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The Nation Complex in a Post-National Era

It is often our gaze which locks the others into the most constricted framework of identity—just as it is also our gaze that can liberate them from it.

Amin Maalouf. *Murderous Identities*¹

Nationalism: the keystone of almost all social buildings constructed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This drug which we have needed as much as our own blood cells for the past two centuries has simultaneously—in the name of blood—turned our heads. How many people have been and are being lost in wars between nations? How many people were and will be oppressed, tortured and killed in the name of the nation? How many people today still have to flee one nation and seek asylum in another?

Didn't we imagine that we had embarked on a "post-national" age long ago? With trans-nationalism, supra-national bodies such as the EU and the much-praised globalisation, didn't we leave the era of nationalism behind us long ago? We thought we would soon be witnesses to the dissolution of the nation state. Every day we thought we heard the proverbial beating of butterfly wings over the Pacific which—according to the globalisation discourse—can whip up a storm over the Iberian peninsula. And it was certain that we should thank this sensitivity to the insight conferred on us by the two World Wars—nationalism can be deadly. Yes, there were setbacks, a back-lash effect. But we felt that our insight had been confirmed at the latest with the terrible example of Yugoslavia—"national revivals" lead to catastrophe.

Despite all this we continue to talk about nationalism, because it continues to grow and prosper happily instead of finally disappearing. War and assassination attempts, sealed-off borders and a further political shift to the right, repression of minorities and nationalistic and populist politics are signs of its powerful resurgence.

If what is expected does not happen, a crisis is precipitated. The following article is concerned with both sides of such a crisis. On the one hand, I want to attempt to explain the *persistence of nationalism*. I will propose two grounds for that. In this connection there will be a discussion of the material from which cultural addiction and political longing are made: *identity*. It is—at least that is the hypothesis presented in this paper—one of the most important reasons why nationalism, despite all expectations to the contrary, has not abdicated its position (and does not appear to be about to do so in the near future either). On the other hand, I would like to analyse the subjective aspect of

the crisis, the expectations and the concomitant disappointment. In this context, I would like to name two reasons. The first carries the name globalisation discourse.

Glocalisation—so what?

The well-known American ethnologist Clifford Geertz writes: “Today’s world is characterised by a paradox which is occasionally referred to but gets little reflection: the growing globalisation is increasingly accompanied by newer differentiations, connections become steadily more far-reaching with progressively more complex divisions. Cosmopolitanism and provincialism are no longer opposites, they are bound to each other and mutually strengthen one another”.² What Geertz described here has since become certain knowledge: globalisation and localisation are no longer opposites. Roland Robertson coined the term “glocalisation”. Stuart Hall was somewhat more critical, talking of “multicultural cuisine” and “new ethnicities”, while Ulrich Beck diagnosed a “Babylonian heart of global society”, which did not bring about linguistic uniformity but “linguistic and identity chaos”. Beck’s conclusion sounds like an aphorism: what makes us all similar is that we are all different.³

So far, so good. But how does this knowledge help us when people—no longer just in the “West” but everywhere—hit each other over the head in the name of national and ethnic differences, and certainly serve the technical and mental achievements of the globalisation process? Geertz is right when he says that the paradoxes of *glocalisation* are defined but remain mostly unreflected. The intellectual pleasure in discovering continuity and coherence behind apparent opposites evidently outweighs the effort of reflecting on the consequences of the discovery itself and its contents. In the end, when we are forced to observe the consequences of supposed glocalisation, cynicism gets the upper hand: some people blow themselves up with the aim of sending others to their death. This form of terror (or resistance, depending on your point of view) is not new. The only new thing about it is that it does not only happen in their own land, on their own soil, within their own borders, but elsewhere in the global village where their enemy is at home or there temporarily. Maybe the world has got smaller, identities are no longer spatially delimited, people are more mobile, communication fleet of foot. But the basic structure does not appear to have changed. The software is perhaps new, but the hardware on which the former is supposed to run is the good old machine Earth, with its power struggles, conflicts of interest, nations and differences. Now we have the additional problem that the new software often crashes—because in reality it has been programmed for a new machine (at least that’s what the programmers assert). The German philosopher and media scientist Joseph Vogl makes the point about the deepening problems associated with globalisation sarcastically: “Globalisation is the term for operations that create worldwide problems without being able to solve them”.⁴

