jalusić 2002: 47).

In many public discussions Europe, and more precisely, the European Union has turned out to be an important basis of measurement for Slovenia in order to understand their own "standards", already before the entrance of Slovenia into the Union. For example, in comparison to EU-Europe, the Slovenian legal system were considered as "better" than those in many European countries, because other EU-countries have more restrictive immigration laws that are even directed towards Slovenia (cf. Jalusić 2002: 70-2). Despite this, Slovenia is strengthening its link with the Alps-Adriatic Euro-region through the legitimatising of the Hungarian and Italian minorities, providing them with extra-rights. Through the Hungarian and Italian minority's knowledge and languages, Slovenia is linked closer to the Alps-Adriatic region (cf. Sanguin 1999: 68). Getting closer there, is also expressed by getting further away from other regions. Therefore, the erasure of non-Slovenian citizens from any official status, as well as on-going (media) discussions about the building of the mosque, and the settling of the Croatian border reflect tendencies of building cultural and political borders between "the Balkans" and "the EU" in the Slovene imagery. From a Slovene viewpoint, the country could play an important role in helping, for example, Croatia to

integrate into Europe, but in the same moment, Slovenia plays with its power to reject their help. For example, during the campaign for the national elections in television in 2004, Slovene (right wing) politicians (who were consciously provocative with their presence) were taken prisoner by Croatian policemen, while standing on a piece of land that was considered as being Slovene by Slovenes and as Croatian by Croatians. Slovene officials announced later that they would not support Croatian membership to the European Union for such reasons (see Delo, October 2004). The border between Slovenia and Croatia is not fixed in all details. The current fight is about a ridiculously small piece of land which both countries, Slovenia and Croatia, seem to need in order to distract the population from inner political problems. The border between Croatia and Slovenia has only existed since 1991. With the first of May 2004 its importance grew tremendously: Now it is the exterior border of the European Union and divides the European Union from "the rest"[46].

5. Returning to the "Balkans"

As a former part of Yugoslavia it seems like Slovenia is trying to get rid of all possible associations with wild and uncultivated "Balkan" cultures. Official representations rarely refer to cultural, political or social connection to that "part of the past". The dealings with the Yugoslavian legacy possibly lead anyone to the conclusion that any relations to ex-Yugoslavian culture have been fully abandoned from the present national identity. Also the treatment of refugees from other ex-states in Slovenia does not support the impression of solidarity. However, if we looked into Slovene music stores, we would suddenly stumble over an interesting category of music. Next to certain music genres, there are also distinctions between the origins that mean "domestic" music and foreign music and also a category somewhere in-between. This category is called *ex-home* music and includes music productions from former Yugoslavian countries up to and after 1991. Velikonja (2002) refers to this as a marginal example, but not as an exceptional one. He describes it as a very specific aspect of Slovene popular culture (cf. Velikonja 2002: 189-90). It is important to note that those music styles are not inventions of a common past that have been transported into the present. They are distinguished achievements from years after Yugoslavian segregation (Velikonja 2002: 190).

Slovenes developed a certain "Balkan" culture, which is not, as Velikonja (2002) clearly points out, inclusive of all possible expressions of Balkan culture, but

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46   Here I stress once more the "West-and-the-rest"-division, like Stuart Hall (1999a) brings it to the
      point.

particularly Ex-Yugoslavian "Balkan" culture. He calls it "Balkan culture" "in the Slovenian way". Furthermore, such a definition does not mean the culture of immigrants from other Yugoslav republics who live in Slovenia and certainly does not simply refer to nostalgia for "Yugo-times", which might exist among older generations of Slovenes. Of course, many things in relation to cinema, music, sports refer to the "golden age" of Yugoslavia, but they are not reduced to images related to the former federation state. Younger generations, even teenagers are fascinated by the new cultural interpretations of "Balkan" influences and these are seen as an innovation of new cultural systems, in contrast to the dominant discourses of "Western" Europe or of US-America. Recently, new and mainly Serbian films became commercially successful. New bands and musicians from former Yugoslavia are able to fill the concert halls of Slovenia. Especially alternative scenes like at Metelkova invite those groups and offer a rich alternative cultural programme to younger generations. Hence, "Balkan" culture is not only appreciated on the level of reception, also new popular-cultural products show "Balkan" creativity. Tito became part of popular culture and even appears in some TV comics or songs. One can also find him on lighters, on posters in some cafes or on bags, etc. Sometimes old Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian songs are translated into Slovene language and have gained new success and meaning. Involvement in Slovene "Balkan" culture is quite critical or ironic and often targets contemporary political situations and occurrences. Velikonja (2002: 195-8) lists here the NATO-bombardment in Kosovo, which was presented in a quite Ex-Yugoslavian, Partisan, and Socialist political phraseology and controversially combined. Hence, such activities mirror in some respect solidarity between people of former Yugoslavia, although in a less mainstream context.

Linguistic influences or games are other aspects of cultural creativity. Also today more than one third of Slovene people are able to speak a language which is not any longer called "Serbo-Croat", from that they have developed a kind of "Serbo-Slovene" slang. Such combinations stem from sectors like football, which often hosted people from former Yugoslavia. It was also, similar to the Black power movement in the USA, a self-encouragement of "Balkan" youth from quarters like Fužine, the area in Ljubljana with a high percentage of (Slovene) people from Southern backgrounds (cf. Velikonja 2002: 199). However, using such elements is a kind of "counter-power" to dominant exclusive tendencies and is a positive discourse of empowerment for young people as well to those interested in broader cultural expressions in Slovenia. At the very beginning of independence, the alternative radio station "Radio Študent" was among the first to support the "Balkan" way. In contrast to other available media, they tried to establish a positive way of including ex-Yugoslavian cultural heritage in Slovene every-day life. Already in the middle of 1992, they were broadcasting a show in Serbian/Croatian/Bosniak language. People from those countries were given a voice

and a platform to discuss the situation in their countries. Besides that, the station continued to broadcast Yugoslav music in the difficult period of June/July 1991. In other stations that kind of music disappeared almost completely. Another place, where the linguistic aspect played a great role, was in graffiti. Many slogans are written in so-called "Serbo-Croat" language, also by Slovene graffiti artists (cf. ibid: 199-204).

Despite the xenophobic atmosphere in which the transition from post-Socialist to a new political and social system occurred, people in Slovenia remained positive towards certain aspects of life in Yugoslavia. Statistics from 1998 show that 88.2 percent of people considered their life in Yugoslavia as good or very good and only 5.5 percent as bad or very bad (cf. Velikonja 2002: 190-1). Such data shadows an idea of ambiguities and contradictions of cultural belonging within one country, people can be Slovene *and* Ex-Yugoslavian *and* European and disagree with some aspect of promoted identities at the same time. That changes when the Slovene culture or language is in question or endangered. Then Slovene nationals react very sensitively and protectively of what they call their own. Then it becomes clear, that cultural images follow hierarchic principles. There is a clear distinction between higher levels of culture, like those coming from EU-Europe or more specifically Germany and lower levels, associated with "Eastern" Europe and the Balkan. In popular media non-Slovene people seen as belonging to "lower" culture are often attributed specific roles. Frequently they are stereotyped as uneducated, untidy people, who are not able to speak proper Slovene. They might be narrated as gangsters, cleaners or porters (cf. ibid: 192-3). However, another kind of solidarity can be observed, when Slovene people decide to move to another EU-European country for work or education. The study of Barbara Samaluk (2009, 73-4) reveals that Slovene migrants in the UK tend to identify themselves either as "Europeans", "Central Europeans" or as "Balkanians" or ex-Yugoslavians. Samaluk interprets this as a result of the fact that identities are not fixed and based upon intersectional characteristics that connect people differently with groups and discourses in different contexts.

Consequences

[O]ne must keep also in mind that Slovenia's accession to the European Union (EU) is the central project of the governing coalition as well as of Slovenia's entire political class. One could even say that today (in comparison to the time of independence) the formation of Slovenes' "European" consciousness is the result of an intense governmental campaign, the end goal of which is to convince Slovenia's inhabitants to support Slovenia's membership in the EU on a referendum vote. (Frane Adam et al. 2002: 133, sic)

Before, around and after the accession period to the EU Slovenia was full of European labels, prices, quality, etc., and "Europe" or "European" became an unavoidable part of the names of events, concerts, sports halls, trade marks etc. In that sense, it is almost impossible to encounter Slovenia without any sense of Europe (see Velikonja 2005: 89). *Interwoven in Europe*, as indicated with the title of this chapter, carries manifold meanings regarding "Europe" and does not take the European Union and with it a "Western" interpretation of "Europeanness" as the only reference point. From the perspective, raised in this book, there is no European culture that is solely determining for the understanding of "Europeanness", without neglecting the hierarchic relationship between different "Europes". Thus, the discourses on Europe related to the European Union are a core issue, since they affect all European countries on the continent and those that feel culturally, economically, historically, etc. related. When it comes to countries outside an EU-Europe definition, it comprises the question whether non-EU-European countries take up a stance based on non-EU-Europeanness as a conscious decision or is it a consequence of being incompatible with so-called EU-European standards (cf. Velikonja 2005: 101). Being situated in Slovenia, Velikonja (2005: 102-3) sees Eurocentrism as being at the heart of the European Union and acknowledges a dangerous dichotomy of thinking in civilised/non-civilised terms. He writes *[Y]et, we should blame not only the arrogant colonizers for this situation, but also, or above all, the servile colonized nations who follow blindly like sheep the discourse of the new master* (Velikonja 2005: 103). In this context he refers to a speech made by the French foreign minister Hubert Vedrin in 1999, who explicitly referred to the "Europeanisation" of the "Balkans" as a political strategy of "Western" Europe. Vedrin also points to his observation of the continuation of such an attitude, when countries, like Slovenia, understand their own "Europeanisation" as an outcome of a difficult transition to democracy and in a comparison do not see the same "reached" in countries, such as Croatia (cf. ibid).

Slovene public discourse of enforcing stricter migration laws, the "erasure" of people from other Yugoslavian ex-states and Roma-people or the prevention of building a

Mosque in Ljubljana should raise warning signals in "Western" (European) societies. Worrisome trends are not only reflected in the exclusive and negative effects of these politics, but also in the fact that such practices are presented as being "normal" within Europe (cf. Zorn 2004, Jalusić 2002, Erjavec 2001, 2003, and others). Although hindering some people of legal statues in Slovenia roused international attention (see BBC 2006) and was reported on by Amnesty International (2005), the discriminatory practice did not prevent Slovenia from taking up European membership, nor did it lead to any other consequences. All in all, these tendencies fit into the picture of the "Fortress Europe Syndrome", where Human Rights and the right to live is reserved for EU-European citizens and other "Western" nationals going along with a certain sense of "tolerance" towards the extreme right wing movements. In order to take a more inclusive direction, "Western" European policy makers and observers of the EU-developments are able to develop a self-critical standpoint in regards a possible European Union future, when they look at the cultural interpretation of "Western" values in former communist democracies, such as Slovenia. In this context, hate speech in mainstream media and the deprivation of women's rights are only two things that are considered as being "normal" in European democracies.

According to Mitja Velikonja (2005) "Europeanness" is largely equated with Eurocentrism in a Slovene context and narrates former Yugoslavian countries as "less" developed and below the level of "Europeanness". This also supports the opinion of left-wing movements that see non-"Western" European countries as excluded from the political European project and therefore as remaining oppositional to it. Eurocentrism is also most applicable to a nationalist understanding of inclusion. Extended to a European level, we end up with little support for Roma-communities and people from the "Balkans". Slovenia, as a relatively new independent nation, has to learn to deal with and to define national and European awareness almost at the same moment. It is in the process of considering itself as a nation state rather than exclusively as an ethnic community, which was the case until the independence in 1991 as Janez Justin highlights in an interview. Therefore, Slovenia has to slowly re-define membership of the Slovene community which until recently has always been based on ethnic grounds and connected to the ability to speak the Slovene language. In addition to this, a less exclusive model has to be found in a climate, as Rado Riha[47] acknowledges, where traditionally democratic states turn to protectionist nationalism. At the same time, Slovenia is already on the road to a more inclusive model of belonging. Janez Justin acknowledges recent developments in the understanding of Sloveneness as very positive. He brings the example of the Slovene football team that consists mainly of players from other ex-republics and who are in the process of being accepted as

47   Based on the interview with Rado Riha on November 14, 2006.

Slovenes on non-ethnic premises. Justin sees this as an indicator for an extension of the meaning of "being a Slovene person". Sloveneness in his perspective only recently to 2006 started opening up to the concept of citizenship and turning against populist politicians. Civil movements and protests against dominant public discourses and exclusive tendencies are indicators that nations are never as homogenous as they tend to present themselves (Puntscher Riekmann and Wodak 2003: 286).

Rosi Braidotti suggests resistance expressed in micro-nationalisms might be "*short time effects*" accompanying the European project and the shifts in power relations, since the idea of the European citizens is relatively new. The legal implementations of the European Treaties as well as regional and local mobilisation affect the sovereignty of the most successful model of social order: the nation state. Following from that, the relation between different levels of identities, such as individual identity, local and regional identity, national identity and European identity is interesting. Rainer Bauböck (2003: 136), for example, accesses questions of identity by assuming that people with minority backgrounds would identify with this particular minority group before they would take national discourses on identifications into consideration. Vice verse, from his perspective, the hegemonic majority would rather identify with the state and would be resistant to accepting minority interpretations. Rada Iveković or Maruša Krese[48] refuses to identify with any of the new states following Yugoslavia. Both express the necessity to deal with the painful loss of their previous cultural belonging in their writings. They therefore offer insights into different feelings of belonging within one nation. Expressions of identity are contested and cause resistance from people of different locations. At the same moment, they attempt to contrast their position to essentialist views of being linked with former Yugoslavia. The emphasis on this is necessary in the context of Yugoslavia, where being "nostalgic" has very negative and regressive connotations. Especially in transition periods, people experience that the order of different identities is not fixed. In the following section I will focus on the micro-level of identification and negotiation of belonging based on a study conducted in Slovenia.

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48   Krese talked about this during her presentation at the "City of Women"-festival.

Global Fragmentation or Another Universalism?

Nation states seem to be very persistent in holding their important function as providers of legal systems in which people are addressed as political subjects, who have access to certain rights such as welfare provisions and other legal bodies that guarantee a certain sense of security in every-day life (cf. Hall 1999a: 427). At the same time, the nation has lost its function as a "key-actor", as Saskia Sassen (2002: 1) argues, in controlling the dynamics of capital, information or cultural discourses. She locates the condition of change in the 1980s. Here increasing privatisation, deregulation and opening of national markets led to the foreign companies and capital becoming increasingly important, and with that, national actors became more and more challenged to participate in global markets. This goes hand in hand with the internationalisation of the media, which were crucial in the provision of national identifications and the genesis of national consciousness. In contrast to national media, which offered nationalised interpretations of the world, with available international media content we could then expect an increasing internationalisation on our imagination (cf. ibid).

1. Different Meanings of Globalisation

Until recently, as David Morley and Kevin Robins (1995: 11) point out, television in "Western" nation states was under strict national control, which limited the foreign material shown on the TV stations. The authors make clear that the deregulation of the markets and media productions – driven by economic and entrepreneurial imperatives – address the viewer in economic factors and no longer as political subjects or as citizens of a nation. The main interest is to attract the largest possible number of consumers. The goal is to break down national borders. Lyotard (1984: 5) writes in his book "The Post-Modern Condition" that knowledge is one of the most important sources of power, and distributors of information have and will have an increasingly important role in societies. In 1979, when he first published the book he envisioned that nation states will fight over the control of media in a similar way to how they fought over territory or cheap labour and natural resources in the past. Already in 1990 (cf. Morley and Robins 1995: 11), Steven Ross, the head of the largest media corporation Time Warner, was advertising the new media reality as a completely free way of transferring information, where national entities belong to the past. International media is driven by market opportunities rather than by national identity. With Ross' words, Morley and Robins (1995: 12) provide an interesting metaphor seeing Marshall McLuhan's vision of "global village" from the 1960s as having been finally realised with the ability of global media to reach even the former totalitarian

regimes in the "East" of Europe. In Ross' perspective, media companies like Time Warner play an important role in creating "a better world" in such countries. The phenomenon I intend to touch on here is usually addressed with the term "globalisation" providing a positive and negative version, depending on who is affected by global influences and from which location. The head of Time Warner dreams of a very positive version of the internationalisation of media contents, he believes privatisation of the media would address the spectators as "global citizens" where everybody will have access to equal contents (cf. ibid). Obviously, Ross does without feeling the need to reflect upon his US-American location.

Ulrich Beck (1997: 24-30) argues that globalisation is closely connected to capitalism and the market or vice versa, capitalism and the market are embedded in global space, where nations lose their former authority, and social security and democracy are intersected by economic interests. He defines three terms from which he tries to embrace the phenomenon in its different shapes. *Globalismus* (globalism) is the term signifying the "threat" posed for national sovereignty for many protectionists of one country. *Globalität* (globality) reveals that we all live in a global society, in which the idea of closed spaces is no longer valid. In that sense all kinds of social, political or economic realities are constantly clashing and older models of "Western" societies have to be rethought regarding their liabilities. National units cannot close themselves off from global influences nor can they avoid international relations, when it comes to wars, crises or the threat of infectious diseases. At the same moment, it does not say that all societies or all nations would know about each other or would be influenced by each other. *Globalisierung* (globalisation) is the term which is most important for the questions for the perspective in this book. It includes processes of relations leaving beyond the national borders and has impact on social realities. In terms of this understanding, the local-global axis is an important point, from which society can be understood. Also here there are integrated and non-integrated parts. A world society does not mean the dissolving of all national societies, but it is an existing network of increasing international dependencies and alliances between (national) societies. From Ulrich Beck's (1997: 28) point of view, such relational networks are too complex for one person to comprehend. Nonetheless, the concept repositions everybody as a global subject, no matter if one moves to different places or stays in a little village for all of her or his life (cf. Clifford 1999: 492).

Stuart Hall (1999a: 424-5) argues that globalisation affects our understanding of space and time. From this perspective, societies cannot only be seen as distinguished systems constituting their own dynamics and rules. In contrast to traditional societies that were bound on a certain space and time through the physical presence of the subjects, globalisation goes across and beyond national borders and communities. Space is

significant for stability, because the idea of spatiality correlates with the notion of social space. Morley (1999: 443-4) sees the transgression of such traditional concepts not only in the new possibilities of travelling, but also as necessarily conflating with advanced information technologies and communication systems as a precondition to affect spatial relations and combine the public and the private, national issues with local and international spaces. Here media have another important function, they do not only provide international points of view, but they also supply their viewers with foreign life-styles and realities. We all know Hawaii or Cuba from television, but most of us have never been there. In his essay on *Traveling cultures,* James Clifford (1999: 476-502) offers a broad definition of the "traveller", from which he criticises the attempt of ethnologists, anthropologists and other social scientists to theorise "foreign" cultures without reflecting on the sense of "*Globalität*" (globality) of their subjects of investigation. Certainly, he does not want to automatically turn everybody into a "travelling subject", but in order to go beyond a definition of physical travelling he also includes knowledge on other cultures without physically moving. He refers to the importance to acknowledge the global/local nexus in societies touched by information technologies or the encounter with people from abroad who are travelling. Neglecting cosmopolitan, intercultural or global aspects in the perception of so-called indigenous people in Clifford's (1999: 487) sense means dismissing co-productions of power relations and resistances, which necessarily intersect such studies. Also George Ritzer and Todd Stillman (2003: 46) or Stuart Hall (1999a: 429) would alternatively argue that considering tribes in the rainforest or communities in other remote locations as "untouched" from global influences and narrating them existing in closed space, with pure ethnicity and cultural traditions, untouched by modernity until yesterday, was essentially the illusion of "Western" people. This is keeping with the belief that pollution, television, trade, industrial use of woods or other natural sources, drug cultivation or tourism would have left such societies unaffected. Some theorists believe, as Hall (1999a: 427) or Hirsch (2000: 325) have noted in their analysis, globalisation interferes with the strong bindings of national identities and weaken national identifications. Here we enter again, what Steven Ross proposed with his idea of "global citizens" (cf. Morley and Robins 1995: 11). People can receive global images all over the world and have access to the global distribution of ideas, life styles, spaces, imaginations that alienate our local space/time, history and past, and offering new identifications and considerations of belonging outside, across, beyond, within, etc. the nation state (Hall 1999a: 428).

1.1 World-Wide Distribution of Content: Another "Western" Domination?

Despite its positive formulation (cf. McLuhan 1995), the idea of the "global village" is accompanied by the fear of a global homogenisation of culture. More precisely, the fear incorporates the vision of a US-Americanisation that would transfer cultures into a historic consumer cultures. The US-American dream expressed by Steven Ross and his view on global media corporations are based on the dream of equality, in the sense that everybody would enjoy equal opportunities within independent (from national control) and privatised companies that are not restricted or exploited by state interest, as happened within communist dictatorships. Not surprisingly, the independence of any business from state influence was realised as soon as one country transgressed from a socialist regime to a democratic state system. This marked the beginning of the nation state's own internationalisation as well. It then becomes more obvious why Stuart Hall (1999a: 425) sees both phenomenon, the nation (state) and globalisation, as deeply bound to the same philosophical origins: modernity. The market and capitalism never allowed state sovereignty to be self-sufficient. Certainly, as Ulrich Beck (2003: 29) argues, nation states always needed a sense of the internationality to understand or give meaning to their own nationality. States are dependent on the recognition of other states to maintain their sovereignty. When a state lacks international recognition it will most likely lead to international conflicts, which is evident in the example of a partially not accepted Israel. Additionally, nation state based societies can only exist in a plural sense. From that perspective, Beck assumes one large world state to be an impossible utopia. At the same moment, transnational relations are able to transgress nation based imaginations of communities.

Beck (2003: 39-40) makes it clear that modernity in its initial form relied on national entities and was secured by clear distinction of inside and outside relations. Modern civilisation was bound on order, cleanliness and beauty, for which the suppression of sexuality and aggressiveness was crucial in maintaining such a system. Therefore, as Zygmunt Bauman (1997: 2) points out, modern order comes with a lot of compromises. Ronald Inglehart (1998) investigated the value systems of societies in world-wide matters over thirty years and analysed cultural change intermingled with changing systems of belief and attitude as well as shift in global relations. From his observations, social and economic discourses influence each other and can ground certain social developments with similar economic, political or social outcomes in countries with previously different traditional cultures (cf. Inglehart 1998: 13). I found this point important for the understanding of globalisation, because he connects it with premises of industrialisation and the consequences of transnationalisation. He says being affected by or being on the road to industrialisation triggers a long-term cultural and social change and is able to re-articulate values and life concepts of countries and

societies (cf. ibid: 14-5). Usually the values connected with industrialisation are economic growth, whereby it can help poor countries to achieve economic wealth. Although a transition to industrial societies also implements a whole range of new values, starting from religious attitude to sexual norms (cf. ibid: 14). Furthermore, it correlates with urbanisation, higher education of the inhabitants and the formation of the category of "specialists" in the job market (cf. ibid: 18). In other words, modernisation carries rational-legitimate values of economic, political or social life, whereas religious and traditional formations disappear. Concluding, Inglehart (ibid: 14) argues that nations in the process of modernisation and industrialisation show strong generational gaps. Such a statement also corresponds with my observations of Ireland, where very old people and very young people, and additionally, people from the countryside and from towns follow different temporalities. For example, Young Irish people in early 2003 were strongly motivated towards education and career[49], and were willing to accept strict and rigid rules on deadlines and courses, as well as almost unattainable good grades as indicators for the high standard of their education system, whereas the older generations and people who decided to live in the countryside appear more relaxed and less focused on their careers. In the case of Slovenia, I could not recognise such a strongly changing society. Inglehart (ibid: 24) also highlights the fact that modern processes do not stop with modern consciousness. This, he sees reflected in a materialist attitude, where economic efficiency, bureaucratic authority and scientific rationality prevail and which slowly transforms towards post-materialist societies with increasingly humane values, more space for self-realisation and individual autonomy. In Inglehart's (1998: 14) point of view the post-materialist attitude is a very positive life-perception, at least from the background of our current value system. He also makes us aware of the confluence of post-materialist societies and a stagnating post-industrial economy. However, Inglehart (1998: 19-20) argues against the ethnocentric point of view of many philosophers who are tempted to see modernisation as equal to "Western" progressive societies. His main attempt is to look at social phenomenon, compare them and recognise similarities in their development, when affected by similar ideologies. He points out that humans are too complex to forecast their social and cultural development, but it is possible to define some tendencies. He also seems to criticise the belief of "Western" values as the highest model of civilisation.

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49   Here, I have to draw the reader's attention to the selected interview groups for my research on Irish identity. All of them attended higher educational institutions and are from a middle class background. At the same time, especially in Limerick where I conducted my research, the contrast between wealthy and poor people was enormous.

Globalisation as a world-wide relational network is not as new as it might appear because of the intensive discussions. Also imperialism and colonialism of "Western" nation states from the 15th century onwards can be seen as examples for globalisation, because of the relationship created between different countries all over the world and the mobility of people, although many of them were forced to go to other countries. Furthermore, imperialism and colonialism still influence present day power relations in the world. Debt-release and the role of the World Bank, IMF and WTO is only one discourse of contemporary discussions on the issue (cf. Beck 2003: 25, Rosaldo 1995: xii). At the moment, many so-called ""developing" countries can neither establish independent functioning infra-structure and markets nor ever become equal partners in global economy matters, because so-called "developed" countries (which are former colonisers) are not willing to give up their control over these. Referring to world-wide money flow, Noam Chomsky (1996: 25-35) makes us aware that globalisation does not necessarily mean the loss of state power. On the contrary, by looking at so-called free market spaces, he discovers a certain dominance of the United States. Therefore, the interests of a nation state can be realised in global politics, when investing into foreign countries in order to stabilise the national market. The attempt of the European Union to protect its own market and take care of its constant growth can be seen in a similar way. The European Union "*[i]s positioned simultaneously as the main ally and the main alternative to the American hegemony in the globalised world*" as Braidotti (2005: 173) argues. European politics try to control globalising forces. In order to be competitive, the Lisbon strategy, for example, should help to achieve such goals. However, this should also include the European media corporations, but they are not very strong in comparison the US-American media. In this way, European viewpoints in a globalised world are not offering a clear European position. This goes hand in hand with the fact, that in the European Union nation state or a network of nation states largely remain the central providers of identifications (cf. Chomsky 1996: 25-35).

From the perspective of US-American dominance in the media, it becomes more understandable why some theorists see a (US)-Americanisation coming along globalising effects, where distribution of consumer based culture is centralised around very few power fields. Therefore, instead of speaking about an Americanisation, I prefer adding the prefix "US" in order to point out the particular location to which "America" as a continent is reduced. Also Roland Robertson (2003: 327) writes that authors usually write "Americanisation" although they have "US-Americanisation" in mind. In case one author wrote Americanisation, I added for this reason "US" in brackets. However, next to the United States and a less powerful Europe, Japan plays

an increasingly important role[50] in the world-wide culture industry (cf. Beck 2003: 25-6). The idea of (US-)Americanisation is largely associated with a political, cultural, social and economic impact of the United States as a world wide power (cf. Robertson 2003: 332-5, Ritzer and Stillman 2003: 51). At the same time, Ulrich Beck (2003: 26) sees so-called (US-) Americanisation as only one limited definition or understanding of globalisation. He sees (US-)Americanisation being based on the premises of the nation state and on the assumption that US-American superiority would consequently lead to a global American way of life (cf. ibid).

Roland Robertson (2003: 327-36) observes that people, either in everyday conversations or in intellectual matters, easily define something as an aspect of US-Americanisation. As someone who has lived half of his life in the US and the other in Europe, mainly in Great Britain, Robertson (ibid: 333) does not believe that people would easily distinguish between US-American influences and other imported cultural practices that might not be a US-American invention or not even known in the United States. He rather acknowledges people employing their own cultural imaginations on other cultures. This, he sees happening by orientalising and exoticising Europe, the Near East, Asia, Latin America etc. in the United States. At the same time, this is expressed by a largely negative and pejorative attitude from the other[51] side towards US-American life style, the banality of their values and so on. US-American culture seems familiar to a majority of people all over the globe through the domination of Hollywood productions in European countries. The same cultural commodities are known in Asian countries that have a rich national movie industry. Through cheap copies on the black market Hollywood movies are also available in so-called Third World countries (Ritzer and Stillman 2003: 51). Next to domination in quantity, George Ritzer and Todd Stillman (2003: 52) point to the (US)-American conquest of certain aesthetic codes or a grammar on the composition of "good" movies. Such standards are frequently copied by Chinese movie directors who then gain access to a "Western" audience. Within their own national and cultural framework, directors like

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50   As a side note: In July 2006, I was at the Crossroads Conference in Istanbul where my presentation was based in the "Globalisation" panel, which was organised by Norio Ota, a Japanese professor who immigrated to Canada. He and his mainly US-American and Canadian colleagues as well a professor from the United States who lives in Japan, discussed and presented the Japanese importance on globalisation with a main focus on cultural production of meaning in children's games and television series. From their point of view, implementations of Japanese culture into the popular culture of Europe and the US supports the process of "whitening" Japanese people in the "white" context of so-called "Western" culture. This consequently re-defines power relations in global matters and points once more at the artificial construction of "race" and "colour" correlating to the subordinated and not to dominant groups. Economic "capital" seems to play a crucial role in the reputation of "ethnic", national, and other collectives.

51   Robertson does not refer to specific countries or cultures.

Zhang Yimo or Chen Kaige are criticised of "exoticising" Chinese culture and history for their European and American viewers.

Hand in hand with the view on a US-American-centred distribution of standards, but different from its philosophical background, goes the concept of "McDonaldisation". Based on the economic success of the fast-food chain "McDonald's", similar companies like Pizza Hut, Burger King, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Starbucks and numerous national variations also emerged (cf. Ritzer and Stillman 2003: 49). Ritzer and Stillman (ibid) argue that the trend of economic consumption is able to reach social texts of societies, in which the company settles down. It can best be defined as the standardisation of practices and values generating predictable and comprehensible situations. In the case of fast food restaurants, it provides efficient ways of dealing with a larger number of people, employees and customers. Therefore, such a rationalisation process also involves the increasing substitution of human work force through machines (cf. ibid: 48-9). In reference to Max Weber, the authors define McDonaldisation as "rationalised systems" intersecting people's everyday lives and influencing the way people work, consume or communicate. They also point out that such practices do not necessarily supersede older, more traditional models (cf. ibid: 50). Max Weber (in Inglehart 1998: 20-1) was convinced that culture and economy influence each other, although one element does not determine the other completely. They are both based on independent causalities and in a "Western" framework have led to industrial as well as to democratic revolutions. In general, rationalisation in that connection means for many modernisation theorists that through their modernist foundation, economic systems affect attitudes toward work, life concepts, religious practices, etc. Also here Ritzer and Stillman (2003: 49) recognise strong US-American components of a relatively new phenomenon. Because the origin of McDonaldisation is located in the 1960s, its cultural, social or economic impact cannot yet be estimated. Nonetheless, Ritzer and Stillman (2003: 49) believe that the consequences of McDonaldisaton will increasingly harm local traditions and work against diversity.

Both the discourse of US-Americanisation and McDonaldisation are aspects of the globalisation debate. The emphasis of one phenomenon over the other is usually dependent on the author, who writes about globalisation, and the location, which is affected by global influences. Ritzer and Stillman (2003: 44) recognise a high academic interest in the phenomenon of globalisation, which leads to a wide number of differing and challenging interpretations and theories. The first two concepts are often targeted by anti-globalisation activists (who are usually globally organised) who protest against cultural imperialism, superiority and exploitation as seen in capitalism, the spirit of a consumer based culture of US-American and other "Western" societies. In this context, as Stuart Hall (1999a: 437-8) points out, fundamentalism becomes a

problem. He refers particularly to the Middle East, where states and governments are closely connected to religious rules. Some theorists see developments related to fundamentalist groups as the reactions of different cultures against being absorbed by "Western" universalism. This is frequently based on cultural memory linked particularly with the 1960s, when Middle Eastern rulers tried to introduce radically "Western" models and cultural values. Others consider fundamentalism as one answer to globalisation and the attempt to remain outside. In former colonies, going back to "cultural roots" can be seen as possible and powerful expressions of counter-identifications to the "West". The discourse goes back to the time of the independence movements of former colonies (cf. ibid). At the same time, George Bush' self-appointed missions after 9/11 to democratise Afghanistan or Iraq and to mobilise countries to participate in the "war against terror" is, as Roland Robertson (2003: 330) argues, just as fundamental as Islamic movements. This war is being fought in the name of Christianity and supports once more the picture of US-American political and cultural imperialism. The US-military is based in many countries all over the world: in Europe, the Middle East, or Latin America. Their troops are constantly involved in foreign conflicts. US-American politicians are and were also involved in peace negotiations between, for example, Great Britain and Ireland, China and Taiwan, North and South Korea or Israel and Palestine. Hence, it is hard to think about globalisation and/or fundamentalism without considering the role of the United States (cf. Ritzer and Stillman 2003: 59-61).

In terms of globalisation, Ritzer and Stillman (ibid) highlight that this cannot be reduced to simply being associated with the United States. McDonaldisation, even though of US-American origin, is not transporting US-American culture in such, but only a certain aspect of the American culture. For example, McDonaldisation also has negative effects in the United States, where local restaurants are incorporated in "rationalised systems" or chains like McDonalds. The taste for a specific food is then made applicable for the masses. It appears disentangled from its initial location where, for example, Italian immigrants or people with Italian descent used to visit Italian restaurants with Italian food and tastes. Hence, Ritzer and Stillman (2003: 58) make us aware that the fact that McDonaldisation is also affecting the regional diversity of the USA, it makes it harder to talk about a US-Americanisation in the case of the United States. Looking at the uneven distribution of power and resistances, the opposition between the "West" and the rest, the authors suggest that the phenomenon of globalisation is most visible in the "West" (cf. ibid). Taking a closer look, the notion of the transnationality and transhistory of globalisation and global capitalism is a very "Western" phenomenon, spreading "Western" customs, values, life styles, etc. in mostly "Western" countries, homogenising "Western" cultural diversity. In conclusion to that, shifts of identity are stronger in the centre than on the "periphery" (cf. Hall

1999a: 430). Certainly, the United States is not the only global actor. Some of their well-known companies, as movie companies (cf. Robertson 2003), Chrysler or Burger King have significant foreign shares (cf. Ritzer and Stillman 2003: 59). Some "rationalised systems" like "Body Shop" (Great Britain) were copied by Europeans and then later re-imported to the States (cf. ibid: 58). Popular TV-formats, like reality-TV are largely imported from Europe to the USA (cf. Robertson 2003: 333). In order to expand the idea of globalisation, Ritzer and Stiller (2003: 63) suggest engaging into Japanisation or Brasilianisation, etc. as possible fields of global investigation.

In contradiction to the dominant "Western" representation of the US-Americanisation and McDonaldisation, globalisation does not insist on the principle of homogeneity. Taking nation states as starting points, I argued earlier, that they have never succeeded in embracing all people in a certain version of pure sameness based on the imagined homogeneity of the nation states. Ethnicised groups or people with minoritised tastes, attitudes, religions or sexual expressions and orientations, and others, identified instead with their own imagined borders (cf. Hall 1999a: 437). In reference to such observations, it is unlikely that globalisation would generate global peoplehood or absorb traditional communities, but rather describes a phenomenon defined as "glocalisation". Resistances and social mobilisations are similar to those I described in negotiation with European identity. There are militant attempts of the extreme right to protect more traditional identities and of the extreme left to resist cultural imperialism and the market driven exploitation of people. It is not surprising that globalising effects are accompanied by nationalisms or the strong local and regional identifications of communities (cf. Sznaider and Winter 2003: 8). Despite the fact that some cultures dominate others in globalisation processes, Ritzer and Stillman (2003: 58) acknowledge that people are always able to translate and appropriate influences from abroad to their local circumstances. Even McDonald's adopted food to local tastes. For example, burgers in Taiwan are more spicy than in Great Britain (cf. ibid), and the existence of fast food chains did not replace the success of service based restaurants (cf. ibid: 50).

Authors like Ritzer and Stillman (2003: 46), Joachim Hirsch (2000: 328), Stuart Hall (1999a), Rosi Braidotti (2005) or Ulrich Beck (2003) agree on the idea that capitalism is the main driving force of globalisation today. Sznaider and Winter (2003: 8) point out that globalisation and consumer culture is not a contaminating disease. It is connected to growing prosperity and poverty at the same time (cf. ibid). Customs and products become part of the identity politics of people (cf. ibid: 9), as Breda Luthar (2006) analysed based on the meaning of Italian goods in constructing a Slovene "middle class" during the socialist regime. In that way, participating in consumerism also expressed a certain taste. For example, when I think of Slovenia, people value

certain products as important for their identity. Maybe because I am from Austria, people often start telling me about their shopping trips to Austria associating these excursions with certain products that were not available in Slovenia some years ago. It happened on several occasions that people gave me little presents, of Austrian chocolate or other sweets, because they associate Austria with those products and me with Austria.

Ritzer and Stillman (2003: 56-7) point out that some goods, in particular spatial and temporal moments like Coca-Cola or McDonald's, can be a successful tool for nouveaux riches or young people to show their distinctiveness with regards to those who cannot afford such products. Especially when such customs are new and not available for the masses, the identity dimension is extremely important. Such attitude can easily change, when people get used to the products, or transfer them into symbols of exploitation. Capitalism is a main force of exploitation of natural and human resources, always in search of the cheapest labour market, cheapest production and larger markets (cf. ibid: 46). A larger sense of globality through advanced information technology, cheap possibilities of travelling and growing infrastructure is frequently filtered through international media and consumer culture.

2. The Confluence of Globalisation and Local Mobilisation

Ulrich Beck (2003: 38) makes us aware that globalisation carries a strong ideology. With reference to Michel Foucault's concept of "truth" and "power", globalisation for Beck promotes "Western" perspectives of life and life-styles in which modernisation plays a crucial role in valuing other life concepts. Economic wealth, technological and scientific progress as well as individualism are in keeping with strong and exclusive identity concepts insisting on sameness (cf. ibid: 39). At the same time, neo-liberalism as a connected ideology celebrates difference, constructing it in a very determining matter (Braidotti 2005: 169). It transports the imperative that everybody who is not able to adapt to this mode of life fails. Capitalism from Hirsch's (2000: 328-9) point of view affects old class realities and allows a new order of social systems that are less bound to strict class divisions. It constitutes a new relationship between the local and global, where the local interacts with global influences, and does not, as Hall (1999a: 430) sees it, simply destroy national identities by offering more and new local and global identifications. Also Hirsch (ibid: 329-31) agrees that nation states are not about to dissolve within global processes. In contrast to the fear of some people, globalisation could lead to cultural homogenisation and destroy nation states and nationalities (cf. Hall 1999a: 429), the authors that I quoted in this chapter do not see that happening, at least not in the manner that nation states will be superseded by a

world society (cf. Hirsch 2000: 325). Sznaider and Winter (2003:12) refer to a sense of global "*Weltbürgertum*", incorporated by people who are open and sensitive for peoples, cultures and problems in world wide matters, or social and cultural networks. Also this perception does not match the picture of "homogeneity" or "sameness". On the contrary, it is similar to the "politics of location" that I introduced earlier, where each person operates from the background of her or his (national, cultural, regional, political, etc.) location.

Globalisation and the nation state are not mutually exclusive concepts, in the sense that one would substitute the other (cf. Sznaider and Winter 2003: 10). Instead, they offer new identifications. Earlier in the book, I introduced the term "hybridity", which is not only connected to migration. "Foreign" and "indigenous" elements necessarily mingle with the opening of collectives and societies to global influences. Accessing other communities, for example, through the internet, other information technologies or travelling is included in the concept of globalisation (cf. ibid: 11). Ritzer and Stillman (2003) point out the example of American music and styles that connects youngsters of different countries through their common interests and life styles. Hybridity in the sense of Canclini (cf. Rosaldo 1995: xv), whose attention is on Latin America, never resolves the tension between the conceptual polarities of hybridity. Hybrid can be understood as mixed appearances emerging by two separate cultural elements (for example folk Catholicism as a mix of Catholic religion and indigenous elements of a culture). In connection with this, Ulrich Beck employs (2003: 26-7) the term "Cosmopolitanism" instead of globalisation to refer to less exclusive and hybrid forms of identity in negotiation with global influences. He goes back to the original Greek definition of the word, where "cosmos" refers to one's position in nature, and "polis" to one's state or city. In this way he is able to embrace both, one's location in a certain culture, community or nation as well as one's entanglement with global matters. Beck (2003: 32) considers such a model as more applicable for present day societies, because we have entered what he calls a "Second modernity", where language, citizenship, and place of birth no longer coincide. Such circumstances require a more integrative model than we know from nationality or others that are based on "either-or" identities, but not both or more at the same time (cf. ibid: 27).

3. The Confluence of Globalisation and Neo-Liberalism

Canclini explains hybridity as an on-going element in every society, where pure forms have never existed and cultures have been in constant processes of transculturation (cf. Rosaldo 1995: xv). Therefore (cultural, ethnic, national, etc.) purity is merely idealised and very much dependent on how people perceive and interpret their own position in

the world (cf. ibid). Despite this, Rosi Braidotti (2005) identifies the inability of people to incorporate the fragmentation of our social world in their perception on (self-)identity, although they encounter different social and cultural roles that contradict the belief in pure forms of identity. However, the battle for power and superiority always includes certain identity conceptualisations and self-imagination of people in order to support the dominant hierarchy of discourses. Despite the evidence suggesting that we are living at the end of the postmodern era, as Rosi Braidotti (ibid: 169) sees it, in which we have witnessed numerous master narratives and ideologies being buried several times, as well as some intellectuals celebrating the "end of ideology", another essentialism enters the "Western" horizon. Braidotti (ibid: 170) regrets that all alternatives to our contemporary prevailing model, which we had with Marxism, communism, socialism or feminism[52], failed (cf. ibid).

Consumerism and capitalism feed our desire for social and economic wealth, for which we accept to postpone our immediate desires until some point in the future and use the present to work hard to achieve what the future promises to us. Therefore, capitalism is incorporated in the notion of "bio-politics" (cf. Braidotti 2005: 178), to employ another Foucaultian term, makes us discipline ourselves in order to function in a social system and controls our lives. Foucault (1978b/2000: 44) explains this by comparing it with a Greek style of self-management, *governementality*. In this case, power works on an individual level and addresses people in their personal and private environment. Earlier in the book, I explained in reference to Foucault (1999: 168-73) that Christianity and later the nation state used power in a similar way in order to make Christianity or nationality part of the personal identity of the population. Being successfully subjectivated by certain discourses, one will accept the package of rules and values included in discourses. Neo-liberal discourses bound individuals to discourses of self-management and the "true" self and therefore support the individual's perceived wholeness of her or his identity. Cultural subjects, who accept *governementality* as a common practice, are working on their "authencity" and wholeness despite the fragmented social circumstances. Self-government, in a neo-liberal translation, means using oneself as a company. One is asked to search for resources of her or his personality, being treated like a manager who tries to motivate

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52 Here I particularly refer to Rosi Braidotti's claim (2005: 171) that "Western" men *and* women share the belief that women already enjoy equal rights to men. In contrast, I referred earlier to Maruša Krese or Svetlana Slapšak, feminist thinkers from post-socialist countries who saw women's rights as among the first to be abandoned in favour for capitalism. Furthermore, such perspectives are engaged by conservative, anti-feminist, anti-abortionist politicians like George Bush (cf. ibid: 173), who even started a war in Afghanistan to fight for women's rights. Essentialist perspectives based on neo-liberalism produce neo-liberal feminists even from post-colonial space like Ayan Hirsi Ali, who fall into the same trap of "liberating" poor suppressed women on "Western" premises (cf. ibid: 171).

each of her or his employees in the most efficient ways (cf. Bröckling 2000: 135). Making the neo-liberal stance more visible, discourses on health, food or sports that provide us with knowledge on living a "good" life in favour of our bodies can help us to remain healthy, and it motivates us to try our best for the company and our career. Also nation states are worried about the "health" of their inhabitants. When the Christian focus on after-life was substituted by the focus on life, discourses on medicine, hygiene, psychiatry as well as on education exploded. With this came the implementation of the welfare state. Neo-liberal discourses accomplish economy and capitalism, because they slowly take away state-responsibilities in order to transfer them to the individual. With decreasing social security, it is better for you not smoke, drink too much alcohol or forget about your daily exercise, because when you are old, your insurance will probably not cover your medical costs. If you suffer from heart disease or cancer despite your healthy life-style, you might have a genetic disorder.

