BUILDING IDENTITIES LANDSCAPE PRACTICES AS A MEANS TO CONSTRUCT IDENTITIES, THE SWISS NATIONAL EXHIBITION *EXPO2027*

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Collective identities are fluid constructions which are constantly renewed in social processes within a group. These processes are not limited to verbal communication, but also refer to the design, meaning, and experience of the built environment. Switzerland maintains a discourse about its identities within the framework of the Swiss National Exhibition and therefore regularly focuses public attention on that discourse. The National Exhibition was initiated in Zurich in 1883 and has been held nearly every twenty-five years in various locations throughout Switzerland. This paper analyses the concept competition for the seventh Swiss National Exhibition, Expo2027, *to be staged in the country's eastern region. Through a qualitative document analysis of the top four winning competition entries, the use of landscape practices is investigated as a means of constructing identities at various scales. Four practices that utilize landscape to de- and reconstruct identities are introduced: creating imagery, moving, mapping, and reading borders through landscape. Furthermore, this article offers a variety of readings of how the authors of the four competition entries intend to design those practices. Potentially, the proposals in this study can inform the various design processes of today's built environment in a globalized world.*

If you leave an office building in the financial district of Panama City and make your way to the next metro station, you could reasonably imagine being in

Tokyo or Hong Kong. Globalization leads to an increasing assimilation of urban architecture around the world. Analogous to the global development of such generic spaces, there is a parallel tendency towards place-based traditions at local level. In architecture too, a return to traditional values is perceived, which is translated into local materials, traditional crafts, and climate-friendly building methods. Already in the 1970s, supporters of Critical Regionalism[1] formulated the desire for a 'genius loci'[2]: spatial differentiation and articulation of individual building cultures. Consequently, concepts such as *Heimat*, affiliation, and identity are picked up as central topics for world and national exhibitions, including the International Architecture Exhibition (IBA), World Fairs, Architecture Biennales, or the European Capital of Culture Programme. These exhibitions, which last for several months, consciously use building culture to convey a theme, an image, or a mind-set, to deliberately deal with identities. Switzerland maintains the discourse about its identities within the framework of the Swiss National Exhibition, and therefore regularly focuses public attention on that discourse.[3]

The National Exhibition was initiated in Zurich in 1883 in response to the upcoming World Fairs of that time. Its aim was to show the technological achievements of the different Swiss cantons competing against one another and representing their successes to the world. Since then, it has been held approximately every twenty-five years in various locations throughout Switzerland. Each of the past six National Exhibitions were strongly dependent on the respective zeitgeist, responding to cultural phenomena of that time, and thus differed in their identity constructions. In some Swiss National Exhibitions, Swiss identity was presented as a cultural entity that must be preserved. As a result, in 1896, 1914, and 1939, exhibition curators recreated stereotypical Swiss villages with traditional architecture, rituals, and costumes. In times of globalization, however, the focus shifts away from national identities to other forms of group identities, such as hybrid, collective, and cultural identities.[4] After nearly thirty years of ongoing globalization, the questions

1 Kenneth Frampton, "Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance," in *The Anti-Aethetic. Essays on Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Forster (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 16-30.

2 Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980).

3 Iso Camartin and Barbara Holzer, *Heimatfabrik: Über die Produktion von Heimat: De la production de patrie,* (Zurich: Niggli, 2002); Gottlieb Duttweiler, *Eines Volkes Sein und Schaffen: Die Schweizerische Landesausstellung 1939 Zürich in 300 Bildern* (Zurich: G. Duttweiler, 1940); Tobias Madörin and Roderick Hönig, *ImagiNation: Das offizielle Buch der Expo.02* (Zurich: Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2002).

4 Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994); Nezar AlSayyad, *Hybrid Urbanism: On the Identity Discourse and the Built Environment* (Westport: Praeger, 2001); Jan Assmann,"Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," *New German Critique* 65 (1995), 125-33.