Why is it, then, that we still give any credence to the globalisation discourse at all? Why do we look at globalisation as if it is a natural phenomenon that we can do nothing to counteract? In his pioneering book, *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson talks about a form of amnesia that can

be attributed to a far-reaching alteration in consciousness: “After experiencing the physiological and emotional changes produced by puberty, it is impossible to ‘remember’ the consciousness of childhood”.⁵

Which is why, Anderson asserts, after a certain age we need special narratives about our childhood to retrospectively replace our memories. What he notes here as a metaphor for “nationalistic narrative” is, in a wider sense, also valid for diagnosing the present: the change of consciousness which we—the people of the world—have gone through since the end of the 1980s has almost completely deleted our short-term political memory. We cannot remember the era of the Cold War, or the so-called fall of the Iron Curtain, or what followed it—Bosnia or Kosovo, for example. Even Afghanistan is passé. There are still little echoes of Iraq, but despite the efforts of the political and media intelligence machines even the memories of 11 September 2001 are fading. What counts is this second. There are no reminiscences from one’s own memory, only stories about things. These narratives tell us how it “really” was; what we should remember and what we should forget.

The “end of history” or the “clash of civilisations” were simply names for this narrative amnesia and they were not even well chosen. Globalisation is, at the moment, the mother of all narratives. It is well-chosen, comparatively speaking, because it is a positive term and thus performative in a twofold sense. Firstly it creates its own reality in a narrative way, and secondly it produces a memory gap that is simultaneously filled with its own narrative. Pure euphoria, whether it is about mobility, networks, border deregulation and transnationalism, world music, ethno-fashion or hybridity, makes us happy to forget that we still live with capitalism and exploitation. We easily forget that we contribute to both, continually, every day using our own talents, our own hand and head work—that inequality still gnaws at our dreams of enlightenment and that here, in our “location”, power struggles are underway and we are a fixed part of them.

However the most important narrative with which the globalisation discourse manipulates our memory is the fairy tale of the end of nations, national states and nationalism. Because we have heard this fairy tale so often in such a short period we have started to believe it. This is where our disappointment and disquiet come from—every time we hear about the ugly face of nationalism, the iron hand of the national state and the tenacious “false consciousness” of the nation.

I want to call this conceptual and linguistic entity around “nation”—national, nationalistic, nation state, nationalism, etc.—a *nation complex*, not least because of its complex tenacity.

Nation as a naked emperor

Post-modernism (or the “deconstructivist turn”) has certainly taught us one thing: scientific talk about a phenomenon makes a decisive contribution to the existence of the very phenomenon it talks about. Simultaneously this represents a blind spot in scientific knowledge. Engaged in the act of talking, scientific discourse does not (or does not want to) acknowledge that it, itself, is responsible for generating what it is talking about. Its discussion is subject to motives, strategies and aims

which are inherent. I perceive this as the second reason (along with narrative amnesia through globalisation) for our disappointment about the failure of the national state to expire, and that reason is home-made.

Although, over the last two decades, we have been given a heap of critical, scientific studies about the nation and nationalism, we are talking about a relatively new development. Admittedly, the nation complex has been dealt with in critical studies from time to time since World War I. There was a Marxist discourse about internationalism, a humanistically slanted universalism, and free thinkers such as Karl Kraus for whom the hurrah patriotism of the World War had no positive aspects. The nationalism of the inter-war years which, in a fit of "*fuite en avant*" (fleeing forwards) (Etienne Balibar) took the form of racism leading to the Shoah, was also not accepted without criticism. Nevertheless, after the Nazi regime and World War II the nation complex as a whole was not dammed, just its more "extreme" forms. Authority, totality and ideology were under fire, but not the nation complex as such.

Thus the nationality principle was reinforced, even in the social sciences and humanities. This principle states that nations exist, that we all live in territories defined by nation states, that within civilised limits we all act and think loyally towards the nation, and also think that peace can only be perpetuated when the right to existence and the borders of nations are respected by all the others. The nationality principle has been strengthened in the post-war era by three developments: by the Cold War that—yet another narrative amnesia—directed the gaze away from the borders of national states towards those which ran between two "systems"; by the national (anti-colonial, anti-imperial) liberation movements which also, and above all, received support from the Marxist camp; and by international organisations and international law at whose centre stood/stand nation states.

