Regional and national identity in Austrian dialectal pop songs

A critical analysis of two Austropop songs

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Introduction

Austrian identity is definitely not easy to grasp. Edward Larkey (1993) writes in the preface of his study *Pungent Sounds. Constructing identity with popular music in Austria* that Austria has been regarded in two associated manners, on the one hand win terms of a negation of something else« and on the other, as »something >not just«. So Austria is, for example, *not* German and it is *not just* Vienna (Larkey 1993, xxi; italics in original).

What then are constitutive factors of Austrian identity? Apart from many others, one of them is the language(s) spoken in Austria, especially dialect(s), inasmuch as these still play a major role in daily life and people's sense of self. Another factor that Austria has always identified with is that of music, although this is usually related to »serious« music (Larkey 1993, 309), i.e. »high culture.« However, popular music turns out to be just as important for Austrian identity as classical music.

This paper will deal with the question of how Austrian popular music may serve as a means to construct both regional and national identity. For this purpose, two pop songs which are sung in dialect and which I consider representative will be analyzed: the Vorarlbergian song »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou,« and the Viennese song »Jö schau.«

Methodology

Which methods to employ when doing research on pop lyrics sung in dialect and the potential influence they may have on society? By what

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means do we grasp questions of identity, and how do we deal with the significance of texts and communication?

In the first place, when working on dialectal features and dialectal differences in pop lyrics, we have to set up the basics of dialectology and explain what the characterics of dialects are and so on. This topic is covered in a general sense by the work of Chambers and Trudgill (1998) and in a more specific sense—with regard to Austrian dialects—by the standard study *Die österreichischen Mundarten* by Hornung and Roitinger ([1950] 2000), as well as by the work of Wiesinger on Austro-Bavarian dialects¹ (1990) and of Gabriel (1987), Jutz (1931; 1961), and Allgäuer (2008) on the Alemannic dialects of Voralberg. Secondly, with regard to pop music and its significance, the work of Frith (2001) as well as of Hall and Whannel ([1964] 1990) may be useful, and when dealing with the lyrics, a brief look at text linguistics, e.g. studies by de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) as well as Widdowson (2007), appears to be useful as well.

Thirdly, inasmuch as the question of identity and identities arises, we need to turn toward cultural theories. Here, the theory of cultural memory, which was developed by Jan Assmann (1992) together with Aleida Assmann, plays an important role as it tries to define what we mean when we talk about identity. The notion of identity (as well as the different kinds of identity) has also been taken up and elaborated by Straub (2004). Other influential models, which may help to elucidate this notion, are communication theories, e.g. those of Littlejohn and Foss (2008), as well as Goffman's sociological concept of »face« ([1967] 1982).

Finally, we need to clarify how different types of identity develop within society. Identity does not exist on its own but it is constructed within a community, that is to say, by means of communication. At this point we

¹ Another source for experts is the Institute for Lexicography of Austrian Dialects and Names, which has meanwhile become a part of the Institute for Corpus Linguistics and Text Technology at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (http://www.oeaw.ac.at/icltt/dinamlex-archiv/WBOE.html, accessed February 14, 2014).

must turn to linguistics again and take a look at critical discourse analysis represented in the work *The discursive construction of national identity* by Wodak et al. (2009), which is in the line of theories by Fairclough (1995) and van Dijk (1984; 1998). At the same time, other cultural studies approaches, such as Stuart Hall's treatment of cultural identity (1996), may also come in handy.

What is a dialect?

Any language of the world shows variation. Pronunciation, grammar, and use of words may differ according to factors such as geography, social class, age, or gender. In the case of geographical variation we may speak of different dialects. Spolsky notes that

[i]t was long obvious (and sometimes troubling) that people who spoke what they considered the same language had different words for the same thing or different pronunciations for the same word. (Spolsky 1998, 27)

He goes on to mention that the first account of dialectal differences can be found in the Bible, specifically in the Book of Judges (12: 4–6) where the pronunciation of the word *shibboleth* is used to dinguistish between friends and enemies. To this day the term *shibboleth* is used in linguistics to describe typical language features that allow for an unambiguous assignment of a particular speaker, be it social, regional, or other (Bußmann 1990, 666).

According to Chambers and Trudgill, the term *dialect* »refers to varieties which are grammatically (and perhaps lexically) as well as phonologically different from other varieties« (Chambers and Trudgill 1998, 5), moreover, it is often »associated with the peasantry, the working class or other groups lacking in prestige« (Chambers and Trudgill 1998, 3). This lack of prestige may result from the fact that dialects (as well as colloquial language) are varieties that have—in contrast to a standard language—never been normed and thus do not feature a homogeneous written form.

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Above all, however

dialects [...] can be regarded as subdivisions of a particular language. In this way we may talk of the Parisian dialect of French, the Lancashire dialect of English, the Bavarian dialect of German, and so on. (Chambers and Trudgill 1998, 3)

Dialect(s) in Austria

Most Austrian dialects belong, in fact, to the Bavarian group, which is »the largest German dialect group« (Wiesinger 1990, 438). Within Austria, the Bavarian group stretches from the federal province of Burgenland in the East to the Tyrol in the West (ibid.), so Bavarian dialects are spoken in 8 of the 9 federal provinces of Austria. Only a rather small territory in the far west of the country (mainly in the federal province of Vorarlberg) is of Alemannic origin.

As both Bavarian and Alemannic belong to the High German dialects, they share a number of dialectal features, notably the High German consonant shift which made the voiceless stops p, t, k change into the affricate consonants pf, tz, kch, or the fricatives f(f), z(z), ch respectively (König 2001, 62–63; Bußmann 1990, 872). This difference in sound can be perceived in English words such as *apple*, *cat*, and *(to) make* and their German equivalents *Apfel*, *Katze* and *machen*.

