Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology Working Papers

Working Paper No. 196

John R. Eidson

The Concept of Identity in the Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries – A preliminary report

The Concept of Identity in the Ethnology and Social Anthropology of the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries – a preliminary report[1]

John R. Eidson[2]

Abstract

Existing histories of the concept of identity are too narrowly conceived and neglect the methods of lexical semantics and *Begriffsgeschichte*. Rather than focusing on Erik Erikson, this paper analyzes occurrences of 'identity' and equivalent expressions in over 700 texts published in English, German, and French since 1700. In the first phase of the study, all occurrences of 'identity' in the sample, including all senses in which the word is used, are analyzed to determine when semantic innovations occurred and how they spread. The focus in the second phase is on other expressions (e.g., 'character') that correspond roughly to selected senses of 'identity', insofar as they co-occur in texts with the same adjectives and verbs and fulfill a comparable semantic function. Finally, it can be shown that these other expressions were replaced by 'identity' in the late twentieth century. Three key senses of the word emerge from the fundamental meaning of 'sameness': personal identity, since about 1700; collective identity (of a category or group of people), since the early 1800s; and social-psychological identity (of the individual), since the 1940s. Beginning in about 1840, Americanist ethnologists played a key role in formulating the concept of collective identity.

[2] John R. Eidson, Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, P.O. Box 110357, 06017 Halle/Saale, Germany; phone: (+49)-(0)345-2927-119; email: eidson@eth.mpg.de

A New Concept?

At mid-twentieth century, Margaret Mead heralded the arrival of "a new concept (…) clamoring for acceptance – the concept of *identity*" (Mead 1955: 381); and a mere ten years later Robert Penn Warren (1965: 17) noted with reference to "the word identity" that "you hear it over and over again".

In the half century since Mead and Warren made these statements, the concept of identity has – or, more accurately, various conceptions of identity have – diffused widely and been used with increasing frequency.[3] The incidence of 'identity' in English-language publications reached a first peak in the 1970s and 1980s. By the 1990s, reflection on this trend intensified, as critics, including both scholars and journalists, echoed Warren's unease with its inflated use, raised questions about its adequacy as a concept, and even condemned its supposedly reprehensible political implications (e.g., Claussen 1994; Handler 1994, 2011; Wieseltier 1994; Bayart 1996; Ely 1997; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Niethammer 2000; Malešević 2002; Judt 2010; Kaufmann 2011). However, such criticism does not seem to have affected its popularity. At the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century, 'identity' is firmly established not only in the social sciences and humanities but also in journalism, public policy, and popular discourse.

The concept of identity seems, then, to have appeared suddenly and spread quickly, achieving within a few decades its current position within our language. But what do we know about the origins of this concept and the way in which it came to be used as we use it today? My contention is that our disagreement over its current meaning is surpassed only by our ignorance of its development. Paradoxically, given the frequency of the occurrence of 'identity' in speech and published texts, an adequate history of the concept and of its entry into the humanities and social sciences has yet to be written. My purpose here is to suggest how we might investigate such a history, to report on some preliminary findings, to raise some questions about methods, and to call for further research.

I. Literature on the History of the Concept of Identity – a critical review

The claim that we still lack an adequate history of the concept of identity should first be substantiated by reviewing, briefly, previous publications on the subject.[4] The most widely cited study was published over three decades ago by the historian Philip Gleason (1983), who concluded that the concept of identity emerged in the United States in the mid-twentieth century in the context of immigration, social change, and emancipatory movements. Gleason distinguished between two developmental strands that eventually intertwined: first, a Freudian or neo-Freudian strand, which,

---

[3] Using the online search engine Google Books Ngram Viewer, one can choose a language and then enter a word, a phrase, or a set of contrasting words or phrases, in order to generate a chart quantifying the occurrence of the words or phrases in a very large corpus (as of 2019, over eight million scanned books, i.e., circa 6% of all books ever published) over a specified period of time. See Michel et al. 2011 for a promotional statement by the creators; and see Zhang 2015 and Younes and Reips 2019 for some cautionary notes and advice on use. When one enters the English word 'identity', one sees, e.g., between 1700 and 2000, a relatively low frequency of use that increases only very gradually, then shows a significant rise beginning in 1940 that intensifies again beginning in 1960. While the Google Ngram Viewer does not differentiate among various senses of a word, it seems reasonable to conclude that the increased occurrence of 'identity' beginning in the 1940s is linked to the senses in which it is used today both in scholarship and in popular discourse.

[4] Ironically, but somehow fittingly, there is no consensus on the definition of 'concept'. In this report, I will call 'identity' a word, when I mean to include all of the senses in which it is used; I will call it a term when referring to use of the word in a specific sense; and I will call it a concept when that term may be understood to have been used for purposes of analysis. In my usage, then, the concept of 'identity' combines a word with a meaning and serves as an analytical tool.

by mid-century, had already combined with national character studies; and, second, a social-psychological one, leading from George Herbert Mead's reflections on the 'self' in society to the research tradition known as symbolic interactionism. Gleason credited the psychoanalyst Erik Homburger Erikson with intertwining these strands by conceiving of 'identity' as "a new kind of conceptual linkage" between the individual and society, thus providing scholars in the humanities and social sciences with a new "key term" (Gleason 1983: 926). Gleason's conclusions were supported, with minor variations, by the political scientist W. J. M. Mackenzie (1978) and the sociologist Andrew J. Weigert (1983).

Since the early publications of Mackenzie (1978), Gleason (1983), and Weigert (1983), there has been little new research on the origins of the concept of 'identity'.[5] Rather, authors of recent contributions have relied on the conclusions of earlier studies, especially the article by Gleason (1983). Most agree that the concept coalesced amid social upheaval in the United States in the mid-twentieth century; but some understand it as a direct response to the crises of that era, while others see it as an expression of bourgeois hegemony, i.e., as a way of channeling that response in politically less threatening directions (e.g., Rouse 1995). These later advocates of Gleason's theses accept without question the conclusion that Erikson played the most important role in introducing the concept (e.g., Herman 1995; Rouse 1995; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Niezen 2012).

While concurring with Mackenzie, Gleason, and Weigert about mid-twentieth-century developments, other authors have drawn attention to the prehistory of 'identity', especially in the empiricist philosophy of the early Enlightenment and in nineteenth-century liberalism (Handler 1994; Rouse 1995; Ely 1997). One representative of this approach, John D. Ely (1997: §14, 19–27),[6] distinguishes the following stages in the development of the concept: the use of the Latin term *identitas* in a "general mathematical-metaphysical sense" from the medieval to the early modern periods; the emergence of 'identity' in the psychological sense of 'personal identity' in works by John Locke (1690; 4th ed. 1700) and David Hume (1739); and, finally, the supposed first use of 'identity' as an "ethnonational term" by John Stuart Mill (1861). This emphasis on the roots of the concept in empiricist philosophy and classical liberalism is favored by those who are intent on showing that 'identity' is an inappropriate category for comparative analysis because it emerged in particular cultural or political-economic contexts beyond which it cannot validly be extended. Thus, Richard Handler (1994: 31–36, 40 note 26) and Roger Rouse (1995: 360–362) see 'identity' as an expression of what C. B. Macpherson (1962) has called the political theory of 'possessive individualism'; similarly, Ely (1997: §26) links it to "the economically interested bourgeois-hedonist of British psychology".

Members of yet a third group of authors follow leads provided by Gleason (1983: 915–918) and Weigert (1983: 192) in seeking the roots of the concept of 'identity' in classic texts by the founding fathers of sociology and social psychology. Thus, Karen A. Cerulo suggests that "identity studies" were "introduced in the works of Cooley and Mead", while "collective identity is a concept grounded in classic sociological constructs: Durkheim's 'collective conscience', Marx's 'class

---

[5] For an extended version of Weigert's documentation and analysis, see Weigert, Teitge, and Teitge 1986.

[6] Because Ely's article is published online in a digital journal lacking pagination, I give paragraph numbers, rather than page numbers, when citing or quoting him.

consciousness', Weber's Verstehen, and Tonnies' Gemeinschaft" (Cerulo 1997: 385–386).[7] Cerulo seems to assume that the authors of the sociological and social-psychological classics formulated theoretical approaches in which the concept of identity was implicit; or that they employed concepts for which 'identity' (or a cognate in another language) was later substituted. Questions of how implicit concepts later became explicit or how originally employed concepts were replaced with 'identity' are not addressed by those who seek the origins of 'identity' in the older sociological and social-psychological literature. In fact, it is common to claim that this or that social theorist helped to develop the concept of 'identity' without mentioning the fact that he or she did not employ the term (e.g., Morrison 2006: 244, referring to Durkheim).

This brief review of research on the history of the concept of identity concludes with reference to a work that warrants separate mention because its author, a prominent German historian, has attempted to go beyond Mackenzie, Gleason, and Weigert, producing, to date, the lengthiest and most ambitious study of the history, specifically, of 'collective identity'. Lutz Niethammer (2000) claims that this concept took shape in the works of six European authors writing in the aftermath of the First World War, namely, Carl Schmitt, Georg Lukács, Sigmund Freud, C. G. Jung, Maurice Halbwachs, and Aldous Huxley – a thesis that is not supported by the data presented below.

What critical response do these various approaches to the history of the concept of identity require? Some are simply incorrect. Others point correctly to important phases in the history of the concept, or to aspects of it, but fail to conceive of the problem appropriately and to employ the appropriate methods.

Regardless of the disciplinary affiliation of any author engaging in the critical history of concepts, he or she should feel obliged to conceive of his or her research in terms of those disciplines that specialize in such questions, especially the subfield of linguistics known as lexical semantics (e.g., Fritz 2005, 2006; Geeraerts 2010), but also, with some caveats, the branch of historical studies known as *Begriffsgeschichte* or the history of concepts (e.g., Koselleck 1972, 1972a, 2004, 2011; Wimmer 2015). By failing to use the tools of these disciplines, those who have written about or reflected critically on the history of the concept of identity have neglected important aspects of that history and drawn conclusions prematurely. In some cases (e.g., Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Niethammer 2000), they seem less interested in writing an adequate history than in reducing 'identity' to a kind of cipher in debates internal to their respective disciplines or shared with neighboring disciplines, and in rejecting it on that basis. Such a procedure is the very opposite of what is needed to understand the history and current usage of the concept of identity – or of any concept, for that matter.

A major flaw in most, if not all, comments on the history of the concept of identity is the failure to specify the particular sense or senses of the word under investigation. All too often, authors confuse different occurrences of the word 'identity' in their sample of texts, even when the word is being used in varying senses. However, the mere occurrence of the word 'identity' in an utterance or a text is no guarantee that it is being used in a particular sense; and, conversely, the absence of

---

[7] Cerulo's equivalents of 'identity' make sense for Marx, Durkheim, and Tönnies, but not for Weber. Weberian equivalents of 'identity' should be sought not in *Verstehen* but in his discussion of *Vergemeinschaftung* (communal relations) in contrast to *Vergesellschaftung* (associative relations), in his understanding of *Stand* (estate or status group) as opposed to *Klasse* (class), and in his analysis of *offene* and *geschlossene Beziehungen* (open and closed relationships). In the English translation of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, see Weber 1978 [1968]: vol. I, pp. 40–43 (on communal and associative relations), vol. I, pp. 43–46 and 341–343 (on open and closed relationships), and vol. I, pp. 302–307, and vol. II, pp. 901–940 (on status versus class). Cf. Eisenstadt and Giesen (1995: 73), who suggest that "Durkheim's conception of 'conscience collective' and Weber's notion of *Gemeinschaftsglauben* (…) may be regarded as classical paradigms of collective identity".

this word is no guarantee that the meaning associated with it when it *is* used in a particular sense is also absent. Failure to distinguish among different senses of the word 'identity' has led some authors to draw mistaken conclusions.[8] The same can be said of the failure to examine, systematically, not only the word 'identity' but also other expressions which, if not exactly synonymous, fulfill a more or less equivalent function.

The twin errors of contributions to the history of 'identity' to date – confusing different senses of the word and crediting those who did not use the word with having introduced the concept, without reflecting on this apparent paradox – indicate that the authors in question have not drawn the fundamental distinction between semasiological and onomasiological approaches to the history of words (Fritz 2006: 21–23; Geeraerts 2010: 23). In a semasiological approach, one focuses on a particular word in a particular language and surveys the full range of meanings that can be expressed by using it, as these develop over time and in various contexts. In contrast, an onomasiological investigation entails focusing not on a particular word but on a particular referent to which one may refer using different words.[9] Or, as one linguist has put it: "By onomasiology (…) we mean that part of word study that asks 'What is this thing called?' rather than 'What does this word mean?' the latter being the province of semasiology" (Roedder 1921: 183). Having made this distinction, however, I must concede that it is difficult to employ it in this study.

Most onomasiological studies deal with words with concrete referents, for example, thunder and lightning, farmyard animals, and so on (Quadri 1952; Geeraerts 2010: 62–63), for, in such cases (let us assume), the word changes but the referent does not. In the case of abstractions, however, changing the word often involves changing the referent as well, at least to a degree. 'Identity' is such an abstraction. Therefore, in this paper, I will follow Gerd Fritz (2006: 21–23) in replacing the semasiological/onomasiological distinction with that between 'lexical' and 'functional' approaches. The two distinctions are equivalent: taking a lexical approach, one focuses on a lexical item – in this case, a word – in the full range of its meanings; and, taking a functional approach, one focuses on how, in discourse, various expressions may fulfill the same or a similar semantic function.

Finally, one learns from lexical semantics that, in order to document the semantic development of a word, whether in lexical or functional terms, it is necessary to work with an adequate sample of texts. Admittedly, it is difficult to say precisely when a sample is adequate; but there is no doubt that histories of 'identity' to date have been based on inadequate samples. The authors in question have restricted themselves largely to works in their own disciplines or in neighboring disciplines; or they have concentrated on works in the established canon of literary and intellectual history. While such texts are not unimportant in language history and are also consulted in this study, it cannot be assumed that they are disproportionately influential or that they reflect most accurately processes of semantic change (Sheehan 1978: 316; Fritz 2006: 23–24). Given our dependence on the written record, especially, the published record, for the period predating the development of technologies for recording oral communication – and that is the only period that interests us here – it is, of course, impossible to obtain as broad a sample as one might wish to have. Nevertheless, it

---

[8] All this is to say that my argument is based on a particular understanding of the disputed concept of polysemy. I sketch my position with regard to these disputes below in the section on methods.

[9] Once one makes the distinction between semasiological and onomasiological (or lexical and functional) approaches to lexical semantics, one's understanding of what constitutes a contribution to the history of a concept such as 'identity' expands greatly. For example, Greenwood's (1977) analysis of "Spanish Basque Ethnicity as a Historical Process" is unconcerned with the appearance of the Spanish word *identidad* or of a Basque equivalent in the sources he examines; but it is still very much about 'identity' in one of the central senses of this word, as it is used in the social sciences and humanities today. Many other examples could be cited as well.

is possible to broaden the search well beyond the samples on which published works on the history of the concept of identity have relied so far.

Given the rapid progress that has been made in digitalizing the volumes in the many libraries at our disposal, it is now possible to extend searches for selected expressions well beyond the recognized classics of the social sciences and humanities and to include both well-known and obscure works in various literary genres. Methodologically, this is a necessity, since, as Fritz (2006: 24; my translation) has noted, "many of the supposed first appearances of words that are cited" in previous contributions to historical semantics "may be replaced by earlier ones, if one extends the spectrum of textual genres beyond the traditional core of literary texts".[10]

Having listed the limitations of existing contributions to the history of the concept of identity and taken the first steps in sketching what I believe to be a more promising approach, it is time to strike a humbler note. This study is preliminary and subject to limitations of its own. Some of these limitations will be addressed below, either in the section on methods or in the conclusion; others may remain unmentioned, because the author – a social anthropologist with some formal training in linguistics but not specifically in lexical semantics – is unaware of them. The paper is intended as a contribution to social theory; but, given the topic, it must necessarily cross disciplinary boundaries, entering into the field of lexical semantics. This procedure may be justified, if I succeed in raising methodological questions about what is required in writing the history of a concept such as 'identity' and in providing plausible answers to some substantive questions. Hopefully, even with its limitations, this study will encourage others – an international team working on texts in various languages would be ideal – to help improve the methods and broaden the search.

II. Methods of this Study

Gleason opens his "semantic history" of the concept of identity by noting that Oscar Handlin, in *The Uprooted* (1951), his Pulitzer Prize winning study of immigrants in the United States, "used *identity* or *identify* a half-dozen or so times" but that "it was not a key term". He continues, arguing that "the contexts" in which Handlin used the term "suggest that he was employing it in an unself-conscious manner as part of the ordinary vocabulary of common discourse"; and he concludes that, for Handlin, "identity (…) did not represent an important analytical concept" (Gleason 1983: 912). Of course, Gleason is reserving the leading role in his history of 'identity' for Erikson.

Gleason overlooks the fact that Handlin's "unself-conscious" usage itself had a history. Before becoming "an important analytical concept", the term 'identity', used in the sense in which Handlin used it, first had to be established "as part of the ordinary vocabulary of common discourse"; and, in order for that to happen, it had to go through a series of semantic transformations in relation to other expressions. *That* is what the history of the concept of identity must be about; and, if it is not, then we have no adequate basis for understanding it.

In fact, Handlin used the term 'identity' in a sense that was introduced in the early nineteenth century but did not become established in common usage until the 1940s: to set apart and distinguish one category or group of people from others. Here is just one example:

---

[10] "So lassen sich z. B. viele Erstbelege (…) durch frühere Belege ersetzen, wenn man das Textsortenspektrum über den traditionellen Kernbereich literarischer Texte hinaus erweitert" (Fritz 2006: 24).

"Dissenters encountered comparable difficulties of adjustment when it came to setting up their churches in the United States (…) They struggled stubbornly to maintain their identity as religious groups and to reconstruct the old faiths in the New World." (Handlin 1951: 140; see also pp. 184, 187, 270)

Admittedly, 'identity' was not the only term that Handlin used in this way. Other terms that fulfill, in his text, the same semantic function – setting apart and distinguishing one category or group of people from others – included 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', and 'character' (Handlin 1951: e.g., 84, 124, 133, 188). Let us compare this with Erikson's usage.

Erikson began publishing (in German under the name Homburger) in 1930; but 'identity', used with reference to a human individual or collectivity, first appears in two of his texts dating from 1945, one published in that same year and the other not until much later (Erikson 1945; 1987 [1945]).[11] In both texts, when setting one human collectivity apart from others, Erikson, like Handlin, uses not only 'identity' but also other expressions. For example, he writes of "the Sioux personality", (Erikson 1945: 327), "group ego" (Erikson 1945: 330), and "the German character structure" (Erikson 1987 [1945]: 370, 373).

Erikson's use of 'identity' differed from Handlin's in two ways: first, he used it with reference not only to collectivities but also to individuals or to the relation between the individual and his or her society; and, second, with the works just cited, he began to insert this term into his texts programmatically. The article of 1945, entitled "Childhood and Tradition in Two American Indian Tribes", combined parts of two previous publications (Erikson 1939 and 1943), which he linked together with newly written passages. In the older parts of the article, human collectivities are set off and distinguished from one another with expressions such as "group ego", "personality", and "character structure"; in the new parts, "identity" serves this purpose – among other purposes. Then, in the very next article that Erikson published, he was already distinguishing "group identity" and "ego identity" (Erikson 1946: 359); and the rest is history, as narrated by Mackenzie (1978), Gleason (1983), and Weigert (1983).[12] The question is, however: where did Erikson and Handlin – and, as shall be shown below, many others in the 1940s and 1950s – get the idea that a group may have an 'identity'?

In this report, I will show when, where, and by whom 'identity' first began to be used in the way Erikson, Handlin, and others used it, and how, eventually, it came to replace competing terms. That is to say that the history of the word 'identity' will be traced in two phases: a lexical and a functional phase.

In the lexical phase, the focus is on the English word 'identity' – and also on its cognates in German and French – regardless of the sense in which this focal word is used. The first step in the lexical phase is to establish the word's "prototypical center of usage" (Fritz 2006: 62), i.e., a central sense of the word that served, in a long-term semantic development, as the point of departure for

---

[11] There is some confusion concerning Erikson's first use of 'identity'. Weigert (1983: 184) does not give an exact date, stating only that Erikson, "in the late 1930's and through the period of the Second World War, (…) began a line of scholarly and literary productivity that gave birth to the concept of identity". Erikson's first biographer mistakenly claims that Erikson used 'identity' as early as 1940 (Coles 1970: 82); but he bases this claim on an altered 'reprint' of the year 1954, to which the word 'identity' was added ex post facto (compare Erikson 1987 [1940]: 561 and Erikson 1954: 24). A second biographer states correctly that Erikson's "work on the concept [of identity] finally gelled in the mid-1940s" (Friedman 1999: 160).

[12] Erikson's (1970: 747) claim not to know where he got the term 'identity' or when he began using it seems disingenuous, given this habit of inserting it, no doubt intentionally, in re-publications or re-workings of earlier texts that originally lacked the term. In addition to the example already cited, see the different versions of Erikson's analysis of Hitler's appeal to many Germans: in Erikson 1942, 'identity' cannot be found, but in Erikson 1948 and 1950, it appears multiple times.

generating derived senses. Once this lexical-semantic point of departure has been established, one can show how derived senses were generated in processes of innovation, adoption, and lexicalization.[13] As I employ these terms, 'innovation' refers to the use of an existing word in a new sense, e.g., through metaphorical extension. 'Adoption' occurs when other speakers or authors make the new sense of the word part of their own active vocabulary. And 'lexicalization' is achieved when the new sense of the word becomes part of common usage. In the case of 'identity' and its cognates, these processes of innovation, adoption, and lexicalization have occurred multiple times, resulting in a series of senses in which the word is commonly used.

In the functional phase of this study, the focus is on a particular sense of the word 'identity' and also on other ways in which the same – or a similar – meaning may be expressed, using other words or phrases. Conceivably, one may conduct functional studies of each new sense of 'identity' stemming from the prototypical center of usage; but, for reasons that will become clear below, I focus on one of these new senses, which must now be specified. This requires a brief outline of the relevant distinctions among the various senses of the word 'identity' – that is, a preview of some results of the lexical phase of the study.

Polysemy, the capacity of a word to have several distinct yet related meanings, i.e., to be used in different senses, is a disputed concept. Do speakers and hearers, or authors and readers, derive particular senses of the word from an ambiguous core meaning with each new use or reception of the word? Or have different senses of the word already been established in common usage before speaking, hearing, writing, and reading take place?[14] While stated, perhaps, too baldly, this juxtaposition of diametrically opposed alternatives allows me to articulate an intermediate position, one based on the research results presented below: the word 'identity' does, indeed, have a core meaning, a prototypical center of usage; but, in the course of language history, different senses of the word have been derived sequentially – either from the core meaning or from a previous derivation – and become part of routine usage.