5 Kanton Appenzell Ausserrhoden, Kanton St. Gallen, and Kanton Thurgau, "Dossier Masterplan: Expo2027 Bodensee – Ostschweiz," accessed 15 December 2015, www.expo2027.ch.

of how identity is constructed in relation to both locality and globality, and how building culture can contribute to global or national exhibitions, arise. Using the example of the concept competition of the upcoming Swiss National Exhibition, entitled *Expo2027*, which is to be staged in Eastern Switzerland, I show that this exhibition takes up the cultural phenomenon of globalization as a central theme. Identities are constructed at various scales rather than only on a national one, and thus new forms of community are engendered.

The *Expo2027* curators expressly and repeatedly formulated the desire for a renewed discussion of the topic of identity design in their strategy paper, *Dossier Masterplan*, which served as the basis for the concept competition of *Expo2027*.[5] The planning teams were to deal with stories as a means of identity construction, with national topics and myths as identity elements, and with the difference between Switzerland's self-image and its public image abroad. The findings were to be summarized in a textual and spatial exhibition design. In a two-step process with fifty-nine international submissions from interdisciplinary teams (mandatorily comprising architects, planners, and artists), ten finalists qualified for the second phase, which concluded in September 2015. The jury chose four prizewinning competition entries, listed here in ranking order: *Expedition27*, *Offshore*, *Par quatre chemins*, and *La Suisse Orientale*.[6] These were chosen by the jury as the entries that gave the best solutions for how to (re)define identities.

This paper investigates how these top four winning entries to the concept competition use landscape practices (as one part of our building culture) as a means to construct collective identities.[7] Although this exhibition is planned for the year 2027, the competition entries show how identities are possibly constructed today. It becomes clear that they balance local and global, as well as regional and national scales. Potentially, the proposal of this paper can inform the various design processes of today's built environment in a globalized world.

6 Markus Schaefer, *Expedition27: Drei Landschaften, zwei Welten, ein Abenteuer*, in collaboration with H. Hosoya, S. Dagnija, E. Reinhardt, L. Krupp, P. Bachmann, L. Schweingruber, R. Winogrond, D. Valentini, and S. Enemaerke (Zurich: Hosoya Schaefer Architects, 2015, www.hosoyaschaefer.com); Daniel Zamarbide, *Offshore*, in collaboration with L. Banchini, S. Burger, D. de Roulet, D. Dietz, and P. A. Hug (Geneva: Bureau A, 2015, www.a-bureau.com); Thomas K. Keller, *Par quatre chemins*, in collaboration with J. Steiner, R. Ilien, J. Gees, F. Burri, and C. Richli (St. Gallen: Thomas. K. Keller Architekten, 2015, www.thomas-k-keller.com); Christoph Kellenberger, *La Suisse Orientale*, in collaboration with A. Derrer, N. Bärtsch, D. Pokora, P. Schaerer, and M. Thoma (Zurich: OOS AG, 2015, www.oos.com).

7 The competition curators aim to reconstruct Swiss identities in relation to neighbouring countries. However, the competition entries address not only Swiss but also global, regional, or local identities that do not necessarily correspond to national borders. Therefore, I will not stick to national identities in this paper but instead refer to collective identities.

Following Philipp Mayring, one of the co-founders of qualitative content analysis[8] for the social sciences, I approached the data by conducting a qualitative document analysis of the top four winning entries, each consisting of five large-scale posters in DIN A0 format, a thirty-page essay, and a jury protocol. As a first step, I employed the summary as a qualitative analysis technique, in order to achieve an overview of the research material and to comprehend the competition entries' understanding of identity. As a second step, I inductively developed categories that show how landscape practices are used for constructing identities.

Before elaborating on how the competition entries construct identities through landscape practices at various scales, I first embed the concept of identity within theory and relate it to the four competition entries.