Post-modern feminism ironically speaks of "bio-piracy" of capitalism, which aims to exploit not only women, or workers in so-called developing countries who "help" us "Westerners" to keep up our life standards, but also plants, animals, genes and cells (cf. Braidotti 2005: 178). While we try our best to fulfil the requirements of our consumer based culture, the main actors leave us alone with our worries. Life long employment is rare in times, when the human work force is increasingly substituted by technology and machines, and "Western" companies have discovered cheaper work forces in poor countries, at the "periphery[53]" of (post-)modernity (cf. ibid). Contemporary "Western" politics often transfer the blame onto the increasing internationalisation of corporations, for which reason national governments are unable to provide sufficient social welfare (cf. Hirsch 2000: 231). Also Hirsch (ibid) sees the reason for this in a growing diversity in current societies through the internationalisation of capital. In contrast to such a position, the previous Ombudsman of Slovenia, Matjaž Hanžek argues from his own research that governments could, if they wanted to, afford a functioning welfare system. From that perspective, the rising degree of insecurity felt by people can also be seen as a strategy in favour of a small minority of wealthy people. Also Zygmunt Bauman (1997: 37) supports such a statement. He argues that tax payers are betrayed by the state in terms of what they have worked for, as the state simply denies its inhabitants social security. Privatisation, the promised freedom, cannot afford social provisions. With growing individualisation and a declining welfare state, which was initially founded as a safety net for the

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53   "Periphery" is another social construction from a "Western" point of view, the reason why critical theorists demand a "politics of location" where each position should be defined as "periphery". Implemented into the European project, it would mean giving up its self-appointed understanding as the centre of "civilisation" (Braidotti 2005: 173).

community, Zygmunt Bauman (ibid: 36-7) argues that the need for social welfare is increasingly presented as "charity" instead of a citizen's right. Therefore, capitalism does not do anything for the people who make it work. Instead, minimum wages are enforced, freelance contracts are increasingly popular (for companies), parental leave does not guarantee employment after return and women are forced to sign contracts saying they will not become pregnant. Working hours have become increasingly flexible and detrimental to private or family life, and here distinctively to women and to migrants. Above all, we could all easily lose our work place (cf. Bauman 2003: 37).

Consumer cultures have resulted in a large number of "broken" and impoverished individuals who are affected by the desire to consume. An increasing rate of criminality as well as a higher number of people in debt, whose property is owned by banks, is symptomatic of this situation. Instead of considering social measures to strengthen the safety net for people, the states increase the repressive apparatus. More people than ever are imprisoned, and more people than ever work in the executive forces (cf. Bauman 1997: 35). The same happens in countries where industrialisation and modernity are new. Canclini recognises similar tendencies in Argentina (cf. Rosaldo: xii). Also here, the government is strengthening the repressive state apparatus in order to combat imagined or (rather) experienced insecurity. The increase of multinational corporations as well as neoconservative politics go hand in hand with an increase in militarisation, a larger police force, stricter border controls and a growing prison population (cf. ibid). The compulsory flexibility of contemporary societies can turn the winner of today into the loser of tomorrow. The call to be responsible for one's own life is combined with the consequences of being responsible as well, when the project fails (cf. Bröckling 2000: 156-7). The explanations are tricky, because one is asked to develop "pure" resources. Therefore, those who betray or deceive will fail and those who are honest and fail did not work well enough. Ernest Sternberg (1998: 3) for example, talks about "*[a]n economy based, not on information, but on image [...], in which the labour performers gain value on the markets through their work of self-presentation*" (ibid). In contrast to the postmodern self, such concepts do not talk about fractured selves or patchwork identities. The demand is for strong and clear identities. The underlying principle is discipline and not punishment. Sternberg (1998: 4) suggests that nothing works not even health care, without a convincing and calculated performance of the same.

4. Losing the Sense of Security and Safety:
   A "Western" Phenomenon

Canclini argues that modernity accompanied by capitalism, neo-liberalism, authoriatism and fascism (cf. Rosaldo 1995: xii) is responsible for different groups having different access to certain goods. He sees that grounded in ideological differences and hegemonic effects within and across societies (cf. Canclini 1995: 2). Of course, Canclini talks about an Argentinean context where the situation is different to a European or North American context, with which I am familiar with. Canclini talks about a country where traditional and modern, or postmodern[54] elements are differently related than in "Western" countries with a longer tradition of the concept of modernity (cf. Rosaldo 1995: xiv). The hypothesis outlined in his book "Hybrid Cultures" (Canclini 1995: 2) is that he assumes there is an uncertainty about the meaning and value of modernity. That does not only derive from the separating power of nations, ethnic groups and classes, but also from the location where modern and traditional elements mix (cf. ibid). With that statement we enter a highly complicated and multiply related network of different imaginations of society, time, space, values which are all, at least to some degree, affected by capitalism. Internationalisation, deregulation and decentralisation of economy, capitalism, world politics or the global transport of ideas and life-styles do not only affect countries or communities in a specific location, but are responsible for a larger migration flow all over the world. Recent migrations are marked by a significant number of people moving from poor countries to richer "Western" countries in Europe and the USA following the dream of prosperity and wealth (cf. Hall 1999a: 431, Hirsch 2000: 328-31, Ritzer and Stillman 2003: 46). Along these processes a modern social order based on stabilised class relations and class-typical access to work is re-organised, inflicted by increasing multi-culturalism and demographic change.

Social power relations are challenged from various sides. Since the end of the Cold War, especially people in "Western" countries, accompanied by incoming "Easterners" in "Western" European space, feel endangered by the experienced and imagined loss of safety, or "forced freedom" as Bauman (2003: 39) would possibly

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54 The research does not aim to provide answers to the question of concepts such as modernity, Second Modernity or postmodernity, I rather employ them as discourses from which people or even intellectuals produce sense in the goings on of contemporary societies. Zygmunt Bauman (1997) doubts in his book "Postmodernity and its Discontents", whether we can speak of postmodernity. Braidotti locates us at the end of postmodernity and Ulrich Beck and other authors of the publication in German language "Globales Amerika?" (Global America?) employ the term "Second Modernity", which I understand as a concept that other theorists would translate into "postmodernity".

name it. From his perspective, people in "Western" countries seem to suffer more from the loss of "structure", because they traditionally saw their culture as being the centre of civilisation. Organisation and security in their eyes was constitutive and an expression of high civilisations (cf. ibid). For Bauman, insecurity is the "price" we pay for the freedom we want to enjoy and makes us ("Westerners") increasingly unhappy. Similar to the example of Breda Luthar (2006) regarding Slovene shopping trips to Italy, "Eastern" European countries are more likely to see market liberation and commodity based consumer culture as their (most important) access to freedom. Although experiencing a higher unemployment rate and a rise in social cuts, Slovenian people perceive the transition to democracy and the deregulation of the market[55] as positive achievements today. Whereas other countries, like Poland or recently Hungary, have already entered social crises. As outlined earlier, Slovenian civil society has a strong sense of social rights. However, when welfare provisions decrease in one country, governments use the opportunity to victimise the guilty parties arbitrarily. This was the case with the government before 2004. More frequently this verdict is found outside the nation state. The cause of decreasing social welfare is identified in capitalism on a general level, in economic developments or in the EU, but nothing which national governments were able to control (Lokar 2006, interview).

Alongside the European population's increasing insecurity through the changing labour market, social cuts and poverty, economic growth is also typical. While approximately three million Europeans are homeless, 20 million have lost their jobs and 30 million live in poverty[56], a small number of people have become incredibly rich (cf. Bauman 2003: 36). In a world wide perspective, Bauman contrasts 358 global multi-millionaires to 2,300 million extremely poor people. In this context, nation states mutually force each other to participate and to support the free market system (Bauman 2003: 37). Especially countries that Bauman defines as "weak" states, poor countries that have to rely on the economy of "strong" states, are easily trapped in the capitalist game. Even though the so-called "periphery" is less than ever willing to accept a "Western" definition of progress and happiness, poor countries are becoming increasingly dependent on strong states (cf. ibid: 36). Capitalism and neo-liberalism, as Canclini (1995: 2) observes in Argentina, is overwhelmingly powerful in generating a global hierarchy. Nonetheless, it is far from homogenising cultures in global matters.

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55   The information is based on the observation of Sonja Lokar and Svetlana Slapšak, with whom I discussed the issue. The conversations took place earlier than January 1st 2007 – with the introduction of the Euro, both experts predict the "Euro-shock" resulting in higher prices and therefore also before the economic crisis that started late 2008.

56   Bauman refers to these numbers as rather conservative numbers, the minimum which we have to consider. Unfortunately he leaves us without a definition of Europe – EU-Europe embraces app. 450 million people, the whole continent app. 680 million people.

The paradox of longing for modernity can be found in various communities that remain untouched by it (cf. Canclini 1995: 1). Capitalism and neo-liberalism limits access to goods and participation in a consumer culture, because certain groups are left outside. Canclini (1995: 2) argues that traditional life concepts are not transferred by influences of modernity into modern realities, because of the uncertainty of what modernity implies or means. Capitalism or neo-liberalism is only one aspect or result of modernity. From that perspective people reformulate their notion of culture, when encountering new concepts of it, but they do not abandon their old beliefs (cf. ibid).

Janez Justin[57], as an observer of media discourses, analysed the relation of communist heritage to capitalist society using the example of one media report four years ago. One journalist expressed his worries about the closure of a shoe-factory in a little Slovenian village, which resulted in approximately 300 unemployed women, who he expected to remain unemployed due to the lack of other available jobs for them in that village. Indeed, the location is not attractive for new companies. Justin defined the attitude of that journalist as symptomatic for a socialist reality, where people's mobility was harmful to the system and therefore prevented through well-organised infrastructure in each village. Due to the small size of the country, villages and small towns are very close to other urban spaces. In the case of the 300 unemployed women, it would mean a 10 to 20 minute drive to one surrounding town for a new job. Justin was surprised by the journalist's attitude, when nobody else, as he claims, seemed to feel irritated.

The result of modernisation is not the absorption of other life styles. Canclini (1995:2) for example, supports the understanding that elements of modern and traditional temporalities get mixed and this allows people hybrid positions from which they can produce their sense of life. The "Western" conceptualities of truth, which are undeniably connected to modernity, are extremely hostile to traditional concepts. They devaluate the latter as less developed and constitute difficulties for those who do not understand the requirements of such a "truth". Saying it in other words: When those 300 women of Janez Justin's example do not consider working in another village, they will most likely remain unemployed and dependent on somebody else, their husbands or the state. Consequently they will be endangered of impoverishment. The notion of progress carried by modernity disqualifies life concepts that "Westerners" consider as having passed and been left behind. The concept of progress is based on patriarchy as Braidotti (2005: 170-1) argues, or on fraternity, as Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) has taught us, and is deeply connected to "strong", rational, male-centred identities, working against hybrid, multiple or multi-layered identities like theorists hoped and still hope

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57   From the expert interview with Janez Justin in autumn 2006.

to see emerging from translations between local and global tensions. Glocalisation, or glocal consciousness that would provide us with local positions and global views is often reduced to the mobilisation of the local through global tensions. Hence, such hybrid and multiple positions are not wiped out by global capitalism, but they remain as minor and marginalised positions, to which a concept like neo-liberalism is detrimental, also within a "Western" space (cf. ibid).

5. Different Worlds in the World Society

Neo-liberal discourses that build upon the discovery of our "true" self, do not tell us that we are all the same. On the contrary, these rely on an exaggeration of "individualism", and celebrate, as I mentioned earlier, all kinds of differences. From a neo-liberal perception, Rosi Braidotti (2005: 170) sees "*[d]ifferences of identity, culture, religion, abilities and opportunities are defined in a very deterministic manner*", reflected in firm beliefs of regional, ethnic, national, town-based specificities and other personal characterisations of difference. "Global peoplehood" is not privileged by equality. It only embraces people who are equal to the notion of equality. It is hierarchic in the sense that hierarchy goes beyond and across national borders, cities, regions and other locations.

The US-American dream fills us with the idea that all of us could, if we really wanted to and tried hard enough, become one of the 358 multi-millionaires and leave our initial social-economic background. As I argued earlier, a global flow of ideas, contents, customs, life styles, etc. creates new relations between, beyond and within local, regional, national, and town-based locations. Therefore, this affects traditional "Western" class relations and the new "underclass" increasingly consists of people from abroad and is accompanied by a growing discrepancy between extremely poor and rich people. Rigid class division would not be useful when life-long social identities are intersected with changing social realities and the requirement of rising flexibility in all areas of social life. This includes, giving up the idea of life-long jobs and changing location for employment (cf. Pilkington 2003: 265). Simultaneously such circumstances offer the possibility, as Mirjana Ule (2002: 12) argues, that young people can leave their parents' class related position in the society. Discourses of success and choice have an enormous influence and pressure on people's experience, plans and life styles (cf. ibid: 12). Unfortunately, life in our (post-) modern era bears high risks and even forces us to take high risks on the road towards success and wealth, which most of us will never reach or due to our life scripts, access of resources, education, financial situation, etc. cannot be reached.

Richard Sennett (2006: 99-108) introduces us in his book "The Corrosion of Character"[58] to middle-aged Rose, who is a mother of two grown-up girls and who is the owner of a well-situated bar in New York. At one point, when both of her daughters were independent, she decided to change her life and to work in the advertising branch. After one year she returned to her bar for several reasons (cf. ibid: 103). Above all and most importantly, she felt alienated by the character of her new work, where youth was privileged over experience and recognition was only partially dependent on success and hard work, but on charismatic personalities and the ability to find others to refer to in case of less successful results. Sennett acknowledges her story as symptomatic for a *risk society*, where people are less able to understand the conditions of success and job requirements. Consequently, many people are caught in insecurity towards their own capacities, whereas others can achieve high positions and well-paid jobs through networking, social skills or personal relations as well as intrigues and manipulation.

With this example, I do not want to refer to the general working conditions of companies and firms, but to different social realities. Of course the advertising business itself is almost a kind of metaphor for neo-liberalism and attracts people who are highly motivated, not only towards the work itself, but oriented towards career. Capitalism needs individuals who want to be successful, even though very few will finally make it. The requirements of companies are indeed contradictory for individuals (cf. Bröckling 2000: 155). Workers are encouraged more and more to focus on and strengthen their individual and very specific way of working. Such an idea would have been considered as disloyal in earlier days and might even have destroyed the way a company was working. At the same moment, it produces a whole market that works with that idea of the self. Books, seminars or lectures are characterised with "Personal Growth", and aim to help "us" using and widening our individual skills in order to have successful careers. They provide us with information on how to react flexibly on unpredictable and new things and how to "manage" ourselves. The self is treated like an economic project. All this is supportive of the belief in the neo-liberalistic self. Rose comes from a different background and her motivation to work was due to a certain interest and the wish to change something in her life. Therefore, she was very disappointed about the reality of such work. She recognised the exploitive character of the work, which she was not dependent on. The lack of security here is explained by Sennett (2006: 111) as caused by decreasing and not comprehendible structures in such systems. Although these systems offer more possibilities, they also bear more risks and require more competences for the

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58 This is the original English title; I work with the German translation published as "Der flexible Mensch".

participating individuals. Since Rose did not sell her bar (Sennett 2006: 102), she was in the privileged situation to take less risks than other people do. She did not lose her job in the end, but she left it. While she stayed there for a year, four other people were fired. The ability to move in flexible spaces is dependent on different circumstances, Sennett refers to James Coleman, when he argues that people inherit a certain fundament on social capital that helps them to navigate through less structured paths and the fact that their success is coupled with incidental opportunities (cf. ibid).

Even though old social divisions are less strict, the new discourses do not promise equal access to everyone either. Still, young people from disadvantaged families are less likely to succeed within (post-)modern conditions, whereas young people from the middle class are much more confident and able to successfully cope with transforming realities (cf. Ule 2002: 12). Divisions between people in certain communities, cities or nations remain to a high degree determined by one's cultural and social embeddedness. Clifford (1999: 502) shows different accesses to travelling resources: some people have the privilege to travel as tourists, others are forced to travel. The latter are usually not seen as "travellers". They are mainly people with a skin colour other than "white", who have little money and few choices. These two examples are simplified. Also within one group in terms of culture, region, nation, ethnicity, etc., people move in different circles, when they travel. Bourgeois, scientific or trade travellers are more likely to encounter people from their "own" group, because of choices of hotels, places or transport connected to prices or interests. Different cultural situatedness is also expressed, when looking at the high mortality of African American infants compared to "white" babies in the United States (cf. Rosaldo 1995: xiv), or ghettoisation in cities to which Zygmunt Bauman refers (2003: 41). "No-go"-zones in cities usually divide insiders from outsiders. There are people who do not go to some parts of the cities and others who do not leave them. As long as people have the choice to selectively ignore such quarters, which would otherwise disturb their idealised social order, the freedom and possibilities found in that choice increases life quality. Of course such freedom can only be achieved under the premises of taking away such freedom from other people. This helps us to see that not all people can avoid encountering people from "no-go"-zones, because they might live there and may have lived there before a particular group, such as migrant communities, moved there and cannot afford to leave the area.

I remember when I came to Ljubljana accompanied by an Austrian supervisor for a project, he immediately warned me about "Fužine", the part of the town with the highest percentage of people from former Yugoslavia. He explained that it wasn't a safe area. In contrast to some cities in South Africa, or sometimes in US-America, European cities do not show such a strict differentiation of city quarters that the

quarters would be locked at nights. Certainly people enjoy crossing frontiers, being inspired and learning from other cultures, as long they have the choice to do so. Cultural interpretations, as Bauman (2003: 41-2) argues, are changing during the life time of a person, although one's earlier locations influence the interpretations and perceptions on following experiences. Hybrid formations are likely to be different between highly educated and wealthy travellers and poor workers who survive with a minimum of luxury and who are tempted to defend their little resources from unwanted foreigners. Elite interpretations of social, political or cultural change can be more positive because when it comes to transnational or international encounters, they usually meet people with a similar social status or consume the inferior other in their food, their services, their wisdoms, etc (cf. ibid). A study from Ann Phoenix (1995: 43), for example, shows that birth and possession of a British passport does not necessarily make Black young people more English than their parents did, who, on the contrary, believe that the situation for their children has changed for the better in comparison to their own.

Consequences

This chapter focussed on defining the means of globalisation and globality in relation to individual and collective identities, such as national communities. During the chapter I outlined that globalisation is attached with various meanings, ranging from the dream of global peoplehood to the global domination of the world through the "Western" societies and from global homogenisation to global fragmentations. In terms of the globalisation debate, US-America and the US-American way of life dominates the thinking process of globalisation in the "West". Two discussed examples are the so-called "US-Americanisation" and "McDonaldisation". The perceived westernheaded global dominance in non-"Western" countries is accompanied by such resistances, negotiations and adoption of "Western" ideology, but according to authors, such as Beck (2003), Robertson (2003) or Ritzer and Stillman (2003), they identify global influences as the most visible within the "Western" framework of countries.

For the questions in this book, a "Western" perspective on what globalisation does to "Western" countries is most important. In this "Western" context, nation states do not necessarily lose much of their sovereignty through the flow of foreign capital of globalised economic relations, as Noam Chomsky (1996) suggests. Despite this, national governments often argue that the decline of social welfare is caused by international corporations and therefore nation states would have less influence on developments in the employment sector, pensions, health insurance, etc. However,

although Saskia Sassen (2002) might be supportive of such an argumentative line, authors such as Bauman (1997) or politicians such as the former Ombudsman in Slovenia, Hanžek, do not believe this is the case. Nonetheless, many individuals increasingly have to struggle with insecure social and employment structures that are detrimental to their social life. Such developments are then very supportive of the neo-liberal discourse of "self-governance", where people are invited to invest in their authencity and "true" identity hand in hand with the promise that they would then succeed in these fragmented and insecure social structures, which again proposes a very strong and essentialist perspective of identity.

Certainly, not all authors support the idea that globalisation carries another essentialist idea of community and would not disturb the sovereignty of nation states. Clifford (1999: 507), for example, makes us aware that there are several trends that disturb national seclusion: political interference from other states for instance, or the transnational character of capitalism and migration flows. Beck's notion of cosmopolitanism as a possible position within internationalised circumstances, or Rosi Braidotti's nomadic subject and the idea of the "privileged foreigner" as flexible citizenship in the European Union, or what some philosophers see in diaspora or hybrid identities, are models of less exclusive identities. They are open and facilitate the incorporation of other perspectives of belonging rather than essentialist, rational and fixed concepts. Contrasting these ideas of inclusive identities, Bauman (1997) raises awareness of the fact that such models are often very privileged ideals of identity positions and would not necessarily correspond to the situation of impoverished and mostly uneducated people, who are often "locked" into their social environment and feel threatened by the changing and unpredictable circumstances of a globalising society in which they are seduced to identify "foreigners" as responsible for diminishing their life quality. From the privileged position of a philosopher or social scientist, it might be hard to define what would help people from less privileged areas to find inclusive identity positions.

As I find it hard to predict in which ways people entangle themselves in the different discourses from which they form more or less exclusive or inclusive identities, I will theorise social backgrounds in the next chapter. I will also introduce the empirical part of the book, for which I interviewed different groups in order to see how identities are negotiated in every-day lives. Additional to the previous chapters, including this, where I have discussed identity questions from a theoretical perspective and from the public representational work, I find it important to include bottom up perspectives in order to create new starting points for theoretical investigation.

Empirical and Analytical Standpoints

Throughout the book I kept referring to meta-levels of identity constructions: historical and political discourses, political and economic interests, (school) education, religions, intellectual reflections and conceptualizations as well as the role of (local, regional, national, transnational, supra-national, global) media in engaging people in certain representations of reality and providing them with stories, myths, symbols, etc. of certain identity formations. However, Frane Adam et al. (2002) show in their study on the commitment of Slovenes to the European Union that it is not enough to target the public dimension alone. They raise awareness to a very important aspect of discursive power, Slovene people have to make sense of a European Union membership or have to recognize this as their own interest in order to support that discourse and to transport it to other people. Without the support of people, a discourse would become meaningless. From that perspective, not only collective identities such as national identities are constituted by a certain order of discourses, but also individual identities. Furthermore, collective and individual levels of identity are in negotiation with each other and intersect in their meaning. Seeing as collective identities are constituted by a hierarchy of discourses and are also affected by other collectives, individuals encounter and incorporate discourses of different cultural, historical or political background. Therefore, this leaves space for contradicting or even opposing elements from which collective or individual identities emerge.

Frane Adam et al. (2002: 134-5) approached the question of the "European identity" of Slovene people by asking them about their situatedness in social space. Most people said that in the first instance they identify with the place they live in (48.8%), secondly with Slovenia (28.7%), then with the region they live in (13.9%), the world (2.9%) and only then as the last choice with Europe (2.5%). Taking into account the first and the second ranges of identification, most people identified with Slovenia (28.7% + 36.9% = 65.6%), then with the place they live in (65.4%), and Europe was second last, with 12.4% of people identifying with Europe (cf. ibid: 135). Despite the fact that the questionnaire forced Slovene people to rank a specific selection of identifications, it seems to be a very "normal" thing to ask. At least the authors did not report of any large waves of protests against this "forced" ranking based on the argumentation that the participants would only identify with one category. Here, I come to two of the crucial points in this book: 1) people's identifications are multi-layered and therefore affected by various discourses within one cultural context and 2) micro-level-interpretations are important in understanding the discursive work of exclusive or inclusive identity formations. How can I, as a researcher, measure the meaning of 12.4% identifying with the European Union, when I do not look at the EU-dimension in a Slovene person's life? Or how to understand the nation state as a major provider

for belonging in the everyday life of Slovene people, when local, regional, supra-national or global identifications jeopardize the dominance of the nation state. Despite acknowledging the ceasing functionality of the nation state in largely post-national conditions, Seyla Benhabib (2008: 18) refers to the fact that there are no global policies implementing new social structures by now. Taking up the micro-level perspectives, the book comprises the question of how do people generate a sense of belonging and how do they negotiate between different levels of identification. By doing so, I find it important to make the empirical framework of my analysis visible and refer to the two major points of this work:

First I will examine the selected *methodology* and explain my choices of methods and research groups from the perspective of *Rekonstruktive Sozialforschung*[59]. In combination with the explanations of the different steps taken, I will also shed light on the considerations that accompanied such choices. As a third point, I refer to *discourse analysis* as the method of theorizing research data, which I found most applicable for the concept of discursively generated identity positions.

1. Methodology

For the empirical part of the book I chose to look at feelings of belonging in young Slovene people. My focus was, from the beginning, on micro-level negotiations and considerations of belonging. At the same time, this had to have a focus on a (Slovene) national and historical framework in order to understand the possible discursive belonging of individuals or groups. Furthermore, as I explained in the theoretical introduction to different concepts of identity, nations can hardly be seen as closed and homogeneous entities. While nationality, from some perspectives is able to subordinate other identifications such as ethnicity, sex, gender, religion, etc. (cf. Hall 1999a: 414), it becomes increasingly substituted by other global, transnational or international identity formations (cf. ibid: 427). For such reasons I framed Slovenia in the context of the "Balkans" and the European Union earlier in this book. From the standpoint I have gained from the whole process of research, I would today also include regional and local considerations of belonging. For this, it was very useful that I was looking for a methodology that did not determine a person's belonging or confine it exclusively to the categories that I had in mind. Certainly I did not aim to find out in terms of percentages with which category one would identify, although I included such statistics in order to take them as starting points of reflecting what such

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59 A possible English translation is "reconstructive social sciences research", but may not be a tradition in English-speaking countries.

numbers could mean in the common sense of people. For that reason I searched for a methodology that allowed people's own structuring of the research subject. I was interested in how people of a certain age group at a certain point in history anchor themselves in the discursive production of their culture. I was also interested in how they include other markers of identity such as age, gender, "ethnicity", sexual orientation, religious faith, political commitment etc., but not solely on a personal level. From that background, my investigation focused on how collective identity and belonging is negotiated on a micro-level.

The decision to conduct *group discussions* was taken due to the assumption that individual structures of relevance and meaning are in negotiation with the social context of a person (cf. Mayring 1993: 54). The question of belonging, at least from my particular focus point, concerns group belonging and not individual situatedness. Here, Mirjana Ule (1996: 175) makes us aware that people also negotiate their individual positions in every-day conversations and try to harmonize their perspectives, as would happen in a group discussion. For this reason, the group opinions in the later analysis might appear much more homogenous, as they were, had I asked the same people individually for their positions. In order to allow a conversation from a similar background of experiences or world views (cf. Bohnsack 2000: 133-134), I chose four groups of three to six people from the same generation, focusing on the 16 to 22 year old age group at the end of the year 2004. In the context of Slovenia, that meant including people who were children during state-socialism, and who are additionally influenced by the former state system through their parents, grandparents or other older relatives and friends, or on a more general level, through the cultural imagination of the Slovene nation. In contrast to earlier generations, they are more affected by neo-liberalism or capitalism. One reason for that assumption is that they were born in the period from 1982 to 1988, when the Federation of Yugoslavia was already intersected by national politics and Slovenia and Croatia had already both begun to move towards Europe. Furthermore, I believe that, on the one hand, this generation has had less time to be bound to socialist life-concepts. On the other hand, this age group grew up in a time when consumer cultures of neighboring countries were already available, if not yet affordable. Therefore, in their childhood they were located in a kind of "starting-position" as regards capitalist participation and were almost certainly filled with the desire to have free access to it. At the same time, as another possible interpretation, the young people simply faced increasingly insecure social structures (Sennett 2006). They are more likely to have been affected by the pressure of possible unemployment and they came under pressure to make important decisions for their lives earlier (such as school education, university or college choice, etc.). Such choices are extremely important, as Ule (2002: 11-3) emphasises, because

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they are bound to different (local, global, national(ist), capitalist, neo-liberal, etc.) ideologies.

Experiencing contrasting ideologies, democracy and capitalism and the communist idea and class solidarity at the same time provided, at least from my perspective, many different possibilities of discursive situating for young people. From my different entrances to the Slovene society in Ljubljana during the year 2004, I started to think of including various groups of different discursive location – a pro-European group, an anti-state, anti-EU group, a feminist group, a group of non-ethnic Slovenes, a nationalist group, whereas at the end, the selection of the groups would have never been representative for *all* (youth) groups in Ljubljana, nor was it easy to (a priori) define a group's attitude. Sometimes it was not easy for me to gain access to the age group I had chosen. Especially feminist groups consisted of young women from 25 to 28 onwards, no matter if they were from an artistic, an academic or an activist environment. The four groups I chose at the end are also those closest to the environments I entered in the area of Ljubljana and which I consider to be more familiar with the social reality than I might be to others. One group was assumed to be "pro-European", one "anti-capitalist and anti-globalist", and another one with "another ex-state of Yugoslavia family background", which means that they had a mother or father, or both parents, who were from another republic of the former Yugoslavia. While those three groups were engaged in higher education and assuming that they had to be reflective on their (national) identity position through their activities or "ethnic" background, I chose then a group of car-mechanic pupils, whom I supposed would come from a differing social background and were most likely not to have reflected their national background. My intention here was to see how Sloveneness could be negotiated from different angles of society. Certainly, the selection also left open the risk of no larger differences emerging between the groups in terms of their sense of belonging. At the same moment, I am also well aware of the seductive danger of interpreting such pre-assumptions into later analysis of the interviews and tried to take those considerations into account in my reflections. Ideally, I hoped they constituted a group in every-day-life, like the "pro-European-group" and the "anti-capitalist and anti-globalist", or they would at least know each other from school classes (members of the "car mechanic group") or university courses (people with "another ex-state of Yugoslavia family background").

Assuming that the "official" meaning of categories such as "Balkans", the "European Union" or other identifications would cover the individual's interpretation of the terms, I needed a methodology that accessed the terms from the particular location of the research participants. Another important consideration was that I did not want to force categories like place, region, country, European Union, the "Balkan", the

"USA", the world, etc. on the participants of the groups. Therefore, I did not want to falsify or verify hypothesis (cf. Bohnsack 2000: 14). It was not my intention to see, if nationality still has relevance in people's life, or if it was substituted by larger or smaller collectives in an increasingly globalised world, where alliances such as the European Union and NATO cross national sovereignty. For me, it was important to see how people define their relationship to and differentiate between different levels of identity and communities. As a result of my interest in identity theories, it also became increasingly important to see, if people supported exclusive or integrative models of identity or to see when identities closed or opened. Therefore, I decided to choose *qualitative methodologies*. From my theoretical background, I favoured what is called in German *Rekonstruktive Sozialforschung* (reconstructive social sciences research) (cf. Bohnsack 2000). Such a study emphasises the importance of not seeing participants of research projects as "objects[60]", and puts their construction of social reality in the centre of interest. For that reason, the researcher has to find ways of motivating participants of the study to develop their structures of relevance and structures of meaning (*Relevanz- und Bedeutungsstrukturen*) and not to find previously structured conditions. Here, the concept of *Redezwänge* (speaking forces) is very important (cf. ibid 2000: 108-9). It takes into account that interviewees or participants in group discussions usually respond to the artificial situation, which influences the way they would speak about their personal stories. Thus, a large catalogue of questions would make the "interview situation" based on the hierarchic relation of the researcher and her or his "research subject(s)" more obvious. Very few questions or no questions at all on the one side and long answers on the side of the research participants could break such perceived hierarchy as long as people start talking. In cases where such a flow does not come, the researcher has either to prove, if the question had relevance to a person's social embeddedness, or try to approach the question from a different angle. Following that, the researcher obligates herself or himself to the principles of communication and openness (*Prinzipien der Kommunikation und der Offenheit*). The principle of communication says that the rules of communication are those of the participant(s) of the study. The principle of openness requests that the structuring of the research subject is in the hands of the participant(s) (cf. Bohnsack 2000: 23 and Girtler 1992: 36). However, such a method has to occur in open and not standardised procedures in order to facilitate the participants in locating their personal situation. I find such a perspective of the research subject as useful in avoiding a sort of self-fulfilling prophecy in determining groups and removing people from the expectations I may have of them.

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60   Here, I am not sure, if targeting humans in research situations as an "object" was ever an English tradition.

Taking rules of *Rekonstruktive Sozialforschung* (reconstructive social sciences research), and the principles of openness and communication seriously, I tried to find optimal conditions for the group interviews. For that reason, I held one preliminary group discussion with a "test-group" earlier, with the support of Karmen Erjavec, a researcher and scientist at the Faculty for Social Sciences (fdv) in Ljubljana, who asked some of her students to volunteer. Based on that I was able to re-design some aspects of my initial research proposal and abandon some others. I was also able to determine that one group discussion would take approximately three hours and would require more than one session. The first step towards the selected research groups was informing the group members about my research project in as much detail as they were interested in. I introduced them to their possible role in the study and the time-frame involved and invited them to participate.

For the interview, I tried to find a convenient place, preferably a familiar environment for the group members. For example, the "anti-capitalist and anti-globalist" group met in an anarchist library, which they know from private gatherings or political activities. The "pro-European"-group had an informal room at the university (fdv), where we could meet. The other two groups encountered more formal conditions in rooms in their university or school provided by their professor or teacher. Furthermore, I put some effort into creating a "living-room-atmosphere". I brought chocolates and soft drinks for the duration of the interview and except from the discussion group at school, where we otherwise would have interfered with school rules, people had the possibility to smoke. All participants knew beforehand that my main question was regarding Slovene national identity. Therefore, they had already some expectations as regards the questions. To facilitate the "self-structuring" of the group discussion, I asked the participants to start off with a sort of brainstorming activity regarding their relationship to Slovenia and what Slovenia means to them. In this way, they could also define their personal relationship to Slovene locations or regions or they had the possibility to associate different parts of the country with different values for their belonging. In doing so, each person was given a pen and a post-it block, where they listed their associations with Slovenia. Each thought had to be written down on a different piece of paper and then stuck on a poster. In this way, all group members could see the ideas of other participants and they were also allowed to talk to each other, without discussing the issues at that point. They decided themselves, when they were finished with their brainstorming. As a next step, they had to look at the different ideas and define different groups out of them. With the post-its, they could visualise the groupings on the poster. From this moment, I started taping their conversation in order to catch considerations of their categorisations. Then I asked them to discuss the picture they had created of Slovenia. Discussing their own path of thinking usually took them between 45 minutes and 75 minutes, depending on the group. Following

that part of the conversation, I passed the group a catalogue of questions that were printed on a paper and which were "standardised" for all groups. The group participants would decide from these questions, whether they had touched the issues earlier or whether they wanted to add something to them. These questions can be found in the appendix.

As regards the "international" or "supra-national" level of Sloveneness, I asked them to think of influences from abroad that would contribute to the meaning of Slovenia today or would maybe change the meaning of Sloveneness in future. In the case of the group of people with "ex-state backgrounds" and the "anti-capitalist and anti-globalist" group this was the second part of the group interview. The other two groups preferred only one session. This part was very similar to the first part. People had to find their own characterisations of foreign influences and sort them into categories, from which they structured their conversation. Again, I had prepared a set of questions that can be found in the appendix. Maybe, if I started with the project today with the knowledge and the experiences I have now, I would not ask the participants for the meaning of Slovenia, but I would try to find a formulation that would allow me to tackle the question of identity in a more general manner. At the same moment, from present day considerations I would have liked to include more specific questions on gender or sex relations. Unfortunately, I did not even target such questions in my additional questionnaire. Since gender issues where largely blended out in the discussion, I was at this point an accomplice of their "thinking-as-usually" about gender and nation-relations. Therefore, I will discuss that issue in more detail in my later analysis.

Another important question for the group discussion was the *language*. As an Austrian who has been studying the Slovene language since the beginning of 2004, I could neither lead the group discussion in Slovene nor follow the conversation, at least not at the level that I could be certain of their particular position in case I wanted to ask an in-between-question. On the other hand, if I had wanted to conduct the group-discussions in English or even in German, I would have limited the number of possible groups. Therefore, I decided to hold the discussions in Slovene, with the exception of the "pro-European"-groups, whose members I encountered in an English-speaking environment, which made it more "natural" for us to decide on the use of English as the research language. Many decisions on the research design were also influenced by the language matter. Nataša Bertlanić, an English teacher, assisted me in my research. She was the one, who also transcribed and translated the interviews of the three Slovene discussion groups. In order for her to carry this out, I introduced her to my standpoint on qualitative research and the idea of including the principle of communication and openness in the discussion. Generally, the method of starting with

a brainstorming session is perfect in order to avoid asking any questions, but on the other hand it was very useful to have somebody who was able to ask questions[61]. Sometimes, especially when people have known each other for a long time, they might talk about situations or refer to shared memories from which we, as unknown members of the group, were excluded. In these cases it was good that someone else could ask for more details or make sure that participants did not completely leave the context of the study. Furthermore, conducting research without a Slovene-speaking person would have created an awkward situation for the group members and me as their "interviewer", knowing that I did not understand their conversation. In order not to get lost as the person who was actually in charge of the research situation, I introduced the rules for and the tasks for the brainstorming and the discussion in English, while Nataša translated my instructions. During the interview, it was her task to keep an eye of the conversation. Passing the "standardised" questions at the end of the intrinsically motivated discussion, I re-introduced myself to the study. While I asked the questions in English, the participants received the questionnaire in Slovene. Outside of the interview situation I also spoke to the different participants. Due to our shared language skills, we mostly spoke to each other in English.

2. Discourse Analysis

Since I define belonging and identity as part of discursive reality, the analysis of the group interviews is based on the concept of discourse analysis. I introduced the relationship between discourses and identity earlier with reference to Judith Butler (2001) and Michel Foucault (2003) and stressed it once more at the beginning of the current chapter. Both authors emphasise the two-folded dimension of discourse: first, in the ability to subordinate individuals in their process of subjectivation and secondly, the subordination of discourse by the individual. From that perspective, discourses only exist within social practice, in which they become materialised and through which they are able to constitute a certain version of reality. Similar to Butler and Foucault, Ruth Wodak et al. (1998: 42) define discourse as constitutive for and constituted through social actions (cf. ibid). Therefore, I would argue further, discourses do not only carry interests, but they are constituted through interests. This can be seen clearly, for example, in "identity politics". Maybe it is in the interest of the dominant group in a society to base certain collective identities on the margins, so as not to disturb the cultural hierarchy. This might raise group-awareness of the

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61   Typical questions for this kind of research could have been: "What do you mean by that?", "Would you please go into more detail?", "Are you thinking of a specific situation?", or similar questions.

marginalised who would consequently demand certain rights. At the same moment their interests constitute discourses on group-belonging and identity politics. Based on that understanding, I will examine in the following pages the wide range of discourses and their challenged and challenging co-existence, the confluence of discourse and social diversity or hierarchy in (post-) modern societies with a focus on young people in Slovenia. Later, I list concrete points on which the analysis of the discussion groups will be based. Meaning and social positions of differing identities are always in processes of negotiation and competition. Speaking of a national belonging of certain groups in Slovenia can only target the positioning of groups at a particular group who make sense of their situatedness in a particular stage of life of a specific contemporary meaning of Slovenia, the "Balkans", the European Union and intersecting global influences.

The starting point of reflection on the interviews has to be national identity, as it was the main framework for the discussions. In this matter, interests and perceptions of self-identity are likely to support, challenge, reject, extend, etc. essentialist, multiple, multi-cultural, hybrid, strategic, ethnic, "natural", paternalistic definitions of national identity. Consequently, differently discursive situated actors of the discussion groups are likely to access and interpret national reality in differing ways. According to Anton Pelinka (1997), democratic states are open to the battle of power between different concepts of reality and consequently of identity. Therefore, it is important to look at mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion in societies that are based on the universal equality of Human Rights (cf. Luhmann 1997: 612). As an example, Christianity functions, mostly implicitly in secularised societies, as a discourse of "normality" in many "Western" European democratic countries. In contrast to that, Islamic traditions often become visible or known through a generalised perception on the treatment of women who are depicted almost exclusively as veiled, genital mutilated and deprived from their political rights (cf. Erjavec and Volčič 2007). Thus, the perceived "equality" of women in "Western" European countries is "normal", whereas Islamic attitude is considered a violation of Human Rights and democracy, additionally supported by the "spectacle"[62] of Islamic fundamentalism in "Western" media as an anti-democratic model of society. Such perceived attitudes are not only excluded as a possible subject-position in "Western" democracies, but have also become a manifested image of the "Islamic other". In this context, one might remember the example of Emo Gotsbacher's out-of-court-agreements in chapter 2, in which the Serbian prosecutor had to defend himself against prevailing imaginations of his cultural context. For such reasons, I consider *normality* as extremely important in maintaining a certain discursive order within a national community. I will therefore

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62   A term borrowed from Douglas Kellner 1995.

focus on that question relating to attitude towards differing groups, social or cultural practices or commodities, when analysing the group discussion.

Another point is the consideration that discourses do not occur in *neutral space*. The same, let us say, public discourse transmitted by the public television station through the news programme in Slovenia, might have differing ideological effects on different people's understanding of reality and themselves. The political discussion on forbidding the veil for female Muslim teachers in a "Western" European country's classroom might be considered truly emancipatory or feminist for some people. Others might find such a discussion redundant or racist/discriminating and define the ban as a secular convention of the public sphere or as another attempt of the West to imperialise "others". The meaning of a discourse is therefore dependent on one's situatedness in society as well as on one's political, cultural or social background. Defining an inclusion/exclusion axis in modern and neoliberal societies is difficult, when human rights and democracy do not a priori exclude someone or a specific group from the state or community. From the background of Bourdieu's theory on *capital*, we know that discursive power meets differing social groups with differing social, cultural and economic backgrounds. That assumption has to be included, when analysing every-day experiences and interpretation of such experiences, where belonging and identity is negotiated.

The battle about the meaning of one discourse cannot be fixed by just one interest group as Erjavec and Volčič (2007) have made us aware. At the same moment, when various other people are excluded from a certain version of "truth", they are likely to produce various alternative interpretations or positions to it. Dependent on the specific access to national identity or nationality, different groups sketch different views of Sloveneness and employ different strategies based on their personal, social, cultural, economic, etc. background. Such considerations are interesting for the following chapters, in which I introduce and analyse the belonging constructions of groups of young people who are located in Slovenia. In order to emphasise this point again, all those groups are not representative for Sloveneness. At the same time, they might outline feelings of belonging, which can only be found in Slovenia. The aim of such research is to build a bridge between theorising identities and the real life experiences of dealing with various discourses. Here I will also analyse, which discourses help the young people to employ inclusive or exclusive identity constructions.