However, Bavarian and Alemannic also differ according to a number of features. First of all, there are notable phonological differences: the Alemannic dialects have retained the Middle High German (MHG) monophthongal vowels *i*, *in*, \hat{n} (*Wiib*, *Lüüt*, *Huus*), whereas in New High German (NHG), and thus also in the Bavarian dialects, these vowels have generally become diphthongs (*Weib*, *Leute*, *Haus*) (Allgäuer 2008, 4; Russ 1990, 364). Likewise, there are several features typical of Bavarian dialects, among which we find the following (Wiesinger 1990, 452–53):

 The MHG vowels *ü*, *ö*, *a*, *üe*, *iu*, *öü* (corresponding to the Standard German front-rounded vowels *ü*, *ö*, *äu/eu*) are unrounded, which produces forms such as [3isl] NHG Schüssel »bowl,« [me:(g)ŋ] NHG *mögen* »to like,« [rivsl] NHG *Rüssel* »trunk,« and [daid3] NHG *deutsch* »German.«²

- The MHG short and lengthened a (corresponding to Standard German a) is raised and backed to a more or less open [3, 5:], which produces outputs such as [blotn] NHG *Platte* »plate, slab,« [zelo:d] NHG *Salat* »lettuce« and [ghoel] for the name *Karl* (this rule, however, only applies to native words, old loans and names).³
- Standard b between vowels and before l becomes [w], i.e. the initial sound in the English word *water*; this produces forms such as [draiwa], NHG *Treiber* »beater« and [ghi:wə] NHG *Kübel* »bucket.«

Secondly, there are certain shibboleth words (so-called »Kennwörter« in German) in both Alemannic and Bavarian, the most striking of which are gri,⁴ the past participle of »to be« in Alemannic (Russ 1990, 364), and the Bavarian pronouns *efs* »you (pl.)« in the subject position and *enk* »you (pl.)« in the object position⁵ (Wiesinger 1990, 451; Zehetner 1985, 57, and 123–25).

² For the use of IPA symbols, see »The International Phonetic Alphabet,« in Handbook of the International Phonetic Association: A Guide to the Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet (revised 1993; updated 1996; repr., Cambridge: 1999), ix.

³ Actually, in a number of Austrian dialects consonants do not exhibit the feature voice (as transcribed in Wiesinger's examples), rather the traditional distinction is one between *lenis* and *fortis* consonants, see Hornung and Roitinger ([1950] 2000, 14). A detailed account of this topic can be found in Kurt Gustav Goblirsch, *Consonant strength in Upper German dialects* (Odense: 1994).

⁴ For this reason, people from Vorarlberg are occasionally called »Gsiberger« or »Xiberger« in the Bavarian-speaking part of Austria (Fluch 2010, 39).

⁵ Actually, *efs* and *enk* used to be Bavarian dual forms but came into use for the second person plural pronouns (Wiesinger 1990, 451).

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Alemannic

Alemannic dialects are spoken in the southwestern part of the Germanspeaking area, so within Austria they cover only the western part of the country. As mentioned before, they are mainly spoken in the province of Vorarlberg (which is located west of the Arlberg mountain and is thus literally win front of Arlberg«), and in a very small part of the Tyrol known as Außerfern.

To the east, the Alemannic dialect group borders the Bavarian dialects. Within Austria, we find a broad transition zone of Alemannic features reaching into the western Tyrol which stretches approximately from just south of the German village of Mittenwald (on the border between Germany and Austria) down to Telfs on the Inn, and further across the Stubai Alps and the border between Austria and Italy, all the way to the Silvretta Alps (Wiesinger 1983, 830). The Austro-Bavarian dialect does not extend further west than to the village of Weißenbach in Tyrol, south of Reutte, and from there to the border between the provinces of the Tyrol and Vorarlberg; Austria's westernmost province thus belongs entirely to the Alemannic dialect group (Wiesinger 1983, 830 and 832; Jutz 1961, 102). The Arlberg mountain forms a relatively sharp linguistic border dividing Alemannic and Bavarian according to several distinctive features.⁶

In a study on the relation between Swiss and Austrian German, Wiesinger cites relevant examples from the Arlberg border so as to highlight striking differences in sound, form, and lexicon. These examples include the following (Wiesinger 1986, 104):

⁶ See the map »I DINAMLEX: Oberdeutsche Dialekträume im Bearbeitungsgebiet« in Bergmann et al. (2005); also available online at http://www.oeaw.ac.at/icltt/dinamlex-archiv/bearbeitungsgebiet .PNG, accessed February 14, 2014.

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Vorarlberg (Klostertal)	The Tyrol (Stanzertal)	Standard German	English
IIs, Huus, Hüüser	Eis, Haus, Heiser	Eis, Haus, Häuser	ice, house, houses
Faß, Fäßli	Fåß, Faßli	Faß, Fäßlein	barrel, small barrel
mir wissend	mir wissa	wir wissen	we know
ir wissend	eß wissets	ihr wisst	you know (pl.)
si wissend	si wissa	sie wissen	they know
goo(n), stoo(n)	gia(n), stia(n)	gehen, stehen	to go, to stand
gsii(n)	gwest	gewesen	been
Ziischtig	Erti	Dienstag	Tuesday
schaffe	årwata	arbeiten	to work

Fig. 1: List of examples illustrating significant differences between Alemannic and Bavarian. (Source: Wiesinger 1986, 104)

This table clearly shows that the differences between the two dialect groups are quite large and that there is hardly any mutual understanding on a dialectal level between speakers of Alemannic and speakers of Bavarian.

As for a finer division of Alemannic, the different dialects spoken in Vorarlberg can neither be characterized as Swabian nor as High or Low Alemannic, but rather form an interference area which is called Middle Alemannic (Wiesinger 1983, 836; Hornung and Roitinger [1950] 2000, 133). A more detailed outline of Vorarlbergian dialects is given by Gabriel (1987), which reveals among other things the phonological sub-

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leties to be found in the dialects of the Bregenz Forest and in the lyrics of the Alemannic song presented in this paper.