The most basic sense of 'identity' – which, in the history of the word, may be regarded as its prototypical center of usage – is the sameness of two or more things: $A = B$; or, rather, $A_1 = A_2$. A second sense of the word, which is derived from the first, is that of 'personal identity', i.e., the sameness of a person with him- or herself from one point in time to another. Usually, however, representatives of the social sciences and humanities have one of two further senses in mind, when they invoke *the* concept of identity. These senses are often confused, but Mackenzie (1978: 39) distinguishes them clearly: "the metaphor that a collectivity can like a person have an identity" and "the identity which an individual can find through a collectivity". Adapting familiar terms to

---

[13] I take these terms from Koch (2001: 10). Other authors use comparable terms to designate stages in processes of semantic change, for example Fritz (2006: 38), who distinguishes among innovation, selection, and diffusion, while also reviewing various designations for subsequent stages, including routinization, conventionalization, standardization, and lexicalization (Fritz 2006: 66–67).

[14] For discussions of these issues, see Fritz (2006: 14–15) and Falkum and Vicente (2015: 3–8).

present purposes, I will call these two senses 'collective identity' and 'social-psychological identity'.[15]

Presumably, some participants in the debate over 'identity' would reject my distinction between the two senses I am calling 'collective' and 'social psychological', because they are convinced that these represent two sides of a single, if complex, phenomenon. For example, in an unpublished but widely cited paper, James D. Fearon (n.d. [1999]: 1) insists on combining, in a single concept, "identity" in the sense of "a social category" and "identity" in the sense of the "socially distinguishing features" of "a person". In this report, however, I provide historical evidence in support of the contention that these two senses of the word – indeed, all of the senses distinguished above – arose at different times and, therefore, should be distinguished.

Departing from the common idea of 'sameness', the different senses of the word 'identity' emerged in intervals of about one hundred years. The idea of 'personal identity' was derived from the notion of 'sameness' in around 1700, while the notion of 'collective identity' arose through a process of metaphorical extension between about 1790 and 1840. Different versions of 'social-psychological identity' emerged in the 1940s, either through the synthesis of personal and collective identity or through reinterpretation of the relation between the individual and society in terms of 'sameness'. However that may be, the idea of collective identity preceded that of social-psychological identity by about a century; and, therefore, it must be considered independently of it. One of the major contributions of this report is, then, to single out 'collective identity' – which is often held, by critics of the concept of 'identity', to be especially problematic – and to document its origins, its meaning, and its spread, thus, restoring it to its proper place in the semantic history of 'identity' and associated expressions.

In the functional phase of the study, then, I take the use of the word 'identity' with reference to collectivities as my point of departure. Given the abstract character of the word 'identity', I will have to compare the history of its use in this sense with parallel histories not of synonyms but of functionally equivalent expressions. The adjectival phrase 'functionally equivalent' may refer to single words, to phrases, or to larger segments of discourse.[16] I take all of these possibilities into consideration but concentrate on functionally equivalent words, specifically, on those we have already encountered in Handlin's book: 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', and 'individuality'. However much they differ from 'identity', each of these terms shares with it at least one important semantic function: each may serve to set apart and distinguish either an individual person from other individuals or a category or group of people from other categories or groups.

I analyze occurrences of 'identity' and semantic equivalents of the specified sense of this focal word in the context of a larger semantic field (Geeraerts 2010: 53–70) – a term that I conceive broadly to include the focal word and all other expressions with which it is or can be related, in one way or another, both in language and in speech or writing. Employing Louis Hjelmslev's revision

---

[15] My distinctions among the relevant senses of 'identity' differ from those of Fraas (1996), who, in an exemplary study, has followed the career of the German word *Identität* as it appeared in the news media and in popular publications in the years preceding and following German unification in 1990. Her first sense, *juristische Feststellung einer Person* (legal determination of a person), corresponds to my 'personal identity'; her *Selbstverständnis* (self-understanding) is equivalent to my 'social-psychological identity'; and her *Übereinstimmung zweier Objekte* (correspondence of two objects) matches my 'sameness of two or more things' (Fraas 1996: 33). Missing in her analysis is the sense I call 'collective identity', i.e., the sameness of a category or group of people with itself over time and its separateness and distinctiveness vis-à-vis comparable categories or groups. Ultimately, then, her study has the same blind spot that characterizes other studies of the history of the concept of identity to date.

[16] In this report, 'discourse' and 'discursive' are used in a general sense to refer to segments of speech or writing that are larger than the sentence.

of Ferdinand de Saussure's terminology (Lyons 1968: 483), and drawing on Roman Jakobson (1971) as well, I focus especially on two dimensions of such relations: paradigmatic, referring to relations among all more-or-less equivalent expressions within the language from which speakers or authors may select; and syntagmatic, referring to complementary expressions with which any given word may be combined in speech or writing. The word 'identity' is related paradigmatically to words or phrases that could be selected instead of 'identity' to express a similar, a varying, or even an opposite meaning. For example, 'identity' and 'character' form a kind of paradigmatic set, insofar as either one may be selected in order to be combined syntagmatically with other expressions that may precede or follow it in any given utterance or text – for example, adjectives such as 'national' or 'tribal' and verbs such as 'maintain' or 'lose'. Analyzing syntagmatic relations between 'identity' and the adjectives, verbs, prepositions, etc., with which it is combined in texts helps us to do two things: first, to grasp the sense in which the focal word is being used in those texts; and, second, to identify expressions that may be deemed to be functionally equivalent members of a paradigmatic set, insofar as they combine easily with the same or similar expressions in other texts (Fritz 2005: 20–24).

That is to say that, in analyzing my data, I supplement a basically hermeneutic approach with an exploratory form of distributionalism. My approach is hermeneutic insofar as I infer the sense in which words are used on the basis of their occurrence in discursive context. My approach is distributionalist insofar as I pay special attention to the syntagmatic context of the occurrence of words, i.e., to the potentially quantifiable co-occurrence of focal words with other words that precede and follow them. The study is, however, distributionalist only to a minimal degree, because even a sample including several hundred texts is still relatively small compared to the corpora with which linguists work in producing statistical analyses of co-occurrence. My comments on distribution and co-occurrence are intended, then, to be suggestive, not statistically significant.[17]

The empirical basis of the study is a selection of texts that includes over 700 titles of various genres, written by very well-known, less well-known, and largely unknown authors who published mainly in English but also in German and French, mostly between 1700 and 1980. Of the titles included in the sample, about 550 are in English, while something over 100 are in German and about 50 are in French.[18] Evidence, provided below, suggests that this distribution is not arbitrary; rather, it reflects the status of the words 'identity', *Identität*, and *identité* as they have developed over time in their respective languages. Research to date indicates that the key semantic innovations occurred first in English and were adopted by authors writing in German and French at a later date.

Sometimes the search proceeded by taking a book in hand and reading. Usually, however, I have used search engines, made available by a variety of providers, to examine digitalized texts.[19] This procedure saves an enormous amount of time but is not without its own difficulties. It depends, first, on the availability of the text – which, given the great extent to which existing publications,

---

[17] On distributional analysis, see Geeraerts (2010: 165–178). Since my discussion of the distribution of words in relation to other words remains fairly simple, I have chosen to use the generally understandable term 'co-occurrence', rather than 'collocation' or alternative expressions.

[18] In the search, I have preferred, when possible, to consult the first edition of works that have appeared in multiple editions. In some cases, however, it is enlightening to compare the occurrence of the sought-after expression in both earlier and later editions (e.g., Kroeber 1923 and 1948). When citing or quoting from multi-volume works, I have tried to consult two or more volumes of the same edition; but given the limited availability of the various editions of some titles online, this has not always been possible.

[19] The search engines I have used most frequently in English, German, and French, respectively, are the Internet Archive, the Deutsches Textarchiv, and Gallica.

especially those no longer under copyright, have been digitalized, is less of a problem than one might suppose – and, second, on optical character recognition (OCR), which may present difficulties when the quality of the scanned original is poor, when the font employed in the original deviates from fonts employed today, or when the search engine in question cannot recognize diacritics (as in German or French). With experience, however, one develops various techniques to overcome such difficulties in finding either the text or the expression that one is seeking.

Some of the websites not only provide searchable texts but also make it possible to generate graphs indicating the frequency of the occurrence of expressions in texts published (and, subsequently, digitalized) over a specified period of time. The utility of such quantification is limited, insofar as search engines are (as yet) incapable of distinguishing among the different senses in which a word is used. Even this difficulty can be overcome, however, when the search of texts is widened to include co-occurring words that increase the probability that a given word is being used in a specified sense.

After searching the texts in the sample, the next step was to document both the bibliographic information regarding the primary sources and the passages extracted from these sources in which the sought-after expressions were found to occur. This has resulted in two databases: one which lists the primary sources, i.e., the published texts that were searched, and a second with a series of quoted passages from the searched texts, including passages featuring the word 'identity' and passages featuring words or phrases that express meanings that are somehow comparable to that expressed by 'identity' in a specified sense. Because the list of primary sources is nearly 60 pages long and the compilation of quoted passages exceeds 200 pages, only selected sources are cited and only a few passages are quoted in this Working Paper. The complete lists of primary sources and documented passages are available online at the following address: https://www.eth.mpg.de/cms/en/publications/working_papers/wp0196

Describing the construction of the sample requires telling the story of how the project was conceived and how this conception changed as work progressed. The original impulse arose from the perceived contradiction between my own use of 'identity' (e.g., Eidson 1990, 2006; Eidson et al. 2017) and glosses of the term in texts written by its critics (e.g., Claussen 1994; Handler 1994, 2011; Wieseltier 1994; Bayart 1996; Ely 1997; Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Niethammer 2000; Malešević 2002; Judt 2010; Kaufmann 2011). Engaging with these criticisms, I concluded that they were based on restricted understandings of the word and on unfamiliarity with the history of its use. Even my very brief review of the secondary literature makes clear that the histories of the concept of identity cited by the critics emphasize the psychological or social-psychological character of the concept and its recent origin in works by George Herbert Mead, Sigmund Freud, and especially Erik H. Erikson (Mackenzie 1978: 35–48; Gleason 1983; Weigert 1983). Critics tend to accept this view and to see the extension of a supposedly psychological concept to sociological phenomena as a fundamental flaw, one leading necessarily to the reification of groups and the attribution of essential, unchanging characteristics to them – the most complete statement of this being the widely cited article, "Beyond 'identity' " by Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper (2000).

I was dissatisfied with this critique, because it prescribed an understanding of 'identity' that did not correspond to my own usage or to that of the authors from whom I had borrowed the term (e.g., Labov 1963). My dissatisfaction grew when I discovered that neither Mead nor Freud had used the term 'identity' and that Erikson first used it in a published text in 1945, that is, at a relatively late

date.[20] I was aware, however, that Meyer Fortes (1940: 251–253), Max Gluckman (1940: 40), and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (1940: 7) had used the word 'identity', not in a psychological or social-psychological sense but in the sense of the 'collective identity' of a category or group of people in their contributions to *African Political Systems*, published five years before Erikson's first use.

So the question arose: does 'identity' have a hitherto unacknowledged genealogy? How did Fortes, Gluckman, and Evans-Pritchard come to use it with reference to collectivities? In attempting to answer this question, I examined works by their senior colleagues, with positive results only in publications by R. R. Marett (1912: 166; 1920: 190). Next, I turned to works by an author known to have inspired both Marett and his junior colleagues, namely, Émile Durkheim. A search of Durkheim's published works revealed that, while he occasionally does use the word *identité*, he does not use it with reference to collectivities. The word *identité* used in this sense does, however, occur once in his works, namely, in a quotation from Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, a mid-nineteenth-century ethnologist and recognized expert on Native Americans (Durkheim 1960 [1912]: 159, 1915: 134, quoting from Schoolcraft 1851: 420).

This first set of discoveries launched a wider search, initially, of texts by Schoolcraft, his contemporaries, and his predecessors. This led me not only to the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature on Native Americans (in English, German, and French) but also to contemporaneous works in the fields of cultural history, language history, geography, travel, *belles lettres*, and heraldry. In short, I began searching the precursors of the humanities and social sciences as we know them today, along with the corresponding popular literature. Soon, however, I concluded that, for methodological reasons, the lexical phase of the search must be conducted more broadly, without being limited by genre or by the sense of the word in question. Therefore, I turned to search engines that allowed for searches not only of selected texts but also of particular words as they appear in a large collection of digitalized texts of widely varying genres. On the basis of this search for the words 'identity', *Identität*, and *identité* in published works available through the search engines, including contributions to theology, philosophy, mathematics, and especially natural sciences, I was able to identify a prototypical center of usage across disciplinary boundaries – that is, the main sense in which the word was used up to the mid-twentieth century.

By extending the search in the lexical phase of the study beyond the nascent humanities and social sciences, I was able to correct errors in my methods and initial conclusions that resembled the errors made by Niethammer (2000). As this author explains, he restricted himself to instances of the use of the terms 'identity', *identité*, and *Identität* "in a collective (political, social, or cultural) context". He continues as follows:

> "Thus, I excluded two possible directions of the search: first, the search for the prehistory of the construction of individual identity in the sense of Erik H. Erikson (…). Second, I bracketed out from my search those conceptions of identity that identify not unions or groups

---

[20] It has often been observed (e.g., Erikson 1968: 61) that Freud, who used regularly the terms *Ich*, *Identifizierung*, and *Charakter* (e.g., Freud 1913: 97; 1916; 1923), employed the concept of identity only on one occasion; but none of those who report this occurrence of *Identität* in Freud's corpus have noticed that his usage is ambiguous: "Ein nationales Hochgefühl habe ich, wenn ich dazu neigte, zu unterdrücken mich bemüht, als unheilvoll und ungerecht, erschreckt durch die warnenden Beispiele der Völker, unter denen wir Juden leben. Aber es blieb genug anderes übrig, was die Anziehung des Judentums und der Juden so unwiderstehlich machte, viele dunkle Gefühlsmächte, umso gewaltiger, je weniger sie sich in Worten erfassen ließen, ebenso wie die klare Bewußtheit der inneren Identität, die Heimlichkeit der gleichen seelischen Konstruktion" (Freud 1941 [1926]: 52. In my reading, Freud uses 'Identität' in the sense of 'sameness', i.e., his statement regarding "die klare Bewußtheit der inneren Identität" may be paraphrased as "the clear understanding that, inwardly, we are the same" – not "that we form a separate and distinct category or group". See Fritz (2005: 21–23) on the 'paraphrase' method of distinguishing among various senses of a word.

of persons but abstract relations, objects, or non-human aspects of nature (…) [for example] in the field of logic (…) [and] in the natural sciences." (Niethammer 2000: 72, footnote 1; my translation)[21]

Narrowing the sample in the proposed fashion would be a good strategy in the functional phase of the investigation of the history of 'identity', but it is a mistake in the lexical phase. By bracketing out some contexts and genres in which the word occurs, and some senses in which it is used, one makes it impossible to identify the prototypical center of usage that serves as the point of departure for semantic innovations, i.e., for the crucial events in the history of the word, to which I now turn.

III. Preliminary Results

In this section, I present the results of the lexical and functional phases of the study; then I show, on the example of ethnology, social anthropology, and – very briefly – the related field of sociology, how lexical and functional developments eventually flowed together. In the lexical phase, the common thread is the word 'identity' and its German and French cognates (*Identität* and *identité*) as they appear in texts of various genres since about 1700. In the functional phase, the common thread is a set of expressions that appear in comparable discursive and syntagmatic contexts and that correspond, even if only partially, to the word 'identity' as it is used with reference to categories or groups of persons.

The Lexical Phase of the Study
A survey of usage in the texts in the sample shows that from the early eighteenth to the mid-twentieth century the word 'identity' was used most commonly to refer to *the sameness of two or more things*. This corresponds to definitions in the earliest dictionaries in French, German, and English (Académie françoise 1694; Zedler 1739; Johnson 1756) and, therefore, can be identified as the prototypical center of usage. Against this backdrop, however, a semantic innovation occurred which made it possible to use 'identity' to express both *the sameness of one thing with itself over time* and the *persisting separateness and distinctiveness of one thing vis-à-vis other things of a comparable nature*. This innovation occurred in two steps: in the first step, 'identity' was used to denote the persisting sameness, separateness, and distinctiveness of an object or a person; and in the second, it was extended to cover the persisting sameness, separateness, and distinctiveness of a category or group of people as well. In the following, I document and elaborate on these generalizations.

The use of the word 'identity' in the sense of the sameness of two things can be demonstrated most effectively with reference to a particular type of co-occurrence, namely, 'identity plus preposition'. Using 'A' and 'B' to indicate two substantives, which, in a passage from any given text in the sample, are said to be the same, at least for practical purposes, one can observe that 'identity' in the sense of sameness co-occurs with prepositions in the following ways: there is an 'identity of A and B', i.e., A is identical to B; there is an 'identity of A with B'; there is an 'identity between A and B'; with respect to A and B, there is an 'identity of X', e.g., they are particular

---

[21] "Ich habe also zwei Suchrichtungen ausgeschlossen: erstens die Suche nach einer Vorgeschichte der Konstruktion individueller Identität im Sinne von Erik H. Erikson (…) Zweitens habe ich aus meiner Suche jene Identitätsbegriffe ausgeklammert, die nicht Personenverbände oder -gruppen, sondern abstrakte Sachverhalte, Sachen oder nichtmenschliche Teile der Natur identifizieren (…) [z.B.] in der Logik [bzw. in] den Naturwissenschaften." (Niethammer 2000: 72, footnote 1)

examples of a general category, or they share a common point of departure; and, finally, A and B share an 'identity in X', i.e., they share one or more of the same characteristics. While these formulas are given in English, similar ones can be constructed for German and French, as the following examples indicate:

"Mais c'est de nos jours une érudition bien ridicule que celle qui roule sur l'identité des Dieux de diverses nations; comme si Moloch, Saturne & Chronos pouvoient être le même Dieu." (Rousseau 1762: 227–228)

"As the true pronunciation of the Hebrew characters, is lost in a considerable degree, it is too difficult a task, for a skilful Hebraist, to ascertain a satisfactory identity of language, between the Jews, and American Aborigines." (Adair 1775: 38)

"Identität des Gegenstandes mit der Vorstellung (…) Identität des Endlichen und Unendlichen (…) Identität des Subjektiven und Objektiven." (Schelling 1803: 8, 38, 71)

"Identity of Electricities derived from different sources" (Faraday 1833: 23; title of §7)

"the essential identity of some of the elementary religious conceptions of the primitive nations of the Old and New Worlds" (Squier 1851: viii)

"As the warmth returned, the arctic forms would retreat northward (…) Hence, (…) the same arctic species, which had lately lived in (…) the lowlands of the Old and New Worlds, would be left isolated on distant mountain-summits (having been exterminated on all lesser heights) and in the arctic regions of both hemispheres.
"Thus we can understand the identity of many plants at points so immensely remote as on the mountains of the United States and of Europe." (Darwin 1859: 367)

"A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a Nationality, if they are united among themselves by common sympathies, which do not exist between them and any others – which make them co-operate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government, and desire that it should be government by themselves, or a portion of themselves, exclusively. This feeling of nationality may have been generated by various causes. Sometimes it is the effect of identity of race and descent. Community of language, and community of religion, greatly contribute to it. Geographical limits are one of its causes. But the strongest of all is identity of political antecedents; the possession of a national history, and consequent community of recollections; collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents in the past." (Mill 1861: 287)

"Ou bien, entre le cadre et les événements il y aurait identité de nature: les événements sont des souvenirs, mais le cadre aussi est fait de souvenirs." (Halbwachs 1925: 134)

"(…) alle demokratischen Argumente [beruhen] auf eine Reihe von Identitäten. In diese Reihe gehören: Identität von Regierenden und Regierten, Herrscher und Beherrschten, Identität von Subjekt und Objekt staatlicher Autorität, Identität des Volkes mit seiner Repräsentation im Parlament, Identität vom Staat und jeweilig abstimmendem Volk, Identität von Staat und Gesetz, letztlich Identität des Quantitativen (ziffernmäßige Mehrheit oder Einstimmigkeit) mit dem Qualitativen (Richtigkeit des Gesetzes)." (Schmitt 1926: 35)

Note that, in all of these passages, the term 'identity' (or the German or French cognate) corresponds to what I have identified as the prototypical center of usage, regardless of whether the

field of inquiry is philosophy, philology, natural science, ethnology, sociology, or political philosophy. In this sense, 'identity' means that two or more things are, in some sense, the same.

Admittedly, there is a range of variation in the meaning of 'sameness'. Phenomena that are perceived, initially, to be distinct – whether they are collective representations, languages, natural phenomena, populations, racial origins, lines of descent, or philosophical, political, or cognitive categories – are subsequently judged to be the same. They are the same because they are particular expressions of a natural law or of an overarching political or metaphysical unity or because they share characteristics that point to a common origin or historical background. Thus, in natural science, electricity is a single phenomenon that manifests itself in different ways; or two different organisms, or the corresponding populations, may be said to belong to the same species, despite their geographical remoteness from one another, because they stem from a common ancestral population. In studies of language, culture, or government, two or more linguistic forms, collective representations, institutions, or compatriots are held to be the same because they share properties that are indicative of common historical origins or experiences. Finally, in philosophy and political philosophy, diametrically opposed concepts are the same either by definition or because they share a basis in something not immediately accessible but more essential that expresses itself in contradictory ways. There is a world of difference between the subject matter and the intellectual orientations of Friedrich Schelling, Michael Faraday, and Ephraim G. Squier, for example, but each uses the term 'identity' in the same sense.

Placing the passages from works by John Stuart Mill, Maurice Halbwachs, and Carl Schmitt in this context allows us to see that Ely (1997: §14, 27) and Niethammer (2000) have erred when they claim that these authors were the first to write of "ethnonational" or "collective" identity. Mill's expression "identity of race" is built on precisely the same model as Adair's expression "identity of language". This is simply a way of saying that the race or language of these two or more people is the same. Mill did not use the phrase 'national identity' – though, as shall be seen, others writing at about the same time were doing just that (e.g., Wolcott 1821: 218; Schoolcraft 1845: 28–29 and Colbert 1865: 343, cited or quoted below). Rather, when Mill set apart and distinguished one category or group of persons from another, he used another expression that was already very well-established in his day: "national character" (Mill 1861: 54, 61–62, 79, 173–174).[22] Similarly, Schmitt's use of *Identität* corresponds exactly to Schelling's very conventional usage. In short, Mill, Schmitt, and Halbwachs used the term 'identity' not in an innovative sense but in the well-established sense of the sameness of two or more things; and the same could be shown for the other authors Niethammer features in his study: Freud, Jung, Lukács, and Huxley. Mere use of the word 'identity' is not proof of the appearance of *the* concept of identity; rather, it must be used in the sense or senses corresponding to current definitions of the concept, whether collective or social-psychological.