Implemented *strategies*, as Wodak et al. (1998: 73-4) outline, are related to discourses and refer to the idea that certain intentions or aims can be realised by discursive positioning. Discursive actors in the perspective of these authors are neither necessarily conscious about such *strategies* nor do they remain without contradictions

in the use of such *strategies*. One might reflect upon some aspects of one's identity as fragmented while one accepts other characteristics as essentialist. Both positions can be supportive of an individual's every-day politics and the way in which a person tries to reach certain aims or demand certain rights on a personal as well as on a collective level. In this context, Wodak et al. (1998: 75-6) also advise researchers to recognise and acknowledge conscious intentions of individuals in the battle of (personal or collective, social, cultural, political or economic) power and not to take away responsibility or choices from the social actor. Focus on a macro-level of such strategies is important, (because) as it reveals motivations behind people's support of discourses. It also allows insights relating to contrasting translations of discourses by different people or groups (cf. ibid). People support, for example, the same political discourse for different reasons. Young people from the working class in Slovenia, for example, voted for the same political parties as middle age intellectuals. However, such data does not provide any deeper conclusions on the choices of the different groups (see Kropivnik 2002: 254-67).

For the analysis of the different group discussions and the discursive construction of belonging, I find it useful to use Wodak et al.'s concept (1998: 76-93). They engage "strategies" in order to distinguish, at least on a theoretical level, different layers of anchoring groups and individuals in social space. Such a point of view allows for the acknowledging of simultaneous situatedness in different social, political or cultural spheres of people and groups (cf. ibid). From that background, I define *resisting, challenging, alienation, protective, justification* and *counter-strategies* of Slovene national identity as crucial in understanding the identity positions generated in the interviews. Furthermore, I find it important to link those strategies to *regional, local, city, global, foreign*[63]*, former Yugoslavian, European* or *EU-European influences*, as well as other influences that might come to the surface in the analysis, which are implemented in such strategies. I also try to work out, in which ways such strategies correspond to a traditional, modern or post-modern understanding of identity in closeness to certain ideologies – such as neo-liberalism, left or right wing, conservative, etc. Having analysed that, I will try to define a "climate" in which such identity constructions fit in. Here, I distinctively think of *essentialist, nationalist, regionalist, Fortress-Europe definitions,* or *hybrid, patchwork, fragmented identities.* A further question that deserves analysis is, whether *essentialist* or *non-essentialist constructions* are corresponding to certain issues or aspects of identity. In the analysis

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63 Foreign, in contrast to global, refers to single examples of influences that are not a global commodity and might stem from face to face contact between people. However, one could argue that such an encounter caused by migration, tourism or international meeting is part of globalisation, which is true, but some of the experiences cannot be translated into a global understanding, but remain specific and local.

of the group discussions, I will also discuss *descriptions of belonging* and *reflected* versus *tacit statements*, which people seem to locate themselves.

"EU-European Slovenes"

The first contact established with people from the later discussion group was due to the recommendation of Prof. Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin who referred to a group of engaged, pro-democratic, and politically active students. At the time of the interviews, they were all members of "Young European Federalists" (JEF[64]), enrolled as students of political sciences in Ljubljana and involved in organizing different public events related to student activities and the European Union. The group discussions were conducted from the background of the assumption that these people were reflective towards their national background in relation to a European discourse of belonging.

Analysing the group discussion of Mojca (22), Gregor (22) and Marko[65] (22) required a constant switching between different levels of narration. Their high level of education and their main area of study, "political sciences" enabled them to describe "Sloveneness" on a very abstract level. Here, I particularly target their way of *talking* about certain issues, which allows them not to create distance to a particular opinion or attitude, even though they may refer to a personal experience. Therefore I sometimes had the impression that the participants, especially Mojca, tried to set herself apart from the issues they were introducing into the conversation by using a second or third person's perspective (such as "as a Slovene, you would do something" or "Slovenes would be disagreeing").

By implementing *alienation-strategies* as narrative elements, the group members might correspond to perceived (self-)expectations regarding their position as political science students. Such a position might have been helpful for them to create a *professional style* of self-presenting or talking about any issue, because they are the group that deals with international summer schools and goes to international meetings of European Youth. On the other hand, taking the concept of *Redezwänge* (speaking forces) seriously, people should at some point either in every-day life or in research situations unfold their particular systems of relevance and meaning (cf. Bohnsack 2000: 109-10) This forces people to go into details in order to make the situations or experiences, they refer to, comprehensible for the listener, although possibly, in this case, directed towards the addressor – the interviewer (Welzer 1993: 76-7). Here, Bohnsack (2000: 109) anchors the possibility that people would open up their examinations to a personally relevant pattern.

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64   See http://www.jef.eu/
65   Names changed/Ages at the time of the interviews.

I was surprised during the interview and especially when I read through it, that this group did not necessarily take up a political stance in their discussion or define Slovenia above all through politics66. Certainly, this "discrepancy" of creating distance at the same time refers to my own expectations of the group. For this reason, it is important to note that I did not ask them about the political situation in Slovenia, but for their view *on* Slovenia and their own belonging to it. Here the challenge was to define, where abstract levels of narration helped to avoid taking up a specific position towards identity issues or where personal experience was missing and when abstract levels corresponded with stories from a micro-level point of view. Besides a distanced description of Slovenia, the group members turned to very detailed personal experiences regarding their childhood and their particular relation to rituals and symbols as well as every-day habits and practices disentangled from reference to education or university teachers. Therefore, at the same moment, their personal experiences do not seem to be largely influenced by or even revisited through their studies. In the first brainstorming session on Slovenia, only two out of 39 characteristics referred to a political dimension of Slovenia. Notable, they are the names of their former president Milan Kučan and the Yugoslavian dictator Tito[67].

1. The Attempt of Defining Sloveneness

Talking about *Sloveneness* instead of Slovenia, as I noticed, is more applicable for the way people in this group describe Slovenia. Perhaps because nation states are *imagined communities*, as Benedict Anderson (1988) has made us aware, are nations difficult to distinguish from their nationality by the national community. The line of describing Slovenia and Sloveneness at the beginning of the discussion was based on four distinguished points: geographic features of Slovene landscape and environment; Slovene people; people's culture, including customs and practices like food, music, festivals; and what they call *Slovene spirit*, mental ideas and attitude of people. In comparison to the other groups, they offered a very detailed list of Slovene character traits. Here it is important to mention that they did not necessarily follow their own mapping of issues through their conversation.

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66 This non-political attitude breaks at some point, which I will analyse in this chapter.
67 See appendix for the list.

1.1 Landscape

When looking at their list of geographic characteristics of their environment, local culture and "*Volkskultur*", it appears that the group members had a very strong traditional sense of belonging to their country, where rural life and traditional folk festivals are influential for their own sense of *Sloveneness*. "Green" is the colour they associate closely with the large Slovene countryside. They also refer to the colour used in marketing strategies of Slovene self-image, which they remember as being important in the 1980s within Yugoslavia. At that time, the *greenness* of Slovenia and the image of the lime tree, which is a national symbol of Slovenia, were promoted as being distinctively occupied with Sloveneness. Certainly they have built an emotional relation to such characteristics, remembering songs about the tree (Lipa zelenela je[68]) in connection to the real lime tree in their garden. Childhood memories like that provide them with feelings of home and belonging. Such memories, it can be argued, are considered as very personal, related to perceived security of protected childhood and not necessarily in confluence with national belonging. At the same time, Mojca creates the connection to *nationality* by linking the feeling of coming home, when arriving at the Slovene airport, to seeing all the *green* of the landscape. Also Marko and Gregor see the landscape as having a great influence on people's mentality. Here, I think they refer to the kind of experience one can have within certain conditions of a specific environment. Coming from the countryside, all three grew up within a particular rural neighbourhood. This can be considered as a *starting point of belonging*. From the kind of experience they have in that cultural and socio-geographic context they can compare and define the quality of other surroundings. At the same time, this can be seen as an indication of successful public campaigns promoting *greenness* as particularly Slovene. It is interesting in that relation that they compare Slovenia with Mediterranean countries and not, as this group often does, with their neighbouring countries. While in other contexts, similarities to Austria or Germany are very important for the cultural situatedness of Slovenia, *greenness* is narrated as a particularly Slovene image as a delimitation to other ex-Yugoslavian republics before independence. This might also correlate with public promotion and individual experience. People fly to Malta or France, but certainly not to Austria. The change between Austria and Slovenia consequently might not be identified by elements of landscape. Their emphasis on *greenness* ignores the fact that other European countries, such as Ireland, also have *green* as a national landscape feature. Marko refers to Slovenia as "*The green piece of Europe*". Such a statement indicates that a self-definition is never sufficient for identity and personal experience is always intersected with interpretations coming from particular discourses with a certain set of interests.

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68   The lime has been blossoming (translation).

Since no-one of the group made an obvious link between their emphasis on *greenness* and political or tourist campaigns, it is most likely that *greenness* for them appears like "natural" *signifier of difference* to other (European) countries. From their description, it seems they have learned to acknowledge this specific image of Slovenia in Yugoslavia as a marker of identity.

The participants of the discussion group acknowledge great landscape diversity within the very small space of Slovene territory, which they see as influential on the self-perspective of Slovene people. This narration is also taken up during the other groups' interviews. The importance of the green landscape for the Slovene self-perspective is also confirmed by authors like Natasha Milanovich (1996: 25), Anton Glosar (1996), André-Louis Sanguin (1999) or Michael Chapman (1996) who have focussed on Slovene national identity. It seems that it is important for the group participants that foreigners recognise Slovenia through such characteristics, including *greenness*. Gregor, who spent several holidays in France, tends to compare Slovenia with France. He emphasises the outstanding degree of diversity of the Slovenian landscape, which according to its size would possibly be, in his opinion, only one landscape region in France. For Gregor, this signifies the uniqueness of the Slovene country in contrast to other larger countries. After all, the group seems split between outside views or public representations of Slovenia and their own experience of *Sloveneness*. Considering the independence campaigns, more recently the European Union campaigns, tourist advertisements and school education, it is probably impossible for the group members to distinguish between their own position and public representational work. This might be the result of a very successful public discourse in generating a common perception of the social geography of Slovene people. Personally, the participants of the discussion group see themselves as anchored in a *regional pattern*. Here, detailed stories about the regions where they lived during their childhood (Oberkrein) and later for studying (Ljubljana) stands in contrast to brief descriptions or references to other parts of Slovenia. Murska Sobota, a place close to the border to Austria and Hungary in the East of the country, functions as the *exotic* example of a particular group of Slovene people, who nobody else in Slovenia could understand because of their strong accent. In relation to this, they believe that the diversity of the Slovene landscape, the mountains, the Mediterranean climate or the low lands is *constitutive* of people's mentality.

1.2 Detecting National Normality

Talking about Sloveneness is not easy. The participants of the discussion raised awareness to their experience of perceiving "Sloveneness" differently in different

contexts. Especially in every-day life, within a Slovene cultural space, people usually do not define their habits or their cultural traditions as "national". Something that is perceived as "neutral" in one's own national context is possibly becoming a specific feature of Sloveneness when abroad.

> **Mojca**: [..] in Portugal, those guys cross the street, even if the light is red, and I would not, I would just stand there, so I guess (1) they were like (1) "Come on, what's wrong with you?" Maybe this was Slovene, I don't know.[69]

Here Mojca identified different rules in Portugal than for example in Slovenia. Whereas she indicates by saying "*I don't know*" at the end of her statement, that she was not sure, if it was exclusively Slovene. Certainly she recognises a different cultural praxis than in Slovenia which makes her foreign in contrast to Portuguese people who do not mind crossing the street when the light is red for them. She points out that such differences abroad make her feel more Slovene than in other situations. Such observations correspond to the theoretical analysis of Harald Welzer (1993: 83) or Emo Gotsbacher (2000: 62), who both made it clear that *thinking as usual* is the only possible way of thinking within a familiar and accepted set of cultural and social rules. Foreigners have to learn artificial rules that are already accepted by the "in-group". Vilém Flusser (2000: 20-1) describes the discursive subordination to a new position as a process of acknowledging the secret codes of a society, learning them and later living them, but forgetting to have learned them. Mojca, when on vacation, neither accepted the Portuguese rules as her rules nor is she able to comprehend Portuguese rules yet, but she was disturbed in her *thinking as usually*. For her, this opened up a way of reflecting Sloveneness and it questions its self-evident rules. However, defining the question of "what is Slovene?"[70] made them feel uncomfortable, because they could not answer the question. Whenever they tried to find an explanation for what it could be, they rejected the idea in the same thought. The notion of Sloveneness was not available to them. It was not easier for them to narrate Sloveneness in comparison with other nations. In the end they were still not confident about their perception of Slovene characteristics. The process of describing, defending and rejecting ideas in relation to Sloveneness was very interesting, because it was very similar to identity work on a national level. As Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann (2003: 286) point out, discursive constructions of identity are always based on translations between *similarity*, *sameness* and *difference*. Also here, Sloveneness was more comprehendible in terms of what it is not rather than what it is, or to what

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69 Transcription features (such as (1) or [..]) are explained in appendix.
70 I don't know why they tried to explain that, it seems as if one of my questions was misunderstood.

other countries it is similar and makes identity only meaningful in the relational network of other identities. Unlike Hall's (1999a: 417-20) five elements of discursive construction of the nation, where categories are exclusively bound on nationality and not to be shared with other nations, this group believes if something was typical for Slovenia it could be also typical for other cultures without losing its importance for their own nationality. This counts at least for some characteristics of *Sloveneness*. At the same time, they do not reflect Sloveneness upon its artificial foundation, which might not be part of their conscious reflections.

More than at other points, the following example illustrates the attempt of the participants to define Sloveneness from within:

> **Mojca:** Maybe when you come to people who are not of Slovene origin and they are living in Slovenia and their traditions (2), you know, like you would not do that, a Slovenian would not do that, it is weird doing that, you know, that's when you get it, but we never (1) we don't often emphasise "this is Slovene!". It's like, we would not do this and that means, my group of friends or my age-group, or my groups, you know people that I get into contact with. We don't stress, this is Slovene.
> **Marko:** Yeah, it's hard, because there are so many huge differences among the regions.
> **Mojca:** Yeah.
> **Marko:** So if I say, this is Slovene, and a person from (1) I don't know, North-East[71] would say "No, come on".
> **Mojca:** "This is the Ljubljana way!" (laughs)
> **Marko:** Exactly, "I never do that. Get out of here!" (laughs)

Mojca, Marko and Gregor are not able to pin down Sloveneness to a specific point or take and do not take a unified consciousness among Slovene people for granted. Maybe this is due to the regional diversity of landscape and mentality, which is often emphasised in tourist brochures as well as in public representations of the country. They would neither easily confirm the sameness of all people, nor reject a cultural common ground of Slovenes from all regions. They are just not sure, where their sense of sharing cultural belonging fits with that of other Slovenes. This example is also useful to see that communities larger than those constituted through face-to-face contact do not know in which ways other people of the same national community would share their sense of identity. Of course, the group does not reject the notion of Sloveneness as such. They would, as Mojca makes us aware, immediately take notice of individuals or groups with different cultural traditions. In that context, I am not sure, whether she is referring to a specific group or not.

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71   Here Marko refers once more to people who are from Murska Sobota and the surrounding area.

At one point, the group picks up the term "cautious" as a categorisation of Slovene behaviour towards "others". From the perspective of the participants this ranges from friendships with tourists to behaviour towards foreigners, which is based on a feeling of insecurity. They all admit feeling uneasy with the fast changes taking place in Slovenia because a high number of tourists (who) are welcomed, and also imply that Slovenia will go through further changes. At the same moment, they refer to other countries where people feel similar to them and therefore emphasise those feelings as being *normal*. In other words, Slovenes are friendly people, but worried. Here, they are not particularly critical in their narrating, but tend to be more observing. They are implying that being "cautious" of new people in a period of transition might be a necessary *strategy of justification* in an era where racism and xenophobia is increasingly attacked in public discussions and most likely, also in theoretical discussions at university. This might be a prevailing *protectionist discourse* and indeed *normal* within unpredictable circumstances. Probably other components such as politics or local mobilisation will determine the outcome of such discourses. Mojca, for example, wonders about the conditions of groups from Serbia, Bosnia or Croatia who immigrated to Slovenia during the 1970s and 1980s, and raises the question, of whether Slovenia has not welcomed them enough[72]. Gregor immediately rejects the idea in the same manner as I examined earlier on public discourses as "*a European problem*". Making reference to me, he said: "You have the Turks and we have our Southerners." The statement *qualifies* the situation in the country and pushes any responsibility from, for example, Marko to an unknown meta-level. This bears the danger of *legitimating* such practices.

1.3 Language and Ethnicity

The participants of the discussion group came to the conclusion that Sloveneness is not accessible through the appearance of a person. When abroad, they would not know who else was incidentally Slovenian. They would only identify someone as Slovene, when hearing the Slovene language. Referring to Breda Gray's (2002) study on Irish people, this observation includes the conclusion that Slovene people are *normal*. Since none of them have travelled outside of Europe, I assume the statement is based on the experience that Slovene people look and behave normal within European countries. In contrast to the Irish example, the point here is not that Slovene people are narrated as the "others" on the basis of language. It is an attempt to define Sloveneness on the basis of a common language. Throughout the discussion the participants acknowledge

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72 I am not sure, if she is really concerned about the issue, or if it was a question related to the discourse on foreigners.

that language was not necessarily important for any nation to generate national identity, they referred specifically to Iraq or Switzerland. The national language is particular important for the Slovene nation, where a comparable small community is constituted through a common language. At this point, it seems that theoretical knowledge of nation building is intersecting with their common sense interpretations. Their examinations are very similar to the argumentations of Benedict Anderson's often-quoted concept of *imagined communities*. However, in the context of language, they refer to famous poets as national symbols and point out that Slovenia did not create war heroes, but they also do not have any other personalities to whom they could refer to. Also here, they *know* that other nations have often based glorious mythologies and stories on war history and I would be surprised if this was solely the result of their own reflections. Since one of their teachers is Aleš Debeljak who employs a very similar narration, to whom I referred in chapter three, I am cautious to argue that this is a very common way of reflecting on the Slovenian literature heroes. I did not notice similar argumentations in the other group discussions. Mojca expressed the wish that there was something else, above language, which could stand for Slovene culture. This corresponds to Janez Justin's[73] perception of Slovenes identifying their belonging through a common language based on a certain version of Slovene ethnicity, as long as they were not an independent state. From this sense of belonging they would a priori exclude other nationals from the definition of Sloveneness which makes it difficult for "others" to easily integrate. Again, the group deals differently within different parts of Slovenia. For example, having a second name with the ić-ending, suggests that one has a non-Slovene origin. "Ć" is not a Slovene letter. In their opinion, this results in more harassment in the countryside than in cities. Among their friends they do not consider a person with such a surname having any problems. To some degree, the group participants are crossing "ethnic" and language based definitions of belonging. They see Slovene people connected through similar traditions or practices. Here they list watching the same media, singing the same songs or preparing for similar festivals like Christmas or St. Nicolas[74]. Furthermore, territorial specificities like mountains or the seaside support common activities such as skiing, hiking or swimming.

1.4 Cultural Heritage as Tradition

The issue of religion was not targeted by the group participants before I asked them about religion, even though later they listed religion among foreign influences. For

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73   His perspective stems from the interview in autumn 2006.
74   The interview was conducted in early December.

them religion does not play an important role in Slovene society, at least not to the same degree as in the neighbouring countries (Italy and Austria). They see it more like a tradition, than an expression of their culture. They define the reason for that as a result of the fact that in their experiences usually nobody from the social environment they know would find a connection to each other through Catholicism in the secularised Slovene society. Maybe these circumstances are very particular for their generation and would not count to the same extent for their parents' or grandparents' generation whose memory on the double life of being a practicing Catholic *and* a good socialist remain strong. While they do not see Catholicism as important on a conscious level, they were not aware that I had asked them generally for religious influences. Concluding from that, Catholicism can be interpreted as being part of their perceived national "normality". As Marjan Smrke made us aware, despite religious diversity there is only one Church in Slovenia. Even though Catholicism is not a thing people would usually talk about, it becomes the parameter of comparison in terms of incoming Muslim communities from the South, who are *different*. The critique on post-modern and neo-liberal cultures is often the lack of profound knowledge regarding one's own cultural roots and history. The group targets such a perspective by saying that because Christianity is a *tradition* in Slovenia, they have problems with Muslims.

One reason why the group members did not list political categories in their sense of Sloveneness might be that they do not consider politics as important for or having an important influence on their identity. In the next example, they particularly target the ability of politicians to generate identity. In their opinion politicians are users of already existing identities, which they bring into play in order to win the elections.

> **Mojca:** I would not say that any Slovene politician admits the idea of Slovenia's importance of being Slovene, I don't know. Were there plans to build some new identity? They never told us standing in front of the flag is cool and we have to salute it, or something.
> **Gregor:** Maybe, err (1) now they will.

The last comment refers particularly to the new right-wing government that was elected one month before the interview in December 2004, and had used nationalist propaganda before the elections. Mojca interprets political influences on identity matters as consciously addressing, for example, national rituals and encouraging people to become involved in these rituals. Maybe this goes back to their childhood memories on being "Tito pioneers". This was the communist youth during state-socialism. In such rituals people consciously committed to the political idea of the state. Similar to this is the example of Gregor's Primary school teacher who introduced saluting "Tito" as a morning ritual in the classroom. However, at the same time, when

they consider political contribution to national identity as obvious, they refer to Milan Kučan, the first president who was in for 12 years, as being one of the "fathers" of the Slovene nation. Overemphasising that point, while they think of a right-wing recurs of national traditions, conservative newspapers will continue depicting Sloveneness through the national flag, Mt. Triglav and national politicians (cf. Hardt 2004, Luthar 2006a) or more recently EU-European symbols in order to promote *Eurocentrism* (cf. Velikonja 2005).

2. In the Middle[75]

"In the *middle*" is a very interesting definition of Slovenia. It does not only mean in the middle of different geographic landscapes, or climates, or mentalities, or in the middle of a certain economic and political transition at the time of 2004. With this statement, the group refers particularly to the cultural belonging of Slovenia. Born in 1982, after the death of former Yugoslavian dictator Tito, they all still grew up with his image and the stories of him. For them, even though they are critical about him, Tito was the figure who held all Yugoslavian republics together. They experienced representations of him more like a "father" than a negative symbol of state-socialism or dictatorship. In their point of view, Tito, who was half Slovenian, is associated with a positive memory for most Slovenes in Yugoslavia. The older generations who experienced his leadership never presented him as a dictator to them. Parents (such as Mocja's) and grandparents sometimes still have his picture in their living rooms. Their personal relationship to the communist era was mostly generated through the ceremony of becoming "Tito pioneers". All of them remember that they were very proud of it and waited eagerly for the ceremony.

> **Mojca:** We were born in 82 and we went to school in 89. And 1989 was the last generation who became Tito pioneers. I remember it well, cause it was you know (1) like, me (1), I am also Catholic, so my parents sent me to both, to Cath- Sunday school and they have Tito paintings, so you can imagine!
> **Marko:** You were very confused (laugh)
> **Mojca:** I am not confused, but nobody, nobody considers it's confusing for us, for me it wasn't. And when I got my – what is it called, when you are first allowed to eat the- in Christian church, not communion, yes first communion (1) you, I was waiting for first communion and I was also waiting to become a pioneer!
> **Gregor and Marko**: (laugh)

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75 The title "in the middle" stems from a characterisation taken from the brainstorming session on Slovenia.

Besides their involvement in communist traditions in their childhood, they simultaneously participated into Catholic practices. At that time, state-socialism in former Yugoslavia was already tolerant of religious practices, although it was a banned sphere by the communist regime to be practised only privately (cf. Smrke 1999: 202-3). As children they did not find anything strange or contradictory about the two different ideologies in which they were involved. For them both rituals were part of social life and important stages to reach in their lives. Even though it does not become clear in the example, Gregor and Marko can refer to similar childhood memories too.

2.1 Shifting Borders: Flexible "We"- and "Them"-Communities

For the group, Slovenia is always discussed between the tension of what they call the "German" cultural field and the "Balkan" cultural field of influence. This is, however, also part of the social imagination about Slovene nationality and includes the argument relating to why Slovenia split from former Yugoslavia. It is also crucial for their own considerations of how to situate their cultural background. In their narration on cultural influences, influences from Italy or Hungary come after influences from the German or "Balkan" culture. Furthermore, they do not necessarily distinguish between German culture and the Austrian-Hungarian empire to which they usually refer. They also do not see Hungarian influences as included in this. Hungarian cultural impact turns out to be the least important for them of all they have listed. During the Cold War, Slovenia was cut off from Hungary through the Iron Curtain and does not generate a source of memory for the participants of the group who come from central Slovenia. Such a definition might be different when talking to people who live closer to the Hungarian border.

> **Gregor:** (laughs) err (1) for example we were a part of an Austrian, err (1) political entity, so err (1) for more than 600 years, Habsburg!
> **Marko:** Yeah, exactly
> **Gregor:** More than 600 years!
> **Marko:** A 1000 years.
> **Mojca:** Oh, guys, come on, Slovenia did not exist then!
> **Gregor:** 600, 636 years!
> **Mojca:** Ah, today Slovene territory was part of it, but put like this not Slovenian-
> **Gregor:** No but it-
> **Mojca:** Okay, yes of course.
> **Gregor:** Maybe we had a similar-
> **Mojca:** Some expression for example, and cultural traditions or maybe-
> **Gregor:** Traditions, yeah!
> **Mojca:** They were just; they were Catholics, mainly, traditionally-

Gregor: And on the other hand, and we err (1) brought a lot from the Balkan space of the last 80 years, so that's (1) it's an interesting picture, that's why I wrote "in the middle".

Here they try to define the origin of Slovene culture. Saying Slovenia was part of the Habsburg Empire for 600 years stems most likely from their *history education*, at the same time Mojca highlights that this only circumscribes today's national territory rather than Sloveneness. With the reference to Catholicism, they narrate a long cultural connection to Central Europe. The period, when Slovenia was unified with Yugoslavia, is often related with "Balkan" influences during the conversation. Earlier in the book I discussed the "Balkan"-space as a cultural definition which borders are not clear from a scientific point of view and as such, have no clear borders. In Slovenia the term "Balkan" usually refers to the other ex-states of Yugoslavia, although not exclusively (cf. Velikonja 2002: 189-92). It is interesting that the reference to the "Balkans" does not seem to forge a link to a political system, but to a cultural field. In the case of that group, the use of the term is driven by different, at times overlapping levels of a *we/them-dichotomy*. Sometimes they feel they belong to the Balkans, sometimes not. At the same moment, the Austrian/German influence created differences between the states of former Yugoslavia. Within Yugoslavia, the group sees Croatia on the same cultural "side" as Slovenia, and Serbia on the other because it was less influenced by the Catholic tradition of the Habsburg-Empire. Therefore, it seems very normal to them that borders change and even co-exist. In relation to the Northern and Southern countries, they see Slovenia as a kind of bridge between Germany and the "Balkans". The inter-changeable use of Austria and Germany is interesting. They were part of the Austrian monarchy, but the cultural legacy is seen as German. The reason for that might lie in their definition of the link to the German-Austrian culture. It is what they call *Volkskultur*, expressed in rural and agricultural life connected to fire brigade festivals and domestic music, which is connected to Oberkrein Music and Avseniki[76], as well as the drinking culture. Also, in relation to a common culture, they settle on a cultural border on the basis of "we" and "them". Slovene folk music follows less rigid rules than Austrian folk music. It can be concluded from this that they see the Slovene way of celebrating as less "civilised" than, for example, in Germany or Austria. Hence, at the same moment, when they narrate differences to the "Balkans" in order to maintain a century-old bondage with the German cultural space, they also maintain differences to the German space by narrating cultural closeness to the so-called "Balkans". Referring to this, Marko talks of group belonging in international gatherings.

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76   Avsenik is a famous folk singer in Slovenia who is also known in the South of Austria, where people share the so-called "Alpine-culture". His band is called Avseniki, which is the plural version of his name, Avsenik. The group members are from the Slovene side of that region.

Marko: I was on a seminar (1) in Malta (2) and there were a group of us – me and Borut, and also some people from Denmark, and Germany, I don't know, I remember, okay, we were drunk, and we like singing (1) out loud, but just the two of us (laughs) (1) me and Borut[77] (laughs)

Mojca: Just the Slovenes.

Marko: Just us, the Slovenian guys, and the others were like "what are you singing, do you think we are allowed to?" I mean, I mean we are drunk, we should sing (all laugh)

Marko: When we are drunk A:::a: (shouts, just to demonstrate shouting)

Gregor: We should, yeah.

For them, such behaviour only works, when Slovenes are drunk and they acknowledge it as a "Balkan" heritage in their culture, singing and being loud when drunk, otherwise they are "civilised". They use, as they describe in the interview, sentences like "*This is so Balkan*", or "*We have a Balkan war*" to refer to things that are negative, messy or wrong. Thus, the conversation about the "Balkans" was accompanied with a lot of breaks, stumbling and insecurity about how to define things without saying something wrong or negative. From my perspective, this highlights an ambiguity towards the issue. "Foreign" and "domestic" cultural habits are crossing the "Balkans" as well as Austria, Germany or Europe. It seems that the "Balkan" identity is one characteristic that they could take on and off for certain occasions. In other situations, they cannot escape from it. Maybe "Balkan behaviour", while drunk, saves them from reflecting a cultural closeness to the Southern neighbours in every-day life. At the same time, by emphasising cultural closeness to the "Balkans" in comparison to Germany or Austria helps them to break out from perceived strict rules of the country, strict rules with which they seem to associate "high culture".

At the same time, when they acknowledge *Volkskultur* as shared cultural heritage with the Northern neighbours, they recognise a lack of high culture in Slovenia. They regret that their culture did not provide the conditions for great artists like Mozart, Händel, Hayden or Beethoven. The problem suggested to be at the mostly rural culture of Slovenia, with little urbanisation. Certainly, they see Slovenia as different from Austria or Germany, even though they belong to the same cultural space of a specific time. Similar to the contemporary discussion on Mozart, who is in some experts' views from Germany, because Salzburg was a German county in Mozart's life time, they could have linked important characters of the Habsburg Empire like Mozart to Slovenia as well. Of course, it would have been unusual, when one considers that nations do not share their national symbols or heroes with other nations (cf. Hall 1999a: 420). Despite a large degree of emphasis on shared German and Austria folk

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77   Name changed.

culture, the participants of the group discussion do not necessarily like traditional music or particularly Avsenik, who is a famous Slovene singer known also in other "Alpine countries" like Austria. They also pointed out that in contrast to the other two countries, Slovenes do not wear traditional clothes at the local festivals. This is rather to maintain difference to German culture, because it does not mean that Slovenes do not have traditional clothes or that Germans or Austrians always wear or even own a traditional dress. Furthermore, difference is also generated through the responses of the foreign media, for example the Austrian media. Here the group refers to an example about a World Cup competition in Slovenia.

> **Gregor:** Čevapčiči Weltcup, I remember a few years ago, when we had a (2), actually every year we have in Maribor err err a golden fox err err err skiing err championship.
> **Mojca:** Yeah, for women.
> **Gregor:** And err in Austrian Newspapers they call it the Čevapčiči Weltcup
> **Interviewer**: Ahja?
> **Gregor:** Yeah.
> **Mojca:** Mhm (agrees)
> **Gregor:** Err, from your[78] side, it is err (1) because all the food that will be served there, is Balkan food, and err (1) Turkish, and, so- that's why I (1) err- (2) maybe a very plain err (2) and ja, it was very plain, and err (1) what was interesting for me on the other hand was err (1) spelling Čevapčiči in German language.
> **Interviewer:** Mhm.
> **Mojca:** (laughs)
> **Gregor:** T-S-C-H
> **Mojca:** Though, when we were in Vienna (1) we saw it only with C
> **Marko:** Yeah!
> **Mojca:** Čevapčiči – yeah
> **Gregor:** So it was one of our guys probably.
> **Mojca:** Yeah (laughs) (2) it was a Kebab stand or something, I suppose.

This example makes two things very clear: firstly, the group really felt irritated by the Austrian newspaper calling the Slovene World Cup competition "Čevapčiči World Cup", because of the very simplified and in Said's sense maybe even *Orientalist description* of Slovenia. Secondly, the immediate commitment to the "Balkans" states, which here is extended to *Turkey*, as from their point of view "Čevapčiči" is of Turkish origin. In this context, somebody who owns a *Kebabstand* in Vienna can be one of "our" people in Slovenia. In terms of the dish "Čevapčiči", Austrians are not even able to spell the word correctly and in this context excluded from the "we"-context of Slavic countries, and Turkey as an extended part of the Balkans. Above all, the Austrian newspaper has rejected the usual association of Slovenes with Austria

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78   From "my" side as their interviewer from Austria.

through the Alpine culture, when narrating a story of a World Cup with Balkan-food which exoticises the Slovene context close to the Austrian border[79]. The example also provides information that there are certain customs or traditions that are shared with other former Yugoslavian states and a shared notion of "we". This example also shows the sensitive area of identities. At this point, narrating cultural closeness to the "Balkans" was neither cheerful nor a chosen position. Slovenes were pushed into such a position by the point of view of an Austrian newspaper and might be an example of Michael Billig's (1995/2002) concept of *banal nationalism*, when people do not necessarily know they are committed to their country until they are offended. In this case, the group members certainly turned their backs on Austria and the Austrian culture, but it can hardly be considered as *cultural closure* or as implementing *exclusive tendencies*, at least not as long it was not be a permanent discourse and, for example, was not carried by all Austrian newspapers. The example rather proves the stretchiness of cultural borders and border zones.

Cultural bonding is especially important for the youth culture within former Yugoslavia and other "Balkan"-states. There are important festivals like the music festival in Guča, Serbia, where many Slovene people go to enjoy music from different bands of the ex-states. Here, Marko said that Slovenian people differentiate themselves from other participants in showing that they would have more money to spend. Mojca clearly rejects the idea, because she would not have much money to spend. Besides that, none of the group was more recently in other parts of former Yugoslavia. Mojca refers to having been in Zagreb, which is close to the Slovene border in the North of Croatia, five years ago and as she points out, this is the farthest south she has travelled in recent years. The group participants usually meet people from the other former Yugoslavian ex-states in Slovenia or at international gatherings. There, they point out, they find their connection to these groups of people through the common heritage of the "Balkan" culture.

> **Mojca:** [...] when I speak with my Croatian friends, when we do something, that's against the rules "Oh we are doing it the Balkan way, oh, let's do it" you know "we are Balkans, let's go" and I like it, it is relaxing.
> **Marko:** But also, when we do something and do not say "let's do it the Balkan way", we do it like that.

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79 Sometimes, in my analysis, it is hard for me, to know, if one of the examples has changed meaning in their memory, but in the case of analysing "lived experiences" it is also crucial to see the importance of some events over others in the point of view of the participants. However, apart from Gregor, none of the group members had heard of the Austrian media report before. Such a narration could have corresponded with other Austrian media reports or maybe it had stood out even in contrast to the vast majority of Austrian media reports.

Mojca: Yeah, I mean, me and my friends, we go the Balkan way, me and my friends from Croatia, who are Croats, and, they, you know, say-
Marko: We are doing it somehow, it does not really matter, but we do it, you know it, that is maybe Balkan culture?
Gregor: That's the French way.
Marko: (laughs) That's the French way, okay, that's probably the French way.

"The Balkan way" is repeatedly stressed in their conversation, but they never allow themselves to be reduced to just that specific way of acting nor do they exactly outline what they mean by "the Balkan way". They also emphasise that they have always more options or other ways of behaving. The Balkan way is not the only one. The French way, as Gregor stresses here, is probably coming from his experience with the French culture, and where he sees a cultural connection to France. On the other hand, there is a certain cultural memory to France through the invasion of Napoleon's troops in the early 19th century that influenced Slovene legal administration concepts. One statue of Napoleon can be found on Mali trg in Ljubljana. Thus, being in the middle *attributes* Slovene people with various cultural competences.

2.2 The Closure of Borders: Exclusively Slovene

Meetings with other people from former socialist countries can offer a common ground of communication, but also confrontations with different stages of industrial developments. Compared to other "Balkan" countries, the group members see the Slovene social life or political systems as more advanced. In a political and economic sense the group members see inhabitants of other ex-states "mugged" by Slovene politicians and Slovene traders, who use the "others" to feel more powerful. Here the conversation takes an interesting turn. Whereas other parts of the conversations were marked by a changing use of "we", which could sometimes embrace people from the "Balkans" or sometimes people from "Western" Europe, this part of the discussion was almost exclusively determined by a Slovene "we", no matter, whether they spoke about politicians or Slovene companies. Here, we also have to consider that this could be a mere repetition of *prevailing stereotypes* against Slovene imperialism. The use of the term "we" could be seen as jeopardising such politics, but on the other hand shows a strong commitment to Slovenia. Certainly theorists like Svetlana Slapšak would confirm such negative tendencies. For the group members, it seems to construct a more complex situation. Here might lay the *insecurity* towards a new and vulnerable *national identity*. The group members see themselves confronted with negative media reports against Slovenia. Especially Serbian and Croatian commentators are very critical of the situation. The group members partly try to *justify* the procedure of Slovenian companies outlining the positive effects on the countries' economies and on

the security of Serbian or Croatian workers, who suffer less from unemployment. The participants are not sure about their standpoint regarding the self-presentation of Slovene companies that try to promote their charity character. Especially Marko[80] seems to be torn by the national ideology implied in the socio-cultural context from which Serbian and Croatian actors try to narrate the "Slovene invasion". His emotional involvement might also indicate the ethical conflict. Certainly, settlement of foreign companies in "cheaper" countries in order to stabilise the national market is a common practice. From his standpoint, I am not sure, whether he agrees with such practices. At the same time, he is strongly supportive of *Slovenia going to Europe* and this is a way to enhance economic growth and also European standards. At this point, all group participants suddenly emphasise a very strong difference between the states as regards legal matters and the disintegration of economy and politics.

Due to the relationship with their neighbouring states, Mojca, Marko and Gregor agree on a *defensive-attitude* of Slovenia in relation to the other neighbouring states. This they do not only locate on a public level, but also within personal relations. In their opinion, superiority of foreign rulers in other state formations has always forced Slovenes to defend their specificities or to maintain difference within a greater state configuration. Each new state order enforced new rules. Therefore, they argue further, Slovenes always had to adapt to new values or new truths, as experienced with the treatment of religious practices. The group participants outline the needs of Slovenes to justify their economic relations to other ex-states. They refer to the troubled relationship with Croatia which is going on because of the fight over part of the Slovene/Croatian-border. Here, the group also refers to foreign politicians such as Jörg Haider from Austria and Jean-Franco Fini from Italy who frequently interfere in questions of Slovene national identity at the time the interviews were conducted. And those, they recognise, are often given a large space in the Slovene media. The group participants also list Slovene minorities, situated in Austria or Italy, as parts of Slovene identity and highlight the Slovene history of political and social emigration, as well as the fact that the country has been divided between different countries and has lost some parts of territory to other states, including Slovene communities. In relation to this, they realise that the former "Eastern bloc" and Hungary rarely form part of their reflections on identity. Certainly, such considerations might be very recognisable for political science students, because none of the other groups referred to the political situation of Austria or Italy or to Slovene minorities abroad.

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80   I am not sure at this point; in which ways Marko's strong opinion was influential to the position of the other two participants. He is, out of all three, the strongest advocate of implementing European standards in Slovenia. At least his dominance in this part of the conversation was obvious.

What is particularly interesting about the *middle*-stage is the *defensive attitude* of the discussants in this group regarding Sloveneness that emerges at the point of defining the "defensive" character. This was also the point, when affiliating with differing positions, which often seemed to be so easy for them to take on and off, stopped and they started *defending* Slovenia against *all* neighbouring countries and cultural spheres. This particular emotional stage overshadows their initial narration on cultural bonding to the ex-states and instead makes hegemonic effects visible. When I asked them, if *political segregation* has cut off cultural relations as well, they saw legal implementations as stronger than *cultural connections*. Therefore, how they see relations to other cultural spheres and whether they see common grounds with other nations or national distinctiveness is very much dependent on their way of encountering Sloveneness. Relating to *we/them-constructions*, macro- or meta-level means of talking determined the imagined belonging to other cultural zones. On some occasions, I observed, the group would say "we" without being 100% serious and use a common "we" for a *strategic position*. In comparison to countries in ""Western" Europe, they could share better jokes or make more distinctive statements with people from former Yugoslavia. At conferences, for example, they say "Balkan" people are always sticking together, including the Slovenes. Also abroad, people from the South remain to be the people, who are friends, and are the people with whom the discussion group would immediately talk to. Emphasising cultural closeness and bonding on the one hand and rejecting it at as impossible on the other hand, is not surprising. I would argue those two elements occupy different levels of perception. Cultural closeness to "Balkan" people is enacted on a *personal level* and is based on *shared cultural codes*, *humour* and also on *memories*. At least the aspect of memories is directed towards the *past*. "Western" Europe is narrated as the "future" of Slovenia, but there is little to say about personal common grounds or experiences. At the same time, solidarity with other ex-states becomes impossible on a public level. Especially the emphasis on the *defensiveness* of Slovenes highlights the insecurity regarding Sloveneness on the macro-level of the group. From that perspective, being in the *middle* can therefore also be seen as being connected with insecurities towards belonging.

2.3 EU-Europeanness and "Western" Situatedness

As it emerged in the analysis of being "in the *middle*", Sloveneness is not something which the group members could define only in the context of Slovenia itself, nations do not negotiate their identity in an isolated manner (cf. Woodward 1997: 29). In the point of view of the discussion group members, Slovenia is a European country, which is influenced by various European traditions. Similar as Velikonja (2005), the group participants observe that it is not surprising that membership to the European Union

has not caused significant change in perceptions of the "degree" of Europeanness. They rather emphasise that they would show a different attitude towards the EU-membership since Slovenia is an EU-country.

> **Marko:** Being European now is just (1) is on a totally different (1) basis (2)
> **Mojca:** I don't know, for me sometimes, I (1), you know, my foreign friends asked me so, "Now, when you are European" – we have entered the EU – "how do you feel now?" And I am like "I have always been European, I have always had similar cultural heritage" I don't know, we have been part of Austrian-Hungarian Empire, which was definitely European of course and so on (1). And even Yugoslavia was still in Europe. Okay not in the Western sense, but (1) come on!
> **Marko:** Yeah, are you speaking geographically?
> **Mojca:** Yeah, geographically or mentally she means, I don't know! And I don't consider myself Asian, I don't consider myself as (1) god, what Asian is – Chinese Asian.
> **Marko:** No, what I wanted to say is, that we feel more connected.

Many changes regarding a "Western" attitude of Europeanness have been introduced over a long period starting from the 1980s. The final membership to the European Union did not cause any radical change among the inhabitants. Despite that Marko considers belonging to the EU as something very important. He distinguishes Mojca's objection of "always been European" in terms of territory, because Yugoslavia does not seem to be his idea of Europe. In another section, he said he had always admired the Austrian structure and tidiness of the country and sees Slovenia on the same road towards cultural organisation, and regrets that they have not reached the same level yet. These insights might make his insistence on separating cultural connections to former Yugoslavian republics more understandable. "*Feeling more connected*" as he states, strengthens the relationship between the European countries that are in the European Union, but not between those who still remained outside. This means excluding all other ex-republics of Yugoslavia. Europeanness as a political category changes the sense of Sloveneness from a larger perspective, because national decisions are also based on a European consensus and have to be taken into consideration also in national matters. Here, Mojca agrees too:

> **Mojca:** [...] Then international organisations from governmental organisations, not just the EU (1) what their opinion on (1) what Slovenia was doing (1) what was right (1) I don't know (1) what was democratic, such as the respect of Human Rights and bababa. Also (1) that NGOs were saying that, I don't know, you should treat homosexuals better and I don't know, Slovenia is err (2) not respecting human rights in this area and that area, I don't know, the nuclear power plant, is a bad thing bababa (3) I don't (1) that also, I think had shaped our identity (1) not significantly, but it had shaped our politics (1) and the way the politicians were, well (1) acting- and that's also a part-

The example also shows the contested area of defining Europeanness, which does not only begin or end with the European Union. There are other instances connected to the notion of "EU-Europeanness". EU-European includes "Westernness" and provides pre-agreed rules for Slovenia. Such standards also work as controlling forces, which was recognized by this group as well. The political Union is seen as the change towards *learning "Western" democratic thinking*. From their own definition, the group members see the state of *mind* of Slovenia as *immature*, because of its short independence and its first steps towards democratic values. Consequently this has to go along with a feeling of insecurity in the new field of proving their *political*, *social* and *cultural competences*. They see that the fact that Slovenes were usually incorporated into greater empires, made them more powerful as well. So far, they can see a connection between the two terms *opening* and *mistrust* with which they have characterised Slovene society in their brainstorming. Opening particularly refers to the changes in Slovenia and the enthusiasm towards the European Union, as well as the positive attitude towards people from other EU-European states. Also in their point of view, "foreigners" were not seen as equals when compared with people from EU-foreign countries. *Mistrust* on the other hand goes along with the *insecurity* of being on their own after almost 700 years, where they felt psychologically safer. In regards to this matter it becomes extremely important, *"what others say about us"*, in particular, what superior others say about Slovenia and Slovenes. Here they listed the European Union, NATO and the United Nations. Again, they see the feeling of insecurity transferred onto personal relationships, but as regards this, I am not sure, whether they spoke about their own situation or whether they tried to identify a "general" Slovene character.

