

Dr. Nils Zurawski

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Title: Identity and Identification - On humans, biometrics and the dynamics of technology

I think I would like to follow what Anastassia just said in my talk or sketch of ideas. Of course, Europe has lots to do with borders. And as I am speaking of identity, I think identity also has a lot to do with borders, and identity has a lot to do with Europe. With borders it is obvious - there is a border around Europe and there are many borders within Europe between countries. There are also borders that are not really nation-based but circle around groups that share a common identity and declare themselves to be autonomous or at least independent as a region within Europe. And here is where identity comes in. So, there are many groups in Europe who would not be able to claim a nation or a state but they would claim to be a coherent group that shares a common identity which wants to have some autonomy et cetera.

So, Europe has to do a lot with identity in that respect. But - and this refers to Anastassias talk - how does Europe accept or recognize these identities? And there is one particular way in which the state bodies within Europe do that: They do not look so much at the collective identities of these autonomous groups or nation-state or regional groups such as the Basques or other, but they look at particular identities especially concerning the border surrounding Europe. They look at individual identities or more at identification. Europe and European policies - in cooperation with national and state policies - have invented a vast machinery of biometric technology and regulations surrounding them to identify individual persons, to give them an identity and eventually to tell who belongs to Europe and who does not. And in what way - referring to deviant groups.

I want to look at what - in consequence - this means, to identify and to have an identity. Because I think that the biometric technologies used to identify persons are challenging our concept of identity, who we are and how we are able to make ourselves. And how groups are able to make themselves and to share an identity. On what basis?

Before the conclusions I will put a dichotomy between identity and identification. What are the differences? What are the similarities?

Identity	Identification
negotiated collectively	individually fixed
regulates social relations/ embeddedness	assessing predetermined patterns
the body as (negotiable) element of identity	body patterns as reference / carrier of identity / as a passport, e.g. via implants
regulates social affiliation/ exclusion	regulates entrance / restrictions
flexible - open - negotiable	fixed - fixing - non- negotiable
Identity management - societal classification, self- determined	Identity management - categorising, heteronomous
holistic	partial
cultural/ social categories	technically determined categories that are socially meaningful
privacy / self-determination	control / heteronomous classifications
„I am xy“	„This is xy“

- Identity - as I understand it - is negotiated collectively. A group - through rituals, through sharing knowledge, traditions et cetera - constructs its own identity. And it is not fixed, it is always open. It is changeable and dynamic. It incorporates new ideas from the outside. It generates new from within, generates new aspect of that identity and it is changing. To be British 100 years ago probably meant something else than to be British today. Although there are common features. So, there is a link, but there are also differences.
- Identification is individually fixed. Someone says: Because you have that passport you are who it says you are. There is no doubt. You can't negotiate that. A passport states your name, you can't negotiate your name. You cannot negotiate who you are in relation to a tax officer or in relation to the state.
- Identity is negotiated collectively and is dynamic, Identification is fixed.

Identity regulates social relations. So, my identity is only an identity in relation to the group, to other people from or outside the group. It is very much context dependent. Identification only means to assess predetermined patterns: Do I fit? Or do I not fit? Does the pattern fit? Does the pattern not fit? The pattern is attached to a particular fixed identification then. The body is also a negotiable element of identity in various circumstances. In identification processes body patterns are a reference for - or a carrier of - identity. Because your fingerprint matches, you are so and so. Using biometric patterns for identification, your body will become something like a passport or the carrier of your identity. You do not need your passport any longer because you have your iris, you have your fingerprints, you have your DNA to show who you actually are. Not regarding what other people would say who you are and how they perceive you, your body and your movements within the society. Your body - according to pattern recognition - clearly states who you are.

Identity - of course - regulates social affiliation or exclusion, if you are not regarded as one of the group. Identification regulates entrance and restrictions. Quite simply, you are in or you are out.