Central and Southern Bavarian

Bavarian dialects within Austria can be further divided into Central Bavarian and Southern Bavarian plus a transition zone between the two (Hornung and Roitinger [1950] 2000, 16; the map »I DINAMLEX: Oberdeutsche Dialekträume im Bearbeitungsgebiet« in Bergmann et al. 2005). Central Bavarian dialects are spoken in Vienna, Lower Austria, Northern Burgenland, Upper Austria, parts of Salzburg, and parts of Styria, whereas Southern Bavarian is spoken in the Tyrol, Carinthia, most part of Styria, and small parts of Salzburg and Burgenland (Hornung and Roitinger [1950] 2000, 15).

Central Bavarian dialects are said to be more open towards linguistic innovation than Southern Bavarian dialects (Wiesinger 1990, 456). Within Austria, this tendency also has to do with Vienna's position as the capital and as »the linguistic model which shapes and influences the east and south of the country with Lower and Upper Austria, Burgenland, Styria and Carinthia« (Wiesinger 1990, 456).⁷ What then are the differences between Central and Southern Bavarian dialects? Here, only a few features shall be enumerated in brief:

A prominent feature in Central Bavarian is the vocalization of *l* before consonants, which does not occur in Southern Bavarian. Thus, a word such as NHG *Hals* »neck« is rendered as [hoiz] in Central Bavarian, whereas in Southern Bavarian the same word will turn out as [hols]. Front vowels may turn out differently, depending on the region and the phonological environment.

⁷ For a detailed account of the Viennese influence on Austria's dialects, see Eberhard Kranzmayer, »Wien, das Herz der Mundarten Österreichs,« in *Festschrift für Otto Höfler zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by Helmut Birkhan et al. (Wien: 1967), 339–49.

- Likewise, the Central Bavarian *r* is often vocalized after a vowel and before certain consonants (especially in the East), and so words such as NHG *kurz* »short« are rendered as [ghu¤ts].
- Central Bavarian dialects lose the simple word-final n, while Southern Bavarian dialects retain it; in Central Bavarian the preceding vowel is nasalized instead. Thus NHG Mann »man« turns out as [mp~:] or [mpo~] in Central Bavarian.
- Due to the loss of -e-, stems with labial and velar plosives generate the clusters [bd], [kt] and [mbd], [gŋd] in the third person singular, the third person plural, and the past participle. These clusters are retained in Central Bavarian, rendering such forms as [ɛɐ gipt] NHG er gibt »he gives,« [ɛɐ zokt] NHG er sagt »he says,« [zi ge:(b)mbd] NHG sie geben »they give« and [zi zo:(g)ŋd] NHG sie sagen »they say,« whereas they show further signs of assimilation in Southern Bavarian, leading to the forms [ɛɐ gip] NHG er gibt »he gives,« [ɛɐ zok] NHG er sagt »he says,« [ɛɐ zok] NHG sie geben »they give« and [zi zo:(g)ŋd] NHG sie sagen »they say.« (Wiesinger 1990, 459–60)

There are more characteristics that are especially important for Southern Bavarian dialects, however, as no Southern Bavarian lyrics shall be treated in this paper they will not be mentioned here. For more details see Wiesinger (1990).

The sociolinguistic situation in Austria

The varieties of German spoken in Austria

As for the sociolinguistic view, the situation in Austria can be described as basically diglossic. The term *diglossia*, which was coined by Charles Ferguson⁸ in 1959 (Eßer 1983, 60), denotes »[a] situation when two distinct varieties of the same language are used, side by side, for two different sets of functions« (Spolsky 1998, 122).

⁸ Charles A. Ferguson, »Diglossia,« in *Language and Social Context: Selected Readings*, edited by Pier Paolo Giglioli (Middlesex: 1972), 232–51.

In his work on dialect and identity (1983), linguist Paul Eßer applies the notion of diglossia to the dialects of the Lower Rhine region. With reference to Dittmar (1973), he describes the local dialects as the low variation, i.e. one that is mainly used for spoken communication and which is both bound to a particular region and to a certain social class; the high variation, on the other hand, is a supra-regional language (in his case German Standard language) that is used primarily for written communication as well as in an official context and usually has high prestige (Eßer 1983, 60–62; Dittmar 1973, 150).

The same can be said of the varieties in Austria. Wiesinger (2008, 34) even talks of polyglossia when classifying spoken language in Austria, as he comes up with four different varieties (or registers, in his words), namely:

- Basisdialekt (i.e. »base dialect«)
- Verkehrsdialekt (which can be roughly translated as »link dialect« and is comparable to a lingua franca)
- Umgangssprache (i.e. colloquial language)
- Standardsprache (i.e. standard language)

(Wiesinger 2008, 26)

As such, the »base dialect« can be defined as the type of language that is traditionally used for daily communication by the older citizens within small villages, mostly peasants and craftsmen, and their younger family members (Wiesinger 2008, 27), whereas the »link dialect« is used to level out differences between dialects and is thus extended into a kind of regional language in a (slightly) larger area (Wiesinger 2008, 27). The colloquial language, by contrast, can be described as a semi-official type of language used in business transactions as well as official proceedings; apart from that it may also be used in private communication where it is sometimes mingled with dialectal elements (Wiesinger 2008, 30). Just like the dialects in Austria the colloquial language is very diverse, although, especially in the eastern part of the country, it is very much affected by the colloquial language in Vienna (Wiesinger 2008, 32). In Vorarlberg,

with its Alemannic background, the colloquial language frequently corresponds to that of Switzerland and the Upper Allgäu, especially on the lexical level (Wiesinger 2008, 33). Finally, the standard language is a »regional realisation of the written language« (Wiesinger 2008, 34) and is the language of public life used by the teachers in school, by ministers and priests in the church, by politicians in public addresses, as well as on TV and radio (Wiesinger 2008, 34).

However, as both Wiesinger and Hornung and Roitinger mention, language is not just locally bound to a certain region; rather, different varieties of it can be found interfering and overlapping with one another in the same area (Hornung and Roitinger [1950] 2000, 12; Wiesinger 2008, 26). This has to do with speakers using different varieties—or registers—according to the particular situation they are in or consider themselves to be in.