In the history of the word 'identity', the key semantic innovation on the way to contemporary usage occurred when 'identity' began to be used to refer not only to *the sameness of two or more things* but also to *the sameness of one thing with itself over time* and *the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of one thing vis-à-vis other things*. The first step in this semantic innovation occurred when 'identity' was used in this way with reference to a single object or person. John

---

[22] In Mill 1861, expressions such as "common sympathies", "feeling of nationality", and "collective pride and humiliation" are indeed relevant for the history of the idea of 'collective identity', but only from an onomasiological or functional point of view.

Locke, who is usually credited with introducing the phrase 'personal identity', may be taken as a convenient point of departure (Perry 1975). For Locke, 'identity' is a relationship between "any thing as existing at any determin'd time and place" and "it self existing at another time" (Locke 1700: 179). This conception is also applicable to the human individual:

> "(...) to find wherein *personal* identity consists, we must consider what *Person* stands for; which, I think, is a thinking intelligent Being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider it self as it self, the same thinking thing in different times and places (…) For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and 'tis that, that makes every one to be, what he calls *self*; and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists *personal Identity, i.e.* the sameness of a rational Being: And as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past Action or Thought, so far reaches the Identity of that *Person*; it is the same *self* now it was then; and 'tis by the same *self* with this present one that now reflects on it, that that Action was done." (Locke 1700: 183)

Locke's formulation shows clearly how 'identity', in the sense of the persisting sameness, separateness, and distinctiveness of one thing, may still be understood in terms of the sameness of two things. Our consciousness of particular objects or particular persons, including ourselves, is discontinuous, due to the occasional absence of that object or person or our occasional inattention to it, him, or her. Nevertheless, we are capable of recognizing that there is a sameness or identity linking the objects of these discontinuous episodes of consciousness and that the thing or person of which or of whom we are conscious discontinuously is actually the one and the same, i.e., identical with itself, himself, or herself. Making this point more formulaically, one might say that the first stage of semantic innovation occurs as one passes from the idea of the sameness of two things considered synchronically, to the sameness, separateness, and distinctiveness of one thing considered diachronically.

Up to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, all instances of the word 'identity' in the texts in my sample express either the sameness of two or more things or the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of an object or a person. Then, however, one begins to find a few scattered instances of 'identity' being used to refer to the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of a category of people or a group of people.

The earliest instances that I have found to date of 'identity', in the sense of the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people, occur in the phrase 'national identity' in the context of political debate in the United States in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. In the Proceedings of the U.S. Congress from the year 1790, which were published in *The American Museum*, one of first literary magazines of the new nation, James Madison is said to have referred to "the national identity of the united states" in support of his argument that, after the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, the government was still obligated to repay "the debt due to domestic creditors" that was incurred before ratification (Proceedings of Congress, Thursday, February 11, 1790, p. 34). Another early use of the phrase 'national identity' appears in a message of Governor Oliver Wolcott Jr. to the Connecticut Legislature, published in *Niles' Weekly Register* in 1821. In this message, Wolcott asserts the validity of English "common law" in the United States, arguing that it is no less "an essential part of our national identity" than is the English language (Wolcott 1821: 218).

Research in published and archival sources touching on constitutional, judicial, and political issues in the early decades of the United States might uncover further early instances of the phrase

'national identity'; but this has yet to be done. In addition, parallel searches should be conducted in other countries featuring comparable "contexts of innovation" (Fritz 1988: 1624), i.e., historical circumstances such as post-revolutionary politics or the ratification of a new constitution. However, a search of classic texts featuring the concept 'nation', from Montesquieu (1721) to Renan (1882) and beyond, indicates that 'national identity' does not enter into this literature until after the First World War (e.g., Hayes 1926: 20; Macartney 1934: 417).[23]

In this preliminary report, the two early occurrences of the phrase 'national identity' cited above may serve to illustrate a typical form of ambiguity. For Locke, 'personal identity' refers to the sameness of a person from one point in time to another; and, in the remark attributed to Madison, 'national identity' seems to mean the sameness of the nation from one point in time to another. In each case, 'identity' is at issue because the relation between the two points in time is marked by discontinuity – an interruption of a person's attention or consciousness, in the first case, and a change in the legal status of a nation, in the second. When Madison's purported usage is compared with Wolcott's, however, it becomes clear that 'identity', when used with reference to a nation, may vary between two senses: 'identity' in the sense of the sameness of a nation with itself at two different points in times; or 'identity' in sense of the distinctiveness of a nation, viewed as the home of characteristic institutions, attitudes, and proclivities that set it apart from other nations. Semantic innovation has occurred definitively when the emphasis shifts to the latter, as in Wolcott's letter.

In the decades following these two early occurrences, I have found, so far, only a very few isolated instances of 'identity' in the sense of the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people – with one notable exception: the ethnological literature on Native North Americans and also U.S. government reports on 'Indian affairs'.[24]

> "The North American Indians are a strongly marked race of men, constituting a distinct class, and maintaining their identity as such, and their peculiarities in every vicissitude of existence, which neither circumstances nor time have conquered." ([Sparks and Felton] in *North American Review* 1838: 136)

> "The SEMINOLES (…) consist chiefly of Muskogees. The ancient possessors of the soil have become extinct, or at least have lost their identity among the wars, and changes and confusion incident to our aborigines." (Samuel Forry, M.D., Medical Staff, U.S. Army, in an undated letter quoted in Morton 1839: 144)

> "I believe, with many others, that the North American Indians (…) have Jewish blood in their veins, though I would not assert (…) '*that they are Jews*', or that they are '*the ten lost tribes of Israel*.' From the character and conformation of their heads, I am compelled to look upon

---

[23] The same may be said of histories of the Jewish people – compare Graetz 1873 and 1875, which does not contain 'identity' in this sense, with Baron 1937, in which the word is used in this sense occasionally (e.g., Baron 1937, vol. I: 13, 35).

[24] Three other works featuring early instances of 'identity' with reference to a collectivity deserve mention – although, in one of them, usage seems to be ambiguous: first, *The Nestorians; or The Lost Tribes: Containing Evidence of their Identity* (1841) by Asahel Grant, an American missionary to Persia; second, *Christ's Covenant the Best Defence of Christ's Crown; or, Our National Covenants Scriptural, Catholic, and of Permanent Obligation* by William White, a pastor in a dissenting Protestant sect in Scotland, who, quite remarkably, and in a way requiring extensive commentary in a separate publication, reflects at length on the relation between "personal identity" and "national identity" (White 1844: esp. 62–79); and, third, *Der grüne Heinrich* (esp. 1855: 240–254) by Gottfried Keller. Niethammer (2000: 66–70) sees Keller's usage as innovative, but, on closer inspection, it is unclear whether he uses *Identität* in the sense of the sameness of two or more things or the separateness and distinctiveness of one thing. Otherwise, in this same novel, Keller uses, with reference to collectivities, such expressions as *Charakter*, *Nationalerinnerungen*, and *Nationalgefühl* (1854: 76–77). Again, extended commentary must be reserved for a future publication.

them as an amalgam race, (…) and from many of their customs, which seem (…) to be peculiarly Jewish, (…) I am forced to believe that some part of those ancient tribes (…) have found their way to this country, where they have entered amongst the native stock, and have lived and intermarried with the Indians, until their identity has been swallowed up and lost in the greater numbers of their new acquaintance, save the bold and decided character which they have bequeathed to the Indian races." (Catlin 1842, vol. II: 231)

"The Uchees were once a distinct and powerful people, but were subdued by the Creeks upwards of a century ago, and (…) were taken into the country of the victors, and held in servitude (…) They gradually became emancipated, and incorporated with the Creek nation, with whom they have ever since remained in close and cordial union, although, as is customary with the Indians, they have preserved their identity as a tribe, and retained their language." (McKenney and Hall 1842: 25–26)

"I allude to the institution of the Totem, which has been well known among the Algonquin tribes (…) By this device, (…) the natives marked their division of a tribe into clans, and of a clan into families, and the distinction was thus very clearly preserved (…) This distinction, which is marked with much of the certainty of heraldic bearings in the feudal system, was seen to mark the arms, the lodge, and the trophies of the chief and warrior. It was likewise employed to give identity to the *clan* of which he was a member, on his ad-je-da-teg or grave-post." (Schoolcraft 1845: 28–29)

"Judging from peculiarity of features, manners and dress, it would seem to be impossible that any people, should have remained so long in contact with or juxtaposition to the European races and changed so little, in all that constitutes national and personal identity." (Schoolcraft 1845: 115–116)

After first appearing in the ethnological and popular literature on American Indians, the new sense of 'identity' also found expression in the administrative language of Indian agents of the U.S. government and in the diplomatic language of representatives of Native American communities. In the following passages, which are representative of several others contained in the annual reports of the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 'identity' – in the sense of the separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people – occurs when questions arise concerning the 'preservation' or 'decay' of Indian nations:[25]

"We, the undersigned commissioners, on behalf of the Choctaw and Chickasaw nations, (…) would (…) state, that we were not induced by the machinations of the emissaries of the Confederate States to sever our treaty stipulations with the government of the United States, but that we made treaties with the Confederate States, from what appeared to us as our interest seemed to dictate, and as the means of preserving our independence and national identity, considering ourselves a separate political organization, and our country composing an integral part of the territory of the United States." (Colbert 1865: 345)

---

[25] Such annual reports, which were prepared by the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the U.S. Secretary of Interior, consist of several individual contributions written by government agents reporting on conditions or developments in various Native American communities, usually on reservations. I have examined the annual reports of the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs from 1826 to 1932, along with other documentary materials available at http: //digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/History/History-idx?type=browse&scope=History.IndianTreatiesMicro. Beginning in 1933, with John Collier's appointment as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, such annual reports decline in significance for my topic, as they appear only as very general summaries, high on statistics and low on narrative, in the *Annual Report of the Secretary of Interior*. Presumably, research on the use of 'identity' in this context should be extended to the unpublished materials generated within the Bureau of Indian Affairs during Collier's tenure of office (1933–1945). My search of the treaties between the U.S. government and various Indian nations, the first of which date from the late eighteenth century, is still in a very preliminary phase, but so far it has revealed no use of 'identity' in the specified sense.

"The past few years, commencing shortly after my taking charge of the agency in 1873, has been [*sic*] an important period in the history of the *Otoe and Missouria* tribe. It has been the turning point between the wild, free life so dear to the memories and traditions of the Indian race, and the more complicated machinery of civilized pursuits, which in the near future they must wield, or by inaction suffer decay and lose their identity amid the growing populace of a more provident race." (White 1878: 96)

To sum up what has been established so far: Until the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, the word 'identity' was still used most often in the sense of the sameness of two or more things; and it was used quite often in the sense of the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of an object or person. Additionally, in some texts, especially ethnological and administrative texts regarding North American Indians, it was used occasionally in a new sense – that of the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of a category or a group of people.[26] The word 'identity' was polysemous. This is not surprising, since semantic innovation often leads not to the replacement of one sense by another but to the multiplication of the senses in which a word may be used (Fritz 2006: 88). What is more, use of the word 'identity' in its new sense seems to have had a double reference: first, the sameness of a collectivity with itself at two different points in time; and, second, the separateness and distinctiveness of a collectivity as the bearer of distinctive characteristics, attitudes, and proclivities vis-à-vis other collectivities of a comparable nature. Despite this modulation, however, and despite the occasional ambiguity of the sense in which 'identity' was used, it is still possible to distinguish clearly between the two senses, sameness and distinctiveness.

The most direct method of distinguishing among the senses in which 'identity' is used is hermeneutic, i.e., inference of an author's intended meaning in discursive context. Another way of distinguishing among different senses is through examination of the co-occurrence of 'identity' with functionally distinct expressions in a syntagmatic chain (Fritz 2005: 23–24).

Let us look at the co-occurrence of the noun 'identity' with various adjectives. When the term is used in the sense of the sameness of two or more things, the adjective serves to tell the reader whether or not two things are really identical; or it conveys something about the qualitative or quantitative aspects of the relationship between two things or among more than two things – e.g., the degree to which they may be said to be identical, or in which aspect they are alike, or how old the relationship of identity is and whether or not it is or has been subject to interruption. Thus, we find references to the "possible identity" (Frazer 1910: 32, footnote 1), or "evident identity" (Swanton 1911: 182) of two or more things; or to their "absolute Identität" (Schopenhauer 1844: 101–102), "sufficient identity" (Jones 1843: 6), "identité fondamentale" (Comte 1844: 3), "identité constante" (Comte 1844 : 98), "exact identity" (Schoolcraft 1851: 299, footnote 2), "frequent identity" (Smith 1889: 39–40), "hohe Identität" (Schmitt-Dorotic 1919: 81), "decreasing identity" (Sorokin 1937, vol. I: 164), or "close identity" (Warner and Lunt 1941: 32). Finally, between two or more things, there may be a "physical identity" (Pickering 1848: 19), "phonetic identity" (Boas 1911: 24), "methodische Identität" (Schmitt-Dorotić 1919: 51), "psychologische Identität" (Jung 1994 [1921]: 469, § 740), or "terminological identity" (Davis and Warner 1937: 308–309).

---

[26] At this point, I can only speculate (as I shall do in the conclusion of this report) as to why instances of the innovative use of the word 'identity' seem to appear with disproportionate frequency in ethnological and administrative texts concerning Native Americans. I can say, however, that no comparable use of 'identity' in this sense has been found in the ethnological literature written by British, German, or French anthropologists and ethnologists of this same era; nor has it been found in other works in English, German, or French that are devoted to history, cultural history, linguistics, exploration, travel, philosophy, or political philosophy.

In contrast, when the term is used with reference to the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people, 'identity' is preceded by adjectives that tell the reader to which or what kind of category or group of people the term is being applied, as, for example, in "national identity" (Wolcott 1821: 218), "Gaelic identity" (White 1885: 626), "group identity" (Simmel 1898: 671), "tribal identity" (Smith 1906: 117, footnote 50), or "corporate identity" (Marett 1920: 190). Or it expresses something about the quality of the identity of the category or group in question, as in "unchanging identity" (Dorchester 1890: 249) or "separate identity" (Mooney 1902: 385).

When we shift our attention to the co-occurrence of 'identity' with various verbs, the results are less conclusive. Some verbs (e.g., 'ascertain', as in Adair 1775: 38 and Browning 1897: 70–71) co-occur with 'identity' in both senses, so that, in order to distinguish among them, one must supplement the distributional approach with a hermeneutic one. Nevertheless, there is a group of verbs that occur frequently with 'identity' in the sense of the separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people in time: 'mark', 'maintain', 'preserve', 'change', and 'lose'. These are, at least, the infinitive forms of the verbs that occur together or in close association with 'identity', not only in the passages quoted above but throughout the sample. This point, too, will be taken up again in the conclusion.

Brief as it is, this consideration of the co-occurrence of 'identity' with selected adjectives and verbs may still be enough to support the contention that, by the mid-nineteenth century at the latest, we are dealing with use of this word in a new sense. 'Identity' is now a way of saying that a category or group may be understood to be (or to have been) separate and distinct from other categories or groups of a comparable nature. Identity, in this new sense, is something that can be marked and preserved; or it can change or be lost.

In the case of the individual personality, the loss of identity through disintegration is the exceptional case, often considered to be pathological; but it is a rather common occurrence in the case of collectivities, the members of which are, inevitably, subject to various forces pulling them in different directions. How, then, was it possible to extend the idea of 'identity' from the person to the collectivity to begin with?

In fact, the distance between questions such as 'Who am I' or 'Who is she' and 'Who are we' or 'Who are they' is not very great, as the following quotation indicates: "The mounds in Franklin and Calhoun Counties were probably erected by a Muskhogean tribe, whose identity has not been determined" (Bushnell 1920: 112). The short distance from 'Who is he or she?' to 'Who are they?' may be traversed using the standard mechanisms of semantic innovation, which were identified by philologists in the nineteenth century and are still at the core of contemporary research, e.g., metaphor and metonymy (Fritz 2006: 42–46; Traugott 2006; Geeraerts 2010: 26–28). In expounding on their theory of conceptual metaphors, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (2003: 260) propose glosses for particular metaphors, one of which is "NATIONS ARE PEOPLE". Insofar as the term 'identity' is extended not only to nations but also to other kinds of collectivities, one might propose additional glosses, such as THE GROUP IS AN INDIVIDUAL or INSTITUTIONS ARE ACTORS.

As Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 260) note with reference to the example "France fell into a recession and Germany pulled it out", usage may display aspects of both metaphor and metonymy. The example involves metaphor, insofar as a nation is being treated as if it were equivalent to an individual actor; it also involves metonymy, insofar as the whole (France) stands for a part (the

French economy, itself a metonymical expression). In my sample, there are several instances in which a group is presented grammatically as if it were an individual, namely, when a singular construction is used in referring to a collectivity or to an institution that is built up and sustained through the actions of many, as in the following examples:

> "The most powerful source of influence, with the Red man, is his religion (…). By it he preserves his identity as a barbarian." (Schoolcraft 1845: 132)

> "To suppose that the Church has to be nurtured on Christian evidences is to suppose that she has forgotten her own identity. And, therefore, it was a melancholy day for Christendom when the Reformation Church (…) began to justify itself to itself much more than to the world without by constantly reiterating the evidences of Christianity." (Smith 1912 [1869]: 155–156)

The fact, acknowledged by lexical semanticists, that "the demarcation of metaphor and metonymy" is sometimes problematic (Geeraerts 2010: 220) need not concern us. The point is that semantic innovation affecting usage of the term 'identity' is accomplished through means that are of central importance in the historical semantics of all languages. In this particular case, it is remarkable that employing rhetorical conventions such as 'the Red man' allows for a conceptual transition from collective to individual 'identity' – a process which, prior to the development of social psychological approaches in the early to mid-twentieth century, was restricted to typification or stereotyping.

The Functional Phase of the Study

To a large extent, abstract expressions such as 'identity' create their own referents in the process of representing them. Therefore, in this functional phase of the study, I seek not exact synonyms, which do not exist, but words, phrases, or even lengthier circumlocutions which fulfill a comparable semantic function, while matching the focal word only inexactly.

Examples of circumlocutions may be found in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources on Native Americans, particularly in passages corresponding thematically with those quoted above. In such cases, authors are able to express a similar meaning without using the term 'identity'.

> "Every nation or tribe have their distinguishing ensigns or coats of arms, which is generally some beast, bird, or fish. Thus among the Five Nations are the bear, otter wolf, tortoise and eagle; and by these names the tribes are generally distinguished, and they have the shapes of these animals curiously pricked and painted on several parts of their bodies; and when they march through the woods, generally at every encampment they cut the figure of their arms on trees." (Rogers 1765: 226–227)

Like Schoolcraft (1845: 28–29), Robert Rogers described what we would now call the segmentary organization of Native American peoples, that is, their subdivision, usually on the basis of descent, into categories or groups, each with markers that are actively maintained. He, too, compared these markers with heraldic emblems; but, unlike Schoolcraft, he managed to do so without using the word 'identity'. Similarly, just a few years after Morton (1839: 144) quoted the passage from Forry's letter regarding the "lost (…) identity" of the Seminoles, Prince Maximilian described a comparable phenomenon in his report on his journey through North America:

> "Herr Bodmer zeichnete in meinem Boote einen jungen kräftigen Missouri. Dieser Stamm war ehemals zahlreich und mächtig, verlor aber durch eine von den Sacs, Foxes und Osagen ihnen beigebrachte Niederlage seine Selbständigkeit und lebt nun als kleiner Ueberrest mit den Otoes gemischt." (Maximilian 1841: 349)

Maximilian wrote not of 'lost identity' but of *verlorene Selbständigkeit* or 'lost independence', which is not the same thing. But in this context, especially in referring to a tribe that was formerly numerous and powerful before being defeated and forced to intermingle with others, 'independence' has connotations that fit well with a sense of separateness and distinctiveness that must be maintained if it is not to be lost.[27]

These examples show that early occurrences of a particular sense of the word 'identity' in English-language publications did not necessarily entail the simple substitution of one word for another. Rather, it seems valid to postulate the occurrence of a semantic innovation that allowed a meaning expressed through a combination of words to be summarized neatly with a single word: 'identity'. If this is so, then the new sense of 'identity' might be seen to have filled a 'lexical gap' in usage regarding separate and distinct categories or groups of people as they persist over time (Geeraerts 2010: 56).

Nevertheless, examination of the sources does reveal several examples of individual words that, together with 'identity', might be said to occupy a kind of paradigmatic set within a common semantic field, if this expression can be used to refer to words that are functionally equivalent and even competing, while overlapping in meaning only partially. Work with primary sources has led me to identify the following as the most commonly occurring single-word occupants of this paradigmatic set: 'character', 'spirit', 'conscience' or 'consciousness', and 'individuality' – along with the corresponding terms in German and French.[28]

With what justification might one claim that these terms, or their German and French equivalents, occupy, along with 'identity', a paradigmatic set within a larger semantic field? This claim is, in any case, asserted by those authors, cited above, who have written about the history of the concept of identity. Gleason (1983: 924) and Weigert (1983: 184) state explicitly that 'identity' eventually

---

[27] A brief note on method: these passages from Rogers (1755) and Maximilian (1841) were found by searching these texts (including also Maximilian 1843) for 'coat of arms' and 'lost' (and the corresponding German terms), after I had already determined that the same or similar expressions co-occur with 'identity' in passages from other texts, e.g., Schoolcraft (1845: 29) and Forry in Morton (1839: 144).

[28] The German and French equivalents are, respectively, *Charakter*, *Geist*, *Gewissen* or *Bewußtsein*, and *Individualität*; and *caractère*, *esprit*, *conscience*, and *individualité*. This list, which is preliminary and illustrative, could be expanded – as one commentator on an earlier draft observed – to include 'culture', which by the early twentieth century had become another way of talking about the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of human collectivities (Stocking 1968 [1966]). Bunzl (1996) has provided a study of this type, tracing the development from Wilhelm von Humboldt's use of *Nationalcharakter* to Franz Boas's concept of culture. However, the words in the proposed paradigmatic set, though based on different metaphors, result from similar processes of metaphorical extension which set them apart from culture: while the word 'culture' has been extended from a vegetal to a human order, the words 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'conscience', 'individuality', and 'identity' all seem to have been extended from the human individual to human collectivities. Admittedly, 'cultivation' might be a candidate for inclusion; but it has processual connotations lacking in the other terms. Further candidates that do exhibit some resemblance to the five words in the set include 'ethos' (a Greek word that is often translated as 'character' but that has affinities with 'spirit' and 'consciousness' as well), 'genius', 'mind', and 'mentality'; but these occur less frequently in my sample. 'Individuality' might be said to belong to a cluster that also includes 'particularity', 'singularity', and peculiarity'. 'Individuality', 'particularity', and 'singularity' belong together because, etymologically, they all take the notion of divisibility or indivisibility as their point of departure. 'Peculiarity' overlaps semantically with these three terms; but, unlike them and like its German counterpart, *Eigentümlichkeit*, it has a semantic range encompassing the notion of ownership. Compare Walker's (1971: 2–3) suggestion that, in the writings of the eighteenth-century jurist Justus Möser, the word *Eigentum*, normally translated as 'property' but also related to 'peculiarity', has connotations linking it to 'identity'. These terms and their interrelations might become relevant in further research, but in this preliminary report I have opted to concentrate on a smaller set of frequently occurring expressions.

replaced 'character' in the humanities and social sciences; while Cerulo (1997: 386) sees precursors in concepts such as 'class consciousness' and 'collective consciousness'. Others draw implicit links. For example, Rodney Needham translates Claude Lévi-Strauss's phrase "groups conscients de leur individualité" (Lévi-Strauss 1962: 14) as "groups conscious of their identity" (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 7); while Dirk Geeraerts (2010: 18) defines Wilhelm Wundt's concept of *Volksgeist* as "the typical 'spirit of a nation or people' that defines their specific identity" (Geeraerts 2010: 18). These examples suggest that, since the 1960s at the latest, 'identity' has been the obvious choice for replacing roughly equivalent expressions, some of which were by then considered to be old-fashioned.