In the post-war era the nationality principle was increasingly "naturalised" and science went along with it—until the great turn in the historical and social sciences. Eric J. Hobsbawm, one of the greatest historians of the nation complex wrote in 1990:

"In the opinion of the present author [Hobsbawm], the number of works genuinely illuminating the question of what nations and national movements are and what role in historical development they play is larger in the period 1968-88 than for any earlier period of twice that length".⁶ Most of the titles in Hobsbawm's list—which he appended—originate from the 1980s. By that time the nation complex, as a consequence of the naturalisation of the nationality principle, was already thoroughly differentiated—some terms such as nationalism and nationalistic had fallen into disrepute by then. Others, however, such as national, nationality and nation state as well as nation (as a political entity) represented thoroughly positive terms.

It is with exactly these positive terms that the historical and social scientific analyses began in the 1980s, and this certainly distinguished them from all previous social science works. A.D. Smith, Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner, Hobsbawm⁷ himself and many others were able to address the question: "What is a (or the) nation?"⁸ Within this framework the other, still positive, elements of

the nation complex could be investigated as problems. This enterprise was very fruitful for the critical perspective. The authors pointed out, amongst other things, that:

- The history of the nation is not nearly as old as the nationalists would like us to believe: nations are the product of a period at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries.
- Nations are not natural entities but constructs, “imagined communities”.
- The “objective” characteristics of a nation (language, culture, territory, etc.) were all created by the state itself (usually by levelling differences).
- The “history” of a nation is represented in a story which does not contain all historical events and regularly recounts events that are superfluous to the history of becoming a nation.
- Nationalism and the nation state are not produced by a “historically grown” nation, but rather, nationalism and the nation state created / create nations.

In short, despite all the internal differences that this new generation of historians and social scientists have—even in central questions—they have one thing in common: they understood the nation as a construct and made it visible. Thus, since the 1980s at the latest, we have had a de-naturalised concept of the nation. And it is exactly this achievement which makes not only a deeper criticism of nationalism possible, but also that of nation and nation state which simultaneously becomes our own undoing. This is because the knowledge of the construct “nation” leads into a narrative which elicits amnesia. We forget the symbols of nationalism that we have seen again today, and begin to believe that the nation complex is in the process of disappearing because we have recognised its constructive character.

This is certainly the Achilles heel of every constructivist theory: establishing a construct leads easily to the ignoring of its existence, effects and coherence by the subjects who collectively “imagine” it. Which is why constructivist nation critiques run the risk of becoming fairy tales. In the tale *The Emperor’s New Clothes*, the fact that the emperor is naked does not mean that his nakedness is visible to all those looking at (up to) him. And seeing his nakedness is a long way from ensuring the beginning of his downfall.

There is one question which is not—or is only implicitly—asked, but it is one that needs to be addressed in connection with the “nation” construct. What can and should we do with the emperor’s nakedness? What is the meaning of the constructive character of the nation for us? What does it mean when we say that we would then find ourselves in a “post-national era”? Should we forget the “nation” construct and leave it to die a natural death? Should we simply assume that talking about its demise will make it happen sooner or later? The concern about the continued existence of the nation comes from that fact that these questions have still not been answered. The nation lives on, as alive as ever, even if it is a construct. It lives on despite all the other constructs such as class or cosmopolitanism which have opposed it over the last century and more.

Minerva’s owl or durable nation complex?

An adjunct to this is the already-mentioned scientific blind spot. Since the 1980s, historical analyses of the nation complex have had a motivation which is expressed implicitly or explicitly in the question: how and why could the nation, despite all prognoses to the contrary, survive modernism?

Scientists answer(ed) this question in different ways. Some talk, for instance, as if the national movements of the last decades are not nationalistic. On the other hand, others indicate that, seen anthropologically and historically, the nation complex fulfils important needs for modern people. But whatever the answer, the question about the unbroken existence of the nation complex can be seen as the central motif in these works.