Language use and perception

In 1998, Guido Steinegger conducted a survey dealing with this very topic (Steinegger 1998). His findings are somewhat similar to the abovementioned perception, i.e. that dialect is spoken mainly within the family (especially with grandparents, parents, and siblings), whereas the standard language is spoken most frequently with teachers, authorities in cities, and one's superiors (Steinegger 1998, 111-13). So dialect is usually chosen when the situation is considered to be an intimate one, whereas standard language is chosen when the situation lacks intimacy and the people or institutions spoken to appear to have a clearly defined social function (Steinegger 1998, 111). In addition to this, Steinegger comes up with another choice of register he calls »adaptation« (»Anpassung«; Steinegger 1998, 101). This means that people in Austria may (and will) decide to adapt to the manner of speaking used by their conversational partner whenever they consider such behavior to be most appropriate. In Steinegger's survey, this is mostly the case when people find themselves in situations that are not standardized and are thus characterized by a high variability (Steinegger 1998, 113). Such situations demand more flexibility from the speaker; at the same time, however, they also grant more linguistic freedom (ibid.). The percentage of adaptation is therefore rather high with friends, as these may come from very diverse linguistic conditions. With strangers, the choice of language may also be adaptation (or standard language).

As for colloquial language in Austria, Steinegger describes it as a relatively neutral way of speaking that can be used in all speech situations as it is always tolerated (Steinegger 1998, 114). It is mostly bound to the semi-official range, however, which can be located in between the private range (with strong use of dialect) and the official range (with dominance of standard language and adaptation). The semi-official range includes, for example, the hairdresser, clothing stores, municipial offices, and banks. In some cases, as with the hairdresser, linguistic behavior may also vary according to gender: in this situation women tend to use much less dialect than men (Steinegger 1998, 116).

Generally speaking, the use of colloquial language is rather high with men, whereas women tend to use far more standard language. In this context it should be noted that the reason for using higher registers has less to do with being understood than with leaving a good impression or earning respect (Steinegger 1998, 117).

What is identity?

The use of a particular type of language or variety is not just a linguistic question, it is also a matter of identity. As Littlejohn and Foss explain

your identity is a »code« that defines your membership in various communities—a code that consists of symbols, like certain kinds of clothing or possessions; and words, such as self-descriptions or things you commonly say; and the meanings that you and others ascribe to these things. (Littlejohn and Foss 2008, 89)

Thus »[y]our identity, in your own eyes and those of others, is established when you interact socially with other human beings across your life span« (Littlejohn and Foss 2008, 89). Likewise, Assmann calls identity a social phenomenon (Assmann 1992, 130).

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Straub (2004) differentiates between personal identity and collective identity, with personal identity drawing on the central question of *»what sort of a person one is and what sort of a person one wants to be«* (Straub 2004, 63; italics in original). In this sense, the question of identity can also be related to Goffman's concept of face-work, with face being *»an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes—albeit an image that others may share«* (Goffman [1967] 1982, 5).

However, the concept of identity that we are dealing with in reference to varieties of language is not so much one of »personal identity,« but rather of »collective identity,« for the use of a certain variety is usually determined by your association or relation to a particular group. Thus Straub defines »collective identity« as follows:

An identity is thereby ascribed to a collective, often as though a »biophysical unity« like a person were in fact meant—be this collective a group, a gender, an ethnic group or nation, a society or a culture, an alliance of nations or even humanity. (Straub 2002, 67)

The feeling of being part of a collective has to do with »sociocultural origin and a certain tradition, [...] certain modes of action and styles of life« (Straub 2002, 72). Apart from that, Wodak et al. call identity a »relational term« which »defines the relationship between two or more related entities in a manner that asserts a sameness or equality.« (Wodak et al. 2009, 11)

Regional identity

This explanation can be related to the phenomenon of regional identity as described by Pümpel-Mader:

A space-specific collective identity is established by transposing the experiences that a social collective has in its immediate space, its space of origin, to a state or regional territory whose name (e.g. *Tyrol*) constitutes it as an identifiable quantity. (Pümpel-Mader 2000, 124; trans. Bill Martin)

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In this context, language functions as a symbol used to express both demarcation and sameness. People feel (and convey) they are the same because they speak the same language according to pronunciation, lexis, and syntax, that is to say the same dialect (Pümpel-Mader 2000, 132–33). In other words, dialect contributes to the awareness of being a group and thus supports the formation of an ingroup (Eßer 1983, 126), i.e. a »cluster of people who can use the term we with the same significance« (Allport 1954, 37).

Likewise, van Dijk highlights the importance of language and communication for establishing group identity, suggesting that »[a]n important part of the formation and reproduction of social groups may indeed have a discursive nature« (van Dijk 1998, 125). He further distinguishes between *wintragroup discourse*, such as meetings, teaching, calls for solidarity, and other discourses that define the ongoing activities, the reproduction, and the unity of the group« and *wintergroup discourse*, in which groups and their members engage for reasons of self-presentation, self-defence, legitimation, persuasion, recruiting, and so on« (ibid.; italics in original).

However, as Pümpel-Mader emphasizes, the regional group is a fiction; it is constituted, passed on, and stabilized through names as well as the contextualization of symbols, be they verbal or non-verbal (Pümpel-Mader 2000, 128). Furthermore, most individuals do not belong to just one collective group, but to (many) more than one, i.e. collective groups are, in fact, »hybrids of identity« (Wodak et al. 2009, 16).

National identity

Similar to the phenomenon of regional identity, national identity is not something which consists in or by itself. As Benedict Anderson states

[A nation] is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (Anderson 2006, 6; italics in original)

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How can people who do not know each other believe they are part of a particular collective?