Beyond these explicit statements and implicit assumptions, there is some evidence in language history of the connection between 'identity' on one hand, and terms such as 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', and 'individuality' on the other. Although each of these terms is based on a different metaphor, each was, at some point, subject to similar processes of metaphorical extension, in some cases more than once. The evidence is strong that, like 'identity', each of these terms is used or has been used, first and foremost, with reference to a single object, phenomenon, or person; but that, at some point in language history, each was extended to refer to categories or groups of people.[29]

This common process of metaphorical extension corresponded, apparently, to a common semantic function: to set apart and distinguish one category or group of people from another – for example, by saying which 'character' members of the category or group possessed, by which 'spirit' they were animated, whether or not they had 'consciousness' of themselves as category or group, or in what, precisely, their 'individuality' consisted. The comparability of the semantic function fulfilled by these terms, when used in a specific sense, is indicated, first, through their occurrence in similar junctures in thematically related texts and, second, through co-occurrence with the same or similar lexical items, especially adjectives, in syntagmatic context. For example, each of these terms – 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', and 'identity' – commonly co-occurs with general adjectives such as 'national' or 'tribal' or specific adjectives such as 'British' or 'Indian'.

In the sample, the member of this set of terms that occurs most frequently is 'character'. Given its affinity with both the genealogical and environmental principles that have long served in the Graeco-Roman and Judeo-Christian traditions to explain difference among human collectivities (Greenwood 1984: 33–40), 'character' seems to have been applied to human collectivities at an early date (Petermann 2004: 31). Not until the early eighteenth century, however, was it regularly coupled with the concept of the 'nation': "le caractere (…) de la Nation" (Montesquieu 1721, vol. II : 132), "Nationalcharakter" (Herder 1769: 93), and "national character" (Hume 1753 [1748]; Home 1778, vol. I: 38). Thereafter, this expression is distributed throughout the sample with great frequency, up to and including national character studies of the mid-twentieth century (Mead 1953; see also Mackenzie 1978: 40–48). In the ethnological and social anthropological literature of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, 'character' was clearly the expression of choice for setting

---

[29] Apparently, these words have been subject to multiple metaphorical extensions. The Latin word 'character' was derived from a Greek word for a pointed stake used to impress a mark or brand on something. 'Spirit' was based on the Latin word meaning 'to breath', which came to designate an incorporeal life-force (Zedler 1739, vol. 14, col. 659; see also Snell 1946 and Onians 1951). Both 'conscience' and 'consciousness' are based on the Latin verb 'to know', which is fused with an intensifying prefix to denote heightened awareness and reflection. 'Consciousness' is linked to the history of the word 'identity' through Locke's (1700: 183) definition of personal identity. 'Individuality', as noted previously, is derived from a Latin root meaning 'indivisible'.

apart and distinguishing categories or groups of people, even in those texts in which 'identity' was first introduced in this sense (e.g., Morton 1839: 19, 26, 30, 32–33; Catlin 1842, vol. I: 193; Schoolcraft 1845: 41, 129, 132, 508; Morgan 1877: 308; Brinton 1890: 299; Powell 1891: 34; Westermarck 1891: 263; Mooney 1902: 500; Brown 1922: 377; Kroeber 1923: 464; Radin 1927: 296).

'Spirit' seems to have been applied at an early date to groups beyond individual beings, as in various Biblical passages (e.g., *Numbers* 11: 29; *Acts* 2: 2–4). Not until the early modern era, however, does one find expressions such as *Geist der Nation* (Scheuchzer 1707: 103), *l'esprit* of the *Nation* (Montesquieu 1721, vol. II: 132), "national spirit" (Bolingbroke 1749:154), and *Volksgeist* (Käsbohrer [Pahl] 1797: 38). 'Spirit' continued to be used in scholarly prose through the first half of the twentieth century to set apart and distinguish categories or groups of people, with this usage enjoying an effervescence during and after the First World War (e.g., Pollock 1919–1920: 265; Dubnow 1920, vol. I: 30; Hayes 1926: 44; Mauss 1953–1954: 29).

The terms *Nationalgewissen* (national conscience) and *Nationalbewußtsein* (national consciousness), together with a reference to the *Selbstbewußtsein Israels* (the self-consciousness or self-understanding of Israel), may be found in Ludwig Feuerbach's *Das Wesen des Christentums* (Feuerbach 1841: 154–155). Of course, similar expressions are notable for the central role they play in the works of Karl Marx and his followers (e.g., *Bewußtsein* in Marx 1859: v; *Klassenbewußtsein* in Mehring 1896: 139) and in those of Durkheim (*conscience collective*, e.g., 1893: 139) and Franklin H. Giddings ('consciousness of kind', 1896: 17–18).

'Individuality' has been used with reference to categories or groups of people at least since the early nineteenth century, for example, in the expression *nationale Individualität* (e.g., W. von Humboldt 1841 [1820–1821]: 20) or in observations about the 'individuality' of particular peoples (e.g., Warburton 1845, vol. II: 175, on the "individuality" of the Jews; and Renan 1882: 15, 17, on the "*individualité du caractère gaulois*" and "*l'individualité germanique*").

Finally, the suggestion that expressions such as 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', 'identity', and equivalent expressions in German and French form a kind of paradigmatic set is supported by evidence indicating correlation in their diachronically varying frequencies of use. Using the Google Ngram Viewer, which generates charts showing the relative frequency in the use of a specified word or phrase in the Google corpus over a specified period of time, I have entered the English expressions 'national character', 'national spirit', 'national consciousness', 'national individuality', and 'national identity' for the period extending from 1700 to 2000. In separate charts, I have also entered the German expressions *Nationalcharakter*, *Volksgeist*, *Nationalbewußtsein*, *nationale Individualität*, and *nationale Identität*; and the French expressions *caractère national*, *esprit national*, *conscience nationale*, *individualité nationale*, and *identité nationale*. The adjective 'national' has been added in all of these cases because it commonly co-occurs with the words in question and increases the probability that these words are being used with reference to a human collectivity.[30] The results indicate that, at various points in

---

[30] Even with this precaution, the meaning of such expressions is not always clear. The word *Volksgeist*, for example, may usually be taken to be the German equivalent of 'national spirit' or *esprit national*; but in some cases – which may be restricted to the eighteenth and early nineteenth century – *Volksgeist* contrasts with *Aristokratismus* and, so, must be translated as 'popular spirit' or 'spirit of the common people' (e.g., Pahl 1796: 202). Incidentally, in key works by Herder (1767, 1769, 1769a, 1772, 1774, 1784, 1785, 1793), I have found multiple instances of *Geist*, with various referents, but no single instance of *Volksgeist* , although this concept is often attributed to him in the secondary literature.

time, the frequent use of one term corresponds to the infrequent use of another, and vice versa (see charts 1, 2, and 3 at https://www.eth.mpg.de/cms/en/publications/working_papers/wp0196).

The frequencies of the occurrence of each of these expressions in the three languages during the specified period and the correlations among the frequencies of the five expressions exhibit interesting patterns. In English (chart 1), 'national character' is by far the most frequently used expression over the centuries, with a surge in the late eighteenth century and a peak just before the mid-nineteenth century, after which it gradually declines, exhibiting a final, more modest surge in the mid-1960s. Thereafter, it plummets rapidly with the meteoric rise of 'national identity' beginning about 1950.

In German (chart 2), *Nationalcharakter* and *Volksgeist* are used most frequently, at least initially. The former attains peaks of use in around 1800 and 1840, before tapering off; and the latter reaches even higher levels around 1850 and again in the 1930s, before declining with the rise of *Nationalbewußtsein* just after the mid-twentieth century. *Nationale Identität* does not reach the heights of *Nationalbewußtsein* in German usage until the late 1990s.

In French (chart 3), the most commonly occurring expression is *caractère national*, followed by *esprit national*, both of which reach a peak of frequency just before 1800. Thereafter, they remain dominant until the first decade of the twentieth century, when they are joined by *conscience nationale*. In the course of the twentieth century, these three terms continue to be used with the same moderate frequency, though the occurrence of *esprit national* begins to decline by about 1940. Beginning in the early 1960s, *identité nationale* rises suddenly, and the trend continues until it surpasses the others in the early 1980s.

While much could be said about these results – especially about the interlingual variation in changing frequencies of occurrence – the single most dramatic finding concerns the way in which the declining occurrence of the terms 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', and their German and French equivalents correlates with the increasing occurrence of 'identity', 'Identität', and 'identité' in the late twentieth century. These apparent correlations in frequency of use suggest that it is valid to view the terms in question as a kind of replacement set. Possible reasons for the rise and fall in the popularity of these terms are addressed in the conclusion.

Merging Lexical and Functional Approaches: the shift from 'character' (etc.) to 'identity' in ethnology, social anthropology, and sociology since the 1890s

Up to the 1890s, in historical scholarship, in the nascent social sciences, and in related forms of popular literature, terms such as 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', and their German and French equivalents were used frequently to set one segment of humanity apart and distinguish it from others. In contrast, 'identity' was used only rarely for that purpose, and, when it was, then disproportionately in the literature on the indigenous peoples of North America. Beginning in the 1890s, however, not only in ethnology but also in related disciplines, occurrences of 'identity' in this sense became more common (though not to a degree that registers in the Google Ngram Viewer). In this paper, I will report on developments only in the ethnological, social anthropological, and sociological literature. Preliminary evidence suggests, however, that similar processes were underway in historical studies and in the emerging field of political science, at least in texts devoted to selected topics. The cross-disciplinary nature of these developments points to the need for a broadly framed approach to transformations within an overarching semantic field; but this more ambitious conceptualization of the problem must be reserved for further research.

The gradual adoption of the new sense of the word 'identity' in the ethnological and social anthropological literature is most evident in texts on aboriginal or historical peoples, but by the late nineteenth and early twentieth century it had spread beyond North America. What is more, the thematic contextualization of the word became more diverse, depending, perhaps, on the participation of the authors in different national traditions of research and also on the differing social conditions in communities in which 'collective identity' seemed to be at issue.

In the United States, usage developed according to patterns established in works by Schoolcraft and his contemporaries, who reacted to the situations they observed in Native American communities in one of two ways. Either they assumed that the Indians would eventually disappear, because they would die out or be absorbed into the majority population; or they marveled at the evident exceptions to what was thought to be the general rule. Here are only a few of many possible quotations drawn from administrative, legal, and scholarly sources, the last of which displays the earliest use of the plural form 'identities' that I have found to date:

> "The Moqui rank among the most staid and conservative of all Arizona Indians, and everything about them wears an antique appearance – their walled habitations on lofty cliffs, to which fuel, produce, and water are carried with great labor; their old-time customs, of which they are very tenacious; their strange pagan shrines and rites, perpetuated from times immemorial; their grotesque snake dances; their peculiar form of self-government; their repugnance to education; their jealous guarding against any modification of tribal ideas and customs; their shrinking timidity in the presence of hostile invaders; and their unchanging identity for centuries. Such are the Moqui whom we seek to assimilate to our civilization and incorporate into our national life." (Dorchester 1890: 249)

> "All the smaller tribes excepting the Biloxi were practically extinct, or had entirely lost their identity, before the year 1800." (Mooney 1902: 500)

> "The southwestern tribes of Apaches during the last fifty years have had no definable tribal identity, and have been little more than robber bands. Such bands, however, constitute a political entity, which must be recognized by the courts." (Smith 1906: 117, footnote 50)

> "Old identities were lost or transformed beyond recognition (…) [in] the all-consuming cauldron that is adventure and the monotonous leveling that is the plains (…) Four Algonquian tribes – the Arapaho, the Cheyenne, the Blackfoot and the Gros Ventre – have practically lost all their old identities. They must have come into contact with the Mandans and the Hidatsa fairly early in their career, for their whole ceremonial life and most of their social life has been manifestly derived from them." (Radin 1927: 293–294)

Beginning in late nineteenth century, either through the reception of Schoolcraft (among others) or in a process that lexical semanticists call 'semantic polygenesis' (Geeraerts 2010: 234) – the two possibilities are reminiscent of what early-twentieth-century scholars called diffusion and parallelism – British authors began to use the term 'identity' in the sense of the enduring separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people.[31] Whether they were speculating about the totemic origins of Judaism or generalizing about totemism among contemporary

---

[31] Schoolcraft, a widely acknowledged expert on Native Americans, was cited multiple times by Tylor (1871), Spencer (1898), and Durkheim (1912), among many others. William Robertson Smith, who based his reconstruction of the ancient Hebrew religion on the ethnological literature on 'totemism' (Smith 1889), can be assumed to have been familiar with the works of those who first wrote about this topic, including Schoolcraft.

'savages', these authors tended to emphasize the positive aspect of collective identity – its creation, representation, and reproduction:

> "Jeremiah, in the full consciousness of the falsehood of all religions except that of Israel, remarks that no nation changes its gods although they be no gods: a nation's worship remains as constant as its political identity." (Smith 1889: 37)

> "Totemism, in the specific form that has to do with kinship, means that a social group depends for its identity on a certain intimate and exclusive relation in which it stands toward an animal-kind, or a plant-kind, or, more rarely, a class of inanimate objects, or very rarely, something that is individual and not a kind or class at all." (Marett 1912: 166)[32]

The differing thematic emphases of early-twentieth-century American authors compared to British authors, including those who employed the term 'identity', might correspond to differences in colonial policies, in conditions among aboriginal peoples, and in key concepts in the two countries. In the United States, where assimilation was the goal of policy governing 'Indian Affairs', ethnologists engaged in salvage ethnography, historical reconstruction, or, by the 1930s, acculturation studies. In the British colonies, where indirect rule prevailed, social anthropologists developed structural functionalism in an attempt to explain how societies reproduce themselves – whether or not they were actually doing so (Stocking 1991: 53). Nevertheless, the international reception of research conducted within various national traditions may be taken for granted. Presumably, a general familiarity among North American and British or European scholars with each other's work contributed to converging usage of the terms of ethnological and social anthropological analysis, so that by the 1940s an increasing frequency of the use of the word 'identity' with reference to collectivities is evident in English-language publications, even among those who had not used it in their publications of previous decades (e.g., Evans-Pritchard 1940: 4, 6–7, 123, 260; Gluckman 1940: 40; Fortes 1940: 251–253; Herskovits 1941: 1, 12, 145; Tax 1941: 28; Warner and Lunt 1941: 32; Beals, Redfield, and Tax 1943: 17; Malinowski 1945: 53; Warner and Srole 1945: 157, 160, 218, 295; Nadel 1947: 13, 86–87, 98, 107, 146–147, 207, 250, 264, 269, 301; Kroeber 1948: 278, 284, 430, 435; Lowie 1948: 246, 287, 306).[33] There was no comparable development in the ethnological literature in German or French during the same period (e.g., not in Griaule 1938; Thurnwald 1940; Mühlmann 1942; Rivet 1943; Leenhardt 1947; Jensen 1948; Leiris 1948; Lévi-Strauss 1949; or Schmidt 1954).

   Aside from Bronislaw Malinowski, there was another author who used 'identity' in a new sense for the first time in 1945: Erik Homburger Erikson, who is usually credited with coining or being the 'architect' of the concept of 'identity' (Coles 1970; Friedman 1999). Clearly, Erikson played an important role: first, in helping to develop a form of 'ego psychology' onto which he later grafted the term 'identity' (Erikson/Schlein 1987; Hoffman 1982, 1993); second, in developing the social-psychological conception of the term by making suggestive remarks regarding the reciprocal

---

[32] Initially, I expected that the topic of totemism would be especially conducive to innovative usage of 'identity' in the sense of the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people; but, in fact, prior to this rather late passage by Marett, 'identity', when co-occurring with 'totem', 'totemic', or 'totemism', was always used in the sense of the sameness of two or more things (e.g., McLennan 1869–1870: endnote 71; Rivers 1909: 175).

[33] In the cited works by Evan-Prichard, Herskovits, and Warner and Lunt, 'identity' is sometimes ambiguous, midway between the senses of 'sameness' and 'persisting separateness and distinctiveness'. One example must suffice: "All Nuer live in a continuous stretch of country. There are no isolated sections. However, their feeling of community goes deeper than recognition of cultural identity (…) a Nuer is never a foreigner to another as he is to a Dinka or a Shilluk" (Evans-Pritchard 1940: 123). Here, "recognition of cultural identity" is replaceable not only with 'recognition of the fact that they are all Nuer' but also with 'recognition of the fact that they are alike, culturally'.

relation between "ego identity" and "group identity" (first explicitly in Erikson 1946); and, third, not only in popularizing the term but also in developing it into a kind of brand associated with his name (Erikson 1948, 1950, etc.). Nevertheless, Erikson's first use of the term was not innovative in itself; rather, it was one instance among many of the adoption of new senses of the word 'identity' in published texts in the mid-1940s. In fact, on examining Erikson's writings, one can only agree with Paul Roazen (1976: 24) when he writes that "Erikson obviously has a number of ideas in mind when he uses the term 'identity'."[34]

To assume, then, that use of the term 'identity' subsequent to the publication of Erikson's key texts was necessarily based on his usage, as have Mackenzie (1978: 35–39), Gleason (1983: 911), Weigert (1983: 184), and the many others who lean on their authority, is unjustified. Rather, channels of influence and adoption would have to be reconstructed in a whole series of individual cases.[35]

By the 1950s, the term 'identity', in the sense of the perceived separateness and distinctiveness of a category or a group of people over time, was just beginning to gain acceptance among sociologists and political scientists but was already well established among cultural anthropologists (the heirs of the ethnologists) and social anthropologists. Indeed, it was used in the specified sense by anthropologists representing widely differing perspectives, including those who would later be the leaders of competing schools of thought (e.g., Nadel 1947: e.g., 86–87; Nadel 1950: e.g., 351; Radcliffe-Brown 1950: 41; Wilson 1950: 113; Fortes 1953: 27; Hoebel 1954: 317, 321; Laguna 1954; Leach 1954: 30; Lowie 1954: 192; Provinse 1954: 388; Redfield and Singer 1954: 68; M. Mead 1955: 381; Wagley and Harris 1955: 430, 447–448; Steward et al. 1956: 500; Crowley 1957: 824; Geertz 1957: 37; Hughes 1958: 158; Tax 1958: 17, 18; Spindler and Spindler 1959: 52, 57; Wolf 1959: 42, 244; Mair 1960: 238, 243). This widespread use among social and cultural anthropologists of various persuasions belies attempts to link a somehow suspect concept of identity more closely with some theoretical orientations than with others.

Viewing the way anthropologists have used 'identity' in parallel with their use of competing terms would be revealing but would extend the length of this preliminary report unduly. Therefore, I provide just a few examples from works by two scholars who numbered among the founding members of the modern schools of social and cultural anthropology in Great Britain and the United States, respectively. Both Bronislaw Malinowski and Robert Lowie began publishing in the first decades of the twentieth century but first used 'identity' with reference to collectivities in the mid- to late 1940s. Prior to that, they employed terms such as 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', and

---

[34] Erikson's use of 'identity' in various senses – including those I have called personal (e.g., Erikson 1945: 350), collective (e.g., Erikson 1945: 323), and social-psychological (e.g., Erikson 1946: 363) – may explain his well-known reluctance to define the term (Erikson 1970: 731; cf. Coles 1970: 82; Gleason 1983: 914). Because Erikson inserted the word 'identity' in 'reprints' of previously published works that lacked the term (see footnotes 11 and 12), it seems fair to conclude that, as of 1946, he began to feature the word 'identity' in his publications programmatically. On the tendency of scholars, along with other specialists, to adopt particular terms as a kind of brand, see Fritz (2006: 70).

[35] For example, from 1939 to 1950, Erikson was resident at the University of California in Berkeley, where he was in contact with Alfred Kroeber and perhaps also Robert Lowie, the two most prominent members of that university's celebrated Department of Anthropology; both featured 'identity' in the sense of the persisting separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people in publications of the late 1940s. But Kroeber, who uses 'identity' in this sense four times in the second edition of his textbook *Anthropology* (1948: 278, 284, 430, 435), had already used it at least once in the first edition (1924: 478); and Lowie (1948: 246, 287, 306), who was less receptive to psychoanalysis than Kroeber (Kan 2019), could have gotten it from Gluckman (1940: 40), Fortes (1940: 251–253), Herskovits (1941: 1, 12, 145), or Warner and Srole (1945: 60, 218), whose usage matches his more closely than that of Erikson. The most plausible explanation is not that Kroeber and Lowie were influenced by Erikson but that all three participated in larger trends current in that decade.

'individuality' when setting apart and distinguishing one category or group of people from another, using 'identity' only in the sense of the sameness of two or more things.