Marko: Bigger. Like other states like Germany, in a way, European Union, United Nations, we always say what European Union thinks, I think, that's okay. Or (1) I don't know, when our Prime Minister is on the television, and gets a question, and he says "I think, we will do, what the European Union will do". We- (1) It's not always like that, but I just want to say, that I think that we always, we are too- (3)

Mojca: -we are too concerned.

Marko: Yeah, we are too concerned with all the other people's opinions, not just international, but also on a personal level.

Mojca: Yes, I guess, we::- the way that we are seen in the eyes of the others, not just in the eyes of other states or in the eyes of the foreigners, but also how does Gregor perceive me, am I successful in his eyes. Maybe that's also important, what am I gonna do, like (2) keep me in a good position, not in the position physically, but (1) you know, where others-

Gregor: Mentally.

Mojca: Yeah! Will others think well of me, or am I gonna stir the waters, you know- (1) that's the problem I think, I mean in Slovenia we are introverted, meaning that, if you are, I don't know (1) not thinking as the majority (1) then it's quite easy to become (1) not outcaste, but not really very popular, let's say it like this.

In this interview excerpt, the group targets several different important issues. One nodal point is the orientation towards the European Union as a kind of measurement used to define Slovenia's position. The example of the Prime Minister might be exaggerated, but expresses certain insecurity on a political level, at least in the point of view of the group. At the same moment, during the discussion, the group members repeatedly referred to the situation of the European Union, when talking about Slovenia. Either to show that occurrences or the political situation is *normal* in their own country compared to others or to point out what Slovenia still has to achieve. Mojca's point on "*thinking like the majority*" is crucial in terms of being accepted by others shows an insecurity regarding a stage of *normality* in the country. This attitude is very particular for the group and reflects upon the kind of *normality* they would like to see realised for Slovenia. They also transfer compulsory normality to a personal level. Here they do not distinguish between different layers of society. They narrate people as being outcasts who would like to go different ways in present Slovenia. For their group "*thinking like the others*" is strongly connected to "Western" standards, such confidence only breaks, if they feel attacked from a EU-European context (at that time by Jean-Franco Fini or Jörg Haider) or excluded from the notion of *Westernness* as with the Austrian media report on the Čevapčiči-World Cup. Then it seems to be a release to have the other option of identifying with the cultural and political traditions of former Yugoslavia.

Recognition within European countries is another important issue for the group. From their personal experiences abroad, they are more likely to accept US-Americans confusing Slovenia with other states, as George Bush did. Outside Europe, European identity becomes important (cf. Wodak and Puntscher Riekmann 2003: 289). Inside Europe, Slovene identity is an important signifier of identity, at least abroad. In this context, they feel offended, when they experienced that people did not know Slovenia. Marko remembered an occasion in a Berlin post office, when the woman at the desk did not know, whether Slovenia was a European country or not. Gregor is more pragmatic, in France people often asked him, where Slovenia was. For him, that was an expression of their poor education. It was, however, irritating for the group, when people abroad, Mojca especially referred to her experiences in France, started to suggest that Slovenia was largely without running water and electricity. At this point, people from the discussion group started to *defend* against the prevailing stereotypes usually attached to the "Balkans". Mojca, for example, felt the need to explain in that connection that Slovenia was a Catholic country, even when people abroad did not ask for the major religious traditions. Suddenly *Catholicism* becomes a signifier for identity in order to "prove" *normality* within an EU-European space and *natural* belonging. The turn to "normality" was not typical for the general line of argumentation of the discussion group, but shows some of the group's insecurity as a

result of not being known in other countries by their nationality. Being connected with "Oriental" or "Balkan" images abroad brings them into a *defensive position* and questions in this way the European identity they hoped to have achieved in other situations. At the same time, they seem to identify EU-Europe through the *compulsory sameness* of the member-states in which Slovenia has to be the *same as* any other state. Such a perception is supportive of Mitja Velikonja's (2005) view of Slovene *Eurocentrism*. The European Union, in the perspective of the group, does not include the "other" Europe. On the contrary, the EU, as Slovenes, tries their best to escape confusions with non-EU-Europe.

Their personal expectations regarding Slovene membership to the EU were, besides jobs in Brussels – a point which they were not absolutely serious about, better welfare conditions and higher wages from a long term perspective. In this matter, they hope to close the gap of earnings with other European countries. For Slovenia, as a state they hope to achieve greater possibilities in negotiating important decisions in order not to be completely dependent on outside rules, but to act like an equal partner in international politics. This might express the hope to "*leave the state of learning*" and at the same moment to re-obtain a more powerful position.

> **Gregor:** -being a part and being an important part in terms of making decisions[81]-
> **Marko:** Yeah. Hm.
> **Gregor:** -as a big, global super power-
> **Mojca:** (laughs)
> **Gregor:** -because I see the European Union in future as a Super-power.
> **Marko:** It already is!
> **Gregor:** Well, not really, but (1) it will be.
> **Mojca:** I just hope that the things will stay well; they won't get worse (laughs), a bit of scepticism.
> **Marko:** I think we see everything here (1) from a political point of view.

EU-Europe is both cultural belonging and a political project, which has a fascinatingly powerful potential for the group. Therefore, they see it as crucial that Slovenia joined the Union by taking up the discourse of gaining "better life conditions" with the EU-membership. NATO, for them, is less culturally loaded and does not affect their imagination in the same way. The idea of NATO remains for them on a political level, a powerful worldwide peace keeping organisation. Mojca and Gregor were both negative towards the idea of joining the NATO, but accepted it as a necessity in order to join the European Union.

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81   Here they talk about the European Union.

3. Old and New Global Influences:
Slovenia in the Process of Change

Talking about Slovene identity and its relationship to other countries and foreign influences was driven by the tension of *hoping for change* and *resisting change*. This is once more repeating the tension between *opening* and *closing tendencies* of the group's negotiation on their sense of belonging. Also here, it is important to see at what points group members feel personally affected or define the need to *protect* Slovene cultural specificities, or where change through foreign influences are appreciated. Above all, the group saw foreign influences as coming from cultural and economic fields rather than through political fields, forgetting that the narration of difference and exclusive identity narrations are especially drawn from the political public level of identity. From their "*in the middle*"- perspective of cultural influences, they believe that Slovenia and Slovenes have always dealt and negotiated with foreign influences. Therefore, they see Slovenian culture to some degree intersected with "foreign" cultural aspects that are largely appreciated by Slovenes and consequently have become part of the Slovene culture.

> **Marko:** Yeah, that, I want to stress that, our language, is, was surely vexed with other languages, especially at the border regions, also Aschenbecher[82] and stuff like that (laughs)
> **Mojca:** Yeah.
> **Marko:** I mean a lot of things in our language, err (1) language is one of the main; I mean, from the Western Slovenian side, there are a lot of Italian words. Language is a very (1) strong basis of our identity and it's affected by other languages and all sort of culture, mixture of different cultures, it's influenced by Hungarians, Austrians, Italian also, Croatians (1) I don't know, Balkans.

In this example, the group discusses influences on language, which is one of the most important identifications or signifiers for Sloveneness on a public level, especially in relation to "nostalgic" and regressive narrations of cultures[83]. As being part of Slovene youth, such influences are not "frightening" for the participants. On the contrary, such language specificities have grown over centuries and contributed to a particular sense of Sloveneness. Conspicuously they do not refer to "Balkan" slang in contemporary youth culture. Mojca mentions Serbo-Croatian even *after* Hungarian influences.

Food is another typical example for Sloveneness being a mixture of diverse origin, which makes it difficult to disentangle single cultural influences. Čevapčiči, sausages,

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82   German for ashtray.
83   This seems to be part of the globalisation debate of many smaller nation states or concerning languages that are not considered as "world languages".

pizza or vegetarian food create the link to the neighbouring countries, as well as to popular trends in the "West" as a larger cultural framework. Unlike "traditional" foreign influences, *new influences*, with the transition of the political system and the opening to the "West" are perceived as *ambiguous* and partially *irritating*.

> **Mojca:** [...] we were talking during an interview; they were asking us, how much Slovenia has changed from when you were young. Then (1) I got to notice, fuck, we really changed, twelve years ago, there was in my village, next to my village, you had to go for ten minutes to one small shop, which would sell (1) I don't know (1) the necessary things, those that you needed, but today you can go to ten shops in my local, in my town, and you got like, I don't know, three types of washing powder, and you don't even need one, and you are just a:: (annoyed) there are so many things to choose, you got …. And the next thing I also noticed about change like, in my village this fire brigade would make parties, every now and then, once a year, and (1) for the past five years, we haven't had any (1) and-
> **Gregor:** Aha.
> **Mojca:** -okay this could also be maybe, because my village is a little bit weird, but- (1) I don't know, I think we are changing more to this capitalistic, materialistic way maybe, I don't know, or maybe it is more obvious-
> **Marko:** Yeah, but this is a global change, right
> **Mojca:** Yeah, probably

Capitalism seems to affect Sloveneness in a different way than traditional foreign influences from the past, which are part of the Slovene culture, such as Catholicism, Volkskultur, etc. The media transports global lifestyles also to rural places and binds young people together with attractive ideas of identity through "Western" music and musicians for example on MTV. Especially Mojca worries about Slovene traditions and missing new Slovene bands. It is interesting in this context that her regrets are regarding the lack of capable followers to Avsenik in the Slovene folk music scene. However, she stated earlier that she disliked traditional folk-music during Sunday lunches. Above all, even though she wants to move to Ljubljana and leave the rural context of her family, she does not appreciate the changes in her parent's location. The main critique of all of them is that there is no band unlike in their parents' generation that could connect Slovenes. Younger people would only sing and dance to such music when they are drunk, otherwise English music increasingly connects people at parties. Perceived changes are associated with capitalism and the centralisation of the market. The decreasing number of small shops is accompanied with passing folk traditions. For the participants, such a change is difficult, because they defined Slovenia largely as rural and marked by *Volkskultur*. Additionally, the perceived speed of such changes raises the question of the implications for Slovenia in the future. The group also finds it displeasing on how younger people, here they mean younger than they are, incorporate or copy styles from the media and dislike the fact that these young people are attracted to commercial media rather than serious media. In their point of view,

serious media consist of more news, like CNN. Sometimes, as the group members point out, consuming such styles from commercial media would often create strange copies of styles. For example, rap produced by Slovenian guys, who sing about the same things as black people from the Bronx, but who have only experienced war, murder and violence on television.

3.1 No Fun-Community

Regarding changes towards a *consumer based culture*, the group members take on a very critical position. I find that interesting, because in doing so, they suddenly employ very conservative point of views on change in a larger perspective. Their resistances are not only directed towards consumer based values and capitalism, but are also based on the example of their own companies. They see capitalism as an aspect of modernisation processes and seem to dislike any changes. This might correspond to a feeling of "home", where changes do not only affect their lives, but also their childhood places. With the latest changes and increased *consumerism* in Slovenia, they discuss the fact that younger people are less interested in history or Slovene culture and consume identity through the media.

Global influences are mostly identified as coming from US-American culture. In their perception the positive attitude towards the United States in the 1980s, including ideas of freedom and, a good way of life, has passed. Today's perspective is more critical about it, also because of the close association with McDonald's, or competition in a negative way, which already exists in Slovenia. They also question, whether they could be aware of influences coming with American movies, or music. As in the case of the previously mentioned Slovene rappers, they point out it was not just copying American items. Sometimes, the group members point out, it is difficult to decide which cultural discourse Slovenia should follow: a US-American or EU-European. Interestingly, especially in terms of "global influences" they become the most protective of Sloveneness. They say, they would know it was impossible to just follow "themselves", which refers to a level of identity work that is always related to other identities. Furthermore, participants see that politics and economics (my addition) and the media have followed the capitalist way already. At this point, all of them turn towards a very strong *protective attitude* on Slovenian culture and seem to be afraid of the loss of national particularities.

> **Mojca:** I see here Spar and I remember when I was a kid, that was (1) an Austrian shop, my parents would go shopping for the week- (1) not for the weekend, but-
> **Gregor:** Ja.
> **Mojca:** -for the week, in the good old days, ja!

Marko: Mm

Mojca: In the previous state, they would go err (1) to Austria, you know, to buy so much stuff-

Marko: Kinder! Kinder!

Mojca: Yeah, maybe.

Marko: Kinder chocolate, that was one of the-

Mojca: And then I can eat chocolate and stuff. Now I get it here, you know! That's what changed! And we have Shell here now, for Petrol, I mean not, okay, not predominant, but you can see it. And that's what is changing. You have Zara, HM and stuff like that, Mc Donald's.

This example might hold the key to why it was important for them to identify companies by their national ownership. Spar was initially a shop they visited in Austria nourishing their imagination of childhood with Austrian chocolate. Today, they have all kinds of foreign shops. They could, as they point out, probably buy Kinder chocolate even in the Shell petrol station. That, I would claim, confuses a certain "order", with which they grew up. The mixed cultural signifiers in their eyes have come with globalisation. Maybe this is what brought them to the point, besides their education in political sciences during which they have probably studied the subject of capitalism, that identities are much easier "to buy" today, because of the great variety of different styles and looks. Here they also miss the connection to Sloveneness. Whereas they referred earlier to the ability of (Slovene) culture to transfer foreign influences into a Slovene way, they cannot say the same thing in the case of hamburgers or rap music.

3.2 Domestificating Foreign Influences

Another point of interest is the different attitudes on media, cinema, and movies. Here the group were able to find very important and positive factors of identity constructions. Above all, Serbian and Croatian movie productions are considered influential for contemporary styles. There was one movie from a Serbian team about the last war in Serbia (Lepe vasi, lepo gore[84]) and many Slovene people started to take up film statements and the language used in the film.

Mojca: "Lepe vasi, lepo gore" – and-

Gregor: Nice villages and beautiful

Mojca: Ja, something like that, and they were.

Gregor: It is a good Serbian movie about the last war.

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84   Translation: Beautiful villages burn beautifully.

Mojca: Ja, and- ja, there was a period for two months and every word they said was from that movie, and I was like "Come on!" And for example you have Pulp fiction.
Marko: Yeah! No! That's me!
Mojca: Everybody is saying Pulp Fiction sometimes.
Marko: Yeah, let me! Me and two friends, best friends, we are Pulp Fiction guys; we were in Belgrade, talking to each other. And I said "Oh shit, all we know, is Pulp Fiction!" Everything we say is Pulp Fiction!

The group became really exited about borrowing statements from popular movies in conversations with friends, through which they create links from their immediate situation to the film context. A similar shared experience, not among the group members, but they considered the example as "funny" and not "dangerous", is watching Tele Novelas. "Esmeralda", the name of the main character and the title of one Latin American Tele Novella, became a popular figure in Slovenia. Mojca claimed that when the actress of Esmeralda came to Ljubljana the main square was full of people, mostly elderly women and young children; overall, she estimates that 200 Slovene babies[85] were named after her.

In the case of the group participants, nobody seemed strongly attached to the so-called *consumer-culture*. Maybe due to their education and their family background, their discursive situatedness prevents them from understanding the "fun" involved in consuming customs and commodities. This would correspond to the case of Stjepan Meštrović, who is a social scientist from former Yugoslavian background who lives and teaches in the USA. Unlike his US-American wife and his children, he outlined that he could not enjoy the consumer culture's way of life, such as going to Disneyland, because this way of fun was completely alien to his social and cultural background. This lack of understanding for the consumer culture may also correspond to the economic situation of the group participants. At least none of them followed the latest fashion trends, as many young people in Ljubljana do. From that perspective they might feel alienated from consumerism. It is the sense that their criticism of consumer culture is more than a mere *repetition* of contemporary public and scientific discourses (cf. Lyotard 1984: 41 pp.) and a *protectionist attitude* to Sloveneness. The ways they engage in popular culture seem to require a higher complexity of thinking, in which they, for example, transform movies into their own context and vice versa. That might allow them to be in "control" of the contents carried by foreign media texts.

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85   I suppose this is an overestimation, but she probably referred to such a high number in order to highlight this particular influence.

4. Considerations of Belonging

Based on their "pro-European"-attitude, of which Mojca, Gregor and Marko proved during the discussion, and their consideration of belongings to different social and cultural space, I would call that group "*EU-European Slovenes*". Although Europe is not above all visible in the characterisations of the brainstorming session, it is evidently an important point of reference during their discussion and comes to surface in different shapes: as the continent, the political project, an important orientation towards democratic values and state organisation, as a cultural zone, a trading alliance, etc. "Europeanness" from their point of view is a very exclusive category bound to the European Union. For them, political or economic unification also includes a certain basis of accepting cultural rules. Especially Marko is strongly emotionally engaged in this project and wants Slovenia to reach the *level* of other ("Western") European countries. Although they remain unspecific in defining what or who the European Union is, they mostly refer to the *German cultural zone,* including Austria and Switzerland, as their main source of comparison. Their impression of the political, cultural and social situation in Slovenia comes from confrontation with Europeans from other countries, when being abroad at international meetings or conferences organised by JEF or on other occasions. I am not sure, how they approach Europeanness theoretically, but I have the impression that they created a particular *emotional* tie to the Union through a certain fascination with the European "high" culture, as they identified with Mozart. Above all, on this political level, "*Balkanness*" has to be abandoned and removed from *Sloveneness*, which does not lead to resentments to a prospective Turkish or Croatian EU-membership. The European Union is seen as an important political power for them to become more powerful together with more states.

> **Gregor:** What is the perception of living abroad, maybe, in ten years to live abroad for us would not be Brussels any longer.
> **Mojca:** Maybe, we hope (laughs)

Gregor employs a future perspective where being abroad must be rethought in an EU-Europe. Since all of the group seem to dream of working once, at least for a period in Brussels, Brussels becomes a synonym for *EU-Europe* for them. Many people from their organisation in Slovenia (Young European Federalists) have been *abroad* on internships in Brussels, all of them consider going there as well for some time. The relation between Slovenia and the European Union is also interesting. In the context of a European identity, they see Slovenia as a part of this identity. In their own cases, as they point out, they would rarely think of themselves as Europeans as long as they are in a European context, but Brussels is not Belgium, it is Europe. From their

perspective, there are not only the Easts, the Souths and Wests of Europe, as Etienne Balibar (1998: 226) perceives Europe, there is also the *centre*. And the centre correlates with the notion of being abroad. At the same time, by saying that in ten years Brussels will possibly no longer be abroad for them, they suggest their expectation that the relation between centres and peripheries will change. Ten years ahead, Slovenia might be much closer to the centre than today, having learned and incorporated EU-Europeanness. They reverse the notion of *abroad* from the statement above, because all of them plan "*to come back*" to Slovenia. This might also refer to a certain state of mind, where Europe and Slovenia are still distinguished instances. It might also tell of a kind of *double-situatedness* of the group members, being EU-European and situated in "pre"-European Slovenia regarding EU-standards at the same time. This is also mirrored in their relationship to Slovenia. There is a strong *local embeddedness* of the group in the initial rural local background, from which they define Slovenia largely through landscape, rural life and Volkskultur, where cities and urban life is left out over a large part of the description, until it intersects with Ljubljana. Their embeddedness in Slovenia is clearly focussed on the same region – the rural area of Kranj and Ljubljana. Therefore, they define their feeling of "home" as a *rural Slovenia* coupled with a *modern Slovenia*. Especially Gregor and Marko see their *private life* in the country side and their *professional life* in Ljubljana, whereas Mojca would prefer to live and work in Ljubljana. While they accept change in modern Slovenia, they do not want to accept the same for rural Slovenia, or their *private life* maybe. Certainly these considerations are made at a point in their lives, where none of them have lived abroad over a period longer than a month. Even when they have visited many countries like all states in Ex-Yugoslavia, Austria, Italy, Czech Republic, Malta, Great Britain, Greece, France, Portugal or Spain, not only as tourists, they have never learned to live with other "*normalities*" than (a particular) Slovenian *normality*. Going on internships or starting a career in the European Union could change their considerations of *home* and *abroad*, as Gregor stresses in his statement above. By stating this, he draws upon a hope that Braidotti (2004: 137-8) envisions with her concept of the privileged foreigner whose nationality is unlinked from notions of citizenship and nation identity. The statement also shows that the group's mind set already deals with a transnational mindset of belonging, in some respect more than in others.

Gregor, Marko and Mojca notice that travelling in other countries sometimes makes them aware of being Slovene, more than in Slovenia on a national holiday day or during some sports competition. When they see billboards of Slovene companies abroad, they are reminded of and become enthusiastic, about their homeland, Slovenia. Therefore, their conscious commitment to Slovenia is mostly experienced abroad or when politicians or other important figures from abroad have something to say about

Slovenia. The strongest tendency of national border drawing comes in relation the Southern ex-Yugoslavian states. The differentiation between a personal and public level is interesting in that relation. While they recognise negative tendencies towards southern neighbours in Slovenia, they never fall into antagonism as regards people from the South. All of them have friends from other ex-Yugoslavian states or meet them and people from other former communist countries in international gatherings. Regarding politics or economy and the legal system of Slovenia, there is suddenly a very strict cut from their Southern neighbours, also on a personal level. At that point identification with Slovenia and the European Union is very strong, and is the emotional involvement at those points of discussion. This may allow from the conclusion that they are in the *middle* of *emotional border-drawing* in the south and maybe also in "old" rural Slovenia. They stated, they would engage in both, in *"Balkan" behaviour* and *"Balkan" music,* and in *Slovene folk music* such as the music of Avseniki, when they are *drunk*. This might prove of a highly ambiguous relationship to these cultural expressions from which they distinguish, when they are in a "rational" state, such as not being drunk. The notion of *Sloveneness* is always contested by rural and urban Slovenia, different regions, their parents' generation and influences from different sides which they have partially acknowledged as part of their own culture. Certainly, being Slovene, they could pass both as being from the "Balkans", which is expressed in their stories of bonding with other people from the "Balkans" in international meetings, and as "Western" Europeans due to similar traditions and the political and economic direction. Being Slovene for the group participants is an "*in the middle*" position, because in the case of the group participants they are able to speak or understand most of the European languages. They can communicate with a large "Western European" population in the national language, such as in French (Mojca and Gregor) and in German (Marko) or English (all of them), and with "Balkan" people in former Serbo-Croatian and they also have their Slovene national language. People abroad usually do not understand Slovene and therefore they have their own "secret" language.

The "Metropolitans"

This group consists of Aleksandra (20), Nada (21), Marija (22) and Igor[86] (21), who all have a family background in another state of former Yugoslavia. They volunteered in taking part in the interview during a lecture and did not form a group outside the research situation. At the time the study was conducted, all were students of Media and Communication Studies in Ljubljana. This interview is characterised by the very personal relationship of the group to issues of *belonging*, although Nada and Igor stressed public presentation of Slovenia in their brainstorming[87], whereas Marija and Aleksandra wrote down their personal embeddedness in Slovenia. Considerations of (non-)belonging are present almost at every moment of talking. Members of this group seem to have defined very clearly their attitude towards national identification in Slovenia.

1. A Picture of Slovenia

In the first brainstorming session, Slovenia in the viewpoints drawn by the group participants was characterized by the tension of the country's micro- and meta-level description: Nada and Igor mentioned the national *culinary specialities*. Nada remembered the Miss Slovenia selection, in which she participated, where she also had to list typical identifiers for Slovenia. For her the connection was immediately made to "pršut", wine and potica. Here, the group members largely agree on the fact that culinary specialities are not necessarily those things which connect them in their personal relationship to Slovenia. They link aspects of Slovene cuisine with representations of Slovene tourist brochures, which is emphasised as being *typically* Slovene or *unique* for the Slovene culture in other public discourses. Referring to those things, was also the way they would introduce foreigners to Slovenia. Landscape was the next feature of Slovenia they would acknowledge as associated with Slovenia. *Trglav*, the highest Slovene mountain, is a national symbol and also the *heraldic feature* on the Slovene flag. The group members also referred to it as a national signifier for Slovenia. Nobody was able to explain the meaning of the symbol and highlighted their disinterest in it. However, landscape and Slovene cuisine was neither of personal interest to them nor did they refer to it as something special or to be proud of. If they had to, they would introduce Slovenia to foreigners, using such examples without showing any emotional attachment to them. Therefore, their description of Slovenia does not expressively contain the concept of *Sloveneness*.

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86   Names changed.
87   See list of characterization in appendix.

1.1 Slovene Reputation

As one main characteristic of Slovenia, the participants point to its territorial smallness. For them, it is not surprising that people abroad, mainly US-Americans[88], usually do not know where Slovenia is. The participants of the group consider US-Americans as defining Europe through the ancient history of Italy and Greece or through large cities like London, Paris, Rome, etc. From that perspective, I would argue that *smallness* also means *not known* to other *important* countries, such as the world-power of the United States. *Recognition* from other countries is extremely important for a nation state. Therefore, not knowing "Slovenia" is very painful for the inhabitants whose nationality is usually important in international encounter. The aspect of *smallness* is also the *short history* of Slovenia. Before independence in June 1991 Slovenia was not perceived as an entity on its own with a distinguished history. Consequently, other (European) states could not know about the Slovene contribution to, for example, "*Europeanness*". It was rather known as former Yugoslavia. However, despite the last point, the group members agree that Slovenia should do something about its recognition. In this context Aleksandra points at George Bush's confusion of Slovenia and Slovakia. Then, they all tried to remember occasions and events, when Slovenia obtained international attention. Nada for example, who is the only one in the group who refers to occurrences and commodities of the popular culture and points at her disinterest in politics, refers to the winner of a Miss Slovenia contest. In Nada's opinion, Miša Novak, the winner, was outstanding. Because of her, as the Slovenian media narrated the case, foreign media did not mix up Slovenia with Slovakia. As positive examples of well-known Slovenes in countries abroad, they also referred to famous music groups like Siddhartha and Laibach, although none of them really knew that Laibach[89] as a music group is known outside of Slovenia in "Western" European states. At the time of the interview (November 2004), Siddhartha was played on MTV. Tajči and Magazin are two other music groups. They were participants in the Eurovision contest and mostly known in the former Yugoslavian states. In this relation, they also mentioned Avseniki. None of the group, however, has a personal connection to the band. The group referred to them as being known in the Alpine countries and as having sold a large number of CDs, and they have already passed their 50 year anniversary. In their perspective, attention from abroad is not only

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88 Whenever Slovene people, or people who live in Slovenia, say that US-American people might not know Slovenia, it is related to George Bush's fauxpas of confusing Slovenia and Slovakia. People have also said that before Bush's statement, but today, I would claim, they will always think of that example as well.

89 Laibach is mainly known abroad, especially in Austria and not in Slovenia. The music group is important for Slovene people, because it represents Slovenia to the world, for this reason Slovene people are likely to know that this band exists.

required from the so-called "West", they also find Slovenia's reputation in the other ex-states as important. Slavoj Žižek is the only name of a famous Slovenian abroad, which is listed by one of the group members in the brainstorming session. The next example points at a famous *Slovenian* from the ex-states.

> **Igor:** I wrote Branko Đurić – Đuro[90] more as a joke. When he first came to Slovenia, he was just seen as a miserable refugee. They didn't even want to engage him in 'Teater Paradižnik'. And nowadays he is a big star. He is the man!

Đuro came to Slovenia as a Bosnian refugee and is today celebrated as *Slovenian* and is representative for the Slovenian art scene. He is also co-editor and actor in the Slovene comedy "Naša mala klinika", which is considered as being a "home-production" that caricatures the Slovenian character. For the members of the group, Đuro's character might be important, because he has a similar situation to theirs. The discussants sharply observed that Branko Đurić has only been accepted as a *Slovene* actor, when it turned out that he was talented. This is very similar to the process of *whitening* "white" people in the context of "white" Europe, as shown on the example of the Irish or Italian people (see Braidotti and Griffin 2002, Gray 2002). Passing for being "white" was only possible to fulfil particular requests of the dominant group, here within Europe or the United States. Often, except in the case of Jewish people, economic wealth was extremely important. After all, there is a lack of a clear set of rules of how to obtain the status of whiteness or in the case of "Southerners" the status of *Sloveneness,* which is equal to Europeanness. Sometimes people seem to be able to *pass* such *boundaries*. In the case of Đurić, the members of the discussion groups explain that as a result of his talent. At the same time, he might be one of the first "Southerners" who was able to extend *Sloveneness* with a positive image of the "Balkans" on a public level. This could be an indication of *Sloveneness opening* to non-ethnic-Slovenes, also because the Southern relations are obvious in the surname Đurić. Neither "đ" nor "ć" is a letter from the Slovene alphabet. The attitude of the group members to the Slovene (not necessarily conscious) tendency to *use* Đuro's success for Slovenia also allows the conclusion that Slovenia has *annexed* his representation for national purposes, instead letting him contribute to Slovene cultural life as a non-Slovenian person. I would claim, although the participants of the discussion all admire Đuro and recognise him as a positive example of "non-ethnic-Slovenes", they regret that the Slovenian hand on his image.

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90   Branko Đurić is also known as Đuro.

1.2 Personal Access to Slovenia – In the Middle Again[91]

Personally all group participants feel closer connected to the *cities* or *towns* where they live or come from, such as Ljubljana or Kranj, than to the whole country or the rural part of Slovenia. The reason for that might lie in the fact that none of them come from the countryside. Through their own experiences and preferences, they seem to have *imagined* their belonging to Slovenia through cities, including *city life*. Other personal relations to Slovene culture come from their encounter with Slovene traditions and every-day-life. Aleksandra[92], for example, who is a folklore dancer, likes music with the Slovene accordion (harmonika) and Slovenian dances. At the same time she points out that Croatian dances would offer more interesting step combinations in their dances. She is the only one in the group who refers to the *beauty* of the Slovene (green) landscape of Slovenia. Marija anchors her belonging in an almost de-nationalised way. She describes her relation to Slovenia through her family and Kranj, where she lives.

Aleksandra, who is from Croatia, feels linked with her grandmother in Slovenia. She is not the only one who immediately thinks of the conflict between Slovenia and Croatia. The "*gulf of Piran*" is symptomatic of the groups for the conflict-based differentiation between Slovenes and "others". Although none of the others have a family background in Croatia, they all seem personally affected by the troubles between the two countries. For them, it is not Slovenia that is "*in the middle*", but they are "*in the middle*" of identity politics of Slovenia and other former Yugoslavian states that cross their sense of belonging in national term. Thus, the border conflict between Slovenia and Croatia was among the first things the group talked about. From the argumentation of the participants it was clear that they can never *think as usually* as "*normal*" nationals. They are on "both" or more sides at the same moment and have to negotiate between Slovenia, the country they grew up in and the countries from where their parents come from. The case of Aleksandra is the other way round: she has family in Slovenia and decided to go there to study. Nada, for example, says that her relatives in Monte Negro, where her parents come from, used to call her and her family "Janezi"[93]. That term is used, especially by their parents' generation, in other ex-republics from Yugoslavia, to talk about Slovenes, where Janez was always a very common name. Although they all spent their summers in Serbia (Igor), Monte Negro (Nada), Bosnia (Marija) or Slovenia (Aleksandra), they did not completely identify with Serbia,

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91   This title refers to the "middle" state defined by the group of "EU-European Slovenes" and also outlines a different "being in the middle" than the "middle-state" of the previous group.

92   Aleksandra is a Croatian citizen with Slovene grandparents. She lives in Ljubljana because of her studies.

93   Plural of the male name Janez.

Monte Negro, Bosnia, or in Aleksandra's case, with Slovenia. They also identified with their families in Slovenia/Croatia and were not allowed to completely adopt one national identity. This tension of being situated between two national contexts is played out further, in the cases of Igor and Marija who have one parent from Slovenia and one parent from another ex-state. Nada, for example, often refers to Monte Negro as her home, but says the same about Slovenia. Igor does not see his national belonging situated in only one of the two countries, to some degree, he will remain alien in both countries. Conspicuously in that connection, the use of "we" and "them" is shifting. The participants of the discussion use both expressions for Slovenes and for people from the country where one or both of their parents come from. Although they cannot lean back and fall into *thinking as usually* as nationals of one country, the conversation of the group did not express the need to fix their identity to one specific position. Similar to a diaspora experience[94], cultural situatedness of each person in the discussion group is very specific. There is no country of "origin" they could return to, because they live between the countries they grew up in. They grew up translating between different social and cultural texts, in which they had to produce meaning from their own position. All of them learned to live with dissonance and alienation in both familiar national contexts and accept that neither Slovenes (Croatians) nor their relatives in Serbia, Bosnia, Monte Negro or Slovenia would change their *thinking as usual* because of them (cf. Welzer 1993: 83).

1.3 Nationalism

Nationalism was among the first terms to describe the Slovenian climate. The group members turned out to be very sensitive towards political or other public discourses, as well as towards labelling in everyday life. From their line of argumentation, they would possibly acknowledge nationalism as an aspect of *Sloveneness*.

> **Igor:** Erm, for what reason did I write down nationalism? Maybe because my mother is from Serbia and my father is Slovene. And somehow I don't feel that I belong to the country and I am very sensitive to this national labelling. I feel neither Serbian nor Slovenian. When I come to Serbia they think of me as a Slovenian. Here – they don't think of me as a Slovenian, but as Janez Janša once stated: as a hybrid. I am as a matter of fact a hybrid. I remember him saying that – I was eight or nine, when he labelled us as hybrids.

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94   Maybe this can be seen as an aspect of diaspora.

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When we were entering this survey[95] a girl in front of me said: "Do you really need to have parents from down there?" Kind of negative connotation isn't it. I notice this all the time. And it bothers me a bit.

In this statement, Igor is very much emotionally involved. Despite the fact that he was never openly harassed by racism, as he stated later, he is extremely sensitive towards a perceived mood against people from the Southern former Yugoslavian Republics in Slovenia. Although he is half Slovenian from a nationalist point of view, he was born and raised in Slovenia and has Slovene citizenship, he experienced very early that he was *not* Slovene. The moment he describes the first time he recognised that he was labelled as *different*. It occurred at the same time as Slovenia announced its independence from Yugoslavia. Therefore, the situation of the people who were defined as *hybrids* by the right wing politician Jane Jana[96] changed with the segregation of Yugoslavia and the transformation from a Federation state to a nation. More than ever, an in-between-identity was contested through the exclusive claim of what is defined as being national. While the term *hybrid,* for people with different family backgrounds does not appear very offensive to me, because I connect *hybridity* to the possibility of crossing national definitions (see also Hall 1999a: 435). The same term used by a right-wing nationalist politician, loses its positive impact and reduces it to another kind of "label". Fortunately, this does not seem to be an established discourse of speaking about so-called "non-ethnic"-Slovenes. Very similar to how Frantz Fanon (1995: 323-4) describes in the "*Fact of Blackness*", the members of the group experienced a tightening of ethnic marker as regards "people from the South". As children, they often associated such labelling with their parents who are, unlike them, "*from down there*". Nada and Marija outline, that they struggled with the notion of *Sloveneness* as a new discourse that transmitted "normality" during the first years of the Yugoslavian war. It was the time, when they perceived hostility as strongest.

> **Nada**: [...] I was ashamed when my friends came for a visit. My father has been living here for 23 years, but you better do not hear him talking in Slovene. I felt ashamed.
> [..]
> **Marija** [...]: I also had a problem in puberty to admit where my parents come from. Today I regret it.

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95   I introduced my project during a class in the Faculty for Social Sciences, asking people with parents from other former Yugoslavian states to join a group discussion. Igor was referring to that situation, when another student asked him that question.

96   Here, of course, I do not have any proof, whether Janša really said that or not. Doubts were expressed on the part of the side of professors in Slovenia who I talked to about it. They don't believe that Janša would have been that clear in his nationalist attitude. Nonetheless, it has influenced strongly Igor's own positioning within Slovenia and he felt rejected from being a full member of the national community.

In this statement it becomes clear that especially at the beginning of Slovene identity politics, the position of the group members was affected as well. Maybe earlier their belonging was clearer or even self-evident within the place they lived and grew up in. The independence of Slovenia focussed attention on identity and came along with a growing nationalisation of the public sphere. Nada, for example, stated at another point in the discussion that she did not experience any discrimination when she was young. She referred to the example of some of her Southern class mates who were complaining about the bad marks that were given to them, because the teacher did not like their nationality, while she could not support that from her perspective. At the same time, she clearly *knew* there was a negative attitude towards people like her father and therefore herself and felt ashamed of him, because he did not speak proper Slovene and was different from Slovenes. It is also interesting that she refers to 23 years, in which her father did not learn "proper" Slovene, which is, I believe, the time he lived in Slovenia until 2004 and does not only refer to the period when Nada was a child. Nada never refers to the feelings she has regarding her father at present. However, Marija faced similar problems in her childhood. She was also afraid to reveal her parents nationality. Today, nationality in her opinion does not say anything about the character of a person. She points out that she has learned from her experiences to be clearly against any kind of *labelling*, also against *religious labelling*, which is usually openly done in public space. Aleksandra supports the feeling of aversion against the fact that she was from Croatia, although she also did not experience any remarkable discrimination or hostility from Slovenes. It provides her with a feeling she does not like and makes her feel alienated.

> **Nada:** And 'čefur'[97] back in those days seemed offensive, but not anymore. It's just a phrase you use.
> **Igor:** It depends who is using it.
> **Nada:** Yes. Exactly like the word 'nigger' in America.
> **Igor:** I am entitled to say 'čefur' to myself. As Magnifico[98] says: "Who is not a 'čefur'?" I think that is the crucial question: "Who is not a 'čefur'?" Because everybody is a 'čefur' in the end. Everybody!

Magnifico and his music seem to give some release to the people from the discussion group because of the particular type of humour. Nationalist definitions of Slovene nationality can act in a very oppressive way upon people who are excluded from them. *Making jokes* about nationality helps those excluded to understand that it does not need to be taken that seriously all the time. The term "čefur" plays a crucial role in

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97   "Čefur" is used in Slovenia as a swearing word for people from other ex-Yugoslavian states.
98   Magnifico is an example of a smart and successful pop musician, who is also known (and knows how to do that) for making fun of exaggerated national pride in a very sophisticated manner.

their interview, because it targets people from other ex-states in a negative way and marks them with associations of the "other". Although the group discussants recognize some changes in the use of the term, it would remain offensive, if a Slovenian person would address them with the term. However, especially Igor expresses his troublesome relation to any kind of fights over labelling and the artificial basis of groups and grouping on exclusive terms:

> **Igor:** At some point, Serbs demanded to become a minority [..] I mean, shit, what is this!
> In Slovenia the situation is different with the Italian and Hungarian minority; they have special rights, because they are <u>autochthonous.</u> And I always wonder what that means. I mean, autochthonous! Who is autochthonous in this area? I mean, does the area belong to someone? Is such a thing even possible? I do not know, why are they autochthon?
> And then Roma-people. They are supposed to be autochthon, but they themselves also make differences between themselves. And there we have the same thing within the Roma-community: we – them.
> Anyway if the ethnic groups feel like ethnic groups then they exist, of course. We have seen that in the case of the mosque, when there was- Ah, I better not talk about it!

In the above-statement, Igor responds to my question, whether "ethnicity" plays a significant role within Slovenia[99]. Doing so, he did not, above all, target explicitly "Slovenians" as an ethnic community, but everybody else in the Slovene national community. This may be related to the fact that national communities in general are based on the principle that members of the dominant majority are "neutral" whereas "minorities" are ethnic groups, which is similarly portrayed in the Slovene public sphere. There is no evidence that group discussants were familiar with theoretical concepts of communities. From the reaction to the question it seems like they access the term in its dominant national reading, but they are the only group who also point at religion as a marker of "ethnic" discrimination. In contrast to this, Igor's critique on exclusive formations of identity is fundamental. He is deeply critical of the self-legitimation of closed (national, ethnic, language, religious) groups making claims on territory or taking on special rights or excluding cultural expression of groups who are not considered to belong (e.g. building up a religious building). I would argue, Igor's standpoint is deeply against the closure of communities which he observes happening, to his incomprehension, also within Roma communities.

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99   After having conducted this research, I would address the question of "ethnicity" in a different way. The way it was introduced here in the conversation is seductive to cover up a different understanding of communities and belonging than that of dominant interpretations of the public sphere in Slovenia.

Igor's way of taking up the issue of the Mosque was symptomatic for the whole group. Often they were so stressed about issues of daily politics or other discourses on the public agenda that they were emotionally touched and no longer able to speak calmly about their feelings. Especially Igor often stopped speaking, when one issue was too emotional for him and also the others did not want to speak about the issue, because they would not know how to express their feelings. As I explained earlier in the book, the "Balkans", Islam or Orthodoxy as well as the lack of civilisation, aggression or the suppression of women are linked to migrants from the Southern states of former Yugoslavia (cf. Todorova 1997). Whether the group wanted or not, they are related to these issues through their parents and also through the cultural experiences of visiting their families in the other republics and switching between two "homes". Additionally, they experience not being as "normal" by Slovenes and in the states, where they are related to with their parents. Such a personal background does not need to be the only reason why they feel emotionally involved in the efforts to prevent the building of a Mosque in Ljubljana. Being partially alienated from the majority discourse, they might in general be more sensitive towards discrimination and exclusion in the (Slovenian) society. Here, I am not sure, if all members of the group are similarly sensitive towards the issue of "labelling" and discrimination, but this viewpoint became an important discourse to approach their cultural location during the discussion.

At the time when the interview was conducted, the group members were once more confronted with identity issues during the period of campaigns for the national elections in Slovenia and the presidential election in the USA. In our second meeting, it was clear that Slovenia had a new right-wing parliament and George Bush was re-elected as the president of the United States. In reference to this, Marija expressed her worries about tendencies of politicians to get votes because of intolerance, because propaganda for the last national elections in autumn 2004 was accompanied partially by open harassment of Southern foreigners. Also Matjaž Hanžek[100], the Slovene Ombudsman for Human Rights at the time, agrees with that point. From his perspective, things have improved since the national elections due to the awareness raising campaign of his chamber. He could also see that during the local elections in October 2006. As I wrote earlier, the new mayor of Ljubljana has a Southern-Yugoslavian "ethnic" background and his opposition candidates, who tried to mobilise the population against foreigners or migrants, lost votes. Although, immediately after the interview with Hanžek, the hate-speech in public, mostly government influenced media against the Roma-community near Ljubljana, has constituted a new wave of hate-speech. Nonetheless, the group assumed at the time of the interview that the

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100 This is from the interview in autumn 2006, when Hanžek was still the Ombudsman for Human Rights in Slovenia.

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success of the recent elections of right wing parties was a result of being dissatisfied with the current politics of the country rather than a real commitment of Slovenes to right-wing politics. Aleksandra sees here a parallel to Croatia. She pointed out that in order to appear more "civilised" or cultivated, politicians often employ a false understanding of social and cultural hierarchy on the backs of those considered as subordinated to the current understanding of society. Additionally, Aleksandra says that especially young people in Croatia are more political than in Slovenia, whereas Slovenian people are not interested and not as much informed about the issues such as the fight over the Slovene/Croatian border.