In the case of the nation this can be explained by their sharing certain media like newspapers, TV, and radio programmes (de Cillia et al. 1999, 154). This is why de Cillia et al. call nations »mental constructs [...] represented in the minds and memories of the nationalized subjects as sovereign and limited political units« (de Cillia et al. 1999, 153). But although nations may be mental constructs, these constructs are real for the individual inasmuch as he/she »is convinced of it, believes in it and identifies with it emotionally« (Wodak et al. 2009, 22). National identity is, as a consequence, constructed through discourse (Wodak et al. 2009, 22). Stuart Hall even goes as far as to call a national culture a discourse, which he traces back to the significance of the narration (Hall 1996, 613); in his view, »meanings about >the nation([...] are contained in the stories which are told about it, memories which connect its present with its past, and images which are constructed of it« (Hall 1996, 613). One might add at this juncture that such meanings can also be contained in the songs that are written in a nation (or even about it).

Pop music

What is pop music?

In describing pop (and especially Austropop) phenomena in this paper, the term *pop* will be used in the broad sense described by Frith (2001). There he states that »[p]op can be differentiated from classical or art music, on the one side, from folk music, on the other, but may otherwise include every sort of style« (2001, 94), although he also indicates that there are sociological distinctions between pop and rock (e.g. the different age groups addressed) which must usually be considered. Hall and Whannel explain what they regard as the reasons why young people especially are so fond of pop music:

There is a strong impulse at this age to identify with these collective representations and to use them as guiding fictions. Such symbolic fictions are the folklore by means of which teenagers, in part,

shape and compose their mental picture of the world. (Hall and Whannel [1964] 1990, 32)

In this sense, forming an identity as a process within adolescent development certainly plays an important role. But, as Larkey shows even in the title of his work *Pungent Sounds: Constructing identity with popular music in Austria* (1993), questions of identity in conjunction with music are not exclusively bound to teenagers, but also apply to (young) adults. Moreover, as Frith remarks: »Pop does not have a specific or subcultural/communal market/culture. It is designed to appeal to everyone« (Frith 2001, 95).

The role of language in pop music

An important feature of pop music is obviously the use of language. In a general sense, a pop song is usually regarded as such only if it is sung, i.e. if it features lyrics, otherwise many people might not call it a song but merely a melody. As Frith puts it, »a song [...] is grasped by people through its words« (Frith 1996, 159), so in this regard, it can be perceived as a text. However, texts are not just abstract linguistic items, as Widdowson remarks; rather, regardless of whether they are written or spoken, »[p]eople produce texts to get a message across, to express ideas and beliefs, to explain something, to get other people to do certain things or to think in a certain way, and so on« (Widdowson 2007, 6). In fact, texts may be defined as communicative occurences (de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981, 3).

Machin is more specific about this when he writes:

Lyrics are not only about artists telling stories but also communicating discourses about their identity. However banal lyrics might seem, as in the case of love songs, they can reveal much about cultural discourses of a specific time alongside which an artist may want to align themselves. (Machin 2010, 77)

Frith acts on this suggestion when he says that »the use of language in pop songs has as much to do with establishing the communicative situation as with communicating« (Frith 1996, 168). He concludes that pop

songs actually have to do with *spoken* language (ibid., 166; italics in original) even though their words may be written down on paper.

This view is in line with the quite frequent use of colloquial language or even dialect in pop songs, both of them being language varieties which are usually spoken (see the above section **The varieties of German spoken in Austria**).

A description of Austropop

The notion of Austropop was allegedly coined by the Austrian music magazine *Hit* in 1977 (Larkey 1992, 156), but the phenomenon itself is said to have arisen in the 1960s. Its development can be portrayed as follows:

Austropop has emerged as a form of musical culture in resistance and adaptation to the diffusion of rock music in the late 1960s in Austria. It is regularly applied as a term to a variety of popular music styles of Austrian musicians, but includes also foreign musicians producing and living in Austria. It has undergone several changes since its emergence in 1971 from previous music stylistic traditions such as the »dialect wave« and the »green wave.« (Larkey 1992, 154)

Thus Austropop is a very vague term, it neither refers to a definite style of music nor does it refer to music produced only by Austrians and sung exclusively in German. It should be noted, though, that »[u]p to the Austropop period, English had been considered the >Ur-language
(of pop music and had become a part of its acoustic and aesthetic structure«
(Larkey 1993, 176), an attitude that changed throughout the evolution of Austropop with the work of Wolfgang Ambros, who »is generally considered the >father
(Larkey 1992, 158), and that of others who sing predominantly in dialect.

Larkey describes Austropop as a »transcultural style,« i.e. a mix of »imported musical and cultural innovations [...] with domestic styles and traditions« (Larkey 1992, 151). In this regard he considers »lyric content

and language [...] the two most important issues involving Austrian popular music« (Larkey 1993, 303).

For the emergence of Austropop from the 1960s on, the birth of the pop radio station Ö3 was crucial; without its existence Austropop could not have developed the way that it did.

According to Larkey, the history of Austropop can be divided into four different phases (Larkey 1992, 151–52):

- 1) consumption: the intake of rock and roll during the 1950s
- 2) imitation: the copying of British and American styles by domestic bands
- 3) de-anglicisation: the combination of foreign and domestic elements
- 4) re-ethnification: the emergence of independence and »cultural legitimacy«

One of the functions of Austropop was and is the »cultural demarcation towards the British and American cultural industries« (Larkey 1992, 153–54); at the same time it has played an important role in negotiating the rather complicated relationship that Austrians have with the cultural influence of Germany (ibid.). So the topic of Austrian identity has always been an important one with regard to Austropop.

Analysis of Austropop sample texts

The central question of this paper is how Austrian pop songs take part in the production and dissemination of regional and national identities.

For this purpose I will analyze parts of two Austropop texts, namely »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou,« which is sung in the Alemannic dialect as spoken in the Bregenz forest, and »Jö Schau,« which is sung in the Bavarian dialect as spoken in Vienna. These two songs were chosen because they exemplify the two main dialect groups of Austria. For Bavarian, a song in Viennese dialect was chosen since Vienna is the capital of Austria, and as such its dialect has a high influence on all Bavarian dialects in the eastern part of the country. Apart from typical dialectal

features, the songs to be analyzed were also chosen to make use of particular names (which the selected songs both do) as these allow for identification with a specific region.