> "In personal appearance, the Dobuans have a very distinct physique, which differentiates them sharply from the Southern Massim and from the Trobrianders; very dark-skinned, small of stature, with big heads and rounded shoulders, they give a strange, almost gnome-like impression on a first encounter. In their manner, and their tribal character, there is something definitely pleasant, honest and open – an impression which long acquaintance with them confirms and strengthens." (Malinowski 1922: 40–41)

> "When a chief is present, no commoner dares to remain in a physically higher position; he has to bend his body or squat. Similarly, when the chief sits down, no one would dare to stand. The institution of definite chieftainship, to which are shown such extreme marks of deference, with a sort of rudimentary Court ceremonial, with insignia of rank and authority, is so entirely foreign to the whole spirit of Melanesian tribal life, that at first sight it transports the Ethnographer into a different world." (Malinowski 1922: 52)

> "From the experience of earlier students he [the anthropologist doing research among Plains Indians] knows what details are significant in setting off his tribe from its neighbors. If he inquires whether it is customary to raise a tipi on a three or four-pole foundation, if he notes the precise arrangement of painted lozenges and triangles on a rawhide bag, it is because these apparent trivialities have proved important in defining tribal individuality." (Lowie 1935: xvii)

> "All Crow agree that the Sacred Pipe (…) came from the Hidatsa in relatively recent times … In a way it remained an alien medicine in tribal consciousness, and many were afraid to own it for fear of breaking some of the taboos." (Lowie 1935: 269)

> "We have reached here the peak of the Crow spirit. With a splendid gesture the hero turns away from the earthly goods that figure so largely in Crow prayers; he has no thought even of glory, he thinks only of his suffering kin in a hostile camp (…)" (Lowie 1935: 334)

By the mid- to late 1940s, however, both of these authors, while continuing to use alternative expressions, also began to use 'identity' in the new sense:

> "All this refers to the forces of conservatism inherent in Native institutions. A comprehensive institution endures because it is organically connected and satisfies an essential need of society. It can be suppressed, but is then driven underground. It can be mutilated, deprived of this or that aspect or prerogative, but it disappears only with the destruction of the whole cultural identity of a people." (Malinowski 1945: 53)

> "(…) the old notion of the American melting pot is unsound, for – irrespective of whether foreign elements can be assimilated or not – many immigrants do not want to be melted down, preferring somehow to preserve their identity." (Lowie 1948: 287)

At the conclusion of this section on preliminary results, I comment very briefly on parallel, if delayed, developments in one related discipline. Like ethnologists and social anthropologists, early sociologists, or their predecessors, had an acute need to express the idea that categories or groups of people may be set apart and distinguished from one another; but, like authors in other fields, they did so by using terms such as 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', and 'individuality' (e.g., Marx and Engels 1848: 10; Spencer 1851: 199, 261, 435; Fustel de Coulanges 1864: 2, 157; von Stein 1865: xi; Proudhon 1866: 123; Ward 1883, vol. I: 216; Tönnies 1887: 42; Durkheim 1893:

282, 335; Weber 1895: 28–29, 34; Giddings 1896: 17). By the early twentieth century, this set of terms was supplemented in the United States by further functional equivalents: e.g., "we-group" and "in-group" (Sumner 1906: 12), "primary group" (Cooley 1910: 23), and "social bonds" (Small 1915). These and similar terms, along with circumlocutions, were abundant in the influential textbook edited by Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess (1921); but the term 'identity', with reference to collectivities, was absent – with one notable exception, namely, Albion Small's translation of a text by Georg Simmel.

In sociology, 'identity' in the new sense began catching on, not, as Gleason (1983: 917–918) and Weigert (1983: 186–193) claim, with Nelson Foote (1951), Erving Goffman (1963), and Peter Berger (1963, 1966), but much earlier in the specialized literature on the sociology of groups: first in pioneering works by Georg Simmel (1898, 1898a, 1908, 1909), and subsequently in works building critically on Simmel by Theodor Abel (1930) and Pitirim Sorokin (1947). Examination of the secondary literature on Simmel may help to explain why he began conceiving of the sameness of a group with itself over time, despite the mortality of its members, in terms of 'identity'. At this point, however, I note merely the three possibilities: semantic polygenesis; reception of the North American ethnological literature, either directly or indirectly through William Robertson Smith or Herbert Spencer; or influences from an as yet unidentified source.[36] However that may be, one can trace with confidence a direct line of influence from the article 'Die Selbsterhaltung der socialen Gruppe' (Simmel 1898) to the chapter 'How Social Groups Maintain their Identity and Continuity' (Sorokin 1947: 380–389). Just as significant is Sorokin's presumed influence on his student, Robert Merton, who, in an overlooked passage in his classic work *Social Theory and Social Structure*, uses 'identity' in the specified sense in a brief summary of Durkheim's (1912) conception of the social function of ritual:

> "Ceremonials may fulfill the latent function of reinforcing the group identity by providing a periodic occasion on which the scattered members of a group assemble to engage in a common activity. As Durkheim among others long since indicated, such ceremonials are a means by which collective expression is afforded the sentiments which, in a further analysis, are found to be a basic source of group unity." (Merton 1949: 65)[37]

With the exception of Simmel (1898, 1908), German sociologists do not seem to have begun using *Identität* with reference to collectivities until the end of the 1950s (e.g., König 1958: 29, 70) or

---

[36] On William Robertson Smith, see footnote 31. Spencer, who cited Catlin eight times and Schoolcraft twenty-one times in the third edition of his *Principles of Sociology* (1897–1898), usually used 'character' when setting off and distinguishing one human group from another (e.g., Spencer 1851: 261; 1898, vol. III: 598); but he used 'identity' in this sense on a few occasions in this three-volume work (Spencer 1898, vol. I: 638; 1898, vol. II: 470), which may or may not have caught Simmel's attention. Simmel is known to have read both Spencer and Smith (Krech 1998: 186–190), who may have stimulated his innovative usage.

[37] I call this passage overlooked because Gleason (1983: 916 note 22), among others, sees Merton's contribution to the development of the concept of identity not in this gloss of Durkheim's theory of ritual, which he does not mention, but in his discussion of reference group theory. Insofar as Merton does not use 'identity' in his discussion of reference group theory, this represents yet another instance in which the distinction between lexical and functional approaches would have been helpful.

much later; while *identité* in this sense does not seem to have appeared in French sociology until the 1960s (e.g., Aron 1967: 350–351).[38]

IV. Tentative Explanations and Suggestions for Further Research

In the many works cited in this paper, beginning at the latest with Wolcott (1821: 218), was the use of the term 'identity' to indicate the separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people 'analytically significant'? Or did this distinction have to await the contributions of Erikson in the 1940s, as Gleason (1983) has argued?

'Analytical significance' must first be defined; but regardless of the precise definition, it clearly presupposes lexicalization, which, for the collective and social-psychological senses of 'identity', occurred just as Erikson and many others began using the term. Even more importantly, however: lexicalization is only the very last stage in a broader process of semantic change.

Rather than trying to determine arbitrarily when 'identity' first became 'analytically significant', in this paper I have viewed its development through the well-known semantic processes of innovation, adoption, and lexicalization. What have we learned about these processes? What answers can we give to questions that must be answered in any adequate description and analysis of human phenomena, namely: who, what, where, when, how, and why?

We know *what* happened: not one but a series of semantic innovations occurred in usage of the English word 'identity' and later in its cognates in German and French (and presumably other languages as well).

We know *where* and roughly *when* it happened: in English, in a first phase (the personal identity of individuals) circa 1700; in a second phase (the collective identity of a category or group of persons) from about 1790 to 1840; and in a third phase (the social-psychological identity of individual persons, viewed as social beings) in the 1940s.

We know *how* it happened: first, through the extension of the idea of the sameness of two or more things to the relationship of an object or person with itself, himself, or herself at two different points in time; second, through further extension, based on a metaphorical process, of the idea of personal identity to a human collectivity, i.e., to a category or group (or, occasionally, to an institution); and, third, either through the synthesis of the ideas of personal and collective identity or through the near equation of the individual and his or her society in different versions of the notion of social-psychological identity.

And we know *who* did it, at least insofar as we know the names of some of those who used the term in these senses at an early date. The authors of the texts cited in this report cannot necessarily

---

[38] So far, I have found no evidence that Simmel started a tradition within German sociology of using *Identität* with reference to collectivities. The term, used in this sense, is absent in Leopold von Wiese (1906) and in Theodor Geiger (1932). While it is incipient in Alfred Vierkandt (1923: 36), it is missing in his lengthy discussion of social groups (Vierkandt 1923: 342–440), where expressions such as 'Gruppenbewußtsein' (group consciousness) and 'Selbstgefühl der Gruppe' (the group's sense of itself) prevail (Vierkandt 1923: 367, 380). Rather, the idea of collective 'identity' seems to have re-entered German sociology in the late 1950s with the reception of the American literature. König's usage in 1958 may, however, have been an outlier, as leading German sociologists of the postwar era, e.g., Schelsky (1957), Dahrendorf (1965), and Horkheimer and Adorno (1969) did not use 'Identität' in this sense. Gleason's (1983) emphasis on the importance of Mead, Erikson, and Goffman for the development of the concept of identity possibly fits better for Germany than it does for the United States. Erikson's *Childhood and Society* (1950) was published in German translation in 1957; the German version of Goffman's *Stigma* (1963) appeared in 1967; and *Mind, Self, and Society* (1934), based on notes from Mead's lectures, appeared in German translation in 1968 under the title *Geist, Identität und Gesellschaft* (Dubiel 1976). Needless to say, the emergence of *Identität* and *identité* in German and French sociology requires further study.

be viewed as the innovators themselves, but they can be assumed to be representative of contemporaneous processes of innovation and, subsequently, adoption that eventually led to lexicalization, i.e., to establishing the new sense of the word in common usage.

But one question remains: *why* did it happen? Why has the word 'identity' had the career that it has had? On the basis of the evidence presented in this preliminary report, this question cannot be answered definitively. In conclusion, I can only give some tentative answers and also pose further questions, making suggestions for further research.

In attempting to explain why innovative use of the word 'identity' occurred at a particular time and place, it is necessary to examine the transformation of the larger semantic field in which 'identity' is embedded in the relevant "contexts of innovation" – a concept that I borrow from lexical semantics and modify with reference to *Begriffsgeschichte*. As Gerd Fritz (1988: 1620, 1624), a specialist in lexical semantics, explains, contexts of innovation may include particular topics, generic or disciplinary spheres of use, particular groups of speakers or authors, forms and networks of communication, and even regional centers of innovation. But, as proponents of *Begriffsgeschichte*, particularly Reinhart Koselleck and his colleagues, have suggested, it is also possible to conceive of an overarching context of innovation that is epochal in character. I start with this, the big picture, to build a framework for examining other aspects of the context of innovation.

In his introduction to the historical-semantic lexicon *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (1972–1997), Koselleck (1972a; 2011) presents his basic underlying assumption: the epochal threshold from circa 1750 to 1850 saw "the dissolution of the old society of orders or estates" in Western and Central Europe "and the development of the modern world". During this period, he continues, "modern and old words began to overlap and shift their meanings":

> "(…) since 1770, a flood of previously unknown words and meanings has appeared, thus testifying to a new understanding of the world, which soon infused the entire language. Old expressions were enriched with novel content. This (…) reframed all the terms used to discuss state and society." (Koselleck 2011: 10)

Koselleck's approach has aroused much critical discussion (e.g., Berding 1976; Sheehan 1978; Bödeker 2002; see also Wimmer 2015); but whether or not he is correct in detail is not the point here. His is just one way of characterizing conceptual aspects of the transition to the modern era – many others come to mind, from Quentin Skinner to Michel Foucault – but it is one that seems to fit my data rather well.

Koselleck's historical lexicon comprises seven volumes, with alphabetical entries from *Adel* (aristocracy) to *Zivilisation* (civilization), and with multiple articles devoted to German-language equivalents of words such as 'citizen', 'democracy', 'emancipation', 'development', 'progress', 'society', 'history', majority', public sphere', race', 'law and justice', 'revolution', 'status and class', tradition', 'constitution', 'people and nation', 'economy', and 'administration', among many others. While German equivalents of 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', and 'identity' appear in the lexicon, none is the subject of a separate entry. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the semantic innovations leading to the use of these terms with reference to human collectivities seem to fall within the period specified by Koselleck. What is more, the German equivalents of these five focal words frequently co-occur with terms that are central to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, e.g., with some form of the words *Volk* or *Nation*. Finally, the new

usage of these words seems to correspond to the categories that Koselleck uses to frame the broader semantic transformation, which may be translated into English, if rather clumsily, as democratization, temporalization, ideologization, and politicization (Koselleck 1972a: xvi–xix; 2011: 10–14).

'Democratization' refers to the way in which, during this period of transition, concepts were either privatized, so that they designated something that each individual person possessed, or extended to apply to larger collectivities, such as a 'nation' or a 'people' (Koselleck 2011: 10). In the introduction to *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Koselleck's (2011: 11) examples of concepts that were subject to democratization are 'honor' and 'dignity'; but it seems that the focal words of this study, including 'identity' and its functional equivalents, might also provide fitting examples. From the early eighteenth to the early nineteenth century, these terms were first privatized, so that all members of the human race – or of its supposedly favored segments – had 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', and 'identity'; and second, they were extended to apply to collectivities such as nations, peoples, tribes, and clans.

Once such concepts are attributed to individuals and extended to collectivities, their ideologization and their politicization are self-evident, so as to obviate the need for lengthy discussion. Conceiving of the common person or of a national community as someone or something with 'character', 'spirit', 'conscience', 'consciousness', 'individuality', or 'identity' was a new way of understanding persons, collectivities, social boundaries, and social relations within and across such boundaries, in dramatic contrast to the division of society in estates under the *ancien régime*, when membership in the 'nation' was restricted to rulers (Koselleck et al. 1978).

The fourth category, temporalization, refers especially to concepts such as 'development', 'progress', 'history', 'revolution', and 'tradition' (Koselleck 2004a: 239, 246); but it also may be applied to the co-occurrence of the focal words with, for example, various forms of the verb 'to lose', including 'losing', 'lost', and 'loss' – or, again, with their equivalents in German and French. Evidently, when combined with one of the focal words in referring to a human collectivity, these words indicate concern with the continuity or discontinuity of that collectivity over time. In the sample, in expressions referring to collectivities, a form of the verb 'to lose' occasionally occurs in close association with 'character' (Madison 1784: 64; Buckle 1857: 240; Morgan 1877: 308; Westermarck 1891: 271), 'spirit' (Buckle 1857: 664), and 'individuality' (Wilson 1851: xvii; Smith 1889: 39; Durkheim 1893: 282), but it co-occurs many times with 'identity' (e.g., Morton 1839: 26; Forry in Morton 1839: 144; Catlin 1842, vol. II: 231; Schoolcraft 1851: 240; White 1878: 96; White 1885: 626; Mooney 1902: 233, 499, 500; Hayes 1926: 20; Radin 1927: 293, 294, 296; Herskovits 1941: 1; Erikson 1945: 323, 350; Erikson 1987 [1945]: 369; Warner and Srole 1945: 218, 295; Nadel 1947: 319; Sorokin 1947: 88; Kroeber 1948: 278; Laguna 1954: 72; Provinse 1954: 383; Wagley and Harris 1955: 447, 448; Crowley 1957: 824; Tax 1958: 18; Spindler and Spindler 1959: 57; Wolf 1959: 42).

To illustrate this apparent fit between 'identity' and questions of continuity over time, I return to Fritz's (1988: 1620, 1624) notion of contexts of innovation – namely, topics, forms and networks of communication, groups of speakers or authors, and centers of innovation that might be especially conducive to a particular innovative usage. I distinguish two spheres of usage in which innovative use of the word 'identity' has been discernible: scholarship and politics.

In the scholarly literature, it seems evident that the focal words – especially 'identity' but also 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', and 'individuality' – occur when continuity or discontinuity in

the existence of nations, tribes, or clans is in question. Since the sixteenth century, authors of proto-ethnological texts tended not only to compare members of contemporaneous indigenous communities with peoples mentioned in the Bible and in classical Graeco-Roman sources but also to see them as the descendants of these peoples (Hodgens 1964: 295–353). From this perspective, and for as long as the five books of Moses and the works of classical authors such as Herodotus were viewed as reliable historical sources, the task was to establish genealogical links between original peoples and contemporary peoples throughout the world (e.g., Schlözer 1772).

Historians of anthropology and ethnology have commented extensively on the survival of the Biblical paradigm well into the nineteenth century (Bieder 1986: e.g., 83, 88–89, 133; Stocking 1987: esp. 11–13). The assumption was that one can explain human diversity with reference to Biblical narratives regarding the sons of Noah, the confusion of languages at the Tower of Babel, or the wanderings of the ten 'lost tribes' of Israel. Of course, establishing a link between Biblical and modern peoples served not only explanatory but also legitimizing functions, insofar as it offered justification for the privileges of some and the enslavement, expulsion, or extermination of others, for example, in terms of blessing of and curses on the sons of Noah (Allen 1949).

In setting apart and distinguishing various segments of humanity and in linking them in a continuous line of descent from original peoples, ethnologists working within the Biblical paradigm employed 'character' much more frequently than 'identity' (e.g., Prichard 1813: e.g., 306, 453). The same may be said of authors who saw in Native Americans the descendants of the 'lost tribes' (e.g., Noah 1837: 8–9). Nevertheless, the search for the 'lost tribes', which transforms historical investigation into a kind of 'whodunit', did, on occasion, lend itself to innovative use of the word 'identity' (e.g., Grant 1841; Catlin 1842, vol. II: 231).

In the scholarly literature of the nineteenth century, the question of the continuity of peoples over time arose not only in works linking present-day populations with original peoples, but also in those reflecting on the fate of Native American communities in the post-Columbian era. As is evident in passages quoted earlier in this report, authors such as Forry (in Morton 1839: 144), Maximilian (1841: 349), Schoolcraft (1845: 115–116, 132), and Mooney (1902: 233, 499, 500) often asked whether members of indigenous populations were still the same people before and after suffering devastation, decimation, and displacement. This was also a major theme in nineteenth-century reports of U.S. Indian Agents to the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, which leads us to the second major sphere of usage: politics.

In the Proceedings of the U.S. Congress (1790: 34), cited above, James Madison is credited with one of the first recorded uses of the idea of "national identity" when asking whether or not the "united states" – printed using the lower case and requiring the plural form of the verb – were the same before and after the change in their political and legal standing with ratification of the U.S. Constitution and whether they were therefore obligated to honor debts incurred prior to ratification. Similar questions concerning the identity of a people before and after a crucial event arose during the administration of the terms of treaties between the United States and subjugated Indian "nations" – terms which, though unjust and often violated, still granted some entitlements to members of those nations. It was important to be able to identify the parties who were named in a given treaty and, therefore, were entitled to benefits that were itemized in the terms of the treaty. Simultaneously, the passages quoted above indicate that some of the so-called Indian Agents were also motivated by ethnological interests and humanitarian concerns.

Tracing genealogical links, founding states, surviving devastation, and negotiating treaties were not historically unprecedented acts warranting semantic innovation; but conceiving of these events in terms of transactions among 'nations' was perhaps unprecedented. This provides further reinforcement for the idea that a broader historical study of 'identity' must also include not only equivalent or competing terms, such as 'character', but also complementary terms, such as 'nation', in the investigation of a larger semantic field. This suggestion is consistent with the finding of Koselleck et al. (1978) that 'nation', another polysemous term, began to be used in innovative ways at about the same time as the new use of 'identity'.

In sum, the metaphorical extension of the focal words does seem to have occurred during the epochal transformation from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, and the way in which it happened does seem to correspond to Koselleck's criteria: 'character', 'spirit', 'consciousness', 'individuality', and 'identity' were attributed both to individual persons and to collectivities, which resulted in ideological constructions with political implications. Each of these concepts was subject to temporalization, i.e., to the idea that the phenomena to which they referred could come into being, exhibit duration, and cease to exist. This seems to have been especially true of 'identity', as the frequency of the use of this word in scholarly and political texts concerned with the origins and with the continuity or discontinuity of categories or groups of people indicates.

Koselleck offers one possible way of explaining the general process that affected all six terms, though with variable periodicity and to varying degrees. But what explains changing preferences for this or that term in the market of speech or literary production? Why does innovative use of 'identity' appear to be concentrated in the ethnological literature and in administrative reports on Native North Americans? And why, by the end of the twentieth century, across disciplinary boundaries, had authors developed a clear preference for 'identity' over 'character' and other alternatives? In the concluding pages of this paper, I sketch some of parameters within which the search for answers to these questions might proceed.

There are two types of explanations for the relatively high incidence of 'identity' used with reference to collectivities in the literature on Native Americans: incidental and substantive. Explanations citing incidental causes have to do with the quantity or quality of the data: either some data are missing; or the data that are available cannot support inferences about the causes of semantic innovation. In other words, the high incidence of 'identity' used with reference to collectivities in the literature on Native Americans in the nineteenth century may be an illusion produced by sample bias; or it may be meaningless, at least initially – an accident of language history.

No doubt, 'identity', as used to express something about the separateness and distinctiveness of a category or group of people, occurs in texts that are not included in the sample on which this study is based. After all, even a sample of over 700 titles is still minute, once one considers the whole of literary production in three languages over three centuries. But how extensive are these undocumented occurrences, and how broad is their distribution across various literary genres and spheres of use? To check this, the search should be extended in two ways: first, by continuing to look for the words 'identity', *Identität*, and *identité*, coupled with co-occurring words that increase the probability that they are being used in the specified sense, across a broad range of texts, regardless of genre or sphere of use; and, second, by broadening the search in those genres and those spheres of use that have proven to be productive so far. That would include the nineteenth century ethnological literature beyond Native America; literature or archival records on the

entitlements granted by colonial power to members of indigenous or minority communities, not just in the United States but in the full range of settler societies; and post-revolutionary debates on continuities with pre-revolutionary times in other countries.

So far, I have taken only the first steps in extending the search – with negative results – through examination of the early ethnological and ethnographic literature, especially in Great Britain but also in the German language area and in France.[39] If further review of the ethnological literature, or of texts on indigenous entitlement, or on liabilities of newly constituted governments after revolutions continues to produce such negative results, then the concentration of the occurrence of a new sense of 'identity' in the ethnological literature on Native America will require explanation.

One possibility is, of course, that the semantic innovation that resulted in the notion of identity being extended to categories or groups of people was merely an accident. After all, innovative usage that is not absolutely necessary but simply possible arises continually. The new usage might have arisen by chance within a particular social network to which it was initially restricted, simply because others had no access to that network or were, at first, uninterested in gaining access to it. In such a case, an innovation may occur, only to disappear quickly; or it may be used with increasing frequency by members of a small group of like-minded speakers or authors who are in communication with one another and, therefore, susceptible to mutual influences in choice of subject matter, theme, and vocabulary. Thereafter, the new usage might escape its initially limited circulation when texts written by members of this small group of authors gain a wider readership beyond their own narrow circle. This might have happened when interest in ethnology and in the comparative study of religion grew and when Schoolcraft, among others, became widely recognized, especially among European colleagues, as an authority on the 'savage' or 'barbarous' peoples of nearly half of the world. But even if the use of 'identity' with reference to a collectivity were, initially, a random event, then one would still have to explain why other authors adopted it. This leads us to substantive explanations for the semantic innovation in question and for its spread.

From the European and European-American perspective, the *Mundus Novus* presented a unique puzzle, especially for those still working within the Biblical paradigm (Hallowell 1960: 1–6). Who were the Native Americans, and where did they come from? Speculation took many forms, as in the search for the 'lost tribes' or, alternatively, in theories of polygenesis, i.e., of the separate origins of the American peoples (Stocking 1968; Bieder 1986: 133–142). Ultimately, however, it is unclear whether or not the Americas were much more likely than the Pacific islands, Australia, East and Inner Asia, and the African interior to induce astonishment among observers and raise questions concerning the origins and identity of peoples. However that may be, I will assume, in the following, not that the New World somehow induced semantic *innovation* in the use of the word 'identity' but that certain factors peculiar to the North American continent, or to the history of its inhabitants, were indeed conducive to the *adoption* of the new sense of identity once it had been made available.