IDENTITY AND THE FOUR COMPETITION ENTRIES FOR *EXPO2027*

In the context of this article, identity is understood as a product of the dialectic between the individual and society that is dynamically constructed at the personal and collective level, as well as contextually bound.[9] Identities are not rigid entities that have been preserved for decades. They are not individual characteristics; they are nothing natural or given. As social geographer Andreas Pott states, identities are "contingent, unstable, fluid, changeable, and hybrid, often contradictory forms. Identity is a matter of negotiation, a struggle for meaning within discourses, power operations, social relations, or networks".[10] Cultural scientist Susanne Hauser describes identities as discursive formations (*Diskursformationen*), which are negotiated through local communication structures: through shared experiences of everyday life, by shaping collective social practices, or by jointly experiencing emotionally important events.[11] Likewise, the authors of the competition entry *Expedition27* invite visitors of *Expo2027* to convey their own identities. They pursue this goal by designing an adventure trip: *Expedition27*. Three thematic rail loops, which connect at one

8 Philipp Mayring, *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse: Grundlagen und Techniken* (Weinheim: Beltz, 2010).

9 Orietta Angelucci von Bogdandy, *Zur Ökologie einer europäischen Identität. Soziale Repräsentationen von Europa und dem Europäer-Sein in Deutschland und Italien* (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2003), 34; Christiane Marxhausen, *Identität – Repräsentation – Diskurs: Eine handlungsorientierte linguistische Diskursanalyse zur Erfassung raumbezogener Identitätsangebote* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2010), 46.

10 "Identitäten [...] sind kontingente, unstabile, flüssige, wandelbare und hybride, oft widersprüchliche Formen. Identität ist Verhandlungssache, ein Kampf um Bedeutungen innerhalb von Diskursen, Machtoperationen, sozialen Beziehungen oder Netzen." Andreas Pott, "Identität und Raum: Perspektiven nach dem Cultural Turn," in *Kulturelle Geographien, zur Beschäftigung mit Raum und Ort nach dem Cultural Turn*, eds. C. Berndt and R. Pütz (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2007), 28. All translations are by the author unless stated otherwise.

11 Susanne Hauser, "Identitäten," in *Ästhetik der Agllomeration*, eds. S. Hauser and C. Kamleithner (Wuppertal: Müller und Busmann, 2006), 184-211.

central point, enable the visitors to experience all three cantons and landscape regions of Eastern Switzerland. This journey is part of the collective life story of Switzerland and the individual life stories of the visitors. The authors describe *Expo2027* as "the Expo of Living Space" (*die Expo des Lebensraums*) and hence equate identity with "life story" (*Lebenserzählung*).

Through these discursive formations, the past is integrated into a present in which experiences are pooled, consolidated narratively, and situated in the here and now. Building on sociologist Maurice Halbwachs' notion of collective memory (*la mémoire collective*), Jan Assmann developed a theory about cultural memory in the 1990s. According to Assmann, collective identities are made up of common memories, forming identity-specific knowledge structures.[12] Thus, a collective knows about its unity and its peculiarity, and this knowledge creates its identities. Likewise, the authors of the competition entry *Par quatre chemins* refer to Swiss collective memory. They describe the Swiss National Exhibition as "an identity-defining generational ritual, a historical reference"[13] that transfers contemporary identities into traditions. They envisage a fallow at Lake Constance called *Utopia*, which is to be the centre of the *Expo2027* venues, and which leads to four thematic routes throughout Eastern Switzerland which connect traditional and contemporary practices.

Furthermore, Halbwachs stated that nothing would stick in our minds unless it was actually preserved by the material environment that surrounds us.[14] Pragmatic philosopher George Herbert Mead, among others, assumed that physical objects also participate in the formation of human identities.[15] Because a human can think symbolically, he argues, he or she transfers social significance to his or her human or material counterpart (this is what Mead and Charles William Morris called "symbolic interactionism").[16] Accordingly, it is not the physical object but its symbolic meanings, the evoked associations and memories, which a human uses in the course of his or her experiences of his or her identities. Daniel Stokols and Sally Ann Shumaker describe these

12 Assmann, "Collective Memory and Cultural Identity," 125-33.

13 "ein identitätsstiftendes Generationenritual, eine zeitgeschichtliche Referenz", competition entry *Par quatre chemins*, 2015.