Nevertheless Hobsbawm interprets the boom in research into nationalism as an indication that the phenomenon has already passed its zenith. Following Hegel, he reminds us that Minerva's owl brings us wisdom only by flying at night. "It is a good sign", he writes, "that it is now circling round nations and nationalism".⁹

Although I share his cleverly formulated hope I cannot—15 years after it was written—confirm it. I do not believe that the nation complex, after a two-century ascent, will experience its own decline today. Somewhat cynically formulated, the critical question today is: how did the nation survive the post-national era?

This is where the first reason for the persistence of the nation complex comes to bear. It is easy to describe. Although most of us—enlightened, liberal, more educated and humanistically-brought-up members of Western society—consider nationalism to be a dangerous ideology, the nation state a necessary but surmountable evil, and the nation for a construct, we are *bound* to all of this with invisible but durable chains. Because we not only live in a society that is organised and structured according to the nationality principle, we also live in a world that that is organised and structured on the same principle. We see whatever appears to be "external" easily; at the moment when we have a flash of inspiration approaching Brecht's *Verfremdung* (distancing or alienation effect), we suddenly ask ourselves: "Do I have to live in a nation state, do I have to love my nation and regard people of other nations as foreigners—only because I was coincidentally born in A and not in B?" Or we exclaim: "Strange that there is no free space at all between the borders of nation states. Even a so-called no man's land only separates two nations from each other!"

But what escapes our insufficiently "alienated" gaze is what is taken for granted, what comprises part of our catalogue of values. We forget that democracy, human rights and international law, terms we mouth as symbols of our liberal world view, are all bound up with the nationality principle. More than that: not only the terms but also the institutions and instruments of this catalogue are structured by the nation state and nationality.

For the EU parliament we elect the national candidates within our national borders. The decisive committee within it is still the European Council, which is to say the assembly of the heads of

(nation) states and their governments. The newly drawn-up EU constitution is structured so that in the decision-making process both large and small nations have an equal say. Until now democracy has only functioned within borders that cannot be maintained without inclusion/exclusion. And those borders are national. Even its supra-national version is nothing more than a “social contract” between nations. Human rights are part of a system of international law and monitored by it. Although they are inalienable rights vested at birth, they only make sense within the context of the nation state, they can only be enforced, complied with or infringements punished within that framework. We are living in a post-war paradigm of international law with its institution, the United Nations. And it is a nation state paradigm. Even the most liberal among us argue increasingly often using rising unemployment figures or the keyword “security” when we want to justify the steadily more restrictive border and residence policies of European countries as a “necessary evil.” We should not forget that the *national* social state and *national* security form the apex of the highly developed nation state.

Naturally there are subtle differences between nationalistic and an international or cosmopolitan way of dealing with these instruments or institutions. Perhaps there is even—as some maintain—left wing and right wing patriotism. And possibly there are indeed differences between “good” (*Staatsnation*) and “bad” (*Kulturnation*) nations, a long-time platitude in academic literature. There is *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*. Democratic and dictatorial nation states. But in this case the truth is to be found neither in the details nor in the middle, because it is exactly in the details and in the middle that the problem becomes indistinct and invisible: we live in a world of nations built from nation states deriving from the principle of nationality. Which is why the nation complex does not let us go. And vice versa.

Distinguishing features of collective identities

The role that the other factor, identity, plays is probably even more important. At the moment I do not want to focus on the specifics of national identity. Rather, I would like to propose that collective identities exhibit a common matrix independently of their particular “attributes” (*cultural* identity, *national* identity, *gender* identity...). For this reason I would like to enumerate some of the basic characteristics of identity that might also be useful in an explanation of national identity.¹⁰

Let us begin with the term itself: identity is one of those words which stands at the centre of a public discourse from time to time and, because of that, is slowly losing its semantic contours. In its ambiguity it comes to mean everything and nothing. I will hold to a particular meaning of the term identity that has become increasingly important in the new social movements of the 1960s and afterwards—the relationship to a collective or an institution, such as affiliation, belonging or membership. This belonging usually has a deeper meaning than a simple job title or club membership. In this context we are talking about collective identity. Identified has more relevance here than identical, the latter having been contained in the term identity since ancient times.