I have already mentioned two of the factors conducive to the use of 'identity' with reference to Native American communities: first, the question concerning their origins; and, second, the concern with their fate in the post-Columbian era. This second factor finds expression in references in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century texts to the 'loss' of identity among Native American

---

[39] I found no innovative use of the words 'identity' in the following British sources: Prichard 1813; Grey 1841; Galton 1853; Tylor 1861; McLennan 1863, 1869–1870; Lubbock 1865, 1870; Stanley 1878; Ibbetson 1883; nor of *Identität* in the following German sources: Riehl 1851, 1854, 1855, 1869; Waitz 1862, 1864; Bastian 1881; Ratzel 1887; nor of *identité* the following French sources: Edwards 1841; Rosny 1861; Quatrefages 1866, 1871.

peoples. In the sample, the earliest example of this topos may be found in the letter by Samuel Forry (quoted in Morton 1839: 144), an army doctor stationed in the southeast of the United States, where once-thriving Indian 'nations', including, among others, the Cherokee, the Choctaw, the Chickasaw, and the Creek, had been subject to epidemics, warfare, and genocidal campaigns, before ultimately being expelled from their lands (Kehoe 1981, chapter 4; Trafzer 2000, chapters 4 to 8).

The readiness of those writing about Native Americans to take up the 'loss of identity' topos may have been heightened, however, not only by concern with the *fate of the observed* but also by the *expectations of the observer*. Clearly, the mobility and regrouping of indigenous populations took a fatal turn with disease, violence, and displacement in the course of North American settlement history. But mobility and regrouping were also facts of pre-Colombian life, corresponding rather poorly with expectations that 'nations' be stationary and enduring. "They were ever prone to divide and assume new names", noted Schoolcraft with reference to the peoples of northeastern North America; "the farther they wandered, the more striking were their diversities, and the more obscure became every link by which identity is traced" (Schoolcraft 1839: 23). Perhaps concern with the 'loss of identity' was at least partially a product of the assumption that 'nations' or similar collectivities such as 'tribes' are subjects of history, exhibiting continuity in space and time. One thinks of the maps that used to be common in U.S. schoolrooms, showing the distribution of a finite set of geographically delineated tribes with a standardized set of English-language names, corresponding only rarely to terms of self-reference. To which social reality do such maps correspond? Conceivably, the contradiction between the need for such maps and the actual principles of grouping and regrouping of indigenous populations also contributed to the concern for the 'loss of identity'.

Finally, concern with the 'identity' of Native American peoples, and with its 'loss', may have been induced by the combination of observations and assumptions that informed the overriding pseudo-evolutionary views of 'savages' and 'barbarians' in both scholarship and the popular ideology of the Western world of the nineteenth and twentieth century. As Curtis M. Hinsley (1981: 213) notes, "nineteenth century ethnology was built on the assumption of Indian decay". Or, in Schoolcraft's (1846: 32) words: "America is the tomb of the Red Man". Here, Schoolcraft is giving expression to the prevailing opinion that the 'White Man' had succeeded the 'Red Man' as master of the New World and that the 'Red Man' had no choice but to vanish. Assumptions that the Indians were doomed, either because of their inferiority or despite their nobility, find expression in the whole course of literary expression, from Buffon's theory of the degeneracy of New World life forms to James Fennimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826) and beyond.[40]

Decades ago, in an innovative essay, Edward M. Bruner (1986) traced a shift in the "implicit narrative structure" of anthropological writings about Native Americans, which, in his analysis, occurred at about mid-twentieth century:

> "In the 1930s and 1940s the dominant story constructed about Native American culture change saw the present as disorganization, the past as glorious, and the future as assimilation. Now, however, we have a new narrative: the present is viewed as a resistance movement, the past as exploitation, and the future as ethnic resurgence. What is so striking is that the transition from one narrative structure to another occurred rapidly, within a decade after World

---

[40] On Buffon's theory of New World degeneracy, developed in volumes 9 and 14 of his *Histoire Naturelle* (1749–1804), see Hallowell 1960: 6–8 and Dugatkin 2017.

> War II (…) The theoretical concepts associated with the outmoded story, such as acculturation and assimilation, are used less frequently and another set of terms has become prominent: exploitation, oppression, colonialism, resistance, liberation, independence, nationalism, tribalism, identity, tradition, and ethnicity – the code words of the 1970s." (Bruner 1986: 139–140)

There is much to recommend Bruner's study, which numbers among the inspirations for this paper. Nevertheless, it is important to note that he is only half-right about 'identity'. While it is true that this term is at home in the 'ethnic resurgence' phase of the development of narrative structures regarding Native Americans, it first arose in the 'assimilation' phase.

Bruner is wrong when he says that 'identity' first became a "code word" in texts about Native Americans after World War II; but he may provide hints that help us to explain why 'identity', used with reference to Native American communities and other collectivities, not only survived the shift in perspective in the mid-twentieth century but thereafter superseded rival expressions such as 'character'. As we have seen, 'identity' lends itself readily to what Koselleck called temporalization. It can be used with reference to the loss, the maintenance, and even the assertion of the separateness and distinctiveness of a human collectivity. Contrasting it with its main competitor, 'character', might help to explain why this is so.

In contrasting 'character' and 'identity', one might begin by placing them on scales ranging between polar values such as determinacy and indeterminacy, objectivity and subjectivity, variability and invariability, and so on. 'Character' ranks high on the scales of determinacy, objectivity, and invariability. According to theories dating from Graeco-Roman antiquity, character is determined by two objective factors, namely, inheritance and environment; and for everyone who is subject to these factors, character emerges as an invariable norm (Greenwood 1984: 33–40). Of course, recent critics of the concept of 'identity' might suspect that similar assumptions are lurking in the semantic haze from which 'identity' emerged. At least that is the conclusion that one might draw from the frequently repeated charge that the concept of identity is "essentialist" (e.g., Brubaker and Cooper 2000: 1; Niethammer 2000: 307). Those who defend the use of 'identity' in the face of such criticism might say the opposite, emphasizing its indeterminacy, subjectivity, and variability. Given this divergence of opinion, what sets 'identity' off from 'character' might be its greater ambivalence, on one hand, and its – contested – connotations of plasticity and impermanence, on the other.[41]

This point may be illustrated with reference to *The Lonely Crowd* (Riesman 1950), arguably, a book that marks both the culmination of 'character' studies and the beginning of their precipitous decline. David Riesman advocated an objective, deterministic, invariable, and normative conception of 'social character':

> "This is a book about 'character' in the contemporary scientific sense of 'social character' – the patterned uniformities of learned response that distinguish men of different regions, eras, and groups. It is a book about the nature of the processes that produce the differences in character of Americans, Frenchmen, Pueblo Indians, and so on; of northern Americans and southern Americans; of middle-class Americans and lower-class Americans. Furthermore, it is

---

[41] The conceptual distinction between 'character' and 'identity' may be parallel to that between cultural 'features', on one hand, and identity 'markers', on the other. See Schlee 2008: 71 for a discussion of this contrast. But this point and my further reflections on the rise of 'identity' and the decline of 'character' still need to be reviewed critically with reference to recent attempts to revive the concept of 'character' in social anthropological analysis (Reed and Bialecki 2018 and 2018a).

a book about the way in which certain social character types, once they are formed at the knee of society, are then deployed in the work, play, politics, and child-rearing activities of adult life (Riesman 1950: v) (…) character structure [is a] (…) more or less permanent, socially and historically conditioned organization of an individual's drives and satisfactions." (Riesman 1950: 4)

Not until the end of the book did Riesman take up the topic of who is and who is not properly "formed at the knee of society". In doing so, he introduced a set of distinctions: "adjusted", "anomic", and "autonomous", with the first being those who conform to the normative pattern and latter two being those who do not:

"The 'adjusted' are (…) the people who respond in their character structure to the demands of their society or social class (…) Such people fit the culture as though they were made for it, as in fact they are (…)"
"In each society those who do not conform to the characterological pattern of the adjusted may be either anomic or autonomous. Anomic is English coinage from Durkheim's *anomique* (…) meaning ruleless, ungoverned. My use of anomic, however (…) is virtually synonymous with 'maladjusted' (…) The 'autonomous' are those who on the whole are *capable* of conforming to the behavioral norms of their society – a capacity the anomics lack – but who are free to choose whether to conform or not." (Riesman 1950: 287)

Tellingly, this same set of categories comes up again in the preface to a later edition of Riesman's bestseller, particularly in the context of his admission than his notion of 'character' is being superseded by 'identity':

"The current preoccupation with identity in this country (notable in the great impact of Erik H. Erikson's work) reflects the liberation of men from the realm of characterological necessity. The power of individuals to shape their own character by their selection among models and experiences was suggested by our concept of autonomy; when this occurs, men may limit the provinciality of being born in a particular family in a particular place. To some, this offers a prospect only of rootless men and galloping anomie. To more hopeful prophets, ties based on conscious relatedness may some day replace those of blood and soil." (Riesman 1969 [1961]: lxx)

Beyond the distractions contained in this passage – not only the reference to Erikson, but also, and more importantly, the suggestion that more and more of us are, or will be, free to be whom we want to be – this passage may still contain a hint of why 'identity' has superseded 'character'. Especially in contrast to 'character' (and, probably, 'spirit' as well), 'identity' may suggest – to some at least – not only the threat of loss but also the potential for transformation.

'Identity' is a conundrum, appealing both to constructivists, for whom all identities are social and historical products, subject to change, and to white nationalist 'identitarians', for whom it is racially determined and therefore invariable. In debates among academics, its critics decry its essentialism, while its advocates insist on its contingency. Could it be that 'identity' is now preferred over alternative concepts because it at least allows for debate, whereas the others – with the exception of 'consciousness', perhaps – do not?

Of course, concluding that 'identity' is preferable to 'character' because it is a little less essentialist is not much of an endorsement and is not likely to quell the skepticism of its critics. But I am not arguing for or against 'identity'. While language history may seem to have its 'winners' and 'losers', at least from the perspective of an observer in his or her own era, research on the

history of concepts and critical reflection on research results do not. What counts is documentation and analysis, which should help us find our way through current usage of the word and ongoing debates about this usage.

Rather than venturing into that sprawling topic – the meaning of 'identity' today – I reflect, briefly, on what I have done and what I have not done in this paper.

I have not assumed that there is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon 'out there' to which we refer every time we use the word 'identity' (cf. Levita 1965). Such a thing – capable of being grasped, if only we would define it correctly, and even measured, if we would use the right methods – does not exist. Rather, I have viewed 'identity' as part of a network of semantic associations within a broader semantic field. At the center of this network is the prototypical meaning of 'identity': sameness. From this center, semantic associations radiate in a number of related but distinct directions. They are related, insofar as they all take 'sameness' as their point of departure; and they are distinct in their paradigmatic and syntagmatic associations, i.e., in 'identity's' near-synonyms (or functional equivalents) and in the other expressions with which it, in its various senses, frequently co-occurs in speech or writing.

One path within this network leads from sameness to personal identity, which may be defined as the sameness of an individual with himself or herself over time and, simultaneously, as his or her separateness and distinctiveness vis-à-vis other individuals. Another path leads to the notion of collective identity, i.e., the sameness of a category or group of people with itself over time and its separateness and distinctiveness vis-à-vis other categories or groups of the same kind. The notion of collective identity is, evidently, a metaphorical extension of the notion of personal identity from the singular to the plural: just as I have an identity, so do we; or, just as he or she has an identity, so do they. Finally, there is the path through this broader network of semantic associations that leads from sameness to the social-psychological identity of the individual, which is based on his or her experience of life as a member of a particular category or group *or* on the observer's understanding of the individual in this context.

Each of these senses of the word 'identity' is related but distinct; and each could serve as the point of departure for a related but distinct study. For example, greater attention to the notion of personal identity might lead to reflection on the transformation of the individual's experience and understanding of himself or herself with the advent of modernity. This is the subject of a study by Robert Langbaum (1977) based on analysis of various works of modern literature. Or it may lead to a historical investigation of the origins of the passport and of other documents that the state requires of its subjects or citizens, as in the work of John Torpey and others (Caplan and Torpey 2001). I have not followed these paths, first, because others already have done so and, second, because the questions that I posed to myself at the outset of this project – and which I have outlined in the section on methods – led me elsewhere.

Nor have I followed the third path through the semantic network radiating out from 'sameness' and leading to the notion of social-psychological identity. This is, clearly, the most well-trodden path but also the most labyrinthine and treacherous. At first glance, social-psychological identity, which was supposed to provide "a new kind of conceptual linkage" (Gleason 1983: 926) between the individual and society, might seem to be the culminating sense of the word, insofar as it combines both personal and collective aspects in a single concept. But which steps were taken in arriving at this apparent destination?

If we focus, as Gleason (1983) and others have done, on works by Erikson, we might conclude that this author's understanding of identity represents a synthesis of the personal and the collective – or of "ego identity" and "group identity" (Erikson 1946: 359). While Erikson provides us with no concise statement regarding this synthesis, his whole style of argumentation presupposes it.

There is, however, another possible origin of 'identity' in the social-psychological sense of the word. There is some evidence, that Erikson borrowed the term from Erich Fromm (Mackenzie 1978: 53; Friedman 1999: 162), and that Fromm – a rather marginal member of the Frankfurt School – drew directly on the idealistic philosophy of Schelling, Hegel, and others, using 'identity' to refer to the sameness of two things – usually opposites which can be understood to form a unity at a higher level. In his bestseller, *Escape from Freedom* (1941), called *Fear of Freedom* (1942) in the British edition, Fromm (1942: 29) traces the development from the individual's original "identity with nature, clan, religion" – which provides "security" but inhibits "the development of his reason and his critical capacities" – to freedom from the authority of traditional institutions. Confronted with such freedom, the individual may proceed in one of two directions: either toward "panic resulting from such loss of identity", which causes him or her to fall into compulsive conformity (as in the fascist movements of early-twentieth-century Europe, which Fromm was trying to explain); or toward some higher form of identity, as when, "in the spontaneous realization of the self, man unites himself anew with the world" (Fromm 1942: 176, 224). Note that 'identity', for Fromm, in both the lower and higher forms, refers to the sameness of two things: the "individual" and his or her "clan"; or "man" and "the world". This grounding of social-psychological identity à la Fromm in the notion of sameness, derived from philosophical idealism, is confirmed in a passage written by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno – who, as philosophers of "non-identity" (Jay 1973: 71), were prepared to make fewer concessions to the concept than was Fromm: "That moment of the work of art that goes beyond reality (…) consists not in (…) the dubious unity of form and content, interior and exterior, and the individual and society, but in the inevitable failure of the passionate effort to achieve identity" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1969: 117; my translation).[42]

One could go on and on; but to do so, i.e., to explore the concept of social-psychological identity, would mean to write a different history than the one I have written.

I have chosen to place my emphasis not on personal or social-psychological identity but on collective identity. This has led me along a path through the semantic network of 'identity' that is fairly straightforward but largely unexplored. The results are, I suggest, first, the liberation of 'collective identity' from its subsumption under the other senses of the word and, second, a relatively modest reconceptualization of the term.

The notion of 'personal identity' preceded and served as a model for 'collective identity'; but 'collective identity' is not, therefore, a psychological concept. Once a metaphorical extension has occurred, the meaning linking the new sense to its source may attenuate, so that the metaphorical character of the expression recedes from consciousness (Geeraerts 2010: 209–210). What was originally a metaphor becomes one of the senses in which a word is used on a regular basis (Fritz

---

[42] The full sentence from which this fragment is taken reads, in German, as follows: "Das Moment am Kunstwerk, durch das es über die Wirklichkeit hinausgeht, ist in der Tat vom Stil nicht abzulösen; doch es besteht nicht in der geleisteten Harmonie, der fragwürdigen Einheit von Form und Inhalt, Innen und Außen, Individuum und Gesellschaft, sondern in jenen Zügen, in denen die Diskrepanz erscheint, im notwendigen Scheitern der leidenschaftlichen Anstrengung zur Identität" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1969: 117). On Fromm's theoretical differences with Horkheimer, Adorno, and other Frankfurt School members, see Jay 1973: 88, 103–106.

2006: 15). This means that saying that a category or group of people may have an identity is not the same as saying that a category or group has a psychological makeup that is somehow comparable to that of an individual person. In fact, for over a century, in texts featuring the term by Wolcott (1821), Forry (in Morton 1939), Schoolcraft (1845, 1851), Mooney (1902), Radin (1927), Gluckman (1940) and others, it did not mean that; for, if it had, then the new usage of Fromm (1942) and Erikson (1945), who helped develop the term 'identity' in the social-psychological sense, would not have been perceived to be innovative.

The notion of collective identity, which arose, approximately, between 1790 and 1840, filled a lexical gap when scholars, presented with ethnological or archaeological puzzles, began asking such questions as 'Who are they?' And when scholars, politicians, and administrators began to ask whether a human collectivity was the same after some sort of historical crisis as it had been before it. And, finally, when members of a collectivity began to feel the need to make statements such as 'We are this, not that!'

When the Commissioner of Indian Affairs decreed "that the Secretary of Interior was (…) charged by law with the duty of ascertaining" the "individual identity" of his wards "and of determining who were Delawares and who were Shawnees" (Browning 1897: 70–71), this implied not only that the people in question belonged to a particular category or group but also that they were born and raised under particular circumstances and presumably displayed particular – dare one say – characteristics. But in an era when biological and social or cultural causes of differences among human populations were not clearly distinguished (Stocking 1968 [1962], 1968 [1966]), reflection about how a person became a Delaware or a Shawnee and what being one or the other meant for his or her personality and behavior did not accompany use of the word 'identity'; rather, this had to await the contributions of thinkers such as Mead (1934) on the self in relation to society, Freud (1923) on relations among the ego, id, and superego, and Erikson (1946) on the relation between "group identity" and "ego identity". Here, finally, we depart from 'collective identity' proper and enter into fields that have been well-plowed by Gleason (1983) and Weigert (1983).

Nevertheless, even after the development of 'identity' in the social-psychological sense, the word continued to be used in the collective sense without necessarily implying any social-psychological considerations. In support of this statement, much – I believe, nearly all – of the ethnological, anthropological, and socio-linguistic usage up to the 1960s and beyond, could be re-cited.

Identity means many things depending on a number of variables; and because there is no single concept of 'identity', then it cannot be accepted or rejected *in toto*. 'Identity' is not, and never has been, "a convenient explanation for most of the world's (…) problems", and so we should have no need of being freed from this illusion.[43] Rather, 'identity' is a word among words, corresponding to a set of related yet distinct concepts. It is neither the first nor the last to have suffered the fate of ambiguity and inflationary use. Knowledge of its history may give us some basis for using it judiciously.

---

[43] The quotation is from a statement promoting Bayart's *The Illusion of Cultural Identity* (2005) on the website of the University of Chicago Press, https: //www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/I/bo3680340.html, last visited on 4 September 2019.

Published Primary and Secondary Sources

Note: Primary sources are marked with an asterisk.*

*Académie Françoise. 1694. *Le Dictionnaire de l'Académie Françoise*. Vol. I. A – L. Paris: Jean Baptiste Coignard. Available online at: https://fr.wikisource.org/w/index.php?title=Page:Le_dictionnaire_de_l%27Academie_fran%C3%A7oise_-_1694_-_T1_-_E-L.djvu/228&action=edit&redlink=1 (accessed on 9 November 2019).

*Abel, Theodore. 1930. The significance of the concept of consciousness of kind. *Social Forces* 9(1): 1–10.

*Adair, James. 1775. *The history of the American Indians; particularly those nations adjoining to the Mississippi, East and West Florida, Georgia, South and North Carolina, and Virginia.* London: Edward and Charles Dilly.

Allen, Don Cameron. 1949. *The legend of Noah: renaissance rationalism in art, science and letters*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

*Aron, Raymond. 1967. *Les étapes de la pensée sociologique: Montesquieu, Comte, Marx, Tocqueville, Durkheim, Pareto, Weber.* Paris: Gallimard.

*Baron, Salo Wittmayer. 1937. *A social and religious history of the Jews*. Vols. I, II, & III. New York: Columbia University Press.

*Bastian, Adolf. 1881. *Der Völkergedanke im Aufbau einer Wissenschaft vom Menschen*. Berlin: Ferdinand Dümmlers Verlagsbuchhandlung.

Bayart, Jean- François. 1996. *L'illusion identitaire*. Paris: Fayard.

Bayart, Jean-François. 2005. *The illusion of cultural identity*. Translated by Steven Rendall, Janet Roitman, Cynthia Schoch and Jonathan Derrick. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Beals, Ralph, Robert Redfield and Sol Tax. 1943. Anthropological Research Problems with Reference to the Contemporary Peoples of Mexico and Guatemala. *American Anthropologist* 45(1): 1–21.

Berding, Helmut. 1976. Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte. *Historische Zeitschrift* 223(1): 98–110.

*Berger, Peter L. 1963. *Invitation to sociology: a humanistic perspective.* New York: Anchor Books.

*Berger, Peter. 1966. Identity as a problem in the sociology of knowledge. *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie/Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie* 7(1): 105–115.

Bieder, Robert E. 1986. *Science encounters the Indian, 1820–1880: the early years of American ethnology.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

*Boas, Franz. 1911. Introduction. In: Franz Boas (ed.). *Handbook of American Indian languages*. Part 1. Washington: Government Printing Office, pp. 5–83.

Bödeker, Hans Erich (ed.). 2002. *Begriffsgeschichte, Diskursgeschichte, Metapherngeschichte.* Göttingen: Wallstein.

*Bolingbroke, Henry Saint John 1749. *Letters on the spirit of patriotism: on the idea of a patriot king: and on the state of parties at the accession of King George the First.* London: A. Millar.

*Brinton, Daniel G. 1890. *Races and peoples: lectures on the science of ethnography*. New York: N. D. C. Hodges, Publisher.

*Brown, A. R. 1922. *The Andaman Islanders: a study in social anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Browning, D. M. 1897. Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. In: *Annual Report of the Secretary of Interior for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1896*. Vol. II. Washington: Government Printing Office, pp. 1–100. Available online at: http: //digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/ History.AnnRep96 (accessed on 30 August 2019).

Brubaker, Rogers and Frederick Cooper. 2000. Beyond 'identity'. *Theory and Society* 29(1): 1–47.

Bruner, Edward M. 1986. Ethnography as narrative. In: Victor W. Turner and Edward M. Bruner (eds.). *The anthropology of experience*. Urbana, IL: .University of Illinois Press, pp. 139–155.

*Buckle, Henry Thomas. 1857. *History of civilization in England*. Vol. I. London: John W. Parker and Son.

Bunzl, Matti. 1996. Franz Boas and the Humboldtian tradition: from *Volksgeist* und *Nationalcharakter* to an anthropological concept of culture. In: George W. Stocking Jr. (ed.). Volksgeist *as method and ethic: essay on Boasian ethnography and the German anthropological tradition*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 17–78.

*Bushnell, David I., Jr. 1920. *Native cemeteries and forms of burial east of the Mississippi*. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 71. Washington: Government Printing Office.