One interesting point in this conversation was that nobody defined *Sloveneness* through the *Slovene language*. They are indifferent about the issue of "losing" the Slovene language with the entrance to the European Union or not. Other groups pointed out that they did not believe that they would lose the language. Since all of the group speak Slovene as one of their mother tongues, they are likely to have recognised that *Sloveneness* is not based on language skills or accents.

2. Negotiating Belonging: The EU-Condition

The group acknowledges a certain *will* of Slovene people and politics to belong to a *"Western" idea of civilisation*. Connected to *"Westernness"*, they see Slovenia's membership to the *European Union* and *NATO*. The position of the group participants towards Slovenia and supra-national alliances like the EU and NATO is interesting. Regarding the political implications of these allies, the group members narrate their location within the Slovene nation and no longer in *in-between-terms*. Therefore, possible commitment or disagreement regarding the EU and NATO comes from the position of Slovenes who think in terms of Slovene benefits. For example, none of the participants of this group supported or is positive towards NATO membership. They see it as a necessity due to Slovenia's small size, its relative lack of power in international politics and financial capacity. Igor, for example, points out that with NATO-membership Slovenia[101] is permanently at war. They agree on the possibility that a different government might have supported a different direction regarding NATO.

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101 Instead of Slovenia he said "we" are permanently at war.

2.1 New Socio-Cultural Borders in Slovenia

The group's resentments regarding the NATO-membership also come from the interference of NATO in the Yugoslavian war. They had relatives and acquaintances at war in this time, and they were afraid of them dying *because* of NATO-soldiers. They experienced being on the "other" side of the "West" as a vulnerable position and being related to people from the other ex-Yugoslavian states, they hope that all other former Yugoslavian republics will be part of the NATO as well. Here, "we" has to be seen as crossing the Slovene border[102]. With the disintegration of former Yugoslavia and the integration in the European Union, the meaning of borders has shifted. It is stronger in the South and opening to the North, West and East. Whereas the North and West were always open for Slovenes, although imposed with some difficulties with money, transport, etc., previously the border to the East (Hungary) was closed and it was open to the south. Along with the changing of borders, also the commitment to a certain idea "we" has changed. In particular, a changed perception of Sloveneness triggers suspicion regarding cultural connection to the south. Today, crossing the border for a person from the south is more difficult:

> **Aleksandra:** Every time I travel with the train, although I have residence permit because of my studies, I'm always interrogated: "Where do you live? What do you study? Are you smuggling anything?" I noticed that they search everybody with a surname that finishes with -ić. I mean always.
> **Igor:** Especially if you have ZRJ visa inside.

Here, a surname with -ić becomes important again, in the case of Aleksandra as a "foreigner" and in the case of Igor, Marija or Nada, who are used to travelling to their former Yugoslavian relatives and need certain visa's for Serbia which makes them suspicious at the Slovenian/Croatian border. *Experiences of alienation* on borders are now transferred from the North-West to the South, which causes suspicion in Slovenia as regards Southern foreigners, whereas Slovenian people as coming from the "West" are less likely to be questioned on the Southern border. Feelings of inferiority of people at borders, as Breda Luthar (2006) described during state-socialism, has transgressed to the new "Western" border between Slovenia and Croatia. People, like Aleksandra, from the "South" experience being suspected of smuggling things or planning illegal activities in Slovenia. As I examined earlier on a public level of narrating Sloveneness, incomers from "safe" southern republics are easily suspected of violating Slovene immigration laws with their stay (see Erjavec 2003). Even when

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102 Slovenia only shares the border with Croatia, but Bosnia and Herzegovina or Serbia (and Monte Negro at the time of the interview) are also on this other side of Slovenian borders.

Aleksandra has a student status, she often has to deal with inconvenient questions at the Slovene/Croatian border. This also becomes part of the experience of the remaining group participants. Each time there is the implicit question at the border, of whether they really belong to Slovenia. This is a question, which is imposed on them and certainly influences their feeling of belonging to Slovenia. In this way, they are personally involved in the line drawn between the "*West and the rest*" in Slovenia, where the European Union becomes very important for sustaining the belonging of Slovenia as a country to the "West" (see Hall 1999a: 431-432). The European Union for the group consists of the following values:

> **Marija:** Democracy and Christianity.
> **Interviewer:**[103] Do you link EU with something else as well?
> **Igor:** Yes. Economic connections.
> **Aleksandra:** Progress, openness.
> **Marija:** Civilised behaviour. (laughs)
> **Igor:** The final escape from the Balkans. (ironically, laughing)

Certainly, the comments on the European Union were not completely serious. Nonetheless, maybe in an overdetermining manner, the statements go along with certain attitudes or expectations towards the European Union concerning the reputation of Slovenia (or Croatia) as a country. Regardless of whether *Christianity* is incorporated in the European legal foundation – as Christianity was discussed as being implemented in the European Constitution as one of the fundamental elements of European cultural legacy (see Schwarz 2003) – or not, tacitly it was clear for all of the participants, not only in this example, that religious faith matters in the European context. *Becoming* "*ethnic*" in their experience, increases with a stronger commitment of Slovenia to the European Union. Being *Catholic* or not, as Marija stated, is not the question in their cases. They are always confronted with the suspicion that they are not Catholic. Although they acknowledge similar processes in Croatia, where the final escape of the "Balkans" is promoted on the public agenda, they are identified in Slovenia with markers of "*otherness*". The group sees this as an the attempt to get rid of *backwardness* which is attached to the "Balkans" in public speeches in Slovenia and Croatia, but also see this as reflected in the opinion of people. Regarding European Union-membership and achieving "Western" status, the participants of the group see two contrasting values intersecting. *Progress* and *openness* as well as *democracy* stand in contradiction to the *exclusive tendencies* of *compulsory Christianity* and the abandoning of the "Balkan" image. This is also the point where the attitude of the

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103 "Interviewer" always refers to Nataša.

group is split between positively supporting the EU and accepting the EU as a necessity.

2.2 Personal Expectations towards the European Union

All of the group see the positive potential in the European Union, especially regarding economic links and development. They expect membership will have a positive effect on Slovenian entrepreneurship and will be positive for their own future. Aleksandra says that one of the reasons behind her decision to study in Slovenia was the greater variety of opportunities and Slovenia's membership of the European Union, which would both influence her future plans. Hence, they recognise the *Eurocentrism* in the cultural translation of the political concept of the European Union in Slovenia and in Croatia, but they have not incorporated the *Fortress-Europe-Syndrome* as an outcome resulting from this. They rather express their hopes that there will be a more open way of combining nationality and Europeanness.

> **Aleksandra:** Studying and future. I have wanted to study in Ljubljana since I was a child. I think that Slovenia offers a lot of opportunities. I mean as a member of the EU. And also Split can not be compared to Ljubljana – regarding student life, jobs and all that. And it is not far away. I could never go to USA or New Zealand.

This example also indicates that Slovenia is not completely different from her home in Split, although she sees Ljubljana as more *progressive* and *better organised* regarding the university system. Especially with European membership, Slovenia becomes an attractive destination for studying. Such an attitude is also expressed by the participants with Slovene citizenship. Somehow, the group members accept the *idea of progress* that comes along with realising EU-European requirements in Slovenia. Here they also see a benefit of Slovenian membership for the improvement of their situation. All of them voted "no" regarding NATO and "yes" regarding the EU. Igor voted for the EU, but he had reservations. This is because of his awareness of the fact that benefits and disadvantages of European membership are played out on different levels. Better economic, educational, etc. conditions come with a limited ("Western") definition of culture. Nada did not make her decision because of a certain reason. She just knew from her environment, her friends and family that NATO membership was not considered as a positive thing to achieve and the European Union was "super good". At the time of the interview, none of the participants said they had seen a real difference since entry into the European Union.

Igor: The life hasn't changed yet. Maybe in ten years. Travelling is easier.
Aleksandra: Things will change with the Euro. Some say that everything will get much more expensive and that only then we will actually be in Europe. Some say this is not true. We will see how it will happen.
Nada: I don't really know what to expect. I don't think much about it. Euro – some say things will get cheaper. Some say we will only then feel we are actually in EU. There are always two sides and both have very good arguments, I don't know what to expect.
Aleksandra: Those employment possibilities. And studying, without any restrictions.
Igor: I don't know. Maybe the standard of living will improve. Not for everybody, of course. Some will profit from it, some won't.
Marija: I think that depends on the ambition you have.

The list of expectations and hopes towards the European Union are interesting for me, when I compare them with their criticisms of European dominance and the perceived closure of the border in the south. Igor mentions "travelling is easier", without pointing out to which countries. Earlier in the conversation he complained about the difficulties of travelling back from Serbia to Slovenia and gives an idea of his *imagined cultural space*. This obviously influences where people can go on journeys. At the same time, immediately after entry, nothing has changed, except the use of symbols, as for example, the stars on the driving licences that slowly become visible by the growing number.

Hoping for better job-opportunities and a general improvement of life conditions include also a sense of "*Western" progressive modernity*, on which they measure "better" as a parameter. Because Slovenia – as Sonja Lokar[104] points out – has a high life-standard, although wages are low and flats are expensive, there is still an improvement in the quality of life through the exchange of home-produced goods, including fruits and vegetables from their own gardens, as well as knowledge about conserving food over the winter. Such kind of knowledge might lose its currency in the next generations, as Inglehardt (1999) argues, that modernisation comes with urbanisation and a change in consuming. Certainly I do not want to make any predictions about such a change. Firstly, I did not focus on that question in my research and secondly, I would not claim Slovenia was deprived from modernisation until now. It is perhaps capitalism that makes a difference in the production and importance of domestic food supply. Being able to study without restriction, like Aleksandra dreams about, is most likely based on her specific situation of being a Croatian who made the effort to enrol in the Slovene university system. Through an assimilation of school and education systems in EU-Europe, studying might be easier

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104 During the interview in autumn 2006.

for EU-citizens, from a broader perspective, also Croatia, Serbia and Bosnia will be part of this.

2.3 "Othering"-Processes in new "Europe" – the "Balkans"

> **Aleksandra:** "We are in Europe. They aren't in Europe yet"
> I think- "We are all in Europe!" (laughing)
> I mean in the continent. The only difference is because of the membership to the EU. I think Slovenia should find some balance. Everybody is now running away from this Balkan – Balkan as a mentality. Everybody would like to present Slovenia (it's mode of thinking and cultural background) as part of Western Europe, because we were part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. But Slovenes are Slavs! I think Slovenia should find some balance between Europe – European Union and the Balkans. Slovenia should not neglect either cultural or economic connections.

As regards that issue, there is not only a split between cultural and political belonging in Slovenia, but also regarding their feelings of cultural belonging. All of the group members have strong affiliations to cultural traditions[105] in Belgrade or Sarajevo. For them, European Union membership does not simply mean elimination from the "Balkans", it just made it more difficult to travel there. In reference to this point, they stress their own cultural belonging to the "Balkans" in a way that points to Slovenes are part of the "them"-group. One possible interpretation in this case might be that they see *Slovenia between the forces of the "Balkans" and the European Union*. The discursive belonging to the Union excludes the "Balkans" also from Slovenia culture and therefore is hostile towards them. In that connection they refer to a study conducted among Erasmus students, who were asked to define Sloveneness[106]. In this study, Slovenes turned out to be most similar to Germans or Austrians, and were assigned with contradicting characterizations like drinking and diligence. Aleksandra was not sure, whether this picture was not simply a reflection of a prevailing stereotype of Slovenes. Nada would have immediately agreed with the outcome of the survey.

> **Nada:** But if you ask me – I would also give this association.
> **Aleksandra:** I don't know. I don't know anybody from Austria.
> **Nada:** Maybe because we used to live in the street where- Slovenian mother and German father or Austrian mother and Slovenian father- And that blond hairstyle, I don't know-
> **Aleksandra:** I call that the Alpine type.

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105 Here they refer to Christmas which was very close to the interview.
106 This study is not important on its own. The example is important from my point of view, because of the tension between "we" and "them" constructions in the group.

Here, the group takes a position from which they talk *about* Slovenes without including themselves in ideas discussed. This does not mean they would like to manifest *Sloveneness* in connection with German-Austrian, which would have excluded them from the notion of *Sloveneness*. They all seem to have little to do with the Slovene "Alpine-culture" and consequently do not narrate them as being part of it.

> **Aleksandra:** That's the permanent stereotype: "Slovenes are cold, reserved, stingy and drinking." (Everybody laugh)
> **Nada:** My mother always says: "You are the real Francka![107]" At my mother's job only Slovene women drink, the elder ones.
> Slovenes drink but we don't – especially in our family.

Nada is captured by both images: showing *"Slovene" behaviour* in the point of view of her mother and being part of her Serbian family and her family's cultural circle. Regarding drinking, they all stress a difference to Slovenes, who, in their opinion, act differently, when drunk than when they are not drunk, but "cold, reserved and stingy". Although no one is completely serious about that description, they all emphasis the stereotypical exaggeration implied in it. People in the South are seen as more passionate than in Slovenia, whereas Slovenes need alcohol to achieve a similar level of passion. Hence, their description is very similar to those of the "pro-European"-group who recognised a very similar *Slovene behaviour* by saying "we" are *cautious, reserved*, etc. In contrast to the group with a background in other former Yugoslavian states, they did not, however, emphasise the difference to southern mentality using the term "passionate", but they identified "passionate" behaviour with "Balkan" wild and rude habits. Regarding mentality, the two groups seem to have opposing positions in society. It is interesting in this relation that both groups tend to "*nationalise*" the "other" group from their own perspective. The people with parents from other ex-states draw a line as regards their Slovene belonging by saying *Slovene people* are "*cold, reserved, stingy and drink*", while they would not say "we" are not "*cold, reserved, stingy and drinking*" nor would they say "we" are *wild, not civilised and rude*, but they would say they are *passionate*. Hence, both groups attribute the "other" group with negative terms, although in both cases the group members tried to present those images as an exaggeration.

> **Marija:** I see south as hot-blooded. I see south, Bosnia, people there so- Somehow, hmm? Passionate people. Europe on the other hand is somehow even – tempered and reserved.
> **Interviewer:** Slovenes are not passionate?

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107 Francka, similar to Janez for the men, was a very common female name in Slovenia, and people from other parts of Yugoslavia sometimes used to call Slovene women "Francka". Especially Nada's family seem to use the expression very often.

Marija: I find Slovenian people are reserved people. Except people from the Štajerska region[108]. They are something special. My mother is from there, that's why.

Aleksandra: I also feel differences in mentality. For me – there are people from Primorska[109] region and people from Slovenia. (everybody laughs)

I do not know so many people from Štajerska region, but whenever I say "people from Primorska region" and Slovenian people, the others add "and people from Štajerska region."

Also mentality seems to be a matter of *Europeanness*. The Slovene link to "Western" Europe is frequently stressed through the Austrian(-Hungarian) rule over 600 years. That cultural connection seems to influence the group's imagination on Slovene European identity as well. Here, it is interesting to mention that none of the people I was talking to, also nobody in this group, defined *Europeanness* through Italian influences. At the same time people point at the "sea-mentality", like Aleksandra does, of Slovene people from the Primorska region, which are closer to Croatians or Italians than to the rest of Slovenia. That attitude becomes more visible with their perception of cultural connections to Europe, which is seen in similar *cultural traditions*. They consider, a dinner with, for example, people from Switzerland or Germany would not cause problems of understanding each others gestures. A Slovenian would not (anybody) appear disrespectful as a guest towards the host, because of similar ideas on politeness in a shared cultural tradition. They also recognised similarities in festivals, concerts or events. In their perspective Slovenes are "more organised" than the Southern ex-republics. Here they point at the border crossing from Slovenia to Croatia, where difference is identified in the tidiness of the landscape and streets.

2.4 EU-Influences on the Relationship between Former Yugoslavian Republics

The group members show a certain indignation as regards Slovenia – here I don't know, if they are referring to politicians, a general media discourse, people around them, or a combination of all those elements – suggesting it is superior to the other ex-republics in economic and political matters.

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108 Štajerska is the region with the place Murska Sobota. It is the region shared with Austria, where it is called "Steiermark", Styria. Štajerska is the Slovene word of this. The same is with "Koroška/Kärnten"; there is an Austrian and a Slovene part of it. It depends on the sense of belonging which region of Slovenia Slovenes (or foreigners, visitors, migrants, minorities, etc.) see as different from the rest. This is because of its diversity. Although, due to my experience of people's perception from Ljubljana and people from Murska Sobota, I would support the idea that Štajerska is often "the other Slovenia".

109 The Primorska region is close to the Italian border and on the Slovenian seaside – people living there are often seen to have an Italian temper.

Igor: That was completely lacking tact, when Slovenia, as a member of EU, wanted to take advantage of it. I mean, the Slovenian diplomacy in the Gulf of Piran case or the border. I find the relationship with Croatia a bit patronising since Slovenia has been a member of EU. Like: "Croatia is still- Croatia is ten years away from joining the EU". I find it incoherent. And towards Bosnia? They present Bosnia like it is still half at war.

And ZRJ and SCG, I don't know? Now there are those economical connections. The attitude is changing of course. It is different from the beginning of nineties. Back then Slovenia was building a country and everything was "As far away from the Balkans as possible, because things are so completely different here." I don't know."

Nada: Since we have been in EU we are trying to push the border down there, as I pointed out before. Everybody wants to be more inside the EU as possible. But <u>my</u> generation and people nowadays are looking at the Balkans in a far more positive way.

For such reasons, as Aleksandra states, Croatian opinion polls show that Croatians perceive Slovenia as their "worst neighbour". This is, however, not unknown to Slovenia and Slovenes and supports a mutual "aversion", in which Slovenia can still act as "more generous". Aleksandra points out that such images are strengthened by the Croatian media that exaggerated the negative relationship between the two countries. All of them feel ashamed of the countries they feel closest to, as regards the matter how they create difference or see difference and hostility being established between the countries. They see the relationship between Croatia and Serbia as more troubled than between Slovenia and Croatia. That tells of their emotional attachment to their southern cultural background. Although they do not live in those countries and have Slovene citizenship, with the exception of Aleksandra, they feel responsible for the politics in the Southern countries. Their interpretations of these feelings might lie in the "double-consciousness" of their position, from which they experience hostilities towards "Southerners" in Slovenia and with which they disagree, at the same time when similar politics are introduced in all other former republics. Thus, they all witness a border-drawing on "both sides" of the cultural context. This might be one of the reasons why they do not fall into the "same" essentialist trap, because they would have needed to "decide" on taking on one particular side of national politics. In contrast to the time after independence, they see a positive opening up of Slovenes towards the former republics in the south, at least on a personal level. Nada particularly refers to her own generation. Slovenian young people also consider Belgrade or the Croatian seaside as weekend destinations or destinations for parties, which strengthens the relationship of Slovenia with the other ex-states on a cultural level. She recognises a kind of "nostalgia" for Yugoslavian times, also among young people, which is often expressed when they are *drunk* and suddenly turn to *Slovenian folk music* or *Croatian* and *Serbian traditional music*. With reference to full concert halls, the group members refer to the success of "Balkan" culture in Slovenia through music and musicians like Bregović, Magnifico or Esma Redžepova. Aleksandra, who is

a folklore dancer, tells the others that Slovenia has dropped dances from other former Yugoslavian states from their competitions and she increasingly sees the eagerness of Slovenian people to learn other dances, also at informal events like parties. Hence, also Nada recognises the difference of enjoying folk music or music from the ex-states, when Slovene people are drunk. From that perspective they see Slovene people as caught in an ambiguous relationship with their differing cultural influences. While they seem to try to forget about "Balkan" influences at the same time, they are totally enthusiastic about aspects of Southern culture. Nada for example sees a positive attitude of her Slovene friends or colleagues in the university towards Serbian food. Cuisine mixes of "Balkan" and Slovenian food is special for them in Ljubljana.

> **Aleksandra:** I want to give an example. Taking walks in Ljubljana: "burek, burek, everywhere". You don't see Ajdovi žganci[110] or something like that written anywhere. And pizza-burek was invented by Ljubljana's Albanians. I've never seen pizza-burek before, except in Ljubljana. Very interesting.
> **Igor:** Pizza-burek isn't burek at all.

Such food combinations mix and question a rigid distinction between *East- and West-cultures*. At the same time, when considering new "meta-narratives", as Rosi Baidotti (2005: 169-179) defines discourses such as neo-liberalism and capitalism, food might offer a "safe" possibility to *consume* the "other" with their food. In the sense of Bourdieu (1987), *enjoying* music requires understanding of cultural codes and therefore cultural competences that one does not simply put on and off. On the contrary, it affects one's emotional participation and has to do with cultural belonging. *Enjoying* and *understanding the joy*, only when drunk, can be interpreted as inflicted with identity politics. While Zygmunt Bauman (2003: 41) points out, as long as one can *choose* foreign influences such as the consumption or not of food, it does not endanger one's position. On the contrary, it might be entertaining. This ambiguity might be expressed by the example of Nada who witnessed one girl saying "*Yes to Burek, no to the Mosque*", indicating an agreement with the "fun-factor" of southern cultures, but disagreeing with the cultural impact on Slovenia.

3. Considerations of Belonging

People from this discussion group were translating throughout all of the discussion between different national and cultural levels, such as between Slovenian (Croatian) nationality and their parents' (here Serbian, Monte Negrin and Bosnian) cultural

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110 Slovene national food made out of buckwheat.

background. To some degree, they also have to negotiate with a kind of Yugoslavian identity. Here, I do not mean Yugoslavia in the same sense that existed during state socialism as a Federal State, but in the sense that they all seem to focus[111] their attention on (identity) politics in all states. At the same time, they engage in music which connects all countries on a cultural level. They like the kind of music, which is called "bedna narodnjaki" and considered as *foreign*, but *domestic* in Slovenia, although not mainstream. Therefore, such in-between-commodities of popular culture might offer positive identifications for the group participants: they can be both at the same time, foreign and domestic, without needing to justify such a position. They also identify a *post-national impact* with music festivals as in Novi Sad or Guča, where young people from all over former Yugoslavia meet and celebrate the same musicians. The group members admire people like Balasević, who always cause a lot of noise with his events. Here they referred to a concert in Split in December 2004, which they expected to be shown on CNN. For them, it would be an important way of recognising such singers, who stand for an in-between-position also abroad. They all like music that unites rather than creates difference between the former republics of Yugoslavia. Thus, such identity positions seem to offer feelings of "security" for the group members who find here a way of defining belonging along "cultural" terms. Such a definition does not insist, in contrast to, for example, national identity based on exclusive symbols, traditions, myth or borders. Such identification is therefore not bound to a state system, on countable people, etc., but on cultural codes, shared humour and taste.

In the point of view of the group members, the influences of the national media that transport national identity in general and in Slovene identity more specifically[112] are disturbing to the post-national considerations of belonging. Hence, they stress the point that media agents, like reporters, journalists, etc., do not necessarily *intentionally* stress a national view. Nada talks about her own experience as a child, when her father always watched the news on a channel from Montenegro. Back then, she had the impression that Serbs were the ones who were abused. When she realised later that it was the other way around, she was surprised.

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111 Or are focussed on such issues – because Nada is not informed at all, but she usually has the same opinion as the others, because she somehow knows tacitly what she has to think in which her personal considerations of belonging through her family seem to help her with her positions. Identity politics or political occasions, from which she feels alienated or "protected", play a major role.

112 Here I want to remind the readers that the group members study media and communications or journalism.

Igor: Things are not just black and white. What is now expected from a good journalist is making a conflict of two sides. A presentation in black and white manner, because people like to watch that. I work on POP-TV, foreign affairs. The editors would like us to simplify things and make a conflict, even if there isn't one. But you can't just simplify things.
[..]
Aleksandra: I will not check all information I've seen in order to prove, whether it is true or not. But it's my third year in this university. I was constantly confronted with: "Do not believe everything you hear!" And so you are always a bit sceptical about things.

Despite their criticism towards media, they seem to be satisfied with information that stresses two sides of a story. Erjavec or Bašič-Hrvatin – who teach them in their courses – is very critical in their essays about this way of handling information. The group members seem to have adopted a "critical" position, which does not mean that they always want to know everything about politics or current affairs in the former Yugoslavian context. Only Igor regularly follows the news, Nada, in contrast, does not at all. The other two follow the news, but they do not necessarily search for more media representations than those they usually watch, listen to or read. The new media laws and the present hate-speech on public broadcasting services might change their habits in that matter, because media turn against discourses they would support, according to the discussion in the interview.

In general, all of the group participants like Slovenia and feel they belong to Slovenia. Not one of them would say she or he wants to leave the country, because of the rude and discriminatory behaviour of ethnic Slovenes towards them. Even though such discourse is part of their every-day experience, it *alienates* them from their "tacit" sense of belonging to Slovenia as a nation and not from the cultural attachment. Considering the idea of staying in Slovenia, especially high life standards and life quality in Slovenia compared to the countries where their parents come from, play a crucial role. They think they have better life conditions over here and better possibilities for their education. Aleksandra likes the system of the city in Ljubljana, the organisation of student jobs, she notices everybody is working.

Aleksandra: I am also making a comparison. I lived down in Croatia for 18 years. There are two bars for the whole of Split. And then you come to Ljubljana- You come to the university and they overwhelm you with books, how to be a freshman in the city, where to get a bus ticket. In Zagreb you come to the university and you have to figure out everything by yourself. Here again, you are able to find many opportunities. I was so happy when I got the job here. And then I saw that almost everybody is working here. We also have a student employment agency. I don't know why, because everybody is moonlighting.
If I could create a perfect city – I would choose Ljubljana with a European mindset and unite this with Split mentality and the sea.
(everybody laughs)

Nada: Exactly! I would put Budva instead of Split.

Aleksandra: When I look through the window there, I see a beach. Here I see Rožnik and it isn't the same.

Nada: When you see the sea in Budva you also see the party coming in the evening – and those nice people. Okay, we do party in Ljubljana as well, but nevertheless I think that is kind of strained party.

Marija: I like the country characteristics of Slovenian people. I like to meet people from Primorska or Štajerska region. I like to see the differences.

Aleksandra: Yes, the differences are enormous.

Hence, Slovenia in this matter seems to be a good place for them, they appreciate the variety of landscape and the mentality of the different regions in Slovenia, but miss, as Marija explicitly points out, a bit of a *multicultural* perspective, especially regarding the refusal of building the Mosque in Ljubljana. For such reasons, all of them would prefer to live in the cities or towns of Slovenia than in villages or the countryside, where *Sloveneness* is more specific than in relative anonymous larger places with a greater variety of communities. The advantage of larger communities in contrast to villages is also that they are not that much exposed to labelling, a point which all of the participants consider as crucial for their life quality – to not be affected by narrow, compulsory concepts of identity, as they point out. Some globalisation theorists as Saskia Sassen (2002), Patrice Riemens and Geert Lovnik (2002) or Iain Chamber (1999) see the cities and metropolis as the new centres of economic power – Ljubljana is only a small town compared to post-modern cities like New York –, where hierarchic power-relations and the tension between the centre and the margins is hostile, exclusive and less comprehendible than the structures of nation states. At the same time, many people, as Iain Chamber (1999: 514) writes, are attracted by the cultural diversity and mixed traditions of cities. Also Nada, Marija, Igor and Aleksandra do not refer to the inequality of different city-quarters, but they imagine larger cities released from limited cultural definitions such as in Ljubljana, where music events, foreign restaurants and fast food chains break with a traditional perception of national identity. A *multicultural condition*, in their point of view, is not the mere presence of different cultures, for them it would implement the cultural competence of negotiating and recognising different national traditions and allow them to co-exist and communicate. City life allows them at least, not to be permanently pushed into a certain cultural position by "advocators"[113] of *Sloveneness*.

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113 Advocator in that context is not necessarily a conscious position. It rather refers to people that promote national values as their own, because they consider them as being crucial for a "normal" life.

Interesting is the relation of the group participants to their neighbouring countries. Austria represents Europeanness for them. They do not view Austria through Austrian politics, but with memories on shopping trips, including H&M, KGM, Kinder-eggs, milk chocolate and also skiing, which Slovenes have in common with Austria. In contrast to this, Italy offers a richer cultural relation to the group. Back to former Yugoslavia, Trieste was seen as an important connection with travel. They also know that a considerable number of Slovenes live there, which they see as an important connection to Slovenia, while they did not seem to know of Slovene minorities in Austria. When analysing the interview, it was interesting for me to see again how little they were involved in Slovene identity matters of the dominant majority. The focus of their worries is torn by the relationship between Slovenia and the Yugoslavian "Balkans". Therefore, the Slovene minority in Italy is a rare example which they refer to because they are impressed of their rich cultural activities and regularly organised trips to Slovenia. Maybe this interest also corresponds with their own wish of a possibility of cultural exchange in a positive way.

All of the group participants were passionate travellers, besides visiting their families in other ex-states, their experiences were mainly from a tourist perspective. Aleksandra travelled a lot, because of her participation in folklore dancing and Marija often went on bag packer tours with her boyfriend. All of them would like to spend longer periods of time in other countries. Considerations of belonging are also implemented in the possible future choices on living or studying abroad:

> **Nada:** In the city-
> **Igor:** Yes, in the city. Not in the countryside.
> (both agreeing)
> I think I could live in ex-Yugoslavia.
> **Nada:** I would go to Belgrade.
> **Igor:** I could live in Belgrade, not to mention Novi Sad – where everything is so easy.
> **Aleksandra:** Belgrade – that is something amazing. If you are, for instance, driving through south Serbia – you can drive all day long without seeing a toilet or a board, there is nothing. Then you come to Belgrade, there is Mercator centre, you don't even have a feeling you are in Serbia. There is so much going on, there is so much building in process.
> My cousin thought that in Ljubljana we don't have scooters. That seemed so odd to me that I said: "And you know, we have water as well, but TV would be too much of a culture shock. Don't show it to me, please."
> **Nada:** I am dreaming about Madrid, or so. But if I want to be more realistic – I can easily see myself in Zagreb or Belgrade after few years. I adore Zagreb. I am attracted to Zagreb much more than I am to Ljubljana. I haven't been there for ten years at least, but I really like it.
> **Aleksandra:** True. I am going to Zagreb this weekend.

Regarding possible choices of where to live in the future, the idea of living in a city at one point in the future was very strong among all group participants. Their focus was especially on one state of former Yugoslavia. Their ideas and dreams of living there are filled with enthusiasm and the possibility of going there. Living, working or studying in one of the larger cities in the ex-states would not be unlikely, because they all speak the language and feel connected through the culture. Belgrade, for example, seems to be very attractive to all of them. The reactions of Slovenian friends or colleagues are different from this.

> **Igor:** I am giving serious thought to studying in Belgrade.
> **Nada:** When I mentioned the same idea, everybody made fun of me. "Everybody is going to Europe and you want to go from Ljubljana to the Balkans! What are you going to study there? They don't have anything."
> **Igor:** I directly wanted to study in Belgrade.
> **Nada:** I would go and not study anything.

The interest in the group might come from their parental connection to the other ex-states, they have shared their feelings of home between the countries, but it does not seem to be based on nationality as such. In their narration of belonging there is no clear "other", they always feel partially excluded from something, insofar Sloveneness is often on the "other side" of where they position themselves. Regarding cultural belonging, the group participants strongly distinguish their situatedness from what they define as an "American" way of life. The discourse itself was not very important in the discussion, maybe because they do not consider it as very important for their personal belonging. They identify US-American life-style with artificial food, as Igor experienced in Illinois, the neo-liberal concept of welfare and the spectacle of terrorism. Even though all of them have mostly been travelling in Europe – except Nada who was in many Latin American countries – all of them consider the USA as a possible travel destination. Besides disagreements with their way of life and also with their domination over some parts of the world, they do not employ any kind of "anti-US-Americanism". The term "*metropolitans*" as a kind of "typification" of the group is based exactly on the refusal to support nationalism or to fall into identity positions of exclusion. Their strongest feelings seem to centre on "*anti-labelling*". For such reasons they prefer a *cultural location* for themselves, where they do not have to be confronted with labelling all the time, like they imagine it to be in cities and metropolis.

"Slovene Travellers"

This is the group that I selected from its political attitude within an anarchistic environment. The people who finally participated in the group discussion are Manja (19), Mirko (20), Peter from Croatia (21), Janez (19), Jože (20), and Tomaž[114] (20) (he joined the group later in the discussion). In general, the conversation was characterised with a strong political perspective on Slovenia and on belonging to groups or communities. The political attitude is intersected with Marxist theory. The common sense in this group seems to comprise around the criticism of the economic domination of society and workers. Working class here is a very broad definition and does reflect on one's family background or work profile, but a certain political attitude. At the same time, the group discussants do not deeply question the *legitimation* of nation, community, or any other imagined collective as such, although they show awareness of the invention of the same. This may sound like a contradiction at first glance and I suppose this is located in the tension of conscious and unconscious levels of belonging. Personal embeddedness and subjectivation within social structures might differ from a rational sense of understanding collectives based on political theory. In accordance to this, I stumbled over the fact that the discussants in this group use the same terms which they criticise and deconstruct to explain social events or relations. As Stuart Hall (1996a: 1) makes us aware, new concepts of identity lack new expressions to *talk* about them. Analysing the group conversation was challenging because of the overlapping usage of terms.

1. Forming Slovenia. Questioned and Unquestioned Categories

In this section, I will work on representations of Slovenia and Sloveneness from the perspective of the group participants. Due to their political attitude, they often appear as "outside" the national narration of belonging and often point at this in their discussion. Hence, they consider Sloveneness as *generated* by the state. *Thinking as usual* becomes an interesting turn in their perspective, because it means thinking of holding a position that is likely to be constructed by certain interests on a public level. At the same time they take their own position for granted and might be easily seduced into falling into a particular relationship to so-called "*normality*". Keeping that in mind, I try to analyse their particular position in society and to work out conscious as well as unconscious consideration of belonging.

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114 Names changed.

1.1 (Non-)Belonging to Slovenia

Above all, the group members access Slovenia through a political position. At the beginning they spent a lot of time saying they did not want to speak about Slovenian identity until we[115] convinced them that the question allowed more complex considerations of belonging than merely national identity. Certainly the research question was not on *Slovene identity*, but on their perception of Slovenia and their personal belonging to it. However, from their political culture they seem to present themselves opposing national belonging and sometimes suspect too easily the national(ist) intentions of other people. What is conspicuous regarding the first collection of Slovene characterisations in the brainstorming, is the *absence of reference* to *landscape features* and the absence of listing *national culinary specialities*, which was the first association with Slovenia in all other groups. The picture of the Slovene nation appears very negative to me as an outsider, but the group members do not show any optimistic or pessimistic tendencies in their attitude or any real personal involvement within the discursive construction of Slovenia. The emotional involvement of group participants in the discussion was mainly expressed in their criticism towards Slovene national discourses. Besides their overwhelming interest in the political and also economic situation in Slovenia, it appears at some points as if they have nothing to do with Slovenia and Slovenes. An interesting *alienation strategy* was the use of "*they*" of group members, when *talking about Slovenes*. It is also conspicuous that everybody in this discussion group is from Slovenia with the exception of Peter, who was definitely not dominating the discussion. None of them was attached by any specific *ethnic, religious* or *cultural marker* from current ideas of Sloveneness, which would make the participants of the interview more sensitive towards Slovene majority interests. Except for their aversion to capitalism and the commitment to the working class, there is no specific passion on any issue which they picked up regarding Slovenia. The focus of the discussion is the political situation, the foundations of the nation state and some characterizations of people that are in their view connected to the features of the state. When I asked them for *their belonging*, they responded with *travelling*.

1.2 Meaning of Smallness (Majhnost)

Slovenia is characterised through its size. From the perspective of the group participants the country is very small compared to other nations. Consequently, they see the perceived smallness not only as influential on the self-perception of the country

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115 "We" means the interviewer: Nataša and I.

regarding its political power or economic capacity, but also as symptomatic for the *lack of self-esteem* of Slovenes.

> **Manja:** The Slovene nation feels small. There was some research about people's feelings when Slovenia is mixed up with Slovakia. Slovaks think that is funny, while Slovenes feel offended. Because a Slovenian is always proving something, he wants to show off in Europe, he wants everybody to see him. Because it's such a small country with two million of people-
> **Janez:** It is still young.
> **Manja:** It's small! People know nothing about it-
> **Janez:** Take a look at Luxembourg!
> **Manja:** Okay, the money is something else. But somebody from America doesn't have a clue where Luxembourg is, either.

Smallness does not only circumscribe the *geographic size* of the country, it also refers to the number of people, the lack of political or economic power. Economic capital is seen as an important issue in the battle over power. Lack of economic power is seen in confluence with little knowledge about the country in other nations. The group connected this feeling of "smallness" of Slovenes with the personal level of Slovenes, and they explained that with the lack of recognition from other nations. If I connect such insights to a theoretical discussion on identity, (national) identities negotiate their value in relation to other more and less powerful (national) identities. Identities depend on a relational network with others in order to generate a sense of themselves. As long as nationality subordinates other signifiers of identity, national reputation is also important for personal confidence. At the same time, people often do not have a choice other than to be "nationalised" with a particular attribution. As the experiences of the group of Slovenes with parents from another ex-Yugoslavian state show, it is even important what is connected with the particular state someone is affiliated with and on the relationship between the countries involved. From that background it is understandable, when Slovene people who belong to a largely "unknown" nation, at least in the eyes of "important" nations like the United States, feel personally devalued as well when *Sloveneness* is degraded by other states. Here, I believe *Sloveneness* that specifically targets Slovene national identity is more important than Slovenia, the country. Considering the "*smallness*" of Slovene history, issues on nationality are even more sensitive and contested for Slovenes.

From the point of view of the group, national agents (most likely politicians and also carried by other individuals) in Slovenia try to emphasise a certain level of EU-Europeanness of the Slovene culture in order to compensate for feelings of inferiority. Often during the discussion, the group participants construct Europe – they often seem to target "Western" Europe and the European Union – as an important parameter of

comparison. Here, I would argue that they are not consciously aware of the importance of that theme for their reflections on belonging. During the conversation they create several links to the European Union, like to an invisible standard, not in the sense of what would be worth achieving, but to explain Slovenia as being based on this. Therefore, the group rejects the idea of being bothered on a personal level by Slovenia's lack of reputation.

> **Mirko:** In case a Slovene person is not recognisable around the world by his nationality and he sees it as a problem – then he must have some serious problems in his life! I mean when somebody is interested in beautiful mountains he will come to Slovenia, no matter if he has heard about the country before or not.

With this statement, Mirko clearly distinguishes his position from a national sense of belonging, not only through the lack of understanding of people who could be bothered by the degree of fame of the Slovene nation in the world. He also disentangles Slovene territory and the Slovene nation, when suggesting one could visit Slovenia without knowing it, because of the natural resources. From that perspective, I consider the positioning of the group participants who point out that they would not understand people who feel devalued by attacks on Sloveneness, as important. Hence, the group largely agree to hold an *indistinct position* outside the Slovene nation state.

1.3 Forced Slovenes

In the perspective of the group, the *idea* of Sloveneness exists in the mindset of people and is generated through the *system* created by the state that makes Slovene inhabitants – which is a territory, defined as Slovene territory – Slovenes. Generally, the participants emphasise the need to enforce solidarity between all people and peoples and not only between citizens or inhabitants of one nation state. Thus, I would argue the group's sense of perceiving nationality is very similar to Benedict Anderson's (1988) idea of *imagined communities*. It also contains neo-Marxist critique, which I introduced with Althusser's (1977) concept of the *Ideological State Apparatus*. Their position towards national belonging, therefore, employs a different *thinking as usual* through their involvement in left-wing political theory. It takes up a constant negation of "natural" belonging in nationalised terms, in which the state becomes the most important source of subjectivating people to national interests. Nationality in their sense is a necessity for the state in order for the state to function, while it is not clear for me where the group members locate the "state" in their narration. It appears sometimes as if it was something independent from humans, even public representatives are "puppets" of an unknown system. The next example was taken

from the part of the discussion right after the group decided to accept the question regarding a Slovene sense of belonging and not reject the question in advance. Hence, it does not necessarily express their sense of belonging.

> **Janez:** Let's say school, work, and everyday life as created by a system. Unfortunately. There are many things that connect us, and many things that differentiate us from the common society. Because of the idea itself.
> **Mirko:** [..] I see the connections in the language. We live under the same authority, under the same law; we speak the same official language.
> **Manja:** The same television.
> **Mirko:** We have the same national television. The same schooling possibility.
> **Janez:** We have the same president. (laughs)

However, at the end, they did not agree on the same "schooling possibilities" for all people in Slovenia, but accept it among other state influenced institutions as an important source of creating the link between Slovenian people with similar possibilities and knowledge. In the example above they also acknowledged their own involvement in Sloveneness in the sense that they also went through school education in Slovenia, experienced the same politicians and watched national television and therefore became part of the system. I am not sure, whether they were familiar with theorists such as Althusser or Foucault or whether such a perspective was part of the anarchist discourse in which they were engaged. Perhaps it lay in their protest against being *absorbed* by *national discourses* to turn to an abstract level of reflecting on their own position. Initially my question towards their belonging to other Slovenian people[116] was defined as stupid, as irrelevant and almost abandoned as a question. In that case I was lucky that Mirko left the discussion for a short time and missed the refusal – especially by Janez – to answer the question. Surprisingly, Mirko offered a very quick answer, a fact that suggests a knowledge-based position on nation building. The return to the discussion of Slovenia on an abstract level helped them to avoid talking about their own sense of belonging to Slovenia or their connection to Slovenian people. At this point I also realised that such a question suggests of a *protectionist attitude* towards a national discourse. People need to come up with similarities and connection elements and can easily turn to a repertoire of *well-known public narrations* on national identity.

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116 Here, there was a discrepancy between the Slovene and the English version, I asked in English for Slovenian people and the Slovene question, but the paper in front of them asked for Slovenian inhabitants. We – Nataša and I – did not notice that before and were not disturbed by it in other group interviews.

From their own access to nationality, the group participants perceive Slovenes in general as a passive society, who does not question the authority they voted. However, Slovene democracy in that sense becomes a critical category for the group. In their opinion, the parliamentarian government avoids public discussion on important issues and decides *for* Slovenes who legitimated the politicians' power through the elections. At this point they talk about "Slovenes" without explaining who they consider as Slovenes or who is identified in their opinion as Slovenian. They also do not specify whether they are speaking about Slovenian citizens or nationals. Maybe Slovenes are from their political embeddedness those people who love Slovene traditions, mentality, landscape, food, etc. and do not reflect upon the artificial moment of foundation of such belonging. Therefore, the participants of the discussion believe that anything goes in Slovenia, because of the absence of an encouraged civil society. This attitude would most likely be supported by Sandra Bašič-Hrvatin, who was engaged in working on amendments towards the new mass media law in 2006. Whereas she considered herself as part of the *civil society movement*, the parliamentarians rejected her position by arguing that she was just a left-wing intellectual protesting against majority politics. Thus, she could not be representative for the civil society as such. Defining the majority of Slovene people as lacking a level of reflection towards national solidarity and nationalist politics, the group members came to the conclusion that this attitude, which I would define as *thinking as usual*, is also constitutive for the exclusion of people with different ethnic backgrounds. The group does not see any "cruel intentions" in such a practice, but sees this as convenience.