Identity is the reflexive relationship of the individual to the collective, to conventions and institutions from which the moment of identification precipitates. The individual becomes identified as member of a collective and is named after it, and the individual identifies him/herself with the collective and names him/herself after it.

Without doubt, the genesis of individual identities has to be historically examined, because each collective, including particular nations, differs from others—or claims to differ—through historically dependent specifics. A history of concrete identities within a particular chronological and geographical space can inform us about the creation of national and other constructs. However these characteristics are contingent and were/will be replaced by other ascriptions as history unfolds. What remains the same is the structure of identity: the ascription.

We are also talking about national identity as a category, we ask all national identities the same question, only it will be answered differently: languages, geographical and political space, type of state, cultural characteristics, history, self-image... As a category, identity is based on a deep structure with specific, concrete forms from which variable identities result. I would like to examine this structure more closely using two theoretical models that were developed for two different purposes: *interpellation* (Louis Althusser) and *micropower* (Michel Foucault).

In the 1970s, in order to subject the term ideology to a new political and philosophical analysis, the French philosopher Louis Althusser presented a model which used a concept more usually found in juridical contexts: interpellation. According to Althusser, just as the shout of a policeman (“Hey, you there!”) causes a person to acknowledge the interpellation and to turn questioningly to the policeman (“Me?”), ideology also works via interpellation. Ideology constitutes subjects: “Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects”.¹¹

This process rests on recognition/acknowledgement (*reconnaissance*). Individuals recognise themselves in the subjects. The individual so addressed acknowledges that it is he/she to whom the call is directed and reacts to that—affirmatively or negatively. The interpellation process presupposes the imagination of a central SUBJECT written in large letters. In the double meaning of the French *assujettir* (and the English “subjection”) the double function of interpellation becomes clear: to make into a subject and to subject to. By means of the interpellation the individual is made into the subject, which is subjected to the SUBJECT. We are dealing here with a non-coercive form of subjection which comes from acknowledgement/recognition.

Althusser’s model becomes clear at once if we transfer it to identity—not on a one-to-one basis but in an analogous sense. When the large SUBJECT, such as IDENTITY “nation”, interpellates the individual—I am thinking here, for example, of the “Address to the Nation” by various national presidents—s/he is being recruited as a subject of the identity, a member of the nation. When a right wing Austrian populist politician interpellates the IDENTITY of the nation—“We Austrians are not going to stand for that”—many individuals who live in Austria recognise themselves. Despite all

gender, physical, sexual or cultural differences that separate us, they are transformed by the interpellation of national identity into a unified mass—into Austrians.

Let us go a step further. Michel Foucault has put a stamp on the word “power” in a manner that deviates from the European theoretical tradition of Modernism in a number of points. He sees power not just as the sum of specific abilities with which humans or societies are endowed—power is not something that one possesses, hands on or relinquishes. Thus power should not be analysed only in its final form, in its expression in institutions and state apparatus. Similarly, as far as Foucault is concerned, questions as to the legitimacy of invested power (or the asymmetries of power) are not good approaches if power is to be examined in the diversity of its reach. According to Foucault, power is, above all, the relationships of power: relationships constituted between persons or groups.

This is why Foucault talks about the omnipresence of power—not because power includes everything but because it comes from everywhere and is “produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another”.¹² Micro relationships of power of this nature serve as the basis for splits which run through the entire social body. “These then form a general line of force that traverses the local oppositions and links them together; to be sure, they also bring about redistributions, realignments, homogenizations, serial arrangements, and convergences of the force relations”.¹³

Analogous to sources of power of this nature, which Foucault terms “capillary”, we can also understand the sources of identity, the differences. In every society there are loose associations of individuals, attributable to similarities or common characteristics, tendencies, abilities, talents, preferences etc.—and equally, in this respect, differences. In this condition of loose association, coherences or differences between individuals do not form groups in themselves and do not result in identity at this point. In other words, they do not presuppose a clearly separated, impermeable border. For that, an evaluative and incorporating axis which runs through society and draws borders is required. Thus it is only with the codification of individual differences that a collective identity and thus the formation of groups results. The interpellation makes a codification like this possible, just as already established codifications enable ever new interpellations.