Caplan, Jane, and John Torpey (eds.). 2001. *Documenting individual identity: the development of state practices in the modern world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

*Catlin, George. 1842. *Letters and notes on the manners, customs, and condition of the North American Indians*. Second edition. In two volumes. London: Published by the author.

Cerulo, Karen A. 1997. Identity construction: new issues, new directions. *Annual Review of Sociology* 23: 385–409.

Claussen, Detlev. 1994. Jargon der Einigkeit: Über die Möglichkeit, den Mißbrauch des Wortes ‚Identität' scharf einzuschränken. *Der Freibeuter* 54: 57–63.

*Colbert, Winchester. 1865. Southern superintendency. In: *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the year 1865*. Washington: Government Printing Office, pp. 252–358. Available online at: http: //digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.AnnRep65a (accessed on 30 August 2019).

Coles, Robert. 1970. *Erik H. Erikson: The growth of his work*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

*Collier, John. 1934. Office of Indian Affairs. In: *Annual report of the Secretary of the Interior – for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1934*. Washington: United States Government Printing Office, pp. 78–163.

*Comte, Auguste. 1844. *Discours sur l'esprit positif*. Paris: Carilian-Goeury et V^{or} Dalmont.

*Cooley, Charles Horton. 1910. *Social organization: a study of the larger mind*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

*Cooper, James Fenimore. 1826. *The last of the Mohicans; a narrative of 1757*. Three volumes. London: John Miller.

*Crowley, Daniel J. 1957. Plural and differential acculturation in Trinidad. *American Anthropologist* 59(5): 817–824.

*Dahrendorf, Ralf. 1965. *Gesellschaft und Demokratie in Deutschland*. München: R. Piper & Co. Verlag.

*Darwin, Charles. 1859. *On the origin of species by means of natural selection, or the preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life*. London: John Murray.

*Davis, Kingsley, and W. Lloyd Warner. 1937. Structural analysis of kinship. *American Anthropologist* 39(2): 291–313.

*Dorchester, Daniel. 1890. Report of the Superintendent of Indian Schools. In: *Fifty-ninth annual report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior*. Washington: Government Printing Office, pp. 246–275. Available online at: http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/ History.AnnRep90 (accessed on 30 August 2019).

Dubiel, Helmut. 1976. Identität, Ich-Identität. In: Joachim Ritter und Karlfried Gründer (eds.). *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*. Vol. 4. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, pp. 148–151.

*Dubnow, S. M. 1920. *Die neueste Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes (1789–1914). Vol. I. Das Zeitalter der ersten Emanzipation (1789–1815)*. Deutsch von Alexander Eliasberg. Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag.

Dugatkin, Lee Alan. 2017. *Mr. Jefferson and the giant moose: natural history in early America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Durkheim, Émile. 1893. *De la division du travail social*. Paris: Félix Alcan.

*Durkheim, Émile. 1960 [1912]. *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*. Paris: PUF.

*Edwards, W. F. 1841. *Des caractères physiologiques des races humaines considérés dans leurs rapports avec l'histoire*. Paris: Imprimerie de M. Dondey-Dupré.

Eidson, John R. 1990. German club life as a local cultural system. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 32(2): 357–382.

Eidson, John R. 2006. 'Immer wieder am Rhein' – Club life and the politics of recognition in a contemporary German community. *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 131: 27–50.

Eidson, John R., Dereje Feyissa, Veronika Fuest, Markus V. Hoehne, Boris Nieswand, Günther Schlee and Olaf Zenker. 2017. From identification to framing and alignment: a new approach to the comparative analysis of collective identities. *Current Anthropology* 58(3): 340–359.

Eisenstadt, Shmuel Noah, and Bernhard Giesen. 1995. The construction of collective identity. *European Journal of Sociology/Archives Européennes de Sociologie/Europäisches Archiv für Soziologie* 36(1): 72–102.

Ely, John D. 1997. Community and the politics of identity: toward the genealogy of a nation-state concept. *Stanford Electronic Humanities Review* 5(2): without pagination. Available online at: http: //web.stanford.edu/group/SHR/5-2/elly.html [*sic*] (accessed on 30 August 2019).

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1939. Observations on Sioux education. *Journal of Psychology* 7: 101–156.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1940. Problems of infancy and early childhood. *Cyclopedia of medicine, surgery, and specialties*. Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Co., pp. 714–730. Reprinted in Stephen Schlein (ed.). 1987. *A way of looking at things: selected papers from 1930 to 1980.* New York: W. W. Norton & Co., pp. 547–568.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1942. Hitler's imagery and German youth. *Psychiatry* 5: 475–493.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1943. Observations on the Yurok: childhood and world image. *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology* 35(10): iii–v, 257–301.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1945. Childhood and tradition in two American Indian tribes: a comparative abstract, with conclusions. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 1: 319–350.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1987 [1945]. A Memorandum to the joint committee on post war planning. In: Stephen Schlein (ed.). *A way of looking at things: selected papers from 1930 to 1980.* New York: W. W. Norton & Co., pp. 366–374.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1946. Ego development and historical change. *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 2: 359–396.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1948. Hitler's imagery and German youth. In: Clyde Kluckhohn and Henry A. Murray (eds.). *Personality in nature, society, and culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, pp. 485–510.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1950. *Childhood and society*. New York: W. W. Norton. Second edition 1963.

*Erikson, Erik Homburger. 1954. Problems of infancy and early childhood. In: Gardner Murphy and Arthur J. Bachrach (eds.). *An outline of abnormal psychology*. Revised edition. New York: The Modern Library, pp. 3–36.

*Erikson, Erik H. 1968. Identity, psychosocial. In: David L. Sills (ed.). *International encyclopedia of the social sciences.* Vol. VII. New York: The Macmillan Company & the Free Press, pp. 61–65.

*Erikson, Erik H. 1970. Autobiographic notes on the identity crisis. *Daedalus* 99(4): 730–759.

*Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1940. *The Nuer: a description of the modes of livelihood and political institutions of a Nilotic people*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Falkum, Ingrid Lossius, and Agustin Vicente. 2015. Polysemy: current perspectives and approaches. *Lingua* 157: 1–16. Available online at: https://doi-org/10.1016/j.lingua.2015.02.002 (accessed on 9 November 2019).

*Faraday, Michael. 1833. Experimental researches in electricity. Third Series. §7. Identity of electricities derived from different sources. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* 123: 23–54.

Fearon, James D. n.d. [1999]. What is identity (as we now use the word)? Unpublished manuscript. Available online at: https: //web.stanford.edu/group/fearon-research/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/What-is-Identity-as-we-now-use-the-word-.pdf (accessed on 30 August 2019).

*Feuerbach, Ludwig. 1841. *Das Wesen des Christentums*. Leipzig: Otto Wigand.

*Foote, Nelson N. 1951. Identification as the basis for a theory of motivation. *American Sociological Review* 16(1): 14–21.

*Fortes, Meyer. 1940. The political system of the Tallensi of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast. In: Meyer Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (eds.). *African political systems*. London: Oxford University Press, pp. 239–271.

*Fortes, Meyer. 1953. The structure of unilineal descent groups. *American Anthropologist* 55(1): 17–41.

Fraas, Claudia. *1996. Gebrauchswandel und Bedeutungsvarianz in Textnetzen: Die Konzepte IDENTITÄT und DEUTSCHE im Diskurs zur deutschen Einheit.* Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.

*Frazer, James G. 1910. *Totemism and exogamy: a treatise on certain early forms of superstition and society.* In four volumes. Vol. I. London: Macmillan and Co.

*Freud, Sigmund. 1913. *Totem und Tabu: Einige Übereinstimmungen im Seelenleben der Wilden und der Neurotiker.* Leipzig und Wien: Hugo Heller & Cie.

*Freud, Sigmund. 1946 [1916]. Einige Charaktertypen aus der psychoanalytischen Arbeit. In: Sigmund Freud. *Gesammelte Werke*. Vol. X. London: Imago Publishing Co., pp. 364–391.

*Freud, Sigmund. 1923. *Das Ich und das Es*. Leipzig, Wien, Zürich: Internationaler Psychoanalytischer Verlag.

*Freud, Sigmund. 1941 [1926]. Ansprache an die Mitglieder des Vereins B'nai B'rith. In Sigmund Freud. *Gesammelte Werke*. Vol. XVII. London: Imago Publishing Co., pp. 49–53.

Friedman, Lawrence J. 1999. *Identity's architect: a biography of Erik H. Erikson*. London: Free Association Books.

Fritz, Gerd. 1988. Change of meaning and change of vocabulary. In: Ulrich Ammon, Norbert Dittmar and Klaus J. Mattheier (eds.). *Sociolinguistics: an international handbook of the science of language and society*. Second volume. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, pp. 1614–1631.

Fritz, Gerd. 2005. *Einführung in die historische Semantik*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

Fritz, Gerd. 2006. *Historische Semantik*. Second edition. Stuttgart, Weimar: Verlag J. B. Metzler.

*Fromm, Erich. 1942 [1941]. *The fear of freedom*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

*Fustel de Coulanges, Numa Denis. 1864. *La cite antique: étude sur le cult, le droit, les institutions de la Grèce et de Rome*. Paris: Durand.

*Galton, Francis. 1853. *The narrative of an explorer in tropical South Africa*. London: John Murray.

Geeraerts, Dirk. 2010. *Theories of lexical semantics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*Geertz, Clifford. 1957. Ritual and social change: a Javanese example. *American Anthropologist* 59(1): 32–54.

*Geiger, Theodor. 1932. *Die soziale Schichtung des deutschen Volkes: Soziographischer Versuch auf statistischer Grundlage*. Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke.

*Giddings, Franklin H. 1896. The principles of sociology: an analysis of the phenomena of association and of social organization. New York: Macmillan and Company.

Gleason, Philip. 1983. Identifying identity: a semantic history. *Journal of American History* 69(4): 910–931.

*Gluckman, Max. 1940. The kingdom of the Zulu of South Africa. In: Meyer Fortes and E. E. Evans-Pritchard (eds.). *African political systems*. London: Oxford University Press, pp. 25–55.

*Goffman, Erving. 1963. *Stigma: notes on the management of spoiled identity*. New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc.

*Goffman, Erving. 1967. *Stigma. Über Techniken der Bewältigung beschädigter Identität.* Translated by Frigga Haug,. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

*Graetz, Heinrich. 1873. *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart. Vol. I. Geschichte der Israeliten von ihren Uranfängen (um 1500) bis zum Tode des Königs Salomo (um 977 vorchr. Zeit) nebst synchronistischen Zeittafeln.* Leipzig: Oskar Leiner.

*Graetz, Heinrich. 1875. *Geschichte der Juden von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart. Vol. II. Geschichte der Israeliten vom Tode des Königs Salomo (um 977 vorchr. Zeit) bis zum Tode des Juda Makkabi (160).* Leipzig: Oskar Leiner.

*Grant, Asahel. 1841. *The Nestorians; or the lost tribes: containing evidence of their identity; an account of their manners, customs, and ceremonies; together with sketches of travel in ancient Assyria, Armenia, Media, and Mesopotamia; and illustrations of scripture prophecy.* London: John Murray.

Greenwood, Davydd J. 1977. *Continuity and change: Spanish Basque ethnicity as a historical process.* In: Milton J. Esman (ed.). *Ethnic conflict in the western world.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 81–102.

Greenwood, Davydd J. 1984. The taming of evolution: the persistence of nonevolutionary views in the study of humans. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

*Grey, George. 1841. *Journals of two expeditions of discovery in north-west and western Australia during the years 1837, 1838, and 1839.* Two volumes. Vol. I. London: T. and W. Boone.

*Griaule, Marcel. 1938. *Masques Dogons.* Paris: Institut d'ethnologie.

*Halbwachs, Maurice. 1925. *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*. Paris: Félix Alcan.

Hallowell, A. Irving. 1960. The beginnings of anthropology in America. In: Frederica de Laguna, (ed.). *Selected papers from the* American Anthropologist, *1888–1920.* Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, pp. 1–90.

Handler, Richard. 1994. Is "identity" a useful cross-cultural concept? In: John R. Gills (ed.). *Commemorations: the politics of national identity*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 27–40.

Handler, Richard. 2011. Comment [on Kaufmann 2011]. *International Review of Social Research* 1(3): 200–202.

*Handlin, Oscar. 1951. *The uprooted: the epic story of the great migrations that made the American people.* New York: Grosset & Dunlap.

*Hayes, Carlton J. H. 1926. *Essays on nationalism*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

*[Herder, Johann Gottfried]. 1767. *Ueber die neuere Deutsche Litteratur*. Erste und zwote Sammlung von Fragmenten (vols. I & II). Riga: [Johann Friedrich Hartknoch].

*[Herder, Johann Gottfried]. 1769. *Kritische Wälder, oder Betrachtungen, die Wissenschaft und Kunst des Schönen betreffend nach Maasgabe neuerer Schriften. Erstes Wäldchen (vol. I).* Riga: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

*[Herder, Johann Gottfried]. 1769a. *Kritische Wälder, oder einige Betrachtungen die Wissenschaft und Kunst des Schönen betreffend nach Maasgabe neuerer Schriften*. Drittes Wäldchen noch über einige Klotzische Schriften (vol. III). Riga: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

*Herder [Johann Gottfried]. 1772. *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*. Berlin: Christian Friedrich Voß.

*[Herder, Johann Gottfried]. 1774. *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit*. Riga: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

*Herder, Johann Gottfried. 1784. *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*. Vol. I. Riga und Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

*Herder, Johann Gottfried. 1785. *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*. Vol. II. Riga und Leipzig: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

*Herder, Johann Gottfried. 1793. *Briefe zu Beförderung der Humanität*. Erste Sammlung (vol. I). Riga: Johann Friedrich Hartknoch.

Herman, Ellen. 1995. The romance of American psychology: political culture in the age of experts. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

*Herskovits, Melville J. 1941. *The myth of the negro past*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Hinsley, Curtis M. Jr. 1981. *Savages and scientists: the Smithsonian Institution and the development of American anthropology 1846–1910*. Washington, D. C.: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Hodgen, Margaret. 1964. *Early anthropology in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

*Hoebel, E. Adamson. 1954. *The law of primitive man: a study in comparative legal dynamics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hoffman, Louise E. 1982. From instinct to identity: implications of changing psychoanalytic concepts of social life from Freud to Erikson. *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 18: 130–146.

Hoffman, Louise E. 1993. Erikson on Hitler: the origins of 'Hitler's imagery and German youth'. *The Psychohistory Review* 22: 69–86.

*[Home, Henry (Lord Kames)]. 1778. *Sketches of the history of man*. Second edition. Four vols. Edinburgh: W. Creech; London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell.

*Horkheimer, Max and Theodor W. Adorno. 1969. *Dialektik der Aufklärung*. New edition. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer.

*Hughes, Everett C. 1958. *Men and their work*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

50

*Humboldt, Wilhelm von. 1841 [1820–1821]. Ueber die Aufgabe des Geschichtsschreibers. In: K. H. Brandes (ed.). *Wilhelm von Humboldt's gesammelte Werke*. Vol. I. Berlin: G. Reimer, pp. 1–15.

*Hume, David. 1739. *A treatise of human nature: being an attempt to introduce the experimental method of reasoning into moral subjects. Book I: Of the understanding.* London: John Noon. Reprinted from the original edition in three volumes and edited, with an analytical index, by L. A. Selby-Bigge. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1888.

*Hume, David. 1753 [1748]. Of national characters. In: David Hume. *Essays and treatises on several subjects*. Fourth edition corrected, with additions. In four volumes. Vol. I containing Essays moral and political. London: A. Millar; Edinburgh: A. Kinkaid and A. Donaldson.

*Ibbetson, Denzil Charles Jelf. 1883. *Panjáb census report, February 17, 1881. Book I. The results of the census*. Chapter VI. The races, castes and tribes of the people. Chandigarh: Census Department, pp. 172–341.

Jakobson, Roman. 1971. Two aspects of language and two types of aphasic disturbances. In: Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle. *Fundamentals of language*. Second, revised edition. The Hague, Paris: Mouton, pp. 67–96.

Jay, Martin. 1973.*The dialectical imagination: a history of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923–1950.* Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

*Jensen, Adolf E. 1948. *Das religiöse Weltbild einer frühen Kultur.* Stuttgart: A. Schröder.

*Johnson, Samuel. 1756. *A dictionary of the English language: in which the words are deduced from their originals, explained in their different meanings, and authorized by the names of the writers in whose works they are found. Abstracted from the folio edition, by Samuel Johnson, A. M. To which is prefixed a grammar of the English language.* London : Printed for J. Knapton, C. Hitch and L. Hawes; A. Millar; R. and J. Dodsley; and M. and T. Longman.

*Jones, George. 1843. *The history of ancient America, anterior to the time of Columbus: proving the identity of the Aborigines with the Tyrians and Israelites; and the introduction of Christianity into the western hemisphere by the Apostle St. Thomas.* London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans.

Judt, Tony. 2010. Edge people. *The New York Review of Books* 57(5): 15.

*Jung, C. G. 1994 [1921]. *Psychologische Typen. C. G. Jung Gesammelte Werke*. Seventeenth edition. Vol. VI. Solothurn und Düsseldorf: Walter-Verlag.

*Käsbohrer, Sebastian [Johann Gottfried Pahl]. 1797. *Vernunft- und schriftmäßiges Schutz- Trutz- und Vertheidigungs-Libell für den Wirtembergischen Adel, gegen die demokratischen und jakobinischen Belialssöhne unserer Zeit.* Waldangelloch und Leipzig [Stuttgart]: [Steinkopf].

Kan, Sergei. 2019. Mainstream or marginal Boasian? An intellectual biography of Robert H. Lowie. In: *Bérose – Encyclopédie international des histoires de l'anthropologie*. Paris, IIAC-LAHIC, UMR 8177 . Available online at: http: //www.berose.fr/?Mainstream-or-Marginal-Boasian-An-Intellectual-Biography-of-Robert-H-Lowie (accessed on 30 August 2019).

Kaufmann, Jean-Claude. 2011. Identity and the new nationalist pronouncements. *International Review of Social Research* 1(2): 1–13.

Kehoe, Alice Beck. 1981. *North American Indians: a comprehensive account*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

*Keller, Gottfried. 1854. *Der grüne Heinrich*. Vols. I & II. Braunschweig: Friedrich Vieweg & Son.

*Keller, Gottfried. 1855. *Der grüne Heinrich*. Vol. III. Braunschweig: Friedrich Vieweg & Son.

Koch, Peter. 2001. Bedeutungswandel und Bezeichnungswandel: Von der kognitiven Semasiologie zur kognitiven Onomasiologie. *Zeitschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik* 121: 7–36.

*König, René. 1958. *Grundformen der Gesellschaft: Die Gemeinde*. Hamburg: Rowohlt.

Koselleck, Reinhart. 1972. Begriffsgeschichte und Sozialgeschichte. In: Peter Christian Ludz (ed.). *Soziologie und Sozialgeschichte: Aspekte und Probleme*. Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, pp. 116–131.

Koselleck, Reinhart. 1972a. Einleitung. In: Otto Brunner, Werner Conze und Reinhart Koselleck (eds.). *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*. Vol. I: A–D. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, pp. xiii–xxvi.

Koselleck, Reinhart. 2004. *Begriffsgeschichte* and social history. In: Reinhart Koselleck. *Futures past: on the semantics of historical time*. Translated and with an introduction by Keith Tribe. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 75–92.

Koselleck, Reinhart. 2004a. *Neuzeit*: remarks on the semantics of modern concepts of movement. In: Reinhart Koselleck. *Futures past: on the semantics of historical time*. Translated and with an introduction by Keith Tribe. New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 222–254.

Koselleck, Reinhart. 2011. Introduction and prefaces to the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. Translated by Michaela Richter. *Contributions to the History of Concepts* 6(1): 1–37.

Koselleck, Reinhart, Fritz Gschnitzer, Karl F. Werner and Bernd Schönemann. 1978. Volk, Nation, Nationalismus, Masse. In: Otto Brunner, Werner Conze and Reinhart Koselleck (eds.). *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland*. Vol. VII. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, pp. 141–431.

Krech, Volkhard. 1998. *Georg Simmels Religionstheorie*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck).

*Kroeber, Alfred L. 1923. *Anthropology*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company.

*Kroeber, Alfred L. 1948. *Anthropology: race, language, culture, psychology, prehistory*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co.

*Labov, William. 1963. The social motivation of a sound change. *Word* 19: 273–309.

*Laguna, Frederica de. 1954. Tlingit ideas about the individual. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 10(2): 172–191.

Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. 2003. *Metaphors we live by*. With a new afterword. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Langbaum, Robert. 1977. *The mysteries of identity: a theme in modern literature*. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.

*Leach, Edmund R. 1954. *Political systems of highland Burma: a study of Kachin social structure*. London: The Athlone Press.

*Leenhardt, Maurice. 1947. *Do kamo: la personne et le mythe dans le monde mélanésien*. Paris: Gallimard.

*Leiris, Michel. 1948. *La langue secrète des Dogons de Sanga (Soudan français)*. Paris: Institut d'ethnologie,

*Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1949. *Les Structures élémentaires de la parenté*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France.

*Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1962. *Le Totemisme aujourd'hui*. Paris: Presse Universitaires de France.

*Lévi-Strauss, Claude. 1963. *Totemism*. Translated by Rodney Needham. Boston: Beacon Press.

Levita, David J. de. 1965. *The concept of identity*. With a preface by H. C. Rümke, M.D. Paris, the Hague: Mouton & Co.

*Locke, John. 1700. *An essay concerning humane understanding*. Fourth edition, with large additions. London: Awnsham and John Churchil; and Samuel Manship.

*Lowie, Robert H. 1935. *The Crow Indians*. New York: Farrar & Rinehart.

*Lowie, Robert H.1948. *Social organization*. New York: Rinehart & Company.

*Lowie, Robert. 1954. *Indians of the plains*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

*Lubbock, John. 1865. *Prehistoric times, as illustrated by ancient remains, and the manners and customs of modern savages.* London: Williams and Norgate.

Lyons, John. 1968. *Introduction to theoretical linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Macartney, Carlile Alymer. 1934. *National states and national minorities*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*McKenney, Thomas L. and James Hall. 1842. *History of the Indian tribes of North America*. Volume II. Philadelphia: Frederick W. Greenough; Daniel Rice and James G. Clark.

Mackenzie, W. J. M. 1978. *Political identity*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

*[McLennan, John F.] 1863. Hill tribes in India. *North British Review* 38: 392–422.

*McLennan, John F. 1869–1870. The worship of animals and plants. *Fortnightly Review* 6: 407–427 & 7: 194–216.

Macpherson, C. B. 1962. *The political theory of possessive individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

*Madison, James. 1901 [1784]. To George Washington, August 12th: Effort in behalf of Thomas Paine. In: Gaillard Hunt (ed.). *The writings of James Madison*. Volume II.: 1783–1787. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, pp. 63–64.

*Mair, Lucy. 1960. Malinowski and the study of social change. In: Raymond Firth (ed.). *Man and culture: an evaluation of the work of Malinowski*. Second impression with corrections. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 229–244.