Identity is flexible, open and negotiable. Identification is fixed. It is fixing also. It is not only that it cannot be changed, but it is also determining what happens. It is putting a person in a place where it cannot move away from.

Identity is about social classifications that are self determined, that are self negotiated. While identity management via identification is realized through categorizing, through putting people into place. It is heteronomous. And it is only partial while identity is more of a holistic approach. It is the body, it is the person it is its place in a group and its relations to it.

Identification is about control. It is about many things - like Anastassia just mentioned - about putting people in places and regulating, managing populations or groups of populations like deviant, delinquent groups of people or other. It says „This is you“, while identity enables you to say „I am who ever I claim to be“.

So, what is the idea behind this? I think it could be fair to say that using biometrics to identify people is not only to verify a particular claim toward your state. Like a passport: „I am who I say I am“, and that is why I am entitled to a claim (money or else). But also eventually to gain entrance into a person. To look beyond the border of the human body, to be able to understand what happens. Biometrics - in a certain way - are an idea to

understand what happens beyond what you can see. You can claim you are this or that and that you only want to come through because of something harmless. But biometrics are used to understand what this person really is, who it is and what the person wants to do. I would say that identification cannot understand, but wanting to understand it makes many mistakes on the way. And the consequences are severe for society.

Although identification is technically determined, the categories that are used are socially meaningful. That means, if you are put into one place you have to - as a person - negotiate yourself out of this place or try to cope with the category that is put onto you. And biometric systems are also seen as a technology - because it is not only ideas, politics and regulations behind it, but it is also a technology, things like an iris or fingerprint scanner. These technologies are not always 100 % working but they make errors. And if by way of an error you are put into a different category than you would like to be put in than you have to deal with that. So, they are socially meaningful although your category has been technically determined. And even though you think it would be easy to say „No, I am not that. There has to be an error.“ because you can see and other people say I am someone totally different. If much weight is put on these categories built on biometric technology then there is no way negotiating out of that spot that someone has been put in.

What is this idea to reframe the borders of the individual? You have identity as a collective idea that is shared by people, that is socially meaningful, that regulates social relations, that is broken down into individual patterns that biometric technology makes - your eye f.i. There is one particular identity that you can identify with and „this is you“. Just like a number, you will be given a number and „this is you“, no matter what. There are many things attached to this number and you cannot escape them.

But the truth is, it is not only individual but - as it is patterns that they are looking for - identity now becomes a collective pattern of probability. For instance, in crime or forensics, in police work - they look for patterns that are at a scene of crime. You collect the patterns and the traces that you find there. And then you try to find that pattern in your database. But that is only a match of probability: How close can you get there? And if you take for instance DNA samples that you find at crime scenes, crime investigators are trying to find out about a possible person that has been at the crime scene at the time of the crime. There have been cases where they try to find out - by genetic traces - whether a person is from southern Europe or rather from eastern Europe. They are not looking for individual

persons, but use these patterns for larger groups of persons. In fact discriminating against these groups!

I think, the attempt made by politicians or other people to understand through biometrics fails completely. Because it puts groups of people into places and categories that do not belong there, and that they have no chance of negotiating. These groups have no meaning to their identity as they understand it. There are two separate identities so to speak - a social identity that they themselves would refer to and an identity that was put on them and restricts them. This identity excludes the persons through a biometric pattern that says that they belong to a larger group that has to be excluded. It is a very scientific way of discriminating against groups that are generated through the ideas of biometric technology. Technologies in general, can say on a safe basis of probability who is in and who is out. Which then would draw new borders and reframe the idea of borders, using particular patterns that these bodies can have and that you can trace to redraw the borders and redraw the politics of inclusion and exclusion and base policies on them. So to sum it up, there is a big difference in between the identity and identification. Although identification claims that your identity is safely established and therefore identification processes by biometric means and technologies can establish security and safety and minimize the risk - as Anastassia just said.

Those are my thoughts. Thank you!