The main focus of the group is an insistence on *distinguishing nationality* and *home*. *Sloveneness* is a matter of positioning oneself in a Slovene narration of identity. At the same moment they recognise another thing: *the fact of Sloveneness*[117]. Being a Slovene citizen with Slovene nationality, as all of them except Peter are, influences the way people from Slovenia and people abroad perceive a Slovene person. This is a *fact*, which all of them have to deal with. Recognising that no matter on which grounds a person would define "home" for herself or himself[118], the attachment of being Slovene is ascribed to them by other people employing national terms. This point shows and makes clear to the discussion group that discursive identity positions are not a question of choice. As long as states are organised as nations, as in Daša Duhaček (2006: 298) analysis, nationality has to be part of the negotiation of belonging. Neither the people of the group with a parental background in former Yugoslavia, who were in search for

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117 Here I borrowed Fanon's term (1995) "The Fact of Blackness", in order to describe nationality as inescapable.

118 The group does not distinct between the genders; they use a male dominated language and do not refer to gender inequality. This might be due to the constitution of the participants, only Manja is female, but also she employs the male form of speaking.

a cultural definition of belonging, nor the "anti-capitalist and anti-globalist" group, who would prefer world-solidarity, are able to escape national labelling on a personal level.

> **Mirko:** Most of the time, the fact that you are a Slovenian does not influence you at all. But just in case Slovenia was at war then you would definitely experience what it means to be a Slovenian. It doesn't make any difference what I say and think about this issue, I am in fact a Slovenian on the basis of such criteria. I experience that I am a Slovenian, because I don't have to join the army – because you don't have to, in Slovenia. And if I had to join the army – I would also experience I am a Slovenian.
> But you are also able to decide about that matter. For example when you are a sportsman you can be representing a Slovenia.
> **Manja:** Yes, I think it is the matter of politics how you experience those things. You don't notice them because Slovenia is not involved in any war.

In this example, a sense of *Sloveneness* is constructed through shared social rules in everyday life. In contrast to the other three groups, this group does not perceive rules as *normal* and detect them during the conversation, for them social rules are consequently national, because they are introduced in a national state system. Not being recruited into the army (as a man or a woman, here they think of Israel) is very important in Slovenia in contrast to other nations, and influences one's experiences and attitude, because they consider this as a feature of the Slovene nation. Being on the other hand in the position to defend a country on national basis in times of war, for example, would make nationality more important than in peaceful times. Therefore, politics that introduce social rules in Slovenia are recognised as very important by the group participants. They also notice that being a public figure makes one more likely to be considered in terms of one's nationality. In such a position one carries national responsibility and has to think about her or his representation of Sloveneness. A successful sportsman (or sportswoman) could not simply tear off his or her Sloveneness, because his or her performance is perceived as nationalised. However, they see sports as something connecting people and as something that encourages national oppositions at the same time. I think with such considerations they target an essentialist and oppositional view of nationality through the competition of sports events. In this connection, they also acknowledge that *national practices* have an impact on the notion of *Sloveneness*, because a particular narration of national knowledge affects the way of constructing "others" within the national community. In the point of view of the group US-Americans or people from "Western" Europe usually have positive experiences with Slovene people. Such friendliness can change, whether you enter Slovenia as Croatian, Serbian, and Bosnian or as a person from another Southern ex-state of Yugoslavia. The participants do not judge this and also do

not refer to it as a common practice in nation states, for them it is clear that these are not acceptable practices.

Being Slovenian with a Slovene *thinking as usual* is seen in the emotional involvement in cultural practices of Slovene cultural customs, traditions and practices.

> **Manja:** But what if you don't consider yourself as a Slovenian?
> **Jože:** Then you don't.
> **Manja:** But you experience it, nevertheless.
> **Jože:** When you are a Slovenian you are not just part of the country. You are part of the, I don't know, of the culture, the roots. And as it is written here – the music, the religion, the language, and the media.
> **Peter** (from Croatia)**:** But "Slovenian" is a nationality and not an ethnic classification. We belong to the Slavic ethnic group.
> **Manja:** I don't consider myself as a- I am not interested in Slovene culture etc. But I am officially Slovenian. And when I came to, for example, to Croatia, a country that does not have very good relations to Slovenia – I would be treated as a Slovenian person.
> **Jože:** Than the question should be: "Where do you experience what it means to be a non-Slovenian?"
> **Peter:** Being a Slovene or being a Croat – that is the matter of belonging to a country.
> **Jože:** Of course. But it isn't only the matter of the country.

This part of the discussion is very crucial, I think, in understanding the way of thinking of the participants. It also gives information on why they dismissed cultural traditions and culinary specialities in their picture of *Sloveneness* on the poster. They refuse to be reduced to nationality, which they are not interested in and do not accept as a part of their identity. They do not participate in Slovene cultural practices. At the same moment, they are dragged through the problem of having incorporated cultural practices and being seen and treated as Slovenes by others. For such reasons, it becomes impossible to find a personal way out of nationality. *Interpellation*, to be hailed in certain identity positions (cf. Althusser 1977: 140-1), in an era in which societies are organised and nationalities thought through, it becomes impossible for them to escape from the *ascription of Sloveneness*. They also recognise during the conversation, that they find it hard to detect national influences in their perceptions. Although, as I explained at another point, they know of the involvement of people with national rules and values and they are very critical about nationalised knowledge, they are aware of not being able to be sure in which way they do not to understand their discursive occupation with national knowledge. Hence, national knowledge distribution is not necessarily referred to as being national. Therefore, it is not likely to be easily recognised. Cultural convention might not even intentionally be part of the national discursive construction, but becomes nationalised through its national specificity. This might be the point of realising that theoretical knowledge on the

disciplinary techniques of the state system does not always help to escape from national situatedness.

2. The attempt to describe Sloveneness

> **Interviewer:** What is a Slovene character?[119]
> **Mirko:** I don't know that. It is hard to say. But in case I was able to express that and I wouldn't be able to come up with something that quickly. I would say- I don't know. Maybe narrow-mindedness.
> **Jože:** And envy.
> **Mirko:** For example. I wouldn't say that. But when we say those are Slovene characters, then we can say that is *Slovene.*

This part of the conversation shows the difficulties of defining the "character" of nationals of the same nation state. It is expressed by the disagreement of the different discussants regarding the categories. Looking at the public dimension of generating Sloveneness, the group observes a certain insecurity regarding what Slovene nationality contains. They see this expressed with an increased focus on Slovene symbols and representations that are highlighted as Slovene. In their point of view, it was with the entrance to the European Union, when politicians raised awareness to the "lack" of consciousness of Slovenes about national symbols and want to enforce greater attention to them in schools. This might also be expressed by the public discourse of being afraid of losing the Slovene national language. At first glance, the group members are indifferent about that possibility.

> **Jože:** When we talk about Slovene language – I think it's losing its importance in the area that we call Slovenia. I am not speaking about Slovenia as a country, because I don't like that, so I refer to it as a territory.[120] It is good that English as a language is increasingly used. In case the Slovene language disappears, I won't feel sorry. I will learn a language that everybody will use which will be much more convenient. But of course it would be cool when some books stayed (laugh), that I will be able to remember it.
> **Janez:** Communication is easier. The language can be a bit of a problem when we meet somebody from abroad. Because our English is far from being perfect. It's different when we communicate to each other in Slovene language.[121]
> **Manja:** I see the fact that this language is limited only to this country as a good-bad thing. Because foreigners are always surprised about our ability to speak languages. Especially

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119 This question is the consequence of a statement earlier in this section of discussion.
120 A territory in which the Slovene language is spoken.
121 This means, Slovene is the language all of them fully comprehend in contrast to English.

English and German. And Slovene people are learning foreign languages all the time. It's somehow bad because of the foreign translation-
But it's good because wherever you go, you are able to communicate. Larger nations don't have to do that and the differences can be seen in the education system. They[122] prepare you for the foreign countries.

Although Jože claims he would not mind losing the *Slovene language*, because he would prefer to see language as a *communication tool* and not as a matter of identity, he would want to keep some books in the Slovene language. Maybe in this sense he sees that he still acknowledges the language as a cultural heritage for his personal history. Janez makes the point more clear, he is conscious about the ability to express himself with his mother tongue which would be diminished through the use of foreign languages. As they point out, for them language is a tool for communication and not the transmitter of historically grown meaning of particular cultures and of inequality within those cultures. It is not surprising that they tacitly use a male dominated language. From their particular political position, they mainly address class based inequality and the artificial national division between people. They also reflect a particular relationship between different ethnic groups within nations, but they do not consider gender as constitutional for certain state relations. Gender is also a category that was not targeted by any other group. For them language is a tool, the better they speak it, the better they are able to express themselves.

Implemented in advanced language skills of Slovene people, they recognise the dominance of larger nations, or language communities, towards smaller language communities like Slovenia. People of larger language communities, like people from the United States or also people from Italy, are less likely to speak foreign languages. In an increasingly *globalised* world, they consider it almost as a necessity to speak more than one language in order to communicate with people outside the *nation*. In that sense, they are indifferent about which language is dominant at the end, as long as people can speak to each other. This might be an indicator of having incorporated a non-nationalist thinking, because in this way, also other nations and national languages do not have a national(ist) meaning for them. At the same time, especially in these matters, they are likely to employ national terms in order to describe the relationship between different language communities.

Music as a provider of *Sloveneness* is important, although certainly not all kinds of music are supportive or constitutive of *Sloveneness*. Here the participants try to

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122 "They" is here likely to be understood as the Slovene authorities, who decide on the education programme in Slovenia or as "languages".

establish a connection between politics and music, but come to the conclusion that those two matters are not necessarily connected. Certainly, Avseniki produce knowledge about "home" and "homeland" to their audience through their lyrics. This is one example where people can be emotionally attached to their nation through music, but this does not count for all music styles. Above all, folk music for them is an example of capitalist exploitation and is produced to be sold as part of popular music and does not need – at least in their point of view – to have national intentions.

> **Jože:** The "Slovenian thing" has to do a lot with the music, but not with the music we listen to. Avsenik was the Slovene promoter because he had the lyrics connected to the homeland. That is the real Slovene music and not some punk or rave – that is world music.
> **Janez:** Music has an effect on people.
> **Peter:** Bakhtin was thinking about politics although he didn't listen to punk but to Beethoven.
> (everybody laughs)

There are several types of music they would define as "world music", either in the sense of a political statement or as detached from a specific nation. Punk or rave music, from their perspective, contain a political statement which I see as particularly important for their own position and offers them a way of not being body-snatched by some kind of popular music and the national and consumerist entanglement. With the reference to Bakhtin, who is an important philosopher for their political position, they indicate that decoding the meaning of music or joy is very particular to one's cultural competences and affiliations. For Janez, music is very important for his position. He states he would not listen to music, no matter what the melody is, if he feels alienated by the lyrics. Thus, I think this is due to the position of the group being cautious of the ideological effects implemented in simply "consuming" cultural commodities. From that point of view, I would argue that such attitudes can be also found regarding the group's dealings with other cultural commodities.

Regarding religion, they group sees another main discourse of thought in Slovenia which they consider as promoted by the churches. Based on their political affiliations, they would support abandoning religion itself, although they acknowledge the persistent character of such cultural expression. Therefore, they would not promote the *building of the Mosque*, because of their aversion to *religious symbols*, but they would not promote forbidding building the Mosque either. Here they show a kind of open "communist" attitude, where religion was deprived of its previous dominance on social reality. At the same moment, they understand that such a treatment would not work in present society. Therefore, they appreciate the Slovene law of religious plurality and the choice to not be religious. The last point is, I believe, most important for the self-perception of the group's members, because they all position themselves as non-

believers. The group is less likely to equal "church matters" with the "Catholic church", although talking about the "Catholic Church" is sometimes reduced to the term "church" alone. They also use "church" and "religious" in an exchangeable way. Only at the end of their discussion on Slovenian religious practices, do they refer to secularised Catholic tradition as a signifier of identity. With the exception of the countryside, the group participants see Slovenia as a secular country that is increasingly pushed towards a secularized Christian/Islamic-dichotomy.

> **Mirko:** About the Mosque – on one hand, people are intolerant and nationalist, but on the other, that is Americanism, they are afraid of the terrorism and similar rubbish.
> **Peter:** But do you really think that this segment is relevant? That people really think about the terrorism?
> **Mirko:** That might be just an excuse.
> **Peter:** I think that is more the issue of intolerance.
> **Mirko:** That is the second aspect, of course.
> **Manja:** But the fear of spreading the Muslim religion, this fear is much more present after the terrorist attacks.

Religion in its secularised form connects and differentiates nations on essentialist grounds, on which intolerance or exclusion is erected. Through the US-American dominance of the issue and its "natural" support of an anti-Islam discourse, the group see Slovenia as belonging to the so-called "West" as regards religious expression. Peter, who might be more sensitive towards the issue through his Croatian nationality, repeatedly refers to intolerance incorporated in the exclusive tendencies of religion.

3. Identity and Difference[123]

Dichotomies, as the group members became conscious of during the discussion, are extremely important for the sense of *Sloveneness*. Cultural belonging and not belonging, as shown on the example of religious (secular) practices provides information about the "location" of Slovenia. Although many Slovenes often disagree with US-American politics, they adopt a certain attitude towards the so-called "Islamic other", which is at the same time translated into a very specific Slovene context, where the communist heritage of religion as a private matter can be used to cover hate-speech against Muslim communities and provides information about the relationship with their neighbouring countries. Hence, based on the example of Islamic faith, the group participants approach the connection between identity and difference in the process of signification (see Woodward 1997: 29, Douglas 1988: 12, Hall 2004: 117-9).

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123 Headline refers to Kathryn Woodward's book "Identity and Difference".

The members of this particular group do not stress or carry discourses of intolerance, which is reflected in their acceptance of such cultural practice in Slovenia, although they would prefer to see religion disappearing as a signifier of cultural belonging. At the time of the interview it was clear that the right-wing politicians Janez Janša would lead the new legislation period and that nationalist politics are supportive of the Catholic Church and hence, were increasingly founding nationalism on religious matter. This attitude is confirmed by the left-wing politician Sonja Lokar[124] two years later in autumn 2006. Also problems with neighbouring states, more distinctively the border conflict between Croatia and Slovenia, are seen as the attempt of Slovenian politicians to strengthen the *difference* to the South. In this respect, the group considers the media as playing a crucial role in constituting and transmitting such conflicts to Slovenes. Similar to Douglas Kellner (1995a and b, 2003), the group acknowledges such reports as *media events* and defines them as "*spectacle*". Furthermore, the group sees such tendencies as artificial attempts to privilege belonging to one side rather than to the other. Regarding this specific attitude, I am not sure, whether they are familiar with media theory. As far as I know, they do not take courses at the university related to media or communication studies. Because of their political situatedness as anarchists, they might be familiar with contents related to the Frankfurt school and the pessimist view of the culture industry (see Adorno and Horkheimer 1993). From a Foucaultian (2003: 26-7) perspective, they can be seen as embedded in a specific discursive knowledge production and therefore engaged with a certain version of "truth". Such a perspective on media might be a consequence of the kind of thinking they have incorporated through the discursive position.

The group participants recognise that *nationalist tendencies* and the *closure of national identities* influence the relation between Slovenia and other countries. In that context, they mainly refer to Croatia and not Serbia, Bosnia or any other former republic of Yugoslavia. This might be due to the participation of Peter, who is Croatian, in the group, or due to other personal relations to Croatia and the border conflict on the media agenda at the time. Croatia is the only former Yugoslavian republic that shares a common border with Slovenia. In the eyes of the participant, the bad treatment of, for example, Croatian residents in Slovenia also causes the bad attitude of Croatia towards Slovenia.

> **Manja:** The relationship with the Croatians isn't the best because there are many Croatian immigrants in Slovenia. There are no resentments against Austrians or Italians, but people

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124 She was one of the experts with whom I discussed recent developments regarding political and public affairs in Slovenia.

have a negative attitude towards people from southern republics of ex-Yugoslavia. Because of the politics, of course.

Peter: The reason *(for the poor relations between the countries, my addition)* lies also in the fact that Slovenia wants to get away from the Balkan as quickly as possible. And they feel much closer to Italy or Austria, because of democracy and capitalism.

In that particular relation, the group members stress the cultural involvement of Slovenia with the "*Balkan culture*", which cannot be reduced to the shared time in the Federation state of Yugoslavia. They see it as expressed in today's young people's culture, through music in discos or radio programmes, and in the Croatian ownership of media companies in Slovenia, as Pink TV. "Balkan" culture is implemented in music, food and every day life. They consider the insistence on the cultural belonging to Austria and Italy as exaggerated. Just like the other groups, they stumble over the missing cultural connection to Hungary. For such reasons they situate Slovene culture as "*middle European*", a *mix* of "Balkan" and Austrian folk culture. The insistence on one cultural legacy over the other is considered as dangerous. They compare such practices with the "You are Catholic and you are Muslim"-promotion during the war in the southern republics of former Yugoslavia. Also in Slovenia, they increasingly recognise the tendency of the right wing parties to obtain votes on discriminatory antagonism on southern foreigners and minority groups such as Roma-communities.

Manja: I don't think that people are really bothered, if their neighbour is Muslim.
Jože: There are so many people that succumb to that propaganda. You can't hate the whole nation if you had a quarrel with one of them, right. Everything is blown out of proportion. I think that most of the people don't care about those things. They still spend their vacation in Croatia.
Manja: -and they have relatives there. Except for some extreme nationalists, maybe.

In the statement above, they detect the common sense-knowledge of Slovenes regarding Islamic faith. It is clear that Slovenes are not Muslims. At the same time being a "Muslim" does not go hand in hand with the notion of nationality. Except from the "fact", as the group members argue, that Muslims are not Slovenian nationals, they still consider the difference between people based on religious faith as artificial and see racist activists as deviations of "average" nationals, who they distinguish from "extremists". With such a distinction, they employ a very similar idea, to Michael Billig (1995/2002) with "*banal nationalism*" and people's involvement in national culture without a particularly strong or visible commitment to it. Furthermore, the group sees relations to other ex-states not exclusively as played out on a public level. They also point to the personal relations that most Slovenes have through relatives. Therefore, they distinguish between the *hate-speech* of *politicians* and the *media* and the cultural connection of individuals expressed in more *positive personal relations*.

The definition of ethnicity by the group is very interesting in this connection, because they refer to groups who are not Slovene, although they had defined Slovenes as belonging to the "Slavic ethnicity" at one other point, they did not employ that notion again, when I asked them for ethnicity.[125]

> **Jože:** We have, I don't know-
> **Manja:** Roma.
> **Peter:** Hungarians, Italians.
> **Jože:** Italians and Austrians and Serbs. They are in the region of Bela Krajina or where?
> **Peter:** But do they belong to an ethnic group?
> **Jože:** Of course. They also have an Orthodox church in the region of Bela Krajina.
> **Peter:** But you have one in Ljubljana, as well.
> **Jože:** No, in the region of Bela Krajina.
> **Peter:** An ethnicity? An ethnic group?
> **Jože:** Yes, yes.
> **Mirko:** And the punks.
> (everybody laughs)
> **Jože:** What else?
> **Mirko:** We will provide more. (laughs)
> **Jože:** We will import Chinese.
> **Peter:** Vegetarians.
> (everybody laughs)

With their considerations, they make a mockery out of the term ethnicity. For me it is not clear, whether they have a certain definition of ethnicity in their minds. From their first comments, it seems that they link the term to recognised minorities in Slovenia who live in a certain region in which they constitute a group. Although they make jokes about ethnicity, when referring to groups who are "different" from the majority, such as punks and vegetarians (but not anarchists), they still tacitly "know" that ethnicity is something *different* than Slovene. They also, at another point, see a socially constructed hierarchy between different "ethnic" groups. For them such different power relations are mainly promoted by the government and the economy. Certain groups are presented differently in the media. Hungarians, Austrians and Italians are valued higher than Roma-people or Serbians, which reflects the Slovene attempt to get rid of the "Balkan"-heritage. Especially media representations of Roma-people are considered as problematic, because they are accompanied by *hate-speech*. Here, the reason is seen in the battle for votes, as well as in the lack of idealism in supporting groups that are financially unattractive. Therefore, different values of groups imply national and economic interests.

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125 The question was, as I wrote earlier in the text, not very clear. "Does Slovenia have an ethnicity" should refer to Slovene ethnicity and not ethnicities in Slovenia.

The group positions itself as especially critical towards the responsibility of media in the discursive production of opinion in Slovenia in particular and contemporary societies in general. The media in their eyes is an important opinion leader and has a lot of responsibility regarding values and ethics. For them, the Slovene media landscape does not really offer critical media. Slovene media are either pro- or anti-government and in their opinion that means that there is no media that offers a "radically different" viewpoint, such as a more reflective approach on current affairs and politics. As a result of their political affiliation to anarchism, they criticise the lack of anti-authority media and acknowledge a lack of money to support *minority opinions*. The only anti-government media are commercial US-American TV-stations: A-KANAL and Pop TV, as well as the Croatian PINK TV, which are an alternative, but not a radically different alternative to state-influenced media.

With reference to *tourist agencies'* role of promoting to a certain notion of *Sloveneness*, the group refers for the first time to Slovene landscape and nature, as aspects of nationality. Earlier, Mirko employed the perception that landscape and nature are only incidentally part of a country. At the same time they acknowledge the confluence of capitalism and nationalism. Tourist agencies are *selling* Slovene landscape and nature to foreigners and those images influence the self-perception of Slovenes. Here, all of them agree, that they like the landscape, outlining the forest and the fresh air as "the only good thing" in Slovenia. Unlike tourist agencies, but also unlike the other groups, they remove Slovene nature from Sloveneness. They do not consider geographical situatedness as a particular achievement of a country. It seems that they are all attached to nature and appreciate living in Slovenia for that reason, even when politics are "crap". For such reasons, they would not prefer Berlin over Ljubljana. They would regret it if those natural sources were sold out for tourism, which they see happening with blocks of hotels and infrastructure.

4. Between Exploitation of "others" and Opening to a Multicultural Condition

Above all, except for the reference of the cultural influence of the "Balkans" in Slovene popular culture, participants mostly talk about "Western" influences on Slovenia. Only incidentally did they come to the point where they suddenly acknowledged the cultural connection to the "Balkans" after the conversation had progressed over a long time. That picture is also due to their clear definition that Slovenia was part of the "Balkans" *before* the disintegration of Yugoslavia and has now "*just entered into Western-Europe*". The "Balkans" in that connection is not

explained by people or cultural practices of other ex-states of Yugoslavia. The group links the notion with a certain kind of *policy*.

4.1 Hope for Positive Change of Slovene Society

In the course of the discussion, the group participants seem to employ different levels of speaking about the "Balkans" and the "West", but they do not refer to such differentiation. Through attributing the "Balkans" and "West" with different meanings, those terms become plural. Meanings of the "Balkans" or the "West" are not necessarily related to each other in their reflections. "Balkan heritage" in a negative sense can be found in the conservative attitude of Slovenian people to a singular definition of culture. From their point of view, conservatism is therefore linked with a monolithic Slovene society, with few cultural expressions, because of the vast homogeneity of the inhabitants and a rural society which is not yet willing to open up to the increasingly multicultural condition. From that perspective, "Western" influences, seen in the EU-membership of Slovenia, are able to work against that kind of conservatism. Simultaneously the group narrate "Western" European influence as largely detrimental to the Slovene community and its relationship to the South.

> **Janez:** That's right. Two years ago an extremist in Slovenia would beat you black and blue if you had a Mohawk. You can see Mohawks on the television; such hairstyles became something very normal. Nowadays people don't have such prejudices about them anymore.
> **Manja:** They still do.
> **Janez:** But not as they used to.
> **Interviewer:** Maybe because that's a trend. Also on MTV.
> **Janez:** Yes.
> **Manja:** The same thing is with gays and lesbians.
> **Janez:** That is a Western influence.

I find this part of the discussion very interesting, because they do not link MTV a priori to capitalism and the ability of capitalism to absorb identities and sell them. Although the interviewer (Nataša) referred to MTV, which might be a symbol for commercial "Western" media on the one hand, the participants consider it as largely positive in the example of transmitting music that is not related to "nation" and "nationalism". Above all, they hope that such media representations support the opening up of Slovene society to different lifestyles, regarding ethnic representation or freedom of sexuality. Again, the role of women is not questioned through the increasing "Western" influence. The tendency towards conservatism concerning women's rights in (new) capitalist countries might not be influential for their personal freedom or prevent them from personal expressions. They might be too young to have

consciously experienced the change of the system in that sense. As Antic and Vidmar (2006) makes us aware, this might be related to the fact that women's traditional social role has neither changed during communism nor afterwards. For them, other values of social life seem to be more important.

> **Manja:** And nobody stares at you in Sweden.[126] Gays and lesbians are allowed to get married. Testing cosmetics on animals is forbidden. I think that is a huge progress. They made a television channel for gays and lesbians in France. These influences are coming here as well, because everybody wants to do it the way Europe does.
> **Peter:** Okay, these are some positive changes that are accompanying the enormous amount of negative things.
> **Manja:** Of course. But that would reduce conservatism a bit.
> [..]
> **Janez:** There are around thirty groups that have a different style than the majority in Ljubljana. When I was in Berlin, there were thirty with different images in only one park. More people mean more diversity.

Manja and Janez are both closely tied to the idea of peaceful co-existence of people and nature. Both live their lives in great respect of other living organisms, not only towards humans. For them, Sweden provides a positive model of life standards, from where they hope to be influenced in Slovenia as well. At the same time, that example is an idealised picture of Sweden and stems most probably from eclectic experiences abroad. Referring to James Clifford's (1999) concept of "Traveling Cultures", people are likely to enter other countries and communities within their own social circles. In such a point of view, it would not be surprising, that Manja and Janez met a greater community of people with similar attitudes and lifestyles in Sweden[127]. Nevertheless, such images positively influence their own political attitude and help build confidence in the idea that "*things can change*", even though in a very limited way. Those positive influences are accompanied, as Peter points out, with many negative.

4.2 The Confluence of "Multikulti" and Exclusive Cultural Definitions

Negative influences from the "West" are above all identified with NATO, which they see as a mainly economically driven force related to war and weapons.

> **Peter:** NATO in its exploitation intentions connects all European countries and the whole world.

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126 Compared to most Slovenian youngsters, Manja has a very conspicuous style.
127 Here I do not want to make any conclusions about Swedish society.

Janez: NATO is the bad side of this connecting process between the countries. When the good side of this process is the possibility to travel and education, NATO is a bad side.
Jože: NATO also offers possibilities to travel and you even get paid for it.
(everybody laughs)
Jože: When we talk about NATO we talk about profit. Countries trade with weapons.

Considering NATO as the "*bad side of the connecting process between countries*" indicates a certain attitude among the group members. Although they define such alliance as a *process*, they recognise *exclusive tendencies* coming along with it. Thus, they see NATO as also attached with images of new "*fascism*" associated with the United States. The USA, in the opinion of the group transports the whole ideology of "*dreaming about terrorist attacks*" also in Slovenia. Personally the group members consider such beliefs as ridiculous, but dangerous and driven by economic interests. NATO, the European Union and largely capitalism are united as "Western influences" in the use of such classifications by the group, although with some differences. In contrast to NATO, the European Union offers more positive images for the group participants. Capitalist influences are assumed to be in the interest of both allies. For the participants, the European Union allows the hope that Slovene society would open up to a multicultural society. The positive impact of the European Union is seen in the possibility of mobility through education programmes, and cheaper travel opportunities. On the political side, they understand the European Union as non-democratic in the shape of *democratic ideology*.

Manja: There are standards valid for all 25 countries. It is impossible to create a law which would suit all 25 countries. Because every country has a different situation. Whatever they think of – the countries must follow.
And it is insane to introduce rules before people can decide about them. They make the rules about alcoholism, new traffic law – they don't care, if you have the money to buy extra equipment.
Peter: But when you voted for the EU, you knew that you have to except the consequences.
Manja: But I didn't vote for it.
Peter: I know you didn't. That is the absurd thing about democracy.
Manja: And they say – you gave us votes. But people didn't actually know what they were voting for, because they were talking only about the open borders-

For the group, the European Union is carried by certain standards that do not necessarily reflect or support other nations' contexts. Concluding from that imposed laws can be detrimental for a nation's society. Here, the group members implicitly target the loss of national sovereignty through European politics and European laws. In this connection, I find it is interesting that they see the European Union as detrimental to national entities and do not think about positive or negative effects on specific groups within all countries, as they used to stress the interest of the world-wide

working class throughout the discussion. Being a member of the European Union seems to push the participants into the position of thinking in national terms, or being at least *defensive* towards Slovenia. Some issues, like the increase of petrol prices without an increase in wages are indeed very particular for the situation in Slovenia and directly affect people who live and work in the territory, defined as Slovenia. Therefore, the group members are also affected. They seem to acknowledge that such organisations are inter*nationally* organised, which means *between nations*, although they do not seem to see the European Union as consisting of nation states. From their description, the European Union appears as if it was something disconnected from the national member-states.

The turn to a rather unquestioned *national* position of the group members allows insights at another level, on which identities are negotiated. As long as national identity was analysed from a *within point of view*, it was easier for the discussants to deconstruct cultural particularities from nationality. The emotional involvement of the group is from a left-wing political perspective that deeply questions nationality. From such a point of view the participants are able to say that they perceive Sloveneness as more exclusive than, for example, Swedishness. Certainly, anarchist groups are organised in global networks and therefore go beyond national interests and cultural zones. Those other anarchist groups have (the) similar interests as the Slovene group from the interview. Anarchist "culture" in different countries might be very similar as well. Hence, I would argue, working together with other anarchist groups does not question their *national* belonging, which is strongly embedded in similar political discourses, where they advocate similar interests. In their eyes, the European Union carries capitalist values, which they criticise from their position. However, the group participants do not only experience the incorporation of EU-European values in political matters, but I would argue they feel also disturbed in their common sense which is related to Slovenia as a provider of culture. EU-influences affect the cultural belonging of the group, whereas anarchist values are experienced differently as they see those values as *internationally agreed*. Interestingly, disagreement with the European Union and the tendency to defend the Slovene culture on national grounds is a result of their emphasis on capitalism and is therefore not conducted from their perspective as anarchist, but as Slovenes. Capitalism as the connecting force between the countries is seen as particularly detrimental to the development of existing cultures, because of its ability to capture cultural specificities and make everything appear as very similar. When they refer to their own context and situatedness, they also have to talk about Slovenia. Their consideration of the European Union creates conflicts for them in defining positive or negative effects coming particularly from the "West".

> **Tomaž:** In general, I think that international connections, connections with something new and different, are positive, they bring-
> **Mirko:** I also think that the isolation will only bring intolerance to us.
> **Manja:** That happened in Yugoslavia. People were quite isolated. They didn't know the world outside.
> **Jože:** It depends, some international connections are positive, some are negative. NATO and EU are not very positive.

Although international influences from NATO or the EU are not defined as positive by the group's members, they would also consider isolation of a nation or community as counter-productive. Here, the group members locate one reason for conservatism, intolerance and the stagnation of cultural and political matters in former Yugoslavia. As regards NATO and the EU, they consider capitalism and globalisation as most influential and have for such reasons a highly ambiguous attitude towards tendencies of *opening* and *closing cultural spheres*. Globalisation and an improved infrastructure makes travelling much easier and cheaper, which is an important aspect for their quality of life, especially in order to participate in their anarchist activities. Also the internet, although connected to capitalism and the military, is seen as a positive outcome or side-effect of globalisation in order to generate a sense of *globality*. Trends in music and fashion come from the "West" and are a connected business. They acknowledge the recent interest of a larger audience in "Eastern" products as positive. Concerning music, which is another very important tool for them to express their own belonging, it is on the one hand reduced in its variety by the music industry and it is supportive for establishing an alternative music scene. In their perspective, music is something that connects people and can spread ideas in a positive way. Trends in Slovenia are in their view, closer to the capitalist side of globalisation. They find it disappointing that in their view, Slovene politicians have started to "prove" their Europeanness in showing that they are "real" capitalists who have abandoned their communist past.

> **Mirko:** If the trends were different – the world could follow many of Slovenian's examples. For instance the good example of self-governance. Maybe the best model ever – although bad, but- Because the system was bad, they want to stifle that very positive thing as well. They want to compare the system with a dictatorship.
> They are kissing Europe's ass: "We are now the real capitalists. We buried communism."
> **Manja:** Yes, that is always present.

For them, the communist idea was abandoned too easily, when reducing the communist idea to state-socialism and dictatorship. Also Stjepan G. Meštrović (1994) makes us aware that abandoning state-socialism means consequently abandoning any reflections on negative influences caused by capitalism or thinking of alternative ways

to organise economics and politics. At this point they turned to a very negative attitude towards the European Union, capitalism and the exploitation of workers, which they see as connected with and responsible for leaving behind other ideas of political expressions. Interestingly, the participants come to similar conclusions as Zygmunt Baumann (1997, 2003) and see surveillance and whole new instrumentalisation of control introduced in European countries as a result to make the new system work. Furthermore, exploitation through capitalism is also seen in tourism – the exploitation of nature, or in foreign capital which supports the foreign investor and not the countries where capital is "invested". They also observe such attitude recently in the attitudes of Slovene people. In contrast to current economic exploitation of the Southern republics by Slovenia, the group participants claim that state-socialism sometimes does not seem that negative anymore, although they certainly remain critical about state-socialist policies and economic equality. Even though everybody was entitled to be in a position to afford the same things, it was always one person from the KPJ, who was the director of the company. Therefore, to be a member of the party gave one access to a flat, a car and other things. It was almost obligatory to join the Yugoslavian Communist Party. In that sense, it was similar to the capitalist structure.

5. Considerations of Belonging

Going through the transcript of the group discussion over and over again, it was very difficult for me to define the sense of belonging of the participants within social and cultural discourses and the confluence of political situatedness. Asking the participants for their relationship to Slovenia caused a strong rejection in the first instance and immediately followed with a reference to the possibility to travel. The more important question for the group was, as I pointed out earlier, how to be a non-Slovenian with Slovenian nationality and citizenship. Certainly, they consider themselves related to their family, to places where they grew up or to friends, but not to Slovenia as a country, which would distinguish them from nationals to other countries.

> **Janez:** I wouldn't talk about Slovenia as a country and about the borders because I don't acknowledge them and I don't see myself as taking a place among Slovenes. But unfortunately one has to have the passport in order to cross borders. I am a human being, I live in this land. I plan to travel, to meet people, different cultures, different ways of living and thinking.

A closer look at the group's social and cultural location reveals their personal difficulties to tear off their nationality in confrontation with people who perceive them as Slovenes. They know, although they largely reject the participation in national

traditions or customs, that their own identity is strongly influenced by the Slovenian way of life. This is implementing social reality to a degree that they cease to know where to draw the border between being and not being a Slovene national. Being Slovene, does not mean having a Slovene passport, Slovene citizenship and so on. They realise that they are not able decide nationality on their own, because there are, for example, people from Croatia who let them know that they are Slovene. In the group's point of view, being raised in Slovenia does mean being *reduced* to that country. Globalisation and international influences – from the "East" and "West", but not necessarily from any other "sides" – link them to a kind of "world culture", which they most often express in their shared interest in music.

The possibility of *travelling* is extremely important for them. They do not even criticise the exploitive capitalist force behind travel agencies or companies. One argument supporting their interest in travelling is that Slovenia as a country is interesting, but there are many other – more – interesting countries and places. Travelling is connected with growing understanding of the world. At the same time there are positive aspects related to living in Slovenia. Peter, who is from Croatia, sees an advantage in Slovenia, being a safe country to live a life as an "ordinary working class man".

Travelling is not only connected to living in different places, but to a particular state of mind. Regarding belonging, the discussants find it important that one has to know and understand the culture before one can decide to be part of it or not. Thus, they are aware of the cultural implications of identity. Travelling becomes important for them in that relation, because they are confronted with different cultural codes from which they might be able to access their initial cultural embeddedness. Due to their political interest, reasons for travelling are, in addition to vacation or holidays as children, connected to anarchist demonstrations, or going on tour with a band, or visiting relatives, and studying. The group also considers the meaning of Slovene nationality as dependent on the country of destination. From their experiences, people reacted mostly positively to their nationality, except some Croatian people, because of the political troubles with the state Slovenia. Nationalism in Zagreb was considered as strong.

Conspicuous during the discussion was the enthusiasm about the question of travel and going abroad for studying or other reasons. This was also true before they were emotionally involved in the conversation, but at this point – it was the last question and all of them showed signs of tiredness – they seemed to be most personally affected.

Manja: I would live abroad immediately.

Jože: Me too. (2) "Every month – another state."[128] (laughs)

Manja: We[129] plan to travel. Personally, I would go somewhere south or east, but that is a problem. You are running a great risk if you go by van, because somebody might steal it.

Janez: Especially if you live inside of it.

Manja: That is a bit of a problem. If I was able to choose where to live, I would choose Germany. Spain also, but I felt most comfortable in Germany. I mean, regarding the people's attitude towards you- In Spain people are more open but in Germany the cops leave you alone. It's freer.

Tomaž: I would live in Paris, Berlin or Barcelona.

Manja: Yes (laugh).

Janez: Football.

(everybody laughs)

Tomaž: No, the history.

Manja: Barcelona is great, just the cops-

Jože: I would love to go to South America.

Peter: I would go to Spain, Italy or France.

Interviewer: For how long would you go?

Jože: For good.

Mirko: I would go anywhere, but not for good.

Manja: Me neither.

Tomaž: Me neither.

Mirko: I would love to live and see a lot, but I would return.

[..]

Peter: I would leave for good to Italy or France.

In this connection, the perceived difference between "East" and "West" regarding "safety" is interesting because here lays the reason why the members of the group would prefer to go to "Western" countries. Only Manja states that she would prefer to go to "Eastern" countries. The group seems to be more connected to the "West", which is expressed in the choice of destination. Even though all of them would immediately travel, besides from Jože and Peter, who has left "his" country already, because he lives permanently in Slovenia, the others would come "back" to Slovenia. That perspective was surprising for me in the first instance, because through the entire interview they rejected the notion of Sloveneness and referred to various "better" places in the world. For that reason, I decided to call them "*Slovene travellers*", not only because of the perception of "Sloveneness" abroad in the eyes of others, but because the group uses Slovenia (or the particular place they define as the place to come "back" to) as their location from which they start to travel, and as a metaphor to

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128 Jože said this sentence in English.
129 "We" means Manja and Janez.

access different cultures and societies. Also, being "abroad" for them is not rejected as an idea in the same way as they would reject "nation". Maybe the reason for that lies in their particular experiences abroad, in the realisations of being a "foreigner" abroad and not speaking the national language and having some problems to communicate with other people in everyday life. "*Slovene travellers*" also refers to their state of mind. Being in Slovenia does not prevent them from being in touch with an international environment. People from different countries always come to concerts in Slovenia, particularly to Metelkova where they used to go out in the evenings and they have contact with people who they met in other countries through the internet.

Promoters or Defenders of Slovenia?

The group consists of Esad (19) and Davor (17) – who both have family backgrounds from a former Yugoslavian country other than Slovenia, the two of them do not necessarily consider themselves as Slovenes –, Aleš (18), Gašper (18), Matej (16) and Branko[130] (17). At the time of the interview, they were all in the educational programme for car mechanics. With this group I faced the most difficult challenge in interpreting or analysing their statements, because the difference between my interpretation of social life, the ranking of values, the words I would usually use to describe things etc. and that of the participants from the car mechanic school was often quite different and I realised that it was stronger than in comparison to the other groups. In the other groups, the majority of participants go on with higher education and have at least random theoretical knowledge on (national) identity and all have finished – except Mitja and Manja from the anarchist environment – with high school. From their educational background, the car mechanic students were not taught to reflect critically on strategies of national discourses. Instead they studied national history, geography, literature, etc. as part of their school education and to understand themselves as part of "the" nation (see Billig 1995: 93 ff.).

The teachers of the students, who we contacted beforehand for the interviews, were quite negative about their students' interest in national history, politics, etc. and did not believe a group discussion would last between three to four hours. Differences with the other groups in the end were – looking at the transcript – the smaller amount of words, because they had less passages of intensive talking and the fact that talking was mainly evoked by the questionnaire and not by their own structure. It is also interesting that among the first things the (female) teachers complained about were the young men's interest in girls and sex-related issues, whereas the school was characterised with an absence of female pupils. At the same time, we were female researchers and the male interviewees were in their adolescence, which constituted a very similar gender/age-relation as between their teachers and them. As a researcher, I am certainly aware of opposing or even mutually exclusive interpretations of social realities and the power relations between different concepts of different groups, in which "car mechanics" are more likely to be found on a lower end of social hierarchy than "teachers". Therefore, as my position as a researcher and Nataša's education as an English teacher is closer to "teacher" than "car mechanic", it might be too easy to believe a certain picture of teachers, which they have on their pupils, and is in my opinion not necessarily part of conscious reflection. Based on these facts, it is not unlikely to reproduce a situation similar to the classroom. With this background information, I found it even more

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130 Names changed.

important that we had held the interview structures in a manner that was as open as possible. In this way, we could avoid falling into several "traps", among them, which I indicated above, were gendered issues at play.

Although unexpected, the conversation of this group was carried by an additional twist. Esad and Davor, who had both migrated from another former Yugoslavian republic to Slovenia, volunteered to join the group of otherwise Slovenians and therefore brought in perspectives that did not always allow participants to rest on their "thinking as usual"-opinions regarding the nation. Michael Billig (1995: 94) drew our attention to the fact that the use of words like "the people" within one nation it is not embracing "the people of the whole world", but only about the people of one particular nation. By having two non-Slovene students take part in a discussion about Slovenia with Slovenes allowed another level of reflection to enter the conversation that might not have come in otherwise. At the same time, the presence of people with different national backgrounds also brings in unequal power relations, since nation states are in competitive relationships. As outlined earlier, particularly with the analysis of the group discussion of the "Slovene metropolitans", Slovene national discourses towards former Yugoslavian nation states are torn by the tension of closeness and delimitation, both on a cultural and political level. Migrants from other former Yugoslavian republics are often negatively affected, when national demarcation turns against them in hate speeches or discrimination. Thus, the conversation comprised both, (talking about) discrimination and demarcation to the point where the group's idea of "Sloveneness" ended. As one characteristic of such an unequal power relation in terms of national backgrounds, it was obvious that Slovene discussants were cautious with formulating their opinions, especially in regards to conflict related issues to other former Yugoslavian republics. Instead, it was Esad and Davor who mostly drew upon discrimination. From the perspective of Critical Whiteness Studies, silence of those who are privileged by a certain cultural or social condition is always also a feature of unequal power relations by suggesting that people who are discriminated against know more about discrimination than those who are not negatively affected by discriminatory structures in a society (see also Wollrad 2005: 178 ff.). At the same time, "white" majority members in ("Western") European nation states feel extremely uneasy, when being referred to as racist (see Hervik 2004). In the example of the group, Slovene participants were trying to avoid being suspected of a discriminatory attitude, which consequently contributed to their silence on discrimination in Slovenia. Here, it is important to note that the national or "ethnic" background of the discussants was not dominating the discussion. Instead, it was very interesting to see how different alliances were built upon different layers of belonging. All group members shared a particular sense of Slovene culture, they viewed Slovene achievements in Slovenia through their educational background as car mechanics and they highly valued the

economic success of Slovene companies. Common as well, as indicated above, was their encapsulation into "banal nationalism" (see Billig 1995). The "nature" of the nation was in question only at a few points.