In order to demonstrate how identity is constructed in the two songs mentioned, I will apply traits of critical discourse analysis as described by Wodak et al. (2009, 30–35). In doing so, I will keep to the following two points:

- Means and forms of realisation
- Content

The former will be a showcase analysis of linguistic elements, including the use of names of different kinds (be they names of villages, famous places, or people) and the use of dialect through typical phonological features and typical lexical items.

The latter will focus on the discourse circling around Austropop songs which is engaged in the question of national identity; its topics can be identified as distinguishing Austria from Germany (Wodak et al. 2009, 188; Larkey 1993, 311) and whet three primary components of identity within the genre of Austropop: the *sound*, the *lyrics* and the *vocalists*« (Larkey 1993, 215; italics in original). The questions to be posed are: in what way are the contents of these songs used to distinguish Austrian identity from German identity, and how do characteristics such as the sound, (parts of) the lyrics, or the musicians function as subjects of a larger discourse within Austria?

»Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou«

»Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou« (»From Mellau until Schoppernau«) is a song by the Vorarlbergian band holstuonarmusigbigbandclub (HMBC) which was released in 2010. It can be described as a fusion between pop and brass instrumental music (Skocek 2010, 45). Since all members of the band come from the Bregenz Forest (Bregenzerwald), the song is rendered in the Alemannic dialect of that area. It must be emphasized once more that Alemannic dialects are very hard to understand for speakers of Bavarian (see the above section **Alemannic**), and the

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Alemannic dialects of the Bregenz Forest are said to possess a number of phonetic specifics that take getting used to even for speakers who come from other Alemannic areas (Allgäuer 2008, 5; *Die Presse* 2010); this may also be demonstrated by the fact that the band themselves decided to place an official translation in German standard language on their website.

The song deals with a young man who gets drunk in a bar on a Saturday night and has to walk home for a distance of about 12 kilometers. The text contains references to three villages in the Bregenz Forest (Egg, Mellau, Schoppernau), whereby the story is embedded in the area from the very beginning. The first stanza and the chorus of the song serve as further illustration:

Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou	English translation
First stanza:	
Samstag Zaubod a dor Egg , I beo wiedor amaul halb varreckt	Saturday evening in Egg [a town close by] I almost kicked the bucket once more
Oas , zwo, drü, vier, fünf, seggs, siebo Gläsle sand oas zviel gsin , I gloub i ka nix daföar	One, two, three, four, five, six, seven glasses were one too many, I think it's not my fault
No an letschta blick uf mine Rolex Uhr, häb oa Oug zua, dass I jau do Zwölfar sea,	One last glance at my Rolex watch with one eye closed so that I still see the 12
Glück kea, glück kea und scho hat ar mi gseah	Lucky me, lucky me but he's already seen me
Guni seyt itz züod fädo I toar	Guni [the boss of the pub] says,

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nämle zuo min Lädo.	»Get out of here right now, I'm going to close my bar.«
Chorus:	
Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou	I walked all the way from Mellau
bean I gloufo, d'Füaß himmor weh	until Schoppernau, my feet hurt
tau	me
Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou	I walked all the way from Mellau
bean I gloufo, d'Füaß himmor weh	until Schoppernau, my feet hurt
tau	me
Weh tau , we tau , we tau , d'Füaß	Hurt me, hurt me, hurt me, my
himmor weh tau	feet hurt me.

Fig. 2: Text sample from »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou«. (Source: http://www .hmbc.at/de/media/cds/vo-mello-bis-ge-schoppornou/offizieller -songtext/)

The transcription of the dialect exemplifies that the phonetics of Alemannic are very different from Standard German (and also from Bavarian). Examples of the typical Alemannic monophthongal vowels *i*, *u*, and \ddot{u} (as mentioned in the section **Dialect(s)** in Austria) can be found in the words uf (NHG auf), mine (NHG meine) and dütsch (NHG deutsch; see text sample in Fig. 4). But there are also phonetic features unique to the Bregenz Forest, or rather to parts of the Bregenz Forest as the text clearly is sung in the dialect spoken in the area between Mellau and Schoppernau, i.e. in part of the so-called Hinterwald. The diphthongization of MHG \hat{a} to *au* which renders the NHG phrase z(u)Abend as Zaubod and the NHG words einmal, ja, (ge)tan, and Blasen as amaul, jau, tau, and Blausa (for the latter, see Fig. 3) is such a feature; it is restricted to the village of Schwarzenberg and the Hinterwald (Gabriel 1987, 39; Allgäuer 2008, 5). Other characteristic traits found in the Hinterwald (and also in the central part of the Bregenz Forest) are the diphthongization of MHG *e* with the lengthening of the vowel *e* in the

form gseah, NHG gesehen (Gabriel 1987, 36),⁹ the diphthong *eə* for MHG *i* in the forms *beo* and *bean* respectively, representing NHG (*ich*) *bin* (see the Hinterwald pronunciation of NHG Sinn in VALTS I [Gabriel et al. n.d.], map 183a), and the pronunciation of NHG *eins*, *ein* as *oas*, *oa* (Hornung and Roitinger [1950] 2000, 137; for more details, see Gabriel 1987, 36–39, and Allgäuer 2008, 5).

In addition, the text shows lexical items like the shibboleth word *gsin* »past participle of be« (see the above section **Dialect(s)** in **Austria**) and the imperative form *züod fädo* »get lost.« The latter is listed in the dictionary of Vorarlberg (*Vorarlberger Wörterbuch*) by Hubert Allgäuer under point 21 of the headword *Faden* and explained by the phrase »Aufforderung, zu verschwinden« (Allgäuer 2008, 529), i.e. »request to disappear.«

There are more words of this kind which can be found in the following line:

Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou	English translation
Blausa kea an Füaßo, Blausa kea im Kopf, so bean I ietrolat i üsa Gadoschopf	

Fig. 3: Text sample from »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou.« (Source: http://www .hmbc.at/de/media/cds/vo-mello-bis-ge-schoppornou/offizieller -songtext/)

The first example is the verb *ietrolat*, listed in Allgäuer under the headword *trolen*. The meaning of the verb is explained by »fallen, stürzen« (ibid., 441), i.e. »fall, tumble,« or, which is probably more exact here, by

⁹ Before l plus consonant the monophthong has been kept, however. For Schwarzenberg and the Hinterwald Gabriel cites examples such as *helfa* (NHG whelfen«), *selta* (NHG wselten«) and *geld* (NHG wGeld«; Gabriel 1987, 39).