The double structure of (national) identity

Naturally this process does not take place quite so ideally as has been described. Identity always exists, we are always in identity. As soon as our gender is determined we have entered the territory of identity though still in the womb, then we get a name (usually with connotations of ethnicity, genealogy or religion), a nationality, and later a profession. Sources and aspects of identity. In addition, in practice, to be identified and self-identification merge with each other. Self-naming is the child of being named by others and vice versa. Here we are touching on the deep structure of identity: it is ascription and self-image simultaneously.

In summary, on the one hand identities are a result of interpellation, and on the other they are a result of the codification (the reductive choice) of differences. In both these structural characteristics it is obvious that identities represent constructs, but that they are just as essential as any other social construct. Every identity contains an “empirical” element which does not inevitably stand in a natural or regular connection with the “content” of the identity. Differences in skin colour comprise many more shades than black and white. Nevertheless, in our time these two colours form the “empirical” basis for identity construction. Thus identities do not come into being in a vacuum.¹⁴ They are not the kind of illusion that makes the emperor’s nakedness invisible. Visibility and invisibility do not derive from manipulation, they are paradigmatic and dovetailed together with knowledge, with the will to know, and a theory of science. This explains their collective, inter-subjective character. They are, however, certainly also “subjective”. They live in subjects getting their flesh and blood from the individuals who identify with them.

National identity carries this structure of identity within itself at the deepest level. Actually, a nation could and can only function in its double meaning—as the organisational form of a community and as the self-image of that community. As is well known, the term nation comes from the Latin *natio* and derives from *nasci* (to be born).¹⁵ Although birth, understood as descent, lineage and place of birth has been a fixed part of the term from the beginning, a “subjective” component also resides in the same origins: a kind of consciousness and a declaration that one is descended from them, belongs to them, shares characteristics with them. *Natio* here is not just nature, but also shared “naturalness”.

If we assume that the nation is an entity, whether construct or essence, imagined or an expression of world spirit, loved or hated—if, therefore, the nation is a construct with both an institutional as well as a personal (subject-related) component—then we have to call to mind identity’s share in the persistence of the national structure. The definitions of the term nation which are often compared to each other, the objective and the subjective,¹⁶ are not opposites but components of one and the same term. The question as to what a nation is cannot only be answered on the basis of its history and structure. It is also misleading to attempt to explain the nation primarily as a history of “manipulation” or “false consciousness”. A nation is just as much a structure as it is a self-perception. Which is why it is based, above all, on national *identity*. As has already been mentioned, identity itself exhibits a double structure: as a self-ascription and as one undertaken by others. Identities are special names which bind the subject, by subordination, to the collective. With that they constitute the second reason why the nation complex is so deeply rooted in our world.

Summing up: beyond enlightenment and deconstruction

The difficulty I have attempted to describe in this article is that neither the functional or institutional abdication of the nation state means the end of the nation complex. The nation

complex continues to survive in a post-national era, both in the nationality principle and—above all—in national identity.

Oppositional politics and a counter discourse—whether in the form of artistic “interventions” or the “occupation” of public space—cannot fight the nation complex as long as they do not understand the double structure of national identity and are likewise able to form a double counter-strategy. To see national identity simply as a subjective illusion and try to eradicate it by means of “consciousness raising” and elucidation leads to pedagogical frustration. A fact we all know all too well. Conversely, to see in national identity a construct pure and simple, one that requires only vigorous “deconstruction” (how does that really work?) leads to elitist avant-garde discourse communities which—screened off from the rest of society—produce/reproduce discursive and artistic dogmas in ever less understandable language.

This crisis does not seem to come from the nation complex. Once again it is a crisis of criticism. As Reinhart Koselleck in his standard work¹⁷ about modernist criticism expresses it, criticism of nationalism has become hypocrisy and finds itself in crisis. To exaggerate slightly: post-modern criticism of the nation complex has, in the meantime, become a component of the nation complex. The crisis is our crisis. We can overcome it if we succeed in grasping the crises in our society—which is teeming with crises—and transforming them into what they were originally: social criticism. The nation complex cracks only when we succeed in directing the “common complaint” (Michael Walzer) into critical channels. And we have to question the share of our catalogue of values in the nationality principle. We have to re-examine our “holy cows” of democracy, human rights and international law for national content.