1. Slovenia for the Eyes of Others?

From a first reading, the way the participants of the group represent Slovenia is likely to appear as if they wanted to present the country to foreigners or tourists. Their way of talking about Slovenia reminded me of a repetition of cultural representations of the nation in a public discourse, such as in history education, in the media, from (tourist) advertising, etc. which they tried to transmit to me as their foreign interviewer[131]. This impression only changed, when looking at their emotional involvement beyond simply listing positive aspects of Slovenia. They seem to have a strong interest in emphasising the "good" sides, the successful stories and the cultural customs being recognised in other countries. Maybe this is why they listed famous writers like Ivan Cankar and France Prešeren, because they seem to understand that those people are part of the cultural heritage of Slovenia and are important references to Slovene high culture. This does not require any personal relation to Slovene literature. Prešeren is also mentioned because he was the author of the Slovene anthem, which is a drinking song and the group members see "drinking" as an important aspect of Slovene culture. Here, the personal level of the participants' experiences and the national level seem to be intersected. With reference to feelings of pride, disappointment, anger or the desire to be recognised, the young men seem to transport national discourses in their self-perception. At three points they referred to the fact that Slovenes are sometimes confused with Slovakians, a circumstance they clearly dislike. As a related issue, they also highlighted Slovenia's progress especially in technology, economy and production at the beginning of their discussion, before they started to talk about cultural influences from other cultures that contributed to contemporary Slovenia. At the same moment, when they claimed to see influences from Slovenia on the world as minor – otherwise, Slovenia would not be confused with Slovakia – the issue was devoted a lot of space. Personally, they seem very proud – also Davor or Esad – when referring to success stories of the Slovenian nation.

> **Interviewer:** What do you like or what don't you like about Slovenia?
> **Aleš:** I like to see foreigners from those big countries coming to Slovenia and speaking enthusiastically and positively about it. If they say they did not regret coming here, because Slovenia is worth being seen.

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131 I suppose that both aspects influenced the discussion, but not exclusively and would not remain present thoughout the whole discussion.

From my own expectations I was surprised with Aleš' answer. Instead of talking about personal relations to Slovenia, he was proud of the positive experiences of foreigners in Slovenia. He finds it satisfying, if foreigners speak (in a positive way) of the country. It is also important to note that: By saying, "foreigners from those big countries" and not "foreigners from any other countries", Aleš indicates that not everyone's opinion would have the same value on Slovenia. If, for example, George W. Bush confuses Slovenia with Slovakia – although considered as stupid – it matters, because he is the president of one of the most influential countries in the world. Sometimes it seems like it is not the participants' personal attachment to the mountains, the nice landscape, the seaside – which they do not find beautiful – that makes such characteristics important. They are proud of them, because it offers something to other people who consequently find something positive about Slovenes. In the next example we tried to find more indicators of their position regarding characterizations of Slovenia that they had collected in the brainstorming.

Interviewer: Why did you write down, for example, the drying-frame, Kras, pršut, Teran?
Davor: Because you can recognise Slovenia by those things. If you leave Slovenia you won't find a kozolec[132] anymore. That is typical for Slovenian people. Avsenik is a famous Slovenian folk singer who almost belongs in front of a kozolec. Things like that. Wine and all that. That is all Slovenian. For example – Cviček, Teran-
Matej: Refošk.
Davor: Refošk.
Interviewer: And you can recognise Slovenia by those things?
Everybody: Yes.
Davor: And Cviček is known even in Europe. Isn't it?
Branko: That is the best wine. Actually the best quality.

Here, they list different culinary specialities, Teran, Refošk and Cviček are different sorts of red wine, Kras is the region around the sea-side area where Teran comes from and also pršut (air-dried ham) is very common in that part of the country because of the stronger winds. Kozolec can usually be found on Slovenian pasture land, where grass is dried for the cattle. The Slovenian cattle grid is mostly wooden and visible in the Slovenian rural landscape, because it is very common to use it and it forms part of the every-day experience of many Slovenes, as well as being a signifier for foreigners who have entered Slovenia. Avsenik, who is frequently named in reference to Slovenia, because his band – Avseniki – has existed over a long period and is largely identified with Slovenia and the Alps-Adriatic region. Also Avsenik is associated with the rural area of the country. Hence, I suppose, the connection to the kozolec. Personally, as it turned out, the Slovenian participants of the group did not like

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132 Kozolec is a cattle grid.

Avseniki. Earlier Gašper introduced the band, because "Avseniki are known everywhere", with reference to the German cultural context. It is again mentioned that it is important that foreigners are able to recognise Slovenia because of the famous singer. The example of Cviček leaves the question open, whether people are more proud about the wine because it is a Slovene product, or because of the (imagined or based on evidence) fact that it is known in Europe. Looking at their distinct knowledge on the Slovene wine production, this indicates their personal interest in it as well and led to – in contrast to, for example, Slovene writers, landscape features or the band Avseniki – a detailed conversation about the issue, interesting all participants.

> **Branko:** I claim that every landscape in Slovenia has its own characteristics. For example the Dolenjska region is known by Cviček. The region of Bela Krajina is well known by Metliška črnina. Things like that. And the Primorska region. Kras – Teran and Merlot.
> [..]
> **Aleš:** We are second best in drinking in the worl-
> **Gašper:** We are the best, statistically. I mean with regard to our smallness.
> **Davor:** And we are very proud of that fact.

Branko explains the landscape features by outlining the growing of different wine sorts in different places. Aleš makes the link to other countries in the world, when he explains that Slovenes are great drinkers and again compatible with other countries. Gašper says at one other point: "Even if we are a much smaller country than Italy, we have better wine." It is interesting here that also Davor, who often addresses Slovenes as "they", here he seems to feel part of the Slovenian national community and says "we". This is symptomatic for both Esad and Davor, when talking about landscape features, Slovene cuisine or beer and wine production. The next example taken from the conversation is also interesting as it regards this line of argumentation:

> **Esad:** The European Union and NATO. They are kissing arses anyway, but okay. Let's drop that subject that is for politicians. Slovenia is a beautiful country; it has mountains, the sea. These are outstanding natural features anyway, so there isn't much to say about it. Beautiful is, what beautiful is.

Esad says "they are kissing arses" and particularly targets politicians. At this point I find it important to analyse the use of "they" for politicians, which is different from the "we" of the world's-best-drinkers which they are proud of. In general the group members, especially Esad and Davor, are negative towards politicians. They do not consider them as acting in their interest, nor, except from Milan Kučan, do they consider there to be any outstanding personalities among them, who would be able to represent the country properly. Their references to larger countries, like Italy that despite their size does not have better wine, might be explained in the fact that they

relate the meaning of Sloveneness also to its reputation to other countries – while in their eyes, politicians do not have any importance for them. Because they find the confusion with Slovakia as an indicator of the fact that they are not known, they may be more likely to stress the points which show Slovenia as having something to offer, things for which it should be known in other countries. The term "we" for the group, is mostly used – in relation to the issues discussed above in this chapter – to comprise opinions and attitudes with which most people agree, or do not obviously question in the conversation. Some people, as Avsenik and his band, can be part of the "we"-construction despite the disinterest in the music genre of the group, others, like politicians, who are narrated as unimportant for Slovene national representation, are clearly distinguished as actors on their own.

One reason for Slovenia's lack of fame in the world is defined by the participants as the size of the country. Compared to former Yugoslavia or the Habsburg monarchy, Slovenia embraces a small territory. Despite its smallness, the group discussants consider that Slovenia has a lot to offer. Many sentences start with "even though we are a small country, we have" good wine, a great variety of landscape, a lot of satisfied tourists, technical museums even in small places, the attractive riverside of Ljubljanica in Ljubljana and different mentalities in different Slovene regions to which again, wine and landscape is related. In their attempt to "defend" the importance of the Slovene country beyond its size, they prove that they have a precise knowledge of Slovenian places, they emphasised for example, the height of the Slovenian mountains, and pointed out that Mt. Triglav was the highest with 2,864 meters (here they made a mistake, they thought it was 2,664 meters high). Again, they see here another tourist magnet and a reason for foreigners to know Slovenia: the possibility of skiing and hiking. Zlata lisica, the famous ski-run for the women's World Cup Competition, was highlighted as very important in attracting foreigners and tourists. At the same moment, they show a great interest in the regional diversity of Slovenia. In contrast to other groups, the group members are from and related to different Slovenian regions and do not show a common affinity for a region. After all, they were not able to decide on their favourite Slovene area, because every new suggestion surpassed the enthusiasm of the one before. One was in favour for Gorenjska[133], two others for Bela Krajina, another one said Primorska is the nicest, again with reference to the local specialities, such as Slovene wine, pastry and ham. Esad and Davor interrupted at one point in this narration, of the beautiful Slovene country with happy foreign visitors by referring to Montenegro or Croatia as having more tourists, because of the missing (beautiful) seaside and beaches in Slovenia. Perhaps here they were (consciously or

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133 Regions of Slovenia.

subconsciously) creating a distance to their own participation in narrating the Slovene nation and being a part of it.

Sports are a category which the group sees directly linking Slovenia and national identity. Especially Esad and Davor refer to the attempt of Slovenia to create an independent sports identity from former Yugoslavia and give one of the few examples of the participants who pointed out the artificial moment of nation building and national differences. However, such a construction was immediately covered by the "nostalgic" element (where Esad and Davor both repeated their fathers' words) that the "best times" were "Yugo-times", and the Yugoslavian team was much more successful than Slovenian sports personalities on their own. On the whole, the group members do not seem to be interested in sports or at least not to the same degree as they showed interest in Slovene wine production. The lack of interest might be due to their considerations that Slovenia does not have many successful representatives in sports. At the same time, they acknowledge sports as one provider of identity, because they recognise the importance for the recognition of nationality. If Slovenia takes part in a competition, and does not win, it is nonetheless considered by Slovenian people and something to be proud of. The interest of following sports games also depends on the participation of the Slovenian team, if the Slovenian team does not succeed, for example, in making it through to the European championship, Slovene people would not watch the competition anymore, at least not with the same interest. Sports people also become important Slovenian representatives, if they are successful.

International relations between Slovenia and other countries – this was a question in the questionnaire – were also considered as closely linked to achievements of Slovenia abroad or with events that attracted foreign (positive) attention about Slovenia. In particular, economic corporations, where Slovenia was able to offer something to other countries, inventions of Slovenian scientists, the quality of Slovenian products, the export of Slovenian products, the production of, for example, lights for famous European cars in Slovenia, etc. were listed here. Again, the group members show a very detailed knowledge. They listed numerous Slovene products and companies. Furthermore, they were able to name Slovene economists and Slovene companies abroad. Their personal involvement is not generated through the consumption of those commodities, maybe they do consume the products, but they do not stress this point. Their reason for outlining these companies and products is to show what Slovenia has to offer and what is constitutive of Slovenia. The question is not what makes Slovenia Slovene, but to show what Slovenia is. Among the important international relations of Slovenia, tourist magnets in Slovenia are again listed. They are also proud of Slovenian people who were rewarded with international prizes. Here, they particularly speak of people and celebrities of popular culture. They pointed out that a Slovenian

lady participated in that year's Miss World competition and wished to see once a Slovenian winning the title. Slovenian music, bands and singers, such as Sidharta and Magnifico, who enjoy international fame, were listed as well. "No-man's land", a Slovenian movie that was awarded with an international prize was considered a very good reference for them. Nobody, not even Esad or Davor, point out that the director of the film, Branko Đurić, was not of Slovenian nationality, but Bosnian. The group's way of talking about Slovenes as being successful and being recognised as successful is a constant tension between wanting Slovene people to succeed and being proud of them and the importance of being acknowledged in the world. It is also interesting that they refer to a politician who is the only Slovenian in the European parliament, but they do not even remember his name. When Nataša suggested this could be a person called Potočnik, nobody was really sure if it was him. Nonetheless, it was an important indicator for Slovenian recognition and participation in international circles, a reference that appears to be in contradiction of their usual attitude during the interview towards Slovenian politicians and especially their behaviour as regards to the European Union. In the context of discussing the international relevance of Slovenia, membership to the European Union and NATO received only little attention. They mentioned these already at the very beginning of the discussion, but they do not extend their consideration in regard to the EU and NATO. They define both as important for Slovenia as a country, because Slovenes have worked towards joining the EU for a long period and have achieved membership finally. Compared to other "Western" European countries – they usually talk about Europe in reference to the EU or "Western" Europe – Slovenia is not yet considered as being on the same level. In their opinion, politics, the legal system or bureaucracy are still intersected by corruption. The participants consider personal relations (to politicians or other "important" persons) as remaining important for (non-)Slovenes in order to get jobs, a visa, legal documents, etc., instead that those things would be based on clear measurements. Vice verse, they see those things as sorted out in EU-European countries. Nobody in the group refers to other new "Eastern" European members of the European Union that was less successful than Slovenia as regards to becoming new EU-members. The group's measurements are clearly set against the older core of the European Union. The space of former Yugoslavia functions as another cultural zone they use for the purpose of comparison, but not to contrast it with a more successful Slovenia.

2. Agents of the National Narration

As a general description, I would not claim that any of the group members considers "nationality" as an invention or a necessity in terms of organisation of the human social life. Thus, they do not seem to employ viewpoints that would detangle

nationality from its "normality" or "natural" appearance. At the same moment, this does not prevent them from being critical towards national traditions, attitude or politics. Sloveneness is not expressed in an exclusive attitude towards "others" or "othering", although they exclude some "others", because they do not mention or consider them. For example, people from former Yugoslavia are not included in the idea of tourists. Therefore they are not considered as important in terms of their opinion of Slovenia. At other points, people from other ex-states become examples of what Sloveneness is not. There is no attempt to deconstruct Sloveneness as such, changes and contradictions are seen within Slovene nationality and not in challenge to it. The question "how do you find out what Sloveneness means", was in my opinion a provocation to encourage thinking about the notion of nationality itself, which was the reason why I was irritated at the beginning with their answer in which they referred to the internet and newspapers. This also allows reflecting upon the different entanglements with the concept of nationality and the wide range of meaning the term "nationality" carries for differently situated people. As regards this point, I will provide a longer example:

Interviewer: What did you mean by the internet?
Gašper: Getting the information.
Interviewer: What kind of information? Which pages?
Gašper: Which pages?
Davor: Mat' kurja!
Gašper: Mat' kurja. 24-ur.[134]
Interviewer: Do you follow information on the internet?
Davor: Of course. Every day for two hours. (Everybody laughing) I am connected to 24-ur.com all the time. I don't even turn off the computer.
Gašper: So, you don't need a newspaper?
Davor: 'Crime and accident section'.
Interviewer: And the others? Do you also do that?
Branko: Usually.
Interviewer: Do you discuss the contents at school?
Davor: Oh, come on! No.
Esad: (laugh) Who cares what was happening yesterday.
Davor: Sometimes they discuss the 'Crime and accident section'.
Esad: But nothing else.
Davor: He stole that, the other one- I have never heard that somebody would say: "It is going to be cloudy and minus 20 degrees."
Esad: But there is such funny information in the 'Crime and accident section'. Incredible, what they show there! How come people do such bizarre things?

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134 24-ur means 24 hours.

Besides their reference to Slovenian labels, Slovene encyclopaedia, customs, such as specific (regional) festivals, they answer that information on Slovenia can be found in newspaper and in the internet. Mat'kurja is the first established Slovene website. Its translation means "mother chicken" and refers to the geographic shape of Slovenia. The group's interest on Slovenian current affairs is mainly in crimes and accidents – especially because they like the strangeness of such happenings – and the weather forecast. This attitude can be explained in the way they see media reports. They state that the media blow things up and show everything in the worst light; here they specifically point at the fight over the Slovenian/Croatian border. This criticism also implies that they do not consider that issue as a national issue, but as a political fight over power, as they complain during the interview. Nations become actors on such issues, when fighting over land, which does not correspond with the way the group constructs Sloveneness. Information and the media industry for them are associated with globalisation and the commercialisation of content. As such, media do not carry national contents for them and are not representative of a national opinion. Saying "there is a lot of nonsense in the media, but also information you would not find on the streets" indicates a certain degree of conscious reflections that media reality is different from their immediate experiences and informs about discussants' situatedness in social reality. The media is informative – regarding contemporary world history –, but is also detrimental in the sense that contents are exaggerated and harmful too, for example, Moslems who are suddenly suspected of planning the next terrorist attack. Especially Esad and Davor appear very resistant towards such media narrations and would value the "truth" in such stories as very low. I am not sure, if the other participants would have been as critical as Esad and Davor, who often experienced such misunderstandings themselves.

This group largely agrees that politics are constitutive of Slovene society – despite disagreements.

> **Davor:** Politicians are some officials. They take care of things. But personally – I neither feel nor see any changes. That is my opinion. I don't know about the others.
> **Branko:** Politics affects everything we were discussing today. If politics change, then the people also change. Everything would.
> From Branko's point of view, politics has a huge influence on people's reality. Political decisions have a direct influence on the sense of community. Here, he sees politicians as acting upon citizens and not necessarily in the citizen's interest. Apart from Milan Kučan, the former president of Slovenia, who is acknowledged as a positive national personality, the group members suggest a lot of improvements regarding the contemporary social system. Here, their ideas are very concrete, they suggest reformations in the health system, changes for hard working people and they demand that physical work should be better rewarded. Those requirements correspond to their own position of becoming car mechanics and most likely also to their own position coming from a working class background.

Contemporary politics are also referred to in terms of the commitment to the European Union and the opening of the economy to free market competition and privatisation. Here the group draws the link to a certain Slovene attitude:

Gašper: I think we (Slovenes) are more reserved and less communicative than people in other countries. Maybe because we are so busy all the time, always under stress. I think people are more open elsewhere, more connected to each-other. Here you can hardly get in contact with people.

Changing to a competitive market system also requires a different attitude to work. The group members also agree in this relation that Slovenian people are "envious", which is in their opinion a "common knowledge" fact about Slovenes. The emphasis on the term "envious" comes from the Slovenian participants and is indeed a description of the Slovene character which was repeated by almost all discussion groups (interestingly, not by the people from the anarchist environment who were the most critical about capitalism). Envy for this group means to be jealous of other people's beautiful houses and expensive cars, for which people would also take a bank loan to improve their reputation in the eyes of their neighbours. The group members do not target that as part of a consumer based culture that is gaining importance in Slovenian society, but in comparison with Davor's and Esad's cultural background, they define it as Slovenian. Slovene people are envious (Matej), cars and beautiful houses are important. In Davor's opinion Slovene people are handed everything on a silver plate, in contrast to Montenegrins, which is his family background. He thinks that Slovene people are very spoilt and selfish. Slovenes only become sociable, when they are drunk, which is also an observation that was repeated in each of the interviews. Esad and Davor say that Slovenes feel threatened by them, they are afraid of possible violence. The Slovenian participants did not comment or respond to that negative picture portrayed of them.

The Slovene language is another characteristic of Slovenian society. It often becomes a narrator of national distinctiveness, because, as the group members describe, it has along with the singular and plural also the dual form. The Slovenian language is able to express very distinctively matters relating to two people. This is considered as being important for poets telling love stories, for example, and generates a sense of intimacy for two people. Slovenes are often proud of the rare grammatical particularity of their language and often emphasise the need to "keep" the dual, as if there was any fear of losing it. However, this group does not give much information on the dual, but they recognise that language is very important for Slovenes and also of their numerous regional accents and dialects. Davor does not understand why people create subgroups of a unified group language, especially, if there are only two million people who speak it. Above all, the group emphasise the communicative aspect of language in general that connects those people who are able to speak it.

3. Alliances to the "West"

The relationship of Slovenia to the "West" is seen mainly in connection with European Union and NATO, and the expectations of such a relationship are seen in term of economic changes:

> **Aleš:** About the new membership-
> **Gašper:** Nothing will change, you know.
> **Esad:** The euro will make the only difference.
> **Aleš:** Everything will become more expensive; people will have to work harder. I hope that income will increase, because prices have been getting much higher lately.
> **Esad:** The big companies will eat up the smaller ones. That is normal.
> **Aleš:** Self-employed people will be forced to shut down. Only the big commercial centres will prosper and eat up the small shops. We can just hope things will get better.
> **Esad:** Things will get better for the politicians. They will get more money.

Although they do not name it, because they might not have available expressions for it, they are critical and also indifferent to the capitalist system that they see coming hand in hand with the European Union. At the moment, they do not see any obvious changes, except the increased prices – like petrol in Slovenia. Despite this negative vision, the participants hope that things are going to get better, which is an important point for them and the reason why their general attitude towards EU-membership is still positive. Again, they see the politicians as acting in their own interests. In contradiction to that, from a long term perspective, they hope that wages will increase, and that they would have easier access to car-tuning equipment in particular and other commodities that are not available, or very expensive, in Slovenia. Their reflections also target the changes of national belonging and the belonging of Slovenia as a nation:

> **Esad:** The good thing is that there are no borders anymore.
> **Branko:** That is the only good thing.
> **Esad:** And the fact that many countries are becoming one larger country.
> **Branko:** It looks like it.
> **Esad:** Yes. A front of competition in the west.
> **Branko:** But otherwise – countries don't give up their nationality.
> **Aleš:** Maybe it would be good if we had better relations with other countries. With Croatia, for example. I think we should be respectful to one – another. Although your parents taught you differently, you must respect other people. I think that people shouldn't insult the others just because of different nationality. I hope things will change. As we are all – 12 countries or I don't know how many? – members of the European Union we should establish better contacts with each other.
> **Davor:** It seems as if you also want to be among the people with a "European mindset". (ironically, laughs)

In this part of their discussion they see the European Union as a border free zone between the member states, which is a good thing for the nations that belong to the Union. At the same time, as Aleš seems to be concerned about, Slovenia should also take care of relations with their Southern neighbour Croatia, which is not part of the European Union yet. EU-Europe reduces the borders between the members and creates a kind of "supra-state" based on a shared economy. Here, it is interesting that the participants perceive the European Union as a larger nation state, when it comes to economic relationships, as Esad and Branko point out, but they do not see that happening as regards other characteristics. Aleš hopes a certain European attitude will go beyond an exclusive nationalist idea and strengthen positive relations also with the "non-members". He differentiates between their values and the values of his parents, or their parents' generation in general, regarding the foreigners from the South of former Yugoslavia. In contrast Davor jokes about the "European mindset" and it seems that this was part of the way the EU was promoted in Slovenia. Davor, as a non-EU member,[135] might not see that "mindset" as realised, or is resistant towards that idea. The participants see the competition between the USA and Europe as one major reason of the European Union project, which might have also been targeted by Esad in the example above, where he saw the European Union as "one front" of competition. Personally, the group's finds it positive that it will no longer be necessary to apply for a working visa in other European countries.

As in all group discussions, the participants were much more controversial about NATO-membership than about an EU-membership; most of the participants of the discussion group agree that this was the price of security. Davor was strongly criticising the fear of Slovenes of being targeted by any terrorist attack or being involved in a war in Slovenia. The others try to explain the membership to NATO as the psychological dimension of "safety", because Slovenia is such a small country. All in all, they do not associate very much with NATO and do not believe it would make any real difference to be a member of NATO or not, because it would not help Slovenia if two allies started a war and Slovenia was in the middle.

Relations with the "West" are also seen in life styles, music, food, foreign shops, etc. The partipants refer to Metelkova as the place where people are obviously influenced by international style and suspect this style is related to a certain international music direction – people in Metelkova all seem to wear doc Martin shoes and wear ear rings. I found this example very interesting, because people from Metelkova see their style as a political commitment showing opposition to capitalism. Here the group does not

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135 Or maybe he had obtained citizenship at this point, we know that he had a lot of problems with Slovenian bureaucracy.

necessarily differentiate between global and capitalist influences and mentions influences of the capitalist consumer society in the same sentence as they refer to the opponents of such an ideology. Here I also have to point out, that the participants do not seem bothered by this, nor do they refer to this as something positive. I consider the influence of foreign – US-American – politics in Slovenia and the attitude of Slovenian politicians to support US-American politics and George Bush as emotionally disturbing to the group participants. Especially Davor and Esad are very angry about the exploitive attitude of US-America and the, in his eyes, senseless attacks on Iraq, which the group sees as directly related to the general increase in hate-speech against Muslims in the "West" partly experienced by themselves in the reactions and prejudices of other people.

4. Ambiguous Relations to Other States of Former Yugoslavia

Due to the participation of Esad and Davor and their strongly critical position regarding Slovenian relations towards their Southern neighbours, the discussion was bound to focus on that particular link. It is hard to say, what the value of this would have been, if those two had not participated. The relationship between Slovenia and other states of former Yugoslavia is mainly discussed by the two non-national Slovenes, who particularly stress a sort of Yugo-nostalgic thinking in the sense of the times were better, when Tito was alive. This is despite the fact that none of them was born before Tito died. This is maybe linked to their perception of the desperate situation in Southern countries such as Bosnia after the war, where people were poor and nobody except "the Red Cross and Caritas" could improve the situation. Davor and Esad locate the change of attitude between Slovenia and the other states of former Yugoslavia in an unspecified time from which point on they claim that people started to become more selfish not only in Slovenia, but also in the "Balkans". The two see the tendency to care about oneself and no longer about the community as an important factor for the final dissolution of Yugoslavia. Such community values are then associated with Tito-rules and idealise the community-commitment across different ethnicities during state-communism in contrast to the selfish route of neo-liberalism which draws an imagined line between the past and the present, as well as between the two state-systems. The "Balkans" – also here, the "Balkans" is used largely congruent with the former Yugoslavian cultural sphere – in Slovenia is preserved through influences on music, especially in youth culture through "bad" behaviour, as Davor expresses it, when using swearing words from the South. Influences are also visible in the cuisine – here they list some "Balkan" restaurants in Ljubljana, and religion. People from ex-states are also visible in different quarters of Ljubljana. Esad jokes about being abroad, when going to Fužine, where a considerable number of people

from the Southern republics live. Doing so, he shows awareness of a particular idea of "otherness" in Slovenia.

In the group's discussion, the quite elaborated drawing of ethnicity in considerations of Southern foreigners is interesting. This occurs without naming such reflections as talking about exclusion based on the concept of ethnicity. At one point, when we directly asked the group about ethnicity in Slovenia in the interview, they confused it with organised (resistant) groups such as partisans and referred to US-American fundamentalism in relation to discrimination against Muslims. Despite the absence of precise knowledge of the term "ethnicity", I found it interesting that it was understood as "conflict"-based. It is strange, however, in this connection, that when Davor or Esad talk about discriminatory behaviour towards them, they use the term "ethnic discrimination" to describe it.

> **Davor:** How would you recognise a Slovenian?
> **Esad:** A Slovenian? You place a Bosnian beside them and see who is who. (laughs) The difference is evident. No, (2) you can notice the difference by the sound of the language, and then you know who is who.
> **Branko:** And the accent!
> **Esad:** Not really! Some Bosnian's are able to speak with the accent from the Gorenjska region and some Slovenes are able to speak Bosnian.
> **Davor:** There is also one other thing evident in Slovenia: Slovenes already have the houses inherited from their mother or father, from their ancestors. They have got it through someone else's effort. Someone else, someone from another country, not necessarily from the Balkans, has to do everything by themselves. With their own hands and sweat.
> And even if a Slovenian builds a house, there is always something. Slovenes can always find something, an illegal form of building for example. Recently I have seen on television that some lady, she was a public official or maybe she was working in a court, didn't have the papers for an extension. In few days she managed to get all the papers needed.
> If I had a house without papers, they would demolish it within five minutes. And then they would charge me for having built it before.

This part of the conversation is interesting, because it takes the very essentialist idea of recognising someone by his or her nationality and ends with deconstructing this kind of category. Davor and Esad, who mainly carry the discussion at this point, do not allow their Slovene colleagues to draw sameness or difference upon looks, language, or accents. Even though one of these aspects can work as a marker of difference, they raise awareness of fact that, for example, speaking the accent of a particular region would not turn a Bosnian into a Slovene person or vice verse. The excerpt above also shows the deep understanding in regards discrimination practices in the nation state. As Ruth Frankenberg (1995) in her work on "The social construction of whiteness", Davor and Esad point to the cultural and structural dimension of exclusion. Whereas

cultural difference, particularly in the reference frame of former Yugoslavia, is in their perspective arbitrarily used, they do not doubt about the social, economic and political disadvantages such binaries would cause for those who are "different" (see also Frankenberg 1995: 72-3). They do not target a specific nationality that would be more likely to be discriminated against, but they clearly address the situation of migrants from former Yugoslavia in Slovenia and do not address the situation of foreigners from "Western" states. Not being a Slovenian for them is recognisable through the reaction of other (Slovene) people, for example, in being addressed as "čefur" or in terms of the comments of other people on their behaviour – which is easily identified as "čefuri", if someone knows their different ethnic background.

> **Davor:** I can experience that in this very institution. At school ethnic discrimination reaches the highest level. All those teachers of Slovene language! There were many cases, also in this school. In primary school I had a teacher who said that I was from the Montenegrin mafia.
> **Esad:** Yes, if your surname ends with -ić and if you are a bit weird-
> **Davor:** Yes, if your skin is darker, you are not wanted here.
> **Esad:** I am not bothered with that fact; it's all the same to me.

In their analysis they are far from falling into an essentialist position or generalisation of saying "all Slovenes are bad", in their opinion they live "in harmony with them". It is not only the -ić ending that causes discrimination, but it also depends on the incoming person's attitude or behaviour. Or maybe, being "a difficult person" from another ex-state would make life in Slovenia even more difficult. In offices or in public services Davor and Esad were able to recognise the different treatment of Slovenian nationals and "Southerners", as they are. In their perception, Slovenes have fewer problems to receiving their documents. The connection between people is also made on a personal level and not in terms of nationality as Davor indirectly states in the following excerpt taken from their conversation.

> **Davor:** I don't know. I have all kinds of neighbours. In the block, where I live, there are two Serbs, one Macedonian, one Croat and one Slovenian on the same floor as I am. My Serbian neighbour, with the same confession as me, kept throwing my cat over the balcony. And a Slovene lady would call me and say that my cat ran away.

This is one point, when Slovenian participants try to demarcate from a negative attitude towards people from the ex-states and create in contrast a very positive, but also very naïve picture of people from Southern nations.

> **Aleš:** But if somebody is of different nationality- Maybe they are much nicer than many Slovenes.
> **Gašper:** That is also true.

Aleš: If you go for example to Bosnia or Croatia etc. – life there is completely different. They don't demand as much as we do and they can live on a minimal amount of money. I saw how people can get through the month with 12,000 Tolars [136]. Okay, it is much cheaper than here. But nevertheless – people are much more modest.
I have many friends who are of different nationality and I think that it shouldn't-
It is true that things depend on a person's up-bringing – what parents tell you about other people – but it's also important how an individual will accept that.

In this sense, this part of the conversation is reproducing stereotypes of which Slovenia usually tries to get rid of their national reputation to "Western" states. Although people from Croatia or Bosnia are referred to as "humble" and "modest", these images come along with backward, rural, and not yet industrialized or a capitalist society. Such a picture backs up Todorova's (1997) examination on images of backwardness of the "Balkans", just that it does not include the "wild" side of them. Aleš recognises differences in cultural expression through different social realities in the different states, and tries to establish a picture of the Southern neighbours as being even nicer than Slovenes, where he finds support from his Slovenian colleague. In this case it might be suggested that unlike dominant hierarchic discursive order, Croatians and Bosnians are "good" and Slovenians are "bad", the dominant order remains untouched, because, similar as Frankenstein (1995: 205) makes visible in her analysis on "white" hegemony in the US, the "other" still holds an unadorned position. In the example above, it is also necessary to be aware that Aleš speaks of Croatians or Bosnians who actually live in Croatia and Bosnia. In contrast to Esad and Davor, who speak of their situation in Slovenia (and never about their experiences in Bosnia or Montenegro) the Slovenes avoid at that point targeting Southern neighbours as residents *in* Slovenia. Aleš' statement suggests the idea to work on an individual level in order to work against dominating negative discourses of thinking about minoritised groups, especially from the former south of Yugoslavia. He refers to his own friendship circle with people from different ethnicities, where different ethnicities are not essentialised, because people know and deal with each other. For him, prevailing negative attitude is not "natural", but generated over repeated media representations and common sense myths, which he indicates when he relates discriminatory behaviour with the "up-bringing" of a person, a concept that was introduced earlier by Davor. Here, the group's discussion comes to a point where they show awareness of the powerful implication of common sense knowledge and the "thinking as usual", which is seen related to one's up-bringing. As regards this, it is also interesting that they, as in this case Aleš, can be aware of the influence of prevailing social constructions on people's perception on reality, but on the other hand they also refer to such generalised

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136 Worth approximately € 50.

discourses of the social reality. Especially in the section on discussing religious matters in Slovenia, the Slovene participants were troubled with their ambiguous position. The next examples are from two different parts of the discussion:

Gašper: The truth is that we are not very tolerant. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses. Where I come from – they want to build some kind of institution near the school and kindergarten. Well (2) I also think it is not right to do so.

Esad: Well, come on. That's the same as building a mosque near the school.[137]

[..]

Gašper: It's true. They (Slovenes, my addition) aren't tolerant.

Branko: Slovenes are bothered by the fact that the mosque is going to be seen from the highway. But that's all the same. Being near the highway or in the city. It's the same. If someone wants to see it – they will see it.

Gašper: And what do you think about having religious education in schools? They wanted to teach Christianity. And they are all against it! And they have the same confession.

Esad: Wait a minute!

Gašper: Wait a minute!

Esad: Slovenes are against it!

Gašper: That is again the same thing.

Esad: That isn't the same thing.

Davor: Look. They wanted to have catholic education in schools.

Gašper: But they won't. And why not?

Davor: Because catholic education doesn't belong in school.

Gašper: You see! And it doesn't belong besides the school. Right?

Davor: It does! Because it is not part of the school activities.

Gašper: Inside the school is the same thing as besides the school.

Matej: No! If it's in school – you have to go. If it's besides the school – you can go if you want.

(Esad and Davor agree)

Davor: That's the whole point!

Aleš: That is the difference.

Gašper: But anyway! It's beside-

Matej: But a different building.

Esad: There was a Christian church beside my school. What do you say about that? What if the mosque was standing there?

Gašper: Some are bothered by it and some aren't. Right?

Davor: You see.

As I examined earlier, religion is a very complex discourse, and goes back to the time during state-socialism, when state, including state-related and public institutions like

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137 Later the conversations returned to the Jehovah Witnesses, but it remains a minor issue when compared to the discussion on the Muslim community.

schools or child care centres and religion were strictly divided. Here, the group has to struggle over that discourse and they notice that they have to be careful not to reproduce a discriminating or racist discourse against Muslim communities, who have been fighting to build the Mosque at one place in Ljubljana for years. Gašper, for example, realises that Slovenes are not tolerant towards religious communities in general, as he points out twice, while he admits at the same time that he is supportive of the same argumentation. Implicitly, he says, he is intolerant as well. Branko makes the unequal position of the two religions more clear, when he argues that it was a way of noticing such buildings, and in that perspective, a Mosque is more visible than a Catholic Church, because it is still "normal" to see Christian objects in the Slovene cultural sphere. All agree on the matter that school education should be separated from any religious influences. The use of "they" for Slovenes is interesting in this part of the conversation. In a way this strategic communication tool allows them to create distance between their examples and themselves. In contrast to that, there is the intensive discussion on the topic of religion, which was not mainly carried or provoked by Esad or Davor. Unlike other parts of the conversation, all Slovenian participants expressed their opinions on the question. In this example, Esad and Davor are again strongly defensive of the Mosque and the Muslim community. Although Slovenes say that the case of the Catholic Church, the attempt of Jehovah's Witnesses to have their own religious building and the on-going discussion on the Mosque are similar, Esad and Davor disagree. However, I do not know the two young men's religious faith, but Davor, for example, mentions that he is not Muslim. Their reactions are similar as those of the group of people with parents from other ex-states, no matter whether they are Muslims (Orthodox, etc.) or not, from their family background in Southern ex-Yugoslavian states, they are nonetheless confronted with religious prejudices and are more sensitive in differentiating between religious-based or ethnicity-based discussions than Slovene citizens with (secularised) Christian roots. In the case of Slovenia[138], the narration of "ethnic others" seems to be closely related to religious difference and to some degree is carried by a more general hate-speech against Muslims, making reference to militant movements in the Middle East. In the discussion about religion, the absence of Slovenian participants targeting – no matter whether opposing, supporting, or mentioning – common prejudices against Muslim communities, was remarkable. Whereas, Esad and Davor listed many such prejudices without provoking a reaction from the others. Gašper, for example, never explains why he thinks that Slovenes "are not very tolerant". At this point, foreigners are no longer including people from "Western" Europe, but people from Bosnia and Herzegovina,

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138 Karmen Erjavec and Zala Volčič (2007) carried out a study on Croatian and Serbian newspapers and found similar conflict-related narrations on Muslim communities.

Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia and Roma-communities in Slovenia are becoming those with "ethnic" markers.

Another aspect of ethnicity is highlighted by Davor through his observation of the gender-related behaviour of women:

> **Davor:** Well, I don't know. I have to say something about Slovene girls. Slovene women are the most beautiful in the world! If you compare them with the Balkan women: A woman there hasn't got such a big authority. They are not allowed to say "Shut up!" to their husband. That is unacceptable.
> **Esad:** She gets smacked right away.
> **Davor:** And when a Slovene woman tells you to shut up, that means you have to shut up.
> **Interviewer:** And you like that?
> **Davor:** I like that.
> **Aleš:** I think you like something else better. If she says something else, not only "shut up!"
> **Davor:** I like that Slovene girls fight for their beliefs. If you say something to čefurka[139] she will be like that *(showing a grimace of being insulted)* all day long.

Cultural differences in behaviour or attitude can become visible through cultural conventions in different countries. Certainly, a Slovene woman would not *only* be recognised by her offensive behaviour, as Davor describes above. On the contrary, it would be unlikely that all Slovene women would behave similarly, but it is a combination of different aspects that makes a person recognisable as Slovenian or from a different former republic. The next aspect the participants raise in connection to the behaviour of Slovene women is their appearance.[140] Ethnic differences in appearance – here they compare Roma, Bosnian, Slovenian and Italian women – are not fixed by skin or hair colour or any other bodily feature, but by the way women are dressed and styled. This again they see as dependent on the earnings (Slovenes compared to Bosnians), the creativity in make something from nothing (Roma above all) and cultural convention of taste (Italians compared to Slovenes).

5. Considerations of Belonging

The group offers very interesting insights on different ways of responding to Slovenia. To some degree they act like promoters, advertisers and sometimes defenders of

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139 This is one example in which the meaning of "čefur" or "čefurka" can be extended. When Davor says "čefurka", he is simply talking about "a girl from the Southern ex-republics of Yugoslavia".

140 That point of view is certainly narrated through the eyes of young men who are interested in women and divide them into beautiful/not beautiful, and "far too old" and point out in the end that "what counts is the character".

Slovenia, who try to show the best of Slovenia to people from "Western" countries. They even give suggestions, at one point, of how to improve tourist information, offers and facilities, to make tourism, including Slovene tourists, more efficient. Certainly, the participants of this group are all very supportive of trends and developments towards neo-liberal economic structures and hope that Slovenia will catch up with the level of "Western" Europeans and US-Americans regarding education and technology. The higher reputation of Slovenia in "Western" countries improves also their value as workers or people, because they are known for positive things. The group members seem to be personally touched by that comparison and annoyed by some national representatives, mainly politicians, to shed a negative light on Slovenia or act obsequiously to "stronger" countries. At the same time, they are very proud of positive representatives of the Slovene nation. They also prove to be dissatisfied with neo-liberal changes of the social system and have the impression that they are being exploited by politicians, rather than by economic forces. Related to economic failure of Slovene companies, they would stress the companies' lack of an efficient market strategy. They also dislike – this idea is mostly carried by Davor and Esad – the decreasing community values and the fact that "openness" is becoming substituted by a "mine-yours"-dichotomy, in relation to national questions – between people from the former Yugoslavia –, social problems, property, etc. Unlike technological and economic progress, the participants do not admire the political attitude of US-Americans representatives and do not favour the route of "spectacle"-culture, which they are aware of through the media.

The position of the group members is certainly influenced by the cultural systems of the "West" and the "South-East" of Europe, which provides them with a troublesome relationship in defining their own values, because of the contradicting sets of meanings of competing discourses. As I pointed out earlier, participants of the group do not necessarily deal with a term like "neo-liberalism". Therefore, it might be more difficult for them to "name" related problems and distinguish them from other discourses. The associations with the "West" as an ideology are not *only* positive and in return, the associations with the Southern ex-states are not seen *only* negative by the Slovene group members. On the contrary, all participants mostly appreciate influences from the "Balkans" culture found in music, cuisine, behaviour or expressions. Interestingly, the picture of the so-called "Balkans" is mainly rural, the group does not refer to big cities like Belgrade or Sarajevo. Whereas, as Davor pointed at, the Slovene participants were much distanced from their own rural culture – villages for them are related with folk music and intolerance. People on the rural side *in* Croatia or Bosnia – as Aleš did – are rather narrated as more tolerant and welcoming. To put it in the extreme, I would claim the relationship with the two cultural frames is narrated on different levels: The relation to the "West" is more associated with the Slovene cities, associated with

progress, economic wealth and advanced technology. The "German cultural connection" is important, but rather neutrally looked at than positively emotionally loaded. The relationship to former Yugoslavia is more ambiguous and emotional – the stress is on cultural heritage found in underground youth culture and in the (positive) idea of rural culture. A more troubled cultural relationship is reflected in relation to immigrants and residents from other Yugoslavian ex-states in Slovenia – this is a matter frequently pointed out by the participants with Slovene nationality.

On an emotional level, most group members feel attached to the environmental scenery of Slovenia, influenced by family background in different regions. Although not necessarily a "national" issue, the group members feel challenged in their narration by the "better" seaside in Croatia and the larger mountain area of Austria. Also in this discussion nationalised abroad plays an important role. This starts with the border crossing, when custom officers control the passport. Esad even defines it as "when they read you", which in his perspective possibly includes the activation of a set of cultural representations connected to age, gender, appearance, region and country of origin, etc. in the eyes of the officer. This corresponds with the cultural representations one has of a custom officer, his (or her – the group members spoke of "him") nationality, age, gender, etc. Entering foreign countries is also experienced with the loss of normality – starting from different languages to changed implicit and explicit cultural rules. After all, the Slovene participants are all planning to live in Slovenia for the rest of their life. Their main line of argumentation is that Slovenia is a safe country, with a good standard of living and an improving economy. Although they all would like to travel, they prefer short tourist trips. Their relationship to foreign countries is through family, especially in the other ex-states of former Yugoslavia, through shopping trips to Italy and Austria and sightseeing trips. Branko, for example, has visited many European countries, because he accompanied his father who is a truck driver. He is also the one who sees the least differences between Slovenia and other countries he has visited. Esad and Davor would both move to other countries. Surprisingly, Esad, although complaining all the time about the country, would move to the United States (or Australia as a second choice), where he assumes life (chances) is much better than in Slovenia or Montenegro. Davor, but I am not completely sure, whether he is serious, claims he would like to move to Italy, which he claimed to be partly related to the Italian girls.

Conclusions

Throughout this book, I engaged a critical perspective towards essentialist ideas of identity and belonging on an individual and community level. This includes the critique on the natural appearance of nation states and nationality and related to this the right and the common practice of nations to include some and to exclude "others" (see also Benhabib 2008: 18-20). The tension between unifying and differentiating processes has proved to be manifold. They take place between identities and go right through identities (Hall: 1996, 1999a). Therefore, such processes challenge the idea of coherent, sovereign subjects and open up an understanding for cultural and ideological complicity to what is considered as a "normal" or an "aberrant" subject. Hierarchy adds to the value of identities which is outlined throughout this book when looking at "Western" European self-understanding as the normative centre and its impact on the self-understanding of formerly communist states in Europe. The tension is also driven by competing ideas of identity and becomes visible, for example, in the co-existence of modern mindsets and postmodern, transnational conditions (Braidotti 2001). Next to the theoretical investigation and an overview on public meta-discourses on the European Union (membership) and national identity in Slovenia, the book offers an analysis of personal entanglement with discourses of different levels of identity. Such a perspective is very important for the understanding of how discursive order involves individuals. The analysis of group interviews with people who are differently situated in the Slovene nation state, makes visible what turns particular positions into exclusive identities, or enables people to overcome or open up to less essentialist ideas of identity. Here, personal entanglement is related with public or meta-discourses regarding identity provided, for example, by the state, the media, tourist agencies or the European Union.