»er stolpert oder torkelt (u.U. betrunken) herum« (point 8 of the entry, ibid.), i.e. »he stumbles or lurches around (possibly drunk).«

The most interesting word here, however, is *Gadoschopf* as it is a compound consisting of two Alemannic words. The first one can be found under the headword *Gaden* with the meaning »allg.: Kammer, Zimmer neben der Wohnstube, meist Schlafzimmer der Eltern« (ibid., 617), i.e. »chamber, room next to the living room, typically the parents' bedroom.« The expression is in general use in Vorarlberg. The second part, *Schopf*, is even more particular; the dictionary entry explains it by »lds. (BrW): integrierter Balkon (Laubengang) an der Traufseite des Wälderhauses« (ibid., 1411), which can be translated roughly as »integrated balcony located on the rainwater pipe-side of a typical Bregenz Forest house.« The dictionary label »lds. (BrW)« identifies the word as regional and limited to the Bregenz Forest.

Apart from that, there is a nice example in the lyrics of code-switching (i.e. a change in the variety spoken) when a German cook appears with his car and gives the narrator a lift:

Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou	English translation
Deanna huckt an Dütscha Koch, ar seyt	Inside a German cook is seated, he says:
»Ich kann Dich mitnehmen bis nach Mellau	»I can give you a lift until Mellau,
von da an musst du schauen wie du selber weiterkommst	from there you'll have to see for yourself how to continue
und jetzt steig ein und mach das Fenster auf es stinkt«	and now get inside and open the window, it's stinking«
ja reg di ned uf Zefix!!	oh well, don't make a fuss,

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jeepers!!

Fig. 4: Text sample from »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou.« (Source: http://www .hmbc.at/de/media/cds/vo-mello-bis-ge-schoppornou/offizieller-songtext/)

The direct speech is entirely held in a German standard pronunciation (as spoken in Germany, as the exact pronunciation in the song reveals); this immediately marks the cook as a foreigner from Germany who is unable to speak Alemannic. The line right after the direct speech expresses the narrator's reaction to the German's utterance and thus switches back to dialect.

»Jö Schau«

The song »Jö Schau« (»Wow, just look«) was written by Georg Danzer and released in 1975. It deals with a streaker who turns up at the Cafe Hawelka, in the inner city of Vienna, and so the song contains references to the cafe and its owners at the time, Leopold and Josefine Hawelka, as well as to the city itself. It is sung in Viennese dialect, thus typical features of both Central Bavarian and Viennese can be heard. As for the transcription of the lyrics, I have decided to use my own which is a compromise between capturing the most important linguistic features and avoiding any special characters, so as to facilitate reading.

Jö schau	English translation
Neilich sitz i umma hoiwa zwa im Hawelka	Lately I'm sitting at half past one in the Hawelka [=a famous cafe in the city of Vienna]
bei a boa Wuchteln und bei an Bia	with a couple of »buchteln« [=yeast dumplings originating in Bohemia] and with a beer
auf amoi gibt's beim Eingang	suddenly there's great agitation at

The first stanza of the text begins like this:

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vuan an Muads Drara	the entrance
weu a Nockata kummt eine bei da Dia	because a naked guy comes in through the door
da oide Hawelka sogt: »Suach ma an Blotz «,	Old Hawelka says, »Let's look for a seat,«
owa sie mocht an Botzn Bahö	but she makes a lot of fuss about it
weu sie mant, dass sowos do net geht	cause she thinks such a thing is not possible in here
und er soi si schleichn, owa schnö.	and he should get out, and right away.

Fig. 5: Text sample from »Jö schau.« (Source: transcription by author)

The text is literally peppered with dialectal features. General Bavarian features like the unrounding of eu or ü can be found in the words neilich (NHG neulich) and Dia (NHG Tür), likewise words such as hoinva (NHG halber), boa (NHG paar), or Blotz (NHG Platz) show an [3] where NHG has [a], and b is pronounced like [w] in hoina (NHG halber), Wuchteln (NHG Buchteln), and owa (NHG aber). Moreover, there are also phonological processes typical of Central Bavarian: the words hoiwa (NHG halber), amoi (NHG einmal), soi (NHG soll), and schnö (NHG schnell) all show a vocalised l whereas vuan (NHG vorn) and Muads (NHG Mords)—among several others—clearly exhibit a vocalised r. And finally, there are also features typical of Viennese dialect like »the presence of [a:] for standard/MHG eix (Wiesinger 1990, 465) in words such as zwa (NHG gwei) and amoi (NHG einmal) and the so-called »monophthongization of Viennese« which renders the diphthongs in words like bei, beim, eine, weu, schleichn, schau, and sau (for the latter two see text sample in Fig. 6) as monophthongs (Wiesinger 1990, 466), but this Viennese particularity cannot be perceived in my transcription but in the sung version only.