Our era will only be truly post-national when every no-man’s land has been made inhabitable. By people whose gaze does not imprison anyone—either others or themselves. Can a series of exhibitions contribute to that?

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Translated from German by Tim Sharp

¹ Amin Maalouf, *Les identités meurtrières*, Paris: Grasset, 1998. Translated by Tim Sharp.

² Clifford Geertz. *Welt in Stücken. Kultur und Politik am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 1996 (p. 69). Translated by Tim Sharp.

³ cf. Ulrich Beck (ed.) *Politik der Globalisierung*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1998. Stuart Hall. „Racism and cultural identity“, in: *Selected writings* (Volume 2), 1994.

⁴ Joseph Vogl, “Die Spielformen der Nichtinformation.“ Interview in: *Der Standard-Album*. 14 September 2002 (p. 3).

⁵ Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. London, New York: Verso, 1983, (revised and extended in 1991) (p. 204).

⁶ Eric J. Hobsbawm. *Nations and nationalism since 1780. Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990 (p. 4).

⁷ Cf. Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities*. London, New York: Verso, 1983; Ernest Gellner. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983; Eric J. Hobsbawm. *Nations and nationalism since 1780. Programme, myth, reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990; Anthony Douglas Smith. *Theories of Nationalism*. London: Duckworth, 1983.

⁸ Eric J. Hobsbawm. *Nations and nationalism since 1780*. (p. 5). He also mentions the work of M. Hroch, J. Armstrong, J.W. Cole and E.R. Worlf, C. Tilly and J. Szücs in his list. (p. 4).

⁹ Ibid. (p. 192).

¹⁰ The following thoughts have been presented in a number of German texts:

Hakan Gürses. "Wechselspiel der Identitäten. Bemerkungen zum Minderheitenbegriff", in: *SWS-Rundschau* 4/94, Vienna: 1994 (pp.353-368); Hakan Gürses. "Ich bin Niemand. Identität - von Odysseus zu Minderheiten." in: P. Bettelheim et al (Eds.). *Kunstreiten auf dem Lippizaner der Identität. Beiträge zu Kultur und Mentalität*. Klagenfurt/Wien/Ljubljana/Sarajevo, 1998 (pp. 35-47); Hakan Gürses. "Kimlik kavramı üzerine düşünceler (Gedanken über den Identitätsbegriff)", in: Tanil Bora (Ed.): *Yeni Bir Sol Tahayyül İçin*. Istanbul: Birikim Yayinlari, 2000 (pp. 221-246); Hakan Gürses. "Identität: Endstation der Geschichte oder eine endlose Geschichte?", in: *kursiv* 7-1/2/, 2000 (pp. 23-31). As a member of a research team, I was also empirically concerned with collective identity in a study: Hakan Gürses. Dilek Çinar. Barbara Herzog Punzenberger. Karl Reiser. Sabine Strasser. "The Necessary Impossibility: Dynamics of Identity among Youth of Different Backgrounds in Vienna", in: *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, Vol. 2, Nr. 1 (Winter), 2001 (pp.27-54).

¹¹ Louis Althusser. "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Some Notes toward an Investigation." in: Louis Althusser. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, 1977.

¹² Michel Foucault. *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge*, (Volume 1). London: Penguin Books, 1998 (p. 93).

¹³ Ibid. (p. 94).

¹⁴ The word "empirical" is, however, used with care and within inverted commas because the selective codification of differences, the temporary reduction of their diversity to a few differences, is a construction itself.

¹⁵ Cf. Eric J. Hobsbawm. *Nations and nationalism since 1780*. (pp. 14 and following); Clifford Geertz. *Welt in Stücken. Kultur und Politik am Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts*. Vienna: Passagen Verlag, 1996 (pp. 39 and following).

¹⁶ Cf. Eric J. Hobsbawm. *Nations and nationalism since 1780*. (pp. 6 and following)

¹⁷ Cf. Reinhart Koselleck. *Kritik und Krise. Eine Studie zur Pathogenese der bürgerlichen Welt*. Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1973.