14 Maurice Halbwachs, La mémoire collective (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950).

15 Among others see: Susan Clayton and Susan Opotow, *Identity and the Natural Environment: The Psychological Significance of Nature* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003); Norberg-Schulz, *Genius loci*.

16 George Herbert Mead and Charles William Morris, *Geist, Identität und Gesellschaft aus der Sicht des Sozialbehaviorismus* (Frankfurt a.M: Suhrkamp, 2008 [1968]).

location- and setting-related symbolic features as "social imageability",[17] for even the built environment can contribute to constructing identities. This form of identity, derived from people's built environment, is called "place identity" by Prohansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff.[18]

Similarly, the authors of the competition entry *Offshore* use place identity (specifically in connection to lakes) to define identities. They want to construct a global "lake identity" (*Seeidentität*), which they depict as a lake culture, whose characteristics are shared by all lake inhabitants in the world. Hence, they describe identities with cultural focuses that are not purely national, but rather transnational. Specifically, the authors aim at integrating into *Expo2027* lakes that border several nations: international lakes. Floating pavilions are to be built on all of these lakes. For the exhibition in 2027, they will be combined to form an island on Lake Constance, an offshore archipelago. The authors of the competition entry *La Suisse Orientale* also describe identity as being shaped by regions and landscapes. They use the overarching notion of identity as a "value of places, regions, and the abstract magnitude of a 'nation'".[19] They want to renegotiate these values in the forest, on the lake, and in the mountains on three stages that are connected with passages.

FOUR PRACTICES OF CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY THROUGH LANDSCAPE

As mentioned, Swiss identity has previously been presented as a cultural entity requiring preservation. In the 1896, 1914, and 1939 exhibitions, curators recreated stereotypical Swiss villages featuring traditional architecture, rituals, and costumes. For *Expo2027*, however, rather than displaying clichéd Swiss imagery, the authors of the competition entries designed cultural practices that deconstruct and reconstruct the notion of Swiss identity on various scales. My focus here lies on the use of landscape as a part of cultural production. I discuss four landscape practices – creating imagery, moving, mapping, and reading borders through landscape – and offer various readings of how these

17 Daniel Stokols and Sally Ann Shumaker, "People in Places: A Transactional View of Settings," in *Cognition, Social Behaviour, and the Environment*, ed. J. Harvey (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1981), 441-80.

18 Harold M. Prohansky, Abbe K. Fabian, and Robert Kaminoff, "Place-identity: Physical World Socialization of the Self," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* (1983), 57-83.

19 "Wertigkeit von Orten, Regionen und der abstrakten Grösse 'Nation'", competition entry *La Suisse Orientale*, 2015.

practices function in the construction of identities.

Fig. 1
Competition entry *Expedition27* projects the question "Where do we come from?" onto the mountain landscape
Image courtesy of Markus Schaefer et al.

Creating imagery through landscape

Landscape plays a central role in all of the competition entries for *Expo2027*. The authors describe landscape as either real or fictitious narrative; for example, "landscapes and moods tell stories of nature, culture and human beings, on which the ideas of our future are based".[20] Interestingly, landscape itself becomes the protagonist of *Expo2027* in all four top entries. All of them respond to landscape's geography by asking three basic questions: "Where do we come from?", "Who are we?", and "Where are we going?". The "mountain landscape" (*Berglandschaft*, example depicted in Fig. 1) is illustrated as a metaphor for origin, history, and myth, and it embodies the narrative stability. The "urban landscape" (*Stadtlandschaft*, example depicted in Fig. 2) is illustrated as a metaphor for the present, agglomeration, highways, cultural landscapes, agriculture, technology, and conurbation. The "lake landscape" (*Seelandschaft*, example depicted in Fig. 3) is illustrated as a metaphor for future development, internationality, outlook, and borders. The different entries transfer social significance onto landscape elements: immovable mountains and primitive rocks stand for origin and stability; settlement,

20 "Die Landschaftsbilder und Stimmungen erzählen Geschichten von Natur, Kultur und Mensch, auf denen die Vorstellungen unserer Zukunft gründen." Competition entry *Par quatre chemins*, 2015.