In this last chapter of the book, I aim to connect insights outlined in different chapters and to draw upon consequences for the understanding of discursive situatedness in relation to the nation state and beyond.

1. The Nation State as a Provider of Identity, or How to Escape National Identity

The importance of nation states for the organisation of human societies, including those societies where national identities become increasingly intersected with identifications from abroad, was outlined in chapter 3. The empirical analysis in chapters 7 to 10 takes up my interest in how discourses on national identity of a particular time were related to the lives of young Slovene people who were anchored

in different discursive realms. For example, the group of people from the anarchist environment felt an inconvenience in having to take Slovenia as a starting point of belonging. They felt uncomfortable because of their impression that this question would contain an implicit reference to their nationality. Based on the group's political sense of belonging, they rejected nationality as being part of their personal identity and would prefer de-nationalised identity constructions for people all over the planet. In contrast to that, the group members who had at least one parent from another ex-state of Yugoslavia did not a priori understand the question as specifically targeting their nationality or national belonging. They either tried to explain their individual relationships with Slovenia and Slovene people or tried to pick up a meta-position and presented Slovenia as if they were talking to tourists. In this way, the first group struggled over the idea of getting rid of their Slovene nationality and the latter behaved as if they were not personally affected by the national narration of Slovenia, without a priori questioning "nationality" as a source of "natural" or cultural belonging.

In the midst of internationalisation of politics and economy, individualisation, and international allies that challenge the sovereignty of the nation state, politicians and philosophers are sometimes tempted to postulate the end of nationalism and nation states. However, the transnational characteristics of present-day societies are also part of what Braidotti (2005: 169) calls "The Return of the Master's Narratives". These are exclusive tendencies evoking nationalism, regionalism or provincialism as well as city-based mobilisation, but they do not necessarily transgress our modern sense of belonging. Also diaspora identities or cosmopolitan standpoints, as Ulrich Beck (2003) makes us aware, can hardly be argued as something particularly new in late modern or postmodern societies. As regards this matter, the sense of belonging of the group that I defined as "pro-European" seems to offer some nodal points in order to understand the integration of "new" or foreign discourses into the national narration of one country. The participants of this particular group considered themselves as Slovenians and as Europeans, seeing in the way that they saw "Europeanness" as an important achievement for Slovene nationality. For them, "Europeanness" largely overlapped with the European Union and was distinguished from other senses of "Europeanness" that might be offered by the former state-socialist European countries. As former part of the Yugoslavian Federation State, Slovene nationality is also discursively intersected with socialist heritage. Nonetheless, the group members clearly separate the previous socialist Slovenia from democratic Slovenia today, which they consider to be on the road to becoming an EU-European country.

As I examined in chapters 4 and 5, the new relationship with "Western" Europe, which started to become implemented into the national narration of Slovene nationality from the 1980s, did not necessarily evoke contradicting identifications on a public level,

when Slovenia just entered the European Union. On the contrary, "EU-Europeanness" was presented as always having been in the "heart" of Slovene identity for the Slovenians (see Fink Hafner 1997). The narration of the European Union and Europeanness was approximated during the years, which contributed to the impression that both ideas were closely related with each other. According to Fink Hafner (1997), Slovenia was written into this kind of Europeanness already in the years before 1997 and therefore, such a discourse appeared as being a "natural" connection to "Western" Europe when Slovenia entered the EU in 2004. Furthermore, "EU-Europeanness" was ascribed to the Slovene national imaginary in a way that helped to support an ideological delimitation of Slovenians from other former Yugoslavia states and did not a priori support reflections on "new" Sloveneness from a supra-national standpoint. Such an attitude can be found in the discussion of the "pro-European" group, who all dreamed about successful careers in the European Union. Since all of them are able to understand and speak the former "Serbo-Croatian" language, they are all able to bond with people from the other ex-Yugoslavian states, who they also find attractive due to their passionate expressive manners and their sometimes "ugly" behaviour. It is interesting, that the group members referred to mostly EU-international meetings, where they bonded with people from "Eastern" countries – not exclusively with people from other former Yugoslavian states. In doing so, this group mostly considered such "bondage" between people from the "East" as belonging to the past. In a Slovenian context, that kind of "pastness" does not have any place anymore in a modern Slovenian context. At the time of the interview the "pro-European" group acknowledged Slovenia and the European Union as two separate things with overlapping elements. Nonetheless, they clearly highlighted an interest in getting rid of those elements of Slovene nationality that did not fit in with "EU-Europeanness". In this way, the commitment of participants in this group to Europe did not help them to re-formulate nationality based on a less exclusive idea of community. They rather saw "EU-Europeanness" as extremely important for Sloveneness. This shows of similarities with the "Slovenia going back to Europe" politics at the time when Slovenia was claiming independence from Yugoslavia. While the public representational work on the Slovene imaginary was pushed towards EU and although the people of the pro-European group do not advocate discriminating practices towards Southern foreigners in Slovenia, there is a clear support for the demarcation to certain cultural discourses. Personally, they seem to identify the backwardness of Slovenia in comparison to "Western" European nations in the disorganisation of the administration apparatus and a less developed economy. They also accept the assaults of "imperial" behaviour of Slovenia towards Croatia and Serbia as the "price" taken on the road to Europe.

While the "pro-European" group largely analysed Slovenia in terms of nationality, in which they, for example, tried to define the "Slovene character", the group consisting of car mechanic students mainly outlined Slovenia in personal terms. A reflection on nationality as such was enforced by the two discussants who spoke from the background of migrating from another former Yugoslavian state to Slovenia. In a first stage of defining belonging, the participants did not distinguish between personal embeddedness and belonging to a specific nationality. After all, it is also hard for me to say, whether they were conscious about the confluence of their personal love of, for example, the beautiful variety of landscape in Slovenia and the symbolic function of those aspects as regards Slovene nationality. As Benedict Anderson (1988: 142-5) reflects in his famous work "Imagined communities", nationalism functions, because people experience their belonging to the nation state as something "natural". This is often expressed in the love of the homelands, or mother- or fatherland. In Slovenia, the shape of the country is perceived as similar to the shape of a hen, which was pointed out by all groups and sometimes they referred to Slovenia as "mother chicken". National songs and stories often carry this love of the "natural" elements of one country (Anderson 1988: 144). Here, the "pro-European" group members also connect childhood memories and feelings of home to national symbols such as the lime tree or the colour green. The group of car mechanics, for example, is able to list numerous natural symbols. This included detailed knowledge about the Triglav, which is the highest mountain of Slovenia and which was emphasised as the heraldic feature of the Slovene flag. Therefore, an important strategy of nation states is providing powerful identifications for the national community and the nationalisation of everyday life, for which they also nationalise the most "natural" things and attach these with other characterisations such as mentality or (folk) culture (Breuss et al. 1995: 34-36). For such reasons, it becomes even more difficult on an analytical level to distinguish between the "nationalised" love of characteristics available in one state and the very individual and personal relation to such elements. No matter whether one is subjectivated by the national discourse or one speaks of personal experiences in conjunction with national natural characteristics, the person will somehow function as a "promoter" of the particular nationality through the intersection of, in this case, nature and the national discourse. In this respect, the anarchist group members were the only group that consciously mentioned the "nationalisation" of the landscape and tried to find a denationalised standpoint.

Positioning oneself outside any nation state becomes difficult because it is hard to find words to speak in non-national terms. The initial attempt of the anarchist group to narrate themselves outside the Slovene nation state was marked by the defensive standpoint of the group members in respect to nationality, but they did not cease to reflect upon their argumentation in contrast to national thinking. This is made even

more complicated, when taking in account that the discourse of nationality does not only cover one perspective in regards to Slovenia, but many. Some discourses appear as mutual exclusive, such as left and right wing politics in Slovenia, but they are nonetheless "Slovenialised" by discourse and nationalises experience without being called national. This may be more obvious in the case of politics, but not in regards to more personal aspects of life. Similar to the naturalised perception of nationalised nature, is the affection for bodily practices and health care of individuals of the community, which can be found in the increased focus on lifestyle in the media. Next to the promotion of responsibilities for the "national body" to stay healthy, such discourses also include involvement in certain lifestyle practices. In Nada's case, attention was drawn to her "Slovene" behaviour by her Serbian mother, who considered her daughter's way of going out, participating in music events, drinking alcohol with friends, her interest in clothes and make up, as particularly Slovene.

Members of a national community also face discourses of work ethics, based on which they decide as a "successful" career that allows them to enter typically "nationalised" working life. With their desire for work and knowledge, members of the national community support a functioning economic system in the state. The "pro-European" group participants, for example, all strongly incorporated the capitalist ideal of being successful, and are all willing to become involved in this kind of working life. Thus, it is already in their interests that Slovene economy and industrialisation should continue to improve. In this way people might follow nationalised scripts unintended, but because they are embedded into nationalised discourses in their everyday lives, they might not be aware of this. All the participants in all the discussion groups who were not Slovene citizens, were also supportive of the Slovene positioning towards the European Union. No matter, if they had problems with Slovene foreign politics and a national culture that is exclusive to them, on a personal level they thought they would profit from access to Slovene national education programmes, the possibility to study abroad, the access to available customs, etc. Since all of the non-national Slovene participants are from other states of former Yugoslavia, their imaginary too was affected by EU-values and the "Western" idea of having a "good life". All of them think this would be easier to achieve in Slovenia than in other countries of former Yugoslavia. This was also visible, when Esad, who was throughout the interview complaining about US-America, said at the very end that he could imagine living, at least for a while, in the United States. When the interviewer asked him for the reason for his contradictory attitude towards the US, he said he was attracted by the lifestyle and would like to go to LA or Miami, but he did not agree with the US-American politics. From such a perspective, it might be possible to look at the nation state in two ways: as a provider of a cultural sense of belonging and of certain possibilities. Post-colonial thinkers, such as Stuart Hall (1999a) or Sandra Ponzanesi (2002), recognise in

this relation that the main reason why "Western" states are contemporary magnets for asylum seekers lies in the promise of the "good life".

2. Nationality as Symbolic Capital

While analysing the group interviews, I stumbled over the attempts of interviewees to describe the "Slovene character". As the "pro-European" group clearly brought to the point, descriptions of Slovenians as "proud" and at the same moment "humble" or even "low-self-esteem" accompanied by the concern about "What do others say about us?" offer contradicting parameters for self-identification without being mutually exclusive to each other. In this connection, the "smallness" of the country also plays a crucial role for all groups. All groups referred to the confusion of George W. Bush with Slovakia, regardless of their attitudes towards this occurrence.

When rejecting nationality as part of personal belonging, as the members of the group from the anarchist environment did, one is not necessarily invited to understand the individual's struggle with national inferiority. It is Slovenia as a nation state that decided to implement EU-standards, based on which it defines its own success or non-success. In order to make such a discourse work, it was necessary to involve the Slovene inhabitants and invite them to acknowledge this as their own interest and incorporate this as a desire. However, in this case, the public only had to give more space to a discourse that was already part of the everyday life of Slovene people. As examined with Breda Luthar's study (2006) on shopping trips to Italy, feelings of inferiority and superiority were already part of the *lived experience* of Slovenians in the era of socialist Yugoslavia. This certainly affected the imaginary of Slovene people. Also the participants of the discussion groups, with the exception of the people from the anarchistic environment, referred to childhood memories of shopping trips to Italy or Austria. While Slovenians felt inferior in comparison to the Italian people, whose culture at the time stood for the "Western world", they simultaneously felt superior in the encounter with people from the Southern republics, who had less money and less fashionable clothes.

The lack of understanding in the anarchist group that Slovene people carry feelings of inferiority in comparison to "superior others", identified with the "Western world", might be also related to their particular understanding of "success" that makes "Western" countries "superior" in the eyes of many Slovenians. In addition to their critical attitude towards the national organisation of societies, they oppose the dominance of capitalism which they compare with "exploitation" not only of the workers, but also of natural resources, animals, plants and nature. As I outlined in the

theoretical part of the book, "Western" perceptions of progress and life standards are very powerful in their self-appointed universalist claim. The "Western" paradigm does not only carry with it certain knowledge of industrialisation, economy, democracy or capitalist systems. Implemented in these characteristics are also cultural values. As interviewees from the group with family backgrounds in one other ex-Yugoslavian states explained, no matter whether they were Muslims or not, they always had to face the implicit question "Are you a Muslim?". Furthermore, they are confronted with cultural stereotypes against Southern foreigners in Slovenia. Therefore, definitions of "backwardness" or "cultural inferior" was also played out on people with, for example, Islamic faith, who have actually lived in an "advanced" "Western" country over some generations and have gone through the national educational system and have been affected by the capitalist way of life. This also proves the persistence of cultural representational work and the protectionist attitude of members of the national community.

European countries, no matter if they are member states of the European Union or not, increasingly have to consider EU-requirements and values in national politics and include "EU-Europeanness" in their national narration (Phoenix 1995). At the same time, citizenship rights within the Union are still organised in national terms and the procedures of permitting newcomers to achieve those rights are based on national traditions. Thus, the European Union does not necessarily offer a standpoint beyond national politics, as this is one aim of European politics. Because the national collective in "Western" societies is frequently narrated upon homogeneity (Modood 1997), cultural conventions often legitimate exclusive practices in the distribution of citizenship rights instead of provoking a sense of post-nationality (Braidotti 2001, 2004). This certainly comes to surface in the case of the justification strategies of Slovene politicians regarding stricter controls of the Croatian border and tightened immigration laws against people from so-called "safe" countries (Erjavec 2003, Jalušić 2002). The Slovene nation state sees itself as influenced by the practices of other European Union members.

The consequence of the transnational condition, found in encounters and exchanges with foreign people and increasingly available discourses from abroad, is not necessarily the dissolution of national communities or borders. Often, this leads to the opposite effect. In confrontation with other states, the value, the reputation, the representation of a nation becomes extremely important. If we look at the identity politics regarding immigration laws, media laws, the incorporation of human rights, etc., the reputation of one's country also becomes important for the individual citizen. People of one country are more popular in some countries and less popular in other countries. Such a distinction might not be played out in the same ways on public and

individual levels. The conflict with Croatia shows that people in the interviews mainly highlight this as a "media spectacle" and do not necessarily see this conflict as symptomatic for the private relationship between Slovenians and Croatians. Nonetheless, within the "West", above all the European Union increasingly becomes a signifier and a comparison for Slovenia and Slovenians. From that background, I would define nationality as an important aspect of what Bourdieu calls "symbolic capital" in international competition. Such a perspective would also offer one possible way of explaining how the low reputation of one country correlates with the low self-esteem of people from that particular national collective. In the following paragraphs, I want to elaborate on the idea of "symbolic capital" of which my argumentation here is that nationality is included in this.

Bourdieu examines in his book "Distinctions", *Die kleinen Unterschiede* [Distinctions] (1987), in which ways people are affected by cultural and social knowledge that is itself attached by certain values. He made it very clear that the involvement of people in certain discourses provides them with the specific skills that are necessary to succeed within particular social structures. His work is situated in the French culture of a specific time, where he analyses the different cultural positions of people from the same national community, who, in such a framework, can achieve more or less powerful reputations, including certain skills and knowledge. With "distinctions", he refers to cultural, social, economical and other resources that one can learn or one is provided with, for example, through the position of the family. "Symbolic capital" is not only important for one's status in the national framework, but also for one's acceptance in a particular community within the national collective. Here, I specifically think of the reputation of a person who is involved within an anarchist group and compared to this a person who is a political science student and works on her or his career in the European Union. If one comes from outside to the group and wants to find a place among the members, one usually has to learn the cultural and social codes of the community. In the case of the anarchist community, one probably has to read certain books, participate in different activities, and so on, until one is accepted as a full member and has achieved her or his cultural "capital". It is probably more difficult to join, for example, the royal family of Great Britain, especially for a person from a working class background who neither has the status, the economic background, nor the required way of "behaving" in a royal manner.

As it turns out in the interviews, the pro-European group and the group of car mechanics are interested in pointing at the quality of the Slovene culture, its economic development, the landscape and national products. Due to their interest in cars, the group consistent of car mechanic students refer to recent developments in the car industry and list several Slovene companies, where car equipment is produced for

German cars. The attempt of the "pro-European" group, who refer to famous Slovenians in order to show that there are influential Slovene people who are known across Slovene borders, is similar. For this reason, they list, for example, Slavoj Žižek who they know little about. After all, they do not consider his theory as being particularly Slovene or important for Slovenia. Nonetheless, he is acknowledged as being important, because he is widely known in Europe and in the United States. The group participants also express their worries about the "brain drain". They believe that Slovenia does not have enough financial resources in order to keep intelligent people in the country. Due to the better equipment of, for example, universities and companies in foreign, mostly EU-countries, many of the "intelligentsia" in Slovenia leave the country. One interpretation might be that the participants of the "pro-European" group see that as detrimental for Slovene development. Another interpretation could be that they implicitly follow a protectionist attitude towards Slovene nationality, from which those intelligent people are unlikely to be seen as representatives of Slovene success, but rather part of another country's successful story. This argumentation might be supported by the hope of the "pro-European" group that Slovenia will be an equal member in the European Union soon and therefore has to improve the national system in many ways. The group of car mechanic students proved their awareness in regards the importance of economy by immediately referring to Zoran Janković, at that time the head of the Slovene food store chain Mercator, when it comes to foreign relations and important achievements of Slovenia.

As a next point, calling nationality as "symbolic capital" seems to be applicable in an increasingly "globalised" word, where the term "capital" becomes increasingly important also in targeting humans. For example, one aim of the Lisbon strategy is to invest in "Human Capital", as one can read on the Lisbon-Council's website (2006a). They write "*[S]pecifically, the study measures human capital stock, deployment, utilization and evolution in 13 EU countries, and ranks those countries by their ability to develop their human capital to meet the challenge of globalisation. Peer-reviewed by numerous authorities on generational accounting, this new ranking is expected to make a great contribution to informing policy making and public opinion in years to come*" (Lisbon Council 2006a). Consequently a direct link is created between "human capital", imaginations of leading a "good life" and the nation state. Such politics push the challenge of single countries on a very limited definition of "success" and "good life". I argued earlier in reference to Sonja Lokar's interview, where she makes us aware that the GNP of a country alone is not significant in order to comprehend the well-being of the inhabitants. In Slovenia, and in many other former communist countries in the "Central-East", people often improve their living standards by gardening, through the exchange of goods and other kinds of support, such as with manual work. Within the European Union, those factors do not offer countable

numbers from which "life standard" is measurable. Instead, "human capital" is narrated based on educated, skilled workers and income. High wages and high prices are referred to as indicators "*[f]or a trend which would turn the traditional economic hierarchy of Europe on its head*" (Lisbon Council 2006a).

Comparing Slovenia and Ireland, the attitude of the people towards their nationality is completely different. Earlier I outlined the similarities of both countries as both have engaged in improving their image within the representational framework of their neighbouring countries, for which they invented an "intellectual" national character. In the 2003 study, I observed that Irish young people were all very proud of their nationality, which they narrated in contrast to their former colonizer, the United Kingdom. Hence, most of them enjoyed participating in traditional music, Irish dancing, etc. The situation in Slovenia is different. Young people there often position themselves outside the "folk" culture in Slovenia. As people from the group with parents from other ex-Yugoslavian states observed, and also Esad and Davor, Slovenians sometimes even seem to be embarrassed of the "folk" cultural heritage and only seem to enjoy it when they are drunk. Only Marko and Gregor stated, they would enjoy Slovene "Alpine" music, at least, during their Sunday lunches, because it reminds them of their childhood and having Sunday lunches with their parents. Since EU-values are most attractive for Slovenia to achieve, in order to also allow Slovenians to pass as Europeans outside their country. Marko and Gregor as well refer to this habit as being part of the "old" Slovenia and together with Mojca, they express some regrets that this "old" Slovenia is changing within globalised and capitalised circumstances. In this way, at least on a personal level, they are in conflict in terms of where they (want to) feel to belong. The Slovene participants in the group of car mechanic students evaluate folk culture differently. This might be due to their embeddedness within Slovene traditions. For them, the membership of the European Union gives them the hope of obtaining better working conditions and well-paid jobs as well as cheaper equipment for car tuning. However, when the participants of the "pro-European" group come to the point of reflecting the tension between being "proud" and feeling "inferior", they seem to target their conflict of being affected by a completely different discursive of understanding of values. While "old" Slovenia is narrated upon peasant folk culture, "young" Slovenia is modern, progressive and oriented on economic growth. Although Irish youth in 2003 also distance themselves from the rural image of Ireland, they are very proud of being Irish and can refer to world-wide events, such as St. Patrick's Day, in which Irishness is celebrated. At the end of 2004, Slovenian youngsters show less enthusiasm in terms of being Slovene and take on a defensive position from which they are sometimes proud of what Slovenia has reached in a very short time. In regards this, the participants in the car

mechanic and the "pro-European" groups are very proud. Especially when they are able refer to EU-European tourists, or US-Americans who like to come to Slovenia.

The "symbolic capital" of nations in Europe is then defined by the competition between European countries, promoted by several controlling instances, such as the Lisbon Council, or the OECD, which compares the quality of education systems in different countries. "Human capital", in the understanding of the Lisbon Council, emphasises the economic aspect within capital as well as the "will" of the individual to engage in a capitalist lifestyle in which "growing one's own food", "helping the neighbour building the roof" or "taking care of the elderly relatives" finds less space. It rather interpellates, to borrow Althusser's term, individuals in long educational processes, with highly specialised knowledge and the investment into many working hours with the promise that it will all be worthwhile at an unknown point in future. Prevailing images of "inferiority" in Slovenia go hand in hand with EU-stereotypisation of "Southern" cultures, such as some republics of the former Yugoslavia: industrial backwardness, uncultivated, not modern, not democratic, lazy and so on. This constitutes a certain social and cultural hierarchy within the country, but also between the different countries that negotiate the symbolic value of certain characterizations and countries. Previously forming part of Yugoslavia, Slovenian politics try to abandon these images and to detangle them from Slovenia. However, not all people involved in the interviews would either support or promote such a dominant representational and discursive work. In the next section, I will look at the entanglement of people with the dominant culture and discuss the relationship between discursive embeddedness and certain viewpoints on (Slovene) society.

3. "Normality" within the Slovene Nation State: Intended and Tacit Belongings

In the introduction to the theoretical framework, I analysed the power of the discourse of "normality" within one culture from which minoritised groups have difficulty in raising a voice and preventing their perspectives from entering into prevailing cultural discourses (Spivak 1988, Gotsbacher 2000). At the same time *thinking as usual* (Gotsbacher 2000) prevents members of the dominant group from understanding the culture of the numerous "others". This makes it easy, on the one hand to continue with "thinking as usual", in encountering with people from different discursive positions (Welzer 1993) and on the other hand, the dominant group feels endangered by the "unknown other" and tries to ensure their sense of "otherness" through powerful aberrant representations attached to them (Hall 1996b, 2004, Gilman 1985). Authors such as Spivak (1988), Hall (2004) or Bhabha (1994) outline that the "subaltern"

perspective is able to go beyond "thinking as usual" positions, because it "knows better", when they know their particular cultural situatedness and that of the dominant group. From the perspective of the discursive generation of identities, neither the dominant position nor the subaltern is outside discursive constructions of identity. Thus, the participants of the groups are situated in different discursive cultural and social situations, from which they are able to be critical of some aspects of the dominant discourse, but not of all. From the background of the group analysis and the theoretical framework of the study, I would argue that "normality" is a very powerful discourse in order to generate exclusive and essentialist identities. Below I will outline in which ways some perspectives are critical of the so-called "normality" of the Slovene society and in which ways the discursive embeddedness prevents individuals from accessing their particular identity position in non-essentialist terms.

Through the interviews, especially those who did not have Slovene citizenship and the participants of the group with parents from other former ex-states of Yugoslavia had difficulties in constructing of Sloveneness around homogeneity. All of them were very aware of the stereotype of people from former Yugoslavia that always puts them into a defensive position. Whether they wanted or not, they expressed the inconvenience of always having to explain their particular position in order to distinguish themselves from prevailing stereotypes about them. The group with parents from other former Yugoslavian states was very clear about the problematic situation from which they were affected by discourses against Southern foreigners, no matter whether they corresponded to their personal situation or not. Similar to Mr. Bogdajarević, in Gotsbacher's (2000) example, to who I referred to in chapter 2, in their everyday life the group participants experienced difficulties in explaining their position as regards Slovenian citizens from birth. In doing so, they had to use more words arguing that they respect Slovene values and accept them mostly as their own, than Slovenians would need to say that the non-national Slovenians were not doing so. Although they grew up in Slovenia, they cannot easily "think as usual", because public and political discourses that are also implemented in the common sense of many Slovene people, do not allow them to do so. Additionally, neither would their parents see them as belonging to their country of origin, nor would they and their parents be seen as "normal" nationals by the communities in either of the countries. Thus, nationality cannot be adapted as a "normal" aspect of their personal identity and they feel dissatisfied with any kind of labelling in matters of identity. If they talked about a country, they usually used to narrate themselves as being outside of the collective "we".

Unlike the group with the family background in another ex-Yugoslavian state, the participants of the "pro-European" group were not very sensitive about discriminative

discourses against people with a background other than Slovene or "Western". Although they showed a high level of abstraction, from which they were also aware of the fact that Slovenians are not very welcoming to people from Southern ex-states, they are not, from their national embeddedness, affected by discriminating discourses on a personal level. Thus, the participants hardly refer to any examples of discrimination, although they refer to it on an abstract level. From their social, cultural and political embeddedness, they are not emotionally affected by discrimination and consequently do not seem to see this as an urgency for their identity construction in Slovenia. Being from the countryside and engaging with EU-politics seems to support holding a "normal" position within Slovenia from which people differentiate between important and unimportant discourses. In contrast, the people from the anarchist environment were very critical towards the exclusive identity politics and hope to find a way to implement a multi-cultural condition in Slovenia. Unfortunately, they did not discuss the possibilities of actually implementing a sense multi-cultural belonging, because they were and had to be concerned about sketching their belonging. In doing so, they also had to use more words than people who did not try to find a position outside nationality. At least by comparing the achievements in regards a multi-cultural condition in different (European) countries, the people of the anarchist environment (had to) employ(ed) national terms.

The group of car mechanic students constituted an interesting case, because the two non-national Slovenians, Esad and Davor, were very dominant in the discussion. They did not hesitate to constantly confront their Slovene classmates with Slovenian discourses on Southern neighbours, including discourses on themselves. In this way, the Slovene participants were in many cases the ones, who had to be very clear in their statements in order not to introduce implicit exclusive discourses on foreigners into the conversation. While Esad and Davor, for example, regretted the dissolution of Yugoslavia, none of the Slovenian participants supported that nor tried to compete with this attitude. Esad and Davor particularly found the disintegration of the Yugoslavian republics as detrimental for the relations between them and the accompanying exclusive nationalist tendencies. During the discussion, they referred to their experiences with the Slovene administration, where officers, for example, requested a translator as a necessity in the process of obtaining legal papers in Slovenia, while speaking with them in Slovenian. In this way, they introduced their Slovene colleagues to aspects of the Slovene culture that they could not know from their own experiences in Slovenia. Such a "strategy" was maybe supported by the fact that there were rarely any moments of exclusive oppositional confrontations within the group.

With the concept of "symbolic capital" in the section above, I tried to outline the confluence of "new" Slovene "normality" and EU-standards and values. In this relation, it is interesting that there are similarities of perspectives regarding that issue in all groups with the exception of the people from the anarchist group. In these groups, the course of Slovenia towards the standards of the European Union was identified as extremely important. In all three groups, the participants either referred to important achievements of Slovenia that gained positive international attention, or they thought about possibilities in which way Slovenia could improve its reputation to the outside world. They considered that it was the responsibility of Slovenian representatives to develop successful marketing strategies in order to make the country internationally visible, which they saw as extremely important in increasingly globlised circumstances. Therefore, also Esad, Davor or the participants of the group with parental background in another ex-Yugoslavian state were supportive of the capitalist road of Slovenia as providing the premises for their future perspectives of leading a "good life" within certain (capitalist) standards. This is also supported by their affiliation to the European Union. Either, they hoped that also the country of their nationality would join the Union in order to make similar access to education and economic resources possible, or they voted for the European Union. Even if they were somehow critical towards the Union, as Igor was, for example, because of the tightening of exclusive tendencies against Southern foreigners in Slovenia, they nonetheless saw it as a "necessary evil" for the success of Slovenia in the free market system and in providing benefits for the Slovenian inhabitants.

4. An Outlook – Starting Points for a Multicultural Condition

In chapters 4 and 5 I sketched different possible outcomes of contemporary EU-European politics. A multicultural Europe that abandons the belief of the homogeneity of its member states is one version which was eagerly awaited. In this last section of my analysis, I try to be positive as regards a European multicultural road by referring to perceptions beyond exclusive forms of identity from the interview groups in my research.

I see national identities as starting points for possible identity formations within the EU-European context, including all the European countries that are interested in becoming members of the EU. This nationality as well as other identity formations is not considered as something that can be taken on and off. Even anarchists have to acknowledge at some point the fact of being nationalised abroad and being involved with the codes and values of the national culture, whether they agreed with them or not. In contrast to this, the "double consciousness" of participants in the group with

parents of a nationality of another ex-Yugoslavian state prevented them from tacit belonging to any nationality. Consequently, they were forced to go beyond "thinking as usual" of the nation state(s). The "pro-European" group members, holding a kind of "normal" position within Slovenia, became to some degree complicities of the dominant national discourse despite their high degree of reflection on identity issues. Due to the "ignorance" of minorised themes, which were neither part of their cultural and social situatedness nor part of their aims and interests, they might be supportive of discriminating discourses without their own knowledge. From their perspectives, they cannot be considered as racists or nationalists. They have many friends in the other former Yugoslavian states and would not reject friendships on the basis of one's national or ethnic background. All of them speak at least four languages and are able to join different groups at the intimate level of sharing the same language. They therefore appear as the ideal examples of multicultural Europe. At the same time, their discursive position of being "normal" in Slovenia makes them identify with the "symbolic capital" of the nation and makes them privileged in terms of the domination of Slovene nationality and the Europeanness of Slovenia over other belongings.

The picture of cultural situatedness narrated in the discussion of the car mechanic students was interesting. Although, beforehand, they did not express the need for a multicultural condition in Slovenia, their sense of culture allows integrative identities in many ways. The participants of the group showed a great interest in the natural variation of Slovenia and they were proud of the wide range and quality of national products. Together with their overview of Slovene national symbols they might appear, at first glance, as "good students" and "promoters" of the national discourse. At the same time, the non-Slovenian participants of the group were able to share the enthusiasm for the Slovene culture in many aspects, including beer and wine production. Enjoying the beautiful landscape in Slovenia, participating in local festivities, going out together, etc. was not reserved for Slovene nationals alone. Many characteristics that might appear as exclusive for Slovenians from a nationalist or nationalised point of view could easily be shared with people of other nationalities. The Slovenian participants did not attempt to occupy Slovene landscape and commodities just for Slovenians, although this does not mean it is possible to refer to such characterisations by employing a language beyond the symbolic order of the nation. Certainly, some issues were accompanied by troublesome moments, as the building of the mosque in Ljubljana shows. The most important common agreement between Slovenians and non-Slovenians of the group was, however, their idea of leading a good life, which was seen as directly affected by "Western" capitalism.

From the background of the interviews, I would argue that all groups offer perspectives of going beyond a national position of "normality" as well as crossing

nationality as the most dominant aspect of belonging. The group of anarchists has troubles taking on a non-national position, because they are nationalised by the majority of other people. The people with the family background in other ex-states position themselves against labelling and always experience themselves as being labelled by others. The participants of the "pro-European" group state that they enjoy bonding with people from former socialist countries, as they were involved, for example, in organising a summer school about European politics to which they invited mainly people from former communist countries who were financed by scholarships in order for them to be able to participate. The Slovene and non-Slovene participants of the car mechanic school share many common interests and passions through their affiliation with characteristics of the Slovene culture, until the point where they try to convince each other that Slovenian or the Southern culture is more attractive (for tourists) and offers more possibilities. What they have in common is the wish to be accepted as "normal". If "normality" is generated through "nationality", it is often reduced to essentialist identity perceptions, although people are usually embedded in more than one cultural and social framework. Abandoning the "Balkans" means denying an important source of belonging for the group of "pro-European". Because EU-Europeanness becomes a compulsory aspect of "normality" within the nation, the group of people with a family background in another former Yugoslavian state are aware that deciding to live in one of the other ex-Yugoslavian states would be considered as an "aberrant" position for many Slovenians who occupy a "normal" in terms of their nationality.

From the background of the insights outlined above, I find Rosi Braidotti's (2004) idea of "flexible citizenship" as a useful way of disentangling nationality, citizenship and national identity in the European Union. "Flexible citizenship" would also allow people to apply for European citizenship without going through the citizenship requirements of a nation state that is a member of the European Union. In this way, she assumes, Europeans would automatically turn into "privileged foreigners" in their countries and nationality could be revisited in less exclusive terms. In that respect, also Ruth Lister (1997, 2007) offers a broad theoretical framework from which citizenship as the legal form of membership and access to social rights could be released from its national character. As a feminist thinker, she also outlines the importance of confronting people of differing discursive belongings in order to raise awareness of particular cultural and social situations and related problems and needs. This turned out to be a fruitful approach within the discussion group of the car mechanic students. This also means that public media and politics have to be revisited in their accomplishment of exclusive tendencies, when mainly representing the situation of the dominant group, whether this is in order to sell their programmes to the largest possible audience or to attract as many voters as possible or to promote the

dominant culture on a public level. As it turns out in the interviews, individuals are hardly ever solely situated within dominant thinking positions, but they have to ignore, suppress or secretly live the "aberrant" positioning of their identities. Hence, if larger collectives are "imagined communities", as Benedict Anderson (1988) would argue, there is a need to work on a multi-cultural imagination of cultures within a European context. Idealistically, as Braidotti (2004) demands, this would also happen on a public level. In this relation, I also outlined the European exchange programmes as being very important for international encounters, at least within a European context. Certainly, not everybody has the "tools" to recognise exclusive tendencies and raise awareness about them. At the same time, those who have the "tools" or the interest to promote a "multicultural condition" could start from an individual level, as a teacher, a kindergarten teacher, police officer, a shop assistant, a university professor, etc. which can take place and as in everyday interactions.

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Appendix

Posters: The Collection of Themes

On the following pages one can get an idea of the work with posters and its importance for the discussion. Below I listed all groups in the same order as the group discussions were analysed in the book, including all terms and categorisation the group participants found for defining Slovenia and its outside influences. Thus, I sorted the categories of the brain storming in the same way as the groups, which explains headlines like "*people*", "*country*", "*culinary specificities*", etc.

"Pro-European"-Group

1. A picture of Slovenia

Culinary specificities
Lipa = Linden (?) (*Lime tree*)[141]
Green
Tschewaptschitschi – Weltkup – Chevapchichi
Chicken
Mountains
Rindssuppe – Goveja juha
Potica, Gibanica
Wine, beer, Schnaps} Alcohol

Country, people
Volkskultur (*folk culture, German expression*)
Proud
Big differences within small territories
Changed
Small, but huge
Introverted
What are the others saying?
Sensitive
Mistrust, difficult to get trust, confidence
Opening

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141 Bracketts, spelling mistakes or other symbols are overtaken from the groups.

Posesive (sic)
"In the midle" (sic)
Cautious
Nice
Balkan ♥
Urtičkarska = gardening
Humble
Self-destructive
Rural
Balanced
Puberty
Father/motherland
Insecure
Historical bondage with Austria
Competitive
Always singing, when drunk
Stammtisch
Fireman & their homes = gasilc

Celebrities
Kučan Milan
Žižek
MTO
Avsenik – Oberkrein music

2. Foreign relations of Slovenia

Comercialism
English words
Rap music
MTV (media)

Balkan thinking – German order
Music
TV – media – films
Catholic church
Čevapčiči – food
Language – culture
Slovenes living abroad

Defensive
The significant other
EU – Balkan – Europe
Intern'l org's

Group of People with "Ex-States Family Background"

1. A picture of Slovenia

Culinary specificities
Lepa Pokrajina *(beautiful landscape)*
Potica *(roled cake with nuts and raisins*)
Vino *(wine)*
Pršut *(smoked ham)*
Krvavice *(black pudding)*
Potica

Locations
Kranj *(is a town)*
Triglav (is a mountain)
Ljubljana *(is the capital of Slovenia)*
Portorož *(is a town on the sea-side)*
Ljubljana *(Capital city of Slovenia)*
Triglav *(highest mountain of Slovenia)*

Ljubljanska banka[142]
Piranski zaliv *(bay of Piran, a town on the sea-side)*
Nacionalizem *(nationalism)*

Polka (is a folk dance)
Harmonika *(accordeon)*

Janez *(a male Slovene name, which is very common in Slovenia)*

Otroštvo *(childhood)*
Prijatelji *(friends)*

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142 The group did not give names to all of their categories, nevertheless, the terms are seen related to
    each other by the group members.

Dom *(either students home or pupil's home)*
Družina *(family)*
Babica *(grandmother)*

Študij *(study)*
Majhnost *(smallness)*
Spremembe *(changes)*
Prihodnost *(future)*

2. Foreign relations of Slovenia

Kultura, šport, umetnost *(culture, sports, art)*
Šport *(sports)*
Šport
Soča – reaggae – river splash (festival na sploh) *(Soča is a river in the south-west of Slovenia, where a reaggae festival takes place every year)*
["Siddharta"] *(Slovene metal band)*
Branko Đurić – Duro *(a film maker in Slovenia with "ex-states-background")*

NATO
Majhnost *(smallness)*
Odnosi s Hrvaško *(relations with Croatia)*
"Balkan"
Evropa (EU) *(Europe (EU))*
Democracija *(democracy)*
EU
EU
Kvščanstvo *(Christanity)*
Članica EU *(European Union membership)*

Erasmus (Izmenjava na Slošno) *(exchange programme)*
Izmenjava študentov *(exchange students)*
"Ryanair" *(Ryanair flies also from Slovenia and is seen as a connection to other countries)*
Jadran *(Adriatic sea)*
Turizem *(tourism)*

Anarchist Group

1. A picture of Slovenia

Country
Majhnost *(smallness)*
Majhnost *(smallness)*
Naravne lepote *(natural beauty)*
Lepa narava *(beautiful nature)*
Kokoš *(hen)*
Ljubljana *(is the capital of Slovenia)*

State – political
"demokracija" *("democracy")*
Policijska država *(police state)*
Nacionalizem v družbi *(nationalism in the society)*
Desničarska vlada *(right wing government)*
Kapitalizem *(capitalism)*
Selitev proizvodnje *(removal of production)*
Prilizovanje EU (Evropi) in USA (Ameriki) *(ingratiation with the EU and the USA)*
Kapitalistično izkoriščanje *(capitalist exploitation)*
Tolar *(was the currency in Slovenia from 1991 until the 31st of December 2006)*
Država *(country)*
Privatizacija *(privatisation)*
Organiziran kriminal *(organised criminality)*
Rajske obljube *(paradisische Versprechen)*

Nogomet (*football*)
Rokomet *(handball)*

People/characters
Konzervativnost *(conservatism)*
Hlapec Jernej *(Knecht Jernej, Geschichte über einen, der immer Arbeitet)*
Alkoholizem *(alcoholism)*
Predsodki *(stereotypes)*
Suicidnost *(suicidal affinity)*
Umirjenost *(peace)*
Sebični meščani *(selfish, self-concerned urban people)*

2. Foreign relations of Slovenia

Tuj kapital *(foreign capital)*
Ekonomske *(economy)*
SL vglašanje *(Slovene voice)*
Globalizacija *(globalisation)*
Turizem *(tourism)*

1936 IFA IWA
EU
Policija, nadzor mej *(police, who controls the borders)*
Shengen
NATO + EUROPOL ♥
Muzika *(music)*
Izobrazba *(education)*
Znanstvene *(scientists)*
Šport *(sports)*
EU
EU
NATO
NATO
NATO
Delovna sila *(worker)*
Multinationalke *(multinationals)*

Car Mechanic Students

1. A picture of Slovenia

Nature
Lepe pokrihive *(beautiful landscape)*
Jama *(cave)*
Gore *(mountain)*
Lepe Gore *(beautiful mountains)*
Gore, morje *(mountains and sea)*
Gore *(mountains)*
Morje *(sea)*
Slapovi *(waterfall)*

Kmetje (*farm*)
Majhna dežela z veliko znamenitosti (*small country with many interesting things*)
Lepa dežela (*beautiful country*)
V obliki kokoši (*the country has the shape of a hen*)
Goriška brda (*is the name of a wine-growing area*)

Sports
Miran Stanovnik, Paris de car (*car-raiser*)
Razvit je šport (*sports is widely known*)
Rafting (*rafting*)

Country, people, culinary specificities
Visoko šolan ljudje (*highly educated people*)
Lepa dekleta (*beautiful girls*)
Union (*is a Slovene beer*)
Laško (*is the competeing beer trade-mark to Union*)
Vinogradi (*wine-yards*)
Cviček (*is a Slovene red wine*)
Kranska klobasa (*a kind of dried sausage*)
Vrč vina (*flagon of wine*)
Lectar (*gingerbread*)
Prešeren (*France is a Slovene writer. He also composed the lyrics for the Slovene national anthem*)
Kras – Teran – pršut (*Kras is the region, where Teran, a wine, and pršut, smoked ham, comes from*)
Kozolec (*is a drying frame for hay*)
Avsenik (*lead singer of the folk-music-group Avseniki*)
Gostoljubnost (*hospitality*)

Politics
NATO pakt
Pravna država (*legal state*)
Evrpska Unija (*European Union*)
Poklicna vojska (*regular armee*)

2. Foreign relations of Slovenia

Sidharta (*Siddartha is a Slovene metal band*)
Zlata Lisica (*skiing area of the Women's World Cup in Slovenia*)

Športni dosežki *(sports successes)*
Evro *(Euro)*
Miss sveta izbor *(Miss World competition)*
Luka Koper *(habour of Koper)*
Trgovina – Izvoz – Uvoz *(shops – import –export)*

Športni dosežki *(sports successes)*

Transcription: Non-Verbal Expressions[143]

(1)   pause, the number in bracketts refers to the length of a break during a sentence in seconds

for a whi-   interruption, in this case the person might have said "for a while"

erm, er   verbal pause, "erm" does not mean anything in particular

<u>we</u>   emphasis of the word

[..]   sentence or words taken out, which were not important for the line of argumentation

(laughing)   the term in brackets refers to the non-verbal emotional expressions

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143   This is in reference to the suggestions of Ralf Bohnsack (2000, 33).

Waxmann

Georg Weißeno,
Valentin Eck (ed.)

Teaching European Citizens

A Quasi-experimental Study in Six Countries

In the framework of the EU-funded project TEESAEC, an instructional research project was conducted in six European countries (Austria, Estonia, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom).

In the quasi-experimental study, an innovative series of lessons on the European Union was introduced into politics lessons in the form of a WebQuest. The intervention study aimed to determine whether the problem-based learning environment WebQuest leads to greater cognitive outcomes as compared with traditional lessons in politics. Knowledge increase was assessed in 14 to 16 year-old students by means of a knowledge test applied before and after the intervention. The test items employed in TEESAEC cover basic (literacy) competences which are of use in situations in which concrete political knowledge is to be applied.

The reports from the six countries involved present the gains associated with lessons in politics, revealing not only strengths but also weaknesses of politics lessons. The current volume presents the main results of the study.

In cooperation with Henk Dekker (Leiden), Reinhold Gärtner (Innsbruck), Bernhard Natter (Innsbruck), Audrey Osler (Leeds), Volker Reinhardt (Luzern), Sanne A.M. Rijkhoff (Leiden), Nicola Savvides (Leeds), Marti Taru (Tallinn), Raivo Vetik (Tallin), Béatrice Ziegler (Aarau).