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Let us take a look at a few more lines, taken from the chorus:

Jö schau	English translation
Jö schau , so a Sau , jössas na,	Wow, just look, such a scumbag, oh jesus,
wos mocht a Nockata im Hawelka?	what's a naked guy doing in the Hawelka?
geh wui, oiso pfui, meina Sö,	Phew, oh yuck, my goodness,
hearst i schenierat mi an seina Stö.	you know, I'd be embarrassed in his place.
ana ruaft: »ein wahnsinn,	One guy shouts: »That's madness,
gebt's eam wos zum anziehn!«	Give him something to dress him- self with!«

Fig. 6: Text sample from »Jö schau.« (Source: transcription by author)

As for lexical items, the Bavarian shibboleth word *efs* is used once, it appears in its clitic form *s* in the verb phrase *gebt's*. There is Viennese lexis as well, with words such as *Bahö* or *Wuchteln*. According to the Viennese dictionary (*Wörterbuch der Wiener Mundart*) by Maria Hornung and Sigmar Grüner the word *Bahö* refers to »Lärm, Wirbel, Krawall« (Hornung and Grüner 2002, 121), i.e. »noise, fuss, riot,« and can be categorized historically as »aw., nw., jw.« (Hornung and Grüner 2002, 121) which means that it was as much in use in Old Viennese as it is in New Viennese and Modern Viennese (for the dates of these terms see Wiesinger 1990, 466). The word *Wuchtel* has a number of meanings the first of which is weine Germmehlspeise, Dampfnudel (Rohrnudel)« (Hornung and Grüner 2002, 827) which can be translated as »an often sweet dish made of flour and yeast, yeast dumpling (oven dumpling).«

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The etymology given shows that the word is of Czech origin which is not unusual for »typical Viennese words« as Vienna was inhabited by many Czech people during the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

The construction of regional identity

The examples cited show that the lyrics of both songs fulfill the criteria for establishing regional identity as described by Pümpel-Mader. In the song »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou« three villages in Vorarlberg are mentioned and can be identified by their (dialectal) names: Egg, Mellau, and Schoppernau. Thus the region where the narration takes place, namely the Bregenz Forest, is also recognizable. The shared experience of knowing the area (and maybe more precisely, knowing the road the young man takes in the middle of the night) can be transfered to the identity of the collective. Moreover, the dialect used in the song is limited to a small area and is able to generate an ingroup with regional awareness, namely all those who can speak and understand the dialects of the Bregenz Forest. The code-switching within the text illustrates this all the more as it definitely serves as a means of demarcation.

Likewise, in »Jö schau« the setting is embedded in Vienna with the German name of the city, Wien, mentioned once, and otherwise several references to the Cafe Hawelka and its owners (referred to as *da oide Hawelka* and *sie* in the song). The lyrics are sung in Viennese dialect and contain typical phonological as well as lexical features. Thus, together with the place of narration, »Vienna's celebrated Café Hawelka« (*London Telegraph* 2011), as well as the mentioning of Mr. and Mrs. Hawelka, they may contribute to the regional identity of people living in Vienna and considering themselves Viennese.

The construction of national identity

At the same time, both songs may also contribute to a sense of Austrian national identity. »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou« is still in regular rotation on Austria's pop radio station Ö3. With Austria being so small in size, Ö3 is a radio station which broadcasts nationwide. Due to this, songs played on Ö3 quickly gain recognition throughout the country, all

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the more if they are played in heavy rotation as was the case with »Vo Mello bis ge Schoppornou.« In due time, this song also became popular in Bavaria and was played on the regional radio station Bayern 3 (Stecher 2010, 27; Skocek 2010, 45), and the band was presented in several articles in Austria's nationwide newspapers, such as Der Standard, Kurier, and Die Presse (Fluch 2010, 39; Stecher 2010, 27; Skocek 2010, 45). One of these articles, »Crossover im Bregenzerwald« (Skocek 2010, 45), also elaborates on the »Sound of Blasmusik,« mentioning that such Blasmusik, i.e. brass instrumental music, is common in rural settings from Lake Constance in Vorarlberg to the Marchfeld in Lower Austria, and that it provides for example the sound for important occasions (such as baptisms and funerals), thus embedding the band's sound in a national (Austrian) context. In addition, it is a curious fact that the weather report on O3 began regularly informing all of Austria about the weather in Schoppernau (the village holds a meteorological station) after the song became a big hit.

Similarly, »Jö schau« was Georg Danzer's first big hit in Austria and is still a very popular tune, Georg Danzer himself having been very popular as a singer and public person. When he died in June 2007, his death was a topic in all of Austria's news, be it on Ö3, the television broadcasting station ORF, or the Austrian newspapers (OE3 2007; ORF 2007; Köck 2007; Schachinger 2007). Even Austria's Federal Chancellor at the time, Alfred Gusenbauer, commented on his death, as did the Federal Minister for Education, Arts and Culture, Claudia Schmied, who called Danzer a musician with a great impact and a role model for the Austrian music of the last decades (ORF Wien 2007); Vienna's Cultural Councillor, Andreas Mailath-Pokorny, even described him as one of the pillars of Austropop (ibid.). This shows that Danzer was a central figure of the Austropop scene and thus a symbol of Austrian identification.

Apart from that, Wodak et al. found in their studies that regional identities »seem to have been important to »pan-Austrian« national identity« (Wodak et al. 2009, 191). Moreover, both songs share a demarcation against Germany (especially Northern Germany) through their use of dialect. As Larkey mentions »Austrian vocal artists [...] cannot be under-

stood north of the so-called *Weisswurst*-Line of Bavaria/Baden-Württemberg« (Larkey 1993, 302). Since dissociation from Germany is an important issue in Austria, dialect may serve this need, all the more so as linguistic differences are primarily associated with the vernacular or dialect (Wodak et al. 2009, 192–93). In any case, both songs are or have been objects of discourse within an Austrian context, be it »by means of language [or] other semiotic systems« (de Cillia et al. 1999, 153).

Conclusion

References to places, regional names, and the use of dialect all may function as a means to create regional identity; and national identity, likewise, is a mental construct of a national collective that arises through discourse. A final word from Larkey, whose definition of Austropop encapsulates this phenomenon:

Austropop is a hegemonically-determined symbol and boundarysetting mechanism for selecting which types of popular music traditions will be channelled into legitimate culture and thus help constitute Austrian national identity. (Larkey 1992, 183)

And as we have seen, dialectal lyrics can play a critical role in constructing regional and national identity in Austrian songs. Thus in our globalized world, people's regional and national identities are not easily lost, but are maintained by different modes and mechanisms—even by the impact of popular culture.

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