Malešević, Siniša. 2002. *Making sense of collectivity: ethnicity, nationalism and globalisation.* London: Pluto Press.

*Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1922. *Argonauts of the western Pacific: an account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.

*Malinowski, Bronislaw.1945. *The dynamics of culture change: an inquiry into race relations in Africa.* Phyllis M. Kaberry, ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

*Marett, R. R. 1912. *Anthropology.* New York: Henry Holt and Co.; London: Williams and Norgate.

*Marett, R. R. 1920. *Psychology and Folklore.* London: Methuen & Co. Ltd.

*Marx, Karl. 1859. *Zur Kritik der politischen Oekonomie.* Part 1. Berlin: Verlag von Franz Duncker.

*Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. 1848. *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei.* London: Office der „Bildungs-Gesellschaft für Arbeiter.''

*Mauss, Marcel. 1953–1954. La nation. *L'Année sociologique*, Troisième série 7: 5–68.

*Maximilian Prinz zu Wied. 1841. *Reise in das Innere Nord-Amerika in den Jahren 1832 bis 1834.* Vol. II. Coblenz: J. Hölscher.

*Maximilian, Prince of Wied. 1843. *Travels in the interior of North America.* Translated by H. Evans Lloyd. London: Ackermann and Co.

*Mead, George Herbert. 1934. *Mind, self, and society.* Edited and with an introduction by Charles W. Morris. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*Mead, George Herbert. 1968. *Geist, Identität und Gesellschaft – aus Sicht des Sozialbehaviorismus.* Translated by Ulf Pacher. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

*Mead, Margaret. 1953. National character. In: Alfred L. Kroeber (ed.). *Anthropology today: an encyclopedic inventory.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 642–667.

*Mead, Margaret. 1955. The scholar's scratch pad: the new isolationism. *The American Scholar* 24(3): 378–382.

*Mehring, Franz. 1896. Kunst und Proletariat. *Die neue Zeit: Wochenschrift der Deutschen Sozialdemokratie.* Vol. XV, part 1, no. 5. Stuttgart: Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Dietz, pp. 129–133.

*Merton, Robert K. 1949. *Social theory and social structure.* New York, London: The Free Press.

Michel, Jean-Baptiste,Yuan Kui Shen, Aviva Presser Aiden, Adrian Veres, Matthew K. Gray, The Google Books Team, Joseph P. Pickett, Dale Hoiberg, Dan Clancy, Peter Norvig, Jon Orwant, Steven Pinker, Martin A. Nowak and Erez Lieberman Aiden. 2011. Quantitative analysis of culture using millions of digitized books. *Science* 331: 176–182.

*Mill, John Stuart. 1861. *Considerations on representative government.* London: Parker, Son, and Bourn.

*[Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de La Brède et de. 1721. *Lettres persanes.* Second edition. Vols. I & II. Cologne: Pierre Marteau.

*Mooney, James. 1902. *Myths of the Cherokee.* Extract from the nineteenth annual report of the bureau of American ethnology. Washington: Government Printing Office.

*Morgan, Lewis Henry. 1877. *Ancient society: researches in the lines of human progress from savagery, through barbarism to civilization.* New York: Henry Holt and Company.

Morrison, Ken. 2006. *Marx, Durkheim, Weber: formations of modern social thought.* Second edition. London; Thousand Oaks, CA; New Dehli: Sage Publications.

*Morton, Samuel George. 1839. *Crania Americana; or, a comparative view of the skulls of various aboriginal nations of North and South America.* Philadelphia: J. Dobson.

*Mühlmann, W. E. 1942. Umvolkung und Volkwerdung. *Deutsche Arbeit* 42(1): 287–297.

*Nadel, S. F. 1947. *The Nuba: an anthropological study of the hill tribes in Kordofan.* London: Oxford University Press.

*Nadel, S. F. 1950. Dual descent in the Nuba Hills. In: A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (eds.). *African systems of kinship and marriage.* London: Oxford University Press, pp. 333–359.

Niethammer, Lutz. 2000. *Kollektive Identität: Heimliche Quellen einer unheimlichen Konjunktur.* Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag.

Niezen, Ronald. 2012. Identities. In: George Ritzer (ed.). *The Wiley-Blackwell encyclopedia of globalization.* Vol. III (I-No). Malden, MA, Oxford, Chichester-West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 985–988.

*Noah, M. M. 1837. *Discourse on the evidences of the American Indians being the descendants of the lost tribes of Israel.* New York: James van Norden.

Onians, Richard Broxton. 1951. *The origins of European thought – about the body, the mind, the soul, the world, time, and fate.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*[Pahl, Johann Gottfried]. 1796. *Die Philosophen aus dem Uranus: Freymüthige Bemerkungen über den politischen, moralischen, und literarischen Zustand von Deutschland.* Konstantinopel.

*Park, Robert E., and Ernest W. Burgess. 1921. *Introduction to the science of society.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Perry, John (ed.). 1975. *Personal identity.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Petermann, Werner. 2004. *Die Geschichte der Ethnologie.* Wuppertal: Peter Hammer Verlag.

*Pickering, Charles. 1848. *The races of man: and their geographical distribution. Vol. IX of United States exploring expedition during the years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, under the command of Charles Wilkes, U.S.N.* Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown; London: John Murray.

*Pollock, Frederick. 1919–1920. The problem of nationality, VI. In: Symposium: the problem of nationality. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* N.S. 20: 242–252.

*Powell, John Wesley. 1891. Indian linguistics families of America north of Mexico. In: *Seventh annual report of the bureau of ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution 1885–86.* Washington: Government Printing Office, pp. 7–142.

*Prichard, James Cowles. 1813. *Researches into the physical history of man.* London: John and Arthur Arch, Cornhill; and B. and H. Barry, Bristol.

*Proudhon, Pierre-Joseph. 1866. *Théorie de la propriété.* Second edition. Paris: Librairie Internationale.

*Provinse, John, and others. 1954. The American Indian in transition. *American Anthropologist* 56(3): 388–393.

Quadri, Bruno. 1952. *Aufgaben und Methoden der onomasiologischen Forschung: Eine entwicklungsgeschichtliche Darstellung.* Bern: A. Francke.

*Quatrefages, Armand de. 1866. *Les Polynésiens et leurs migrations*. Paris: Arthus Bertrand.

*Quatrefages, Armand de. 1871. *La race prussienne*. Paris: Librairie Hachette & Cie.

*Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. 1950. Introduction. In: A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (eds.). *African systems of kinship and marriage*. London: Oxford University Press, pp. 1–85.

*Radin, Paul. 1927. *The story of the American Indian*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation.

*Ratzel, Friedrich. 1887-1888. *Völkerkunde*. Vols. I., II., & III. Leipzig: Verlag des Bibliographischen Instituts.

*Redfield, Robert, and Milton B. Singer. 1954. The cultural role of cities. *Economic Development and Cultural Change* 3(1): 53-73.

Reed, Adam, and Jon Bialecki (eds.). 2018. Special Section on *Subjects of character* (Part 1). *Social Anthropology* 26(2): 159–221.

Reed, Adam, and Jon Bialecki (eds.). 2018a. Special Section on *Subjects of character* (Part 2). *Social Anthropology* 26(3): 305–375.

*Renan, Ernest. 1882. *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation ? Conférence faite en Sorbonne, le 11 mars 1882.* Second edition. Paris: Calmann Lévy, Éditeur, Ancienne Maison Michel Lévy Frères.

*Riehl, Wilhelm Heinrich. 1851. *Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Sozial-Politik.* Vol. II. *Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft.* Stuttgart und Tübingen: J. G. Cotta.

*Riehl, Wilhelm Heinrich. 1854. *Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Sozial-Politik.* Vol. I. *Land und Leute.* Stuttgart und Tübingen: J. G. Cotta.

*Riehl, Wilhelm Heinrich. 1855. *Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Sozial-Politik.* Vol. III. *Die Familie.* Stuttgart und Tübingen: J. G. Cotta.

*Riehl, Wilhelm Heinrich. 1869. *Die Naturgeschichte des Volkes als Grundlage einer deutschen Sozial-Politik.* Vol. IV. *Wanderbuch.* Stuttgart und Tübingen: J. G. Cotta.

*Riesman, David. 1950. *The lonely crowd: a study of the changing American character.* In collaboration with Reuel Denney and Nathan Glazer. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

*Riesman, David. 1969 [1961]. Preface to the 1961 edition. In: David Riesman. *The lonely crowd: a study of the changing American character*. In collaboration with Reuel Denney and Nathan Glazer. Abridged edition with a 1969 Preface. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, pp. xxiii–lxii.

*Rivers, W. H. R. 1909. Totemism in Polynesia and Melanesia. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 39(Jan.–June): 156–180.

*Rivet, Paul. 1943. *Les origines de l'homme américain*. Paris: Gallimard.

Roazen, Paul. 1976. *Erik H. Erikson: The power and limits of a vision.* New York: The Free Press.

Roedder, Edwin C. 1921. A critical survey of recent research in Germanic philology. *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 20(2): 157–185.

*Rogers, Robert. 1765. *A concise account of North America*. London: Printed for the author by J. Millan.

*Rosny, Léon de. 1861. *La civilisation japonaise*. Paris: Imprimerie de L. Martinet.

Rouse, Roger. 1995. Questions of identity: personhood and collectivity in transnational migration to the United States. *Critique of Anthropology* 15(4): 351–380.

*Rousseau, J. J. 1762. *Du contrat social, ou Principes du droit politique*. Amsterdam: Marc-Michel Rey.

*Schelling, F. W. J. 1803. *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur*. Vol. I. Second edition. Landshut: Philipp Krüll.

*Schelsky, Helmut. 1957. *Die skeptische Generation: Eine Soziologie der deutschen Jugend*. Düsseldorf, Köln: Eugen Diederichs Verlag.

*Scheuchzer, Johann Jacob. 1707. *Beschreibung der Natur-Geschichten des Schweizerlands*. Vol. II. Zürich: In Verlegung des Autors.

Schlee, Günther. 2008. *How enemies are made: towards a theory of ethnic and religious conflicts*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books.

*Schlözer, August Ludwig. 1772. *August Ludwig Schlözers Vorstellung seiner Universal-Historie*. Göttingen und Gotha: Johann Christian Dieterich.

*Schmidt, P. Wilhelm. 1954. *Der Ursprung der Gottesidee: Eine historisch-kritische und positive Studie*. Vol. XI, Part 3. *Die Religionen der Hirtenvölker*. Section 5: *Die asiatischen Hirtenvölker. Die primär-sekundären Hirtenvölker der Jakuten und der Sojoten-Karagassen sowie der Jenisseier und die Synthese der benachbarten Nicht-Hirtenvölker*. Münster: Aschendorff.

*Schmitt, Carl. 1926. *Die geistesgeschichtliche Lage des heutigen Parlamentarismus*. Second edition. München und Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot.

*Schmitt-Dorotic, Carl. 1919. *Politische Romantik*. München und Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot.

*Schoolcraft, Henry Rowe. 1839. *Algic researches, comprising inquiries concerning the mental characteristics of the North American Indians*. First series. *Indian tales and legends*. In two volumes. New York: Harper & Brothers.

*Schoolcraft, Henry R. 1845. *Oneóta, or characteristics of the red race of America*. New York: Wiley & Putnam.

*Schoolcraft, Henry Rowe. 1846. *An address delivered before the Was-ah Ho-de-no-son-ne, or New Confederacy of the Iroquois*. Also, *Genundewah*, a poem by W. H. C. Hosmer. Rochester, NY: Jerome & Brother.

*Schoolcraft, Henry R. 1851. *Historical and statistical information respecting the history, conditions and prospects of the Indian tribes of the United States*. Part I. Philadephila: Lippencott, Grambo and Company.

*Schopenhauer, Arthur. 1844. *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*. Second edition. Vol. II. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus.

Sheehan, James J. 1978. Begriffsgeschichte: theory and practice. *Journal of Modern History* 50(2): 312–319.

*Simmel, Georg. 1898. Die Selbsterhaltung der socialen Gruppe: sociologische Studie. *Jahrbuch für Gesetzgebung, Verwaltung und Volkswirtschaft im Deutschen Reich* 22(2): 589–640.

*Simmel, Georg. 1898. The persistence of social groups. Translated by Albion W. Small. *American Journal of Sociology* 3(5): 662–698.

*Simmel, Georg. 1908. *Soziologie: Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung.* Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot.

*Simmel, Georg. 1909. The problem of sociology. Translated by Albion W. Small. *American Journal of Sociology* 15(3): 289–320.

*Small, Albion W. 1915. The bonds of nationality. *American Journal of Sociology* 20(5): 629–683.

*Smith, Lincoln B. 1906. Indians. In: William Mack (ed.). *Cyclopedia of law and procedure*. Vol. XXII. New York: The American Law Book Company, pp. 109–156.

*Smith, William Robertson. 1912 [1869]. The work of a theological society. In: John Sutherland Black and George Chrystal (eds.). *Lectures and essays of William Robertson Smith*. London: Adam and Charles Black. pp. 137–162.

*Smith, William Robertson. 1889. *Lectures on the religion of the Semites. First Series: The Fundamental Institutions.* Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black.

Snell, Bruno. 1946. *Die Entdeckung des Geistes: Studien zur Entstehung des europäischen Denkens bei den Griechen.* Hamburg: Claassen & Goverts.

*Sorokin, Pitirim A. 1937. *Social and cultural dynamics. Volume I: Fluctuation of forms of art.* London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

*Sorokin, Pitirim Alexandrovich. 1947. *Society, culture, and personality: their structure and dynamics. A system of general sociology.* New York & London: Harper & Brothers.

*[Sparks, Jared and Cornelius Conway Felton]. 1838. Review of 'History of the Indian tribes of North America, with biographical sketches and anecdotes of the principal chiefs. Embellished with one hundred and twenty portraits, from the Indian gallery in the department of state at Washington.' By Thomas L. McKenney, late of the Indian Department in Washington; and James Hall, of Cincinnati. Vol. I. Philadelphia; published by Edward C. Biddel. *North American Review* 47(100): 134–148.

*Spencer, Herbert. 1851. *Social statics: or, the conditions essential to human happiness specified, and the first of them developed.* London: John Chapman.

*Spencer, Herbert. 1898. *The principles of sociology*. Three volumes. Third revised edition. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

*Spindler, Louise S. and George D. Spindler. 1959. Culture change. *Biennial Review of Anthropology* 1: 37–66.

*Squier, Ephraim G. 1851. *The serpent symbol and the worship of the reciprocal principles of nature in America.* New York: George P. Putnam.

*Stanley, Henry M. 1878. *Through the dark continent; or The sources of the Nile around the Great Lakes of Equatorial Africa and down the Livingstone River to the Atlantic Ocean.* Two volumes. London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington.

*Stein, Lorenz von. 1865. *Die Verwaltungslehre. Erster Theil: Die Lehre von der vollziehenden Gewalt, ihr Recht und ihr Organismus. Mit Vergleichung der Rechtszustände von England, Frankreich und Deutschland.* Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta.

*Steward, Julian H., Robert A. Manners, Eric R. Wolf, Elena Padilla Seda, Sidney W. Mintz and Raymond L. Scheele. 1956. *The people of Puerto Rico: a study in social anthropology.* Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Stocking, George W. Jr. 1968 [1962]. Lamarckianism in American Social Science, 1890–1915. In: George W. Stoking Jr. *Race, culture, and evolution: essays in the history of anthropology.* New York: The Free Press, pp. 234–269.

Stocking, George W. Jr. 1968 [1966]. Franz Boas and the culture concept in historical perspective. In: George W. Stocking Jr. *Race, culture, and evolution: essays in the history of anthropology.* New York: The Free Press, pp. 195–233.

Stocking, George W. Jr. 1968. The persistence of polygenist thought in post-Darwinian anthropology. In: George W. Stocking Jr. *Race, culture, and evolution: essays in the history of anthropology.* New York: The Free Press, pp. 42–68.

Stocking, George W. Jr. 1987. *Victorian anthropology.* New York: The Free Press.

Stocking, George W. Jr. 1991. Maclay, Kubary, Malinowski: archetypes from the dreamtime of anthropology. In: George W. Stocking Jr., ed. *Colonial situations: essays on the contextualization of ethnographic knowledge.* Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 9–74.

*Sumner, William Graham. 1906. *Folkways: a study of the sociological importance of usages, manners, customs, mores, and morals.* Boston: Ginn & Company.

*Swanton, John R. 1911. Tlingit. In: Franz Boas (ed.). *Handbook of American Indian languages.* Part 1. Washington: Government Printing Office, pp. 159–204.

*Tax, Sol. 1941. World view and social relations in Guatemala. *American Anthropologist* (New Series) 43(1): 27–42.

*Tax, Sol. 1958. The fox project. *Human Organization* 17(1): 17–19.

*Thurnwald, Richard. 1940. Die fremden Eingriffe in das Leben der Afrikaner und ihre Folgen. In: Hermann Baumann, Richard Thurnwald and Diedrich Westermann. *Völkerkunde von Afrika: Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der kolonialen Aufgabe.* Essen: Essener Verlagsanstalt, pp. 453–573.

*Tönnies, Ferdinand. 1887. *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft: Abhandlung des Communismus und des Socialismus als empirischer Culturformen.* Leipzig: Fues's Verlag (R. Reisland).

Trafzer, Clifford E. 2000. *As long as the grass shall grow and rivers flow: a history of native Americans.* Fort Worth, TX, etc: Harcourt College Publishers.

Traugott, Elizabeth C. 2006. Semantic change: bleaching, strengthening, narrowing, extension. In: Keith Brown (ed.). *Encyclopedia of language and linguistics.* Second edition. Vol. XI (Sca–Spe). Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 124–131.

*Tylor, Edward B. 1861. *Anahuac, or Mexico and the Mexicans, ancient and modern.* London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts.

*Tylor, Edward B. 1871. *Primitive culture: researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, language, art, and custom.* Two volumes. London: John Murray.

*[U.S.] Congress, Proceedings of. 1790. In: *The American museum, or universal magazine.* Vol. VII. from January to June 1790. Appendix III. Philadelphia: Carey, Stewart, and Co., pp. 1–44.

*Vierkandt, Alfred. 1923. *Gesellschaftslehre: Hauptprobleme der philosophischen Soziologie.* Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke.

*Wagley, Charles and Marvin Harris. 1955. A typology of Latin American subcultures. *American Anthropologist* 57(3): 428–451.

*Waitz, Theodor. 1862. *Die Amerikaner, ethnographisch und culturhistorisch dargestellt. Part 1. Anthropologie der Naturvölker.* Vol. III. Leipzig: Friedrich Fischer.

*Waitz, Theodor. 1864. *Die Amerikaner, ethnographisch und culturhistorisch dargestellt. Part 2. Anthropologie der Naturvölker.* Vol. IV. Leipzig: Friedrich Fischer.

Walker, Mack. 1971. *German home towns: community, state, and general estate, 1648–1871.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

*Warburton, Eliot. 1845. *The crescent and the cross; or, romance and realities of eastern travel.* Third edition. In two volumes. London: Henry Colburn.

*Ward, Frank Lester. 1883. *Dynamic sociology, or applied social science, as based upon statistical sociology and the less complex sciences.* Vols. I & II. New York: D. Appleton and Company.

*Warner, W. Lloyd and Paul S. Lunt. 1941. *The social life of a modern community*. Yankee City Series, Vol. I. New Haven: Yale University Press.

*Warner, W. Lloyd and Leo Srole. 1945. *The social systems of American ethnic groups*. Yankee City Series, Vol. III. New Haven: Yale University Press.

*Warren, Robert Penn. 1965. *Who speaks for the negro?* New York: Random House.

*Weber, Max. 1895. *Der Nationalstaat und die Volkswirtschaftspolitik*. Freiburg im Breisgau: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck).

*Weber, Max. 1972 [1921 & 1922]. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft: Grundriss der verstehenden Soziologie*. Fifth edition. Edited by Johannes Winckelmann. Studienausgabe. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck).

*Weber, Max. 1978 [1968]. *Economy and society: an outline of interpretive sociology*. Two volumes. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, eds. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Weigert, Andrew J. 1983. Identity: its emergence within sociological psychology. *Symbolic Interaction* 6(2): 183–206.

Weigert, Andrew J., Joyce Smith Teitge and Dennis Wayne Teitge. 1986. *Society and identity: toward a social psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Westermarck, Edward. 1891. *The history of human marriage*. London and New York: Macmillan and Co.

*White, Henry C. 1885. The western puritan. *Magazine of Western History* II(6 [Oct.]): 619–631. Cleveland, Ohio: W. W. Williams.

*White, Howard. 1878. Reports of agents in Nebraska. In: *Annual report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior for the year 1878*. Washington: Government Printing Office, pp. 93–102.

*White, William. 1844. *Christ's covenant the best defence of Christ's Crown; or, Our national covenants scriptural, Catholic, and of permanent obligation.* Edinburgh: W. P. Kennedy.

Wiese, Leopold von. 1906. *Zur Grundlegung der Gesellschaftslehre: eine kritische Untersuchung von Herbert Spencers System der synthetischen Philosophie.* Jena: G. Fischer.

Wieseltier, Leon. 1994. Against identity: an idea whose time has gone. *The New Republic*, 28 November, pp. 24–32.

*Wilson, Daniel. 1851. *The archaeology and prehistoric annals of Scotland*. Edinburgh: Sutherland and Knox.

*Wilson, Monica. 1950. Nyakyusa kinship. In: A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (eds.). *African systems of kinship and marriage*. London: Oxford University Press, pp. 111–139.

Wimmer, Mario. 2015. Conceptual history: *Begriffsgeschichte*. In: James D. Wright (ed.). *International encyclopedia of the social and behavioural sciences*. Second edition. Volume 4, pp. 548–554.

*Wolcott, Oliver. 1821. Legislature of Connecticut. Governor's message. In: H. Niles (ed.). *Niles' weekly register*. From March to September 1821 – Vol. XX, No. 14, Whole No. 508 or Vol. VIII, No. 14 (June 2) – N. S. Baltimore: The Franklin Press (William Ogden Niles), pp. 212–221.

*Wolf, Eric R. 1959. *Sons of the shaking earth*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Younes, Nadja and Ulf-Dietrich Reips. 2019. Guidelines for improving the reliability of Google Ngram studies: evidence from religious terms. *PLoS/ONE* 14(3): e0213554. Available online at: https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0213554 (accessed on 30 August 2019).

*Zedler, Johann Heinrich. 1739. *Grosses vollständiges Universal-Lexicon aller Wissenschafften und Künste*. Vol. XIV, Part 1. Leipzig und Halle: Johann Heinrich Zedler.

Zhang, Sarah. 2015. The Pitfalls of Using Google Ngram to Study Language. *Wired* (Science), 15 October 2015. Available online at: http://www.wired.com/2015/10/pitfalls-of-studying-language-with-google-ngram/ (accessed on 30 August 2019).