Fig. 2
Competition entry *Expedition27*
projects the question "Who are
we?" onto the urban landscape
Image courtesy of Markus Schaefer
et al.

Fig. 3
Competition entry *La Suisse
Orientale* projects the question
"Where are we going?" onto the
lake landscape
Image courtesy of Christoph
Kellenberger et al.

agglomeration, and crossroads stand for community, changeability, and encounter; water, lake, and coast stand for departure, arrival, exchange, and permeability. In these proposals landscape embodies both character and the identity of a region.

The authors of *Expedition27* regard the National Exhibition as a grand narrative with a collection of interrelated side stories. In their designs these side stories are stages along the path taken by the visitor, providing a beginning, middle, and end to the grand narrative. This narrative centres on the existential questioning of origin and direction. In response to the three basic questions mentioned above, the authors develop a second narrative strand that extends from the past to the present, and into the future. The responses locate the visitors in the here and now. For them, landscapes possess the ability to "position us in the great scales of space and time. [...] Stories – whether an Alpine legend or a science fiction novel – create identity and orientation. *Expedition27* will lead through narratives that emanate from landscape, and through those which are implanted in it".[21] The various stories are collected by the authors in the Writer's Room, a narrative device that processes and transforms everything into a myth. Through archiving, experiences can be made accessible in the future and thus return to collective memory.

Moving through landscape

Reading from the competition entries, landscapes leave their mark on the inhabitants and shape them by virtue of their specific characteristics. Landscapes – be it a mountainous, urban, or lake landscape – determine (mountainous-/urban-/lake-) cultural space. The inhabitants of a landscape, in turn, also appropriate it through their means of transport, which in the competition entries is represented by the exhibition routes, and their specific and individual links. Itinerancy is an essential part of the atmospheric exhibition experience. In the competition entry *Offshore*, the exhibition is placed on the water, which subsequently also becomes the meeting point for all visitors. Its liquid surface is the primary transportation route, and visitors reach the archipelago on Lake Constance in a "special, silent gliding way, such as water transport embodies. [...] This uncertainty of unpredictable, slow movements is the identity of this space".[22] By adapting to the movement of the lake's spatial characteristics, the visitors become part of the space itself. As the

21 "verorten uns in den grossen Massstäben von Raum und Zeit. [...] Erzählungen – ob Alpensage oder Science-Fiction Roman – stiften Identität und Orientierung. Die Expedition 27 wird durch Narrative führen, die der Landschaft abgelauscht sind, und durch solche, die ihr eingepflanzt werden." Competition entry *Expedition27*, 2015.

22 "besondere, leise Weise gleitend, wie sie Wassertransport an sich hat. [...] Dieses ungewisse Treiben von unvorhersehbaren, langsamen Bewegungen ist die Identität dieses Raumes." Competition entry *Offshore*, 2015.

authors of *Offshore* explain, "[t]his introductory experience of navigation is essential to the overall atmosphere of the exhibition. Even before the visitor reaches the exhibition offshore, he [sic] has already dived into the expanse of the lakescape".[23] *Fleet 2027*, the transport fleet used to reach the archipelago in the middle of the Lake Constance, foregrounds these properties of water transportation. It also complements the landscape with both traditional and contemporary transportation methods. Via individual paths and unique experiences, the visitors appropriate the *Expo2027* area and thus experience place identity.

Mapping the landscape

The Dufour Map, the first accurate geographic map of the Swiss Nation, was developed for the first Swiss National Exhibition, held in 1883 in Zurich.[24] This bird's eye view, which allowed visitors to orient and position themselves, was an attraction at the time, since it was not until the 1890s that the balloonist Eduard Spelterini published the first aerial photographs of Switzerland. The geographical representation of the nation, and at the same time its demarcation from the neighbouring countries, were used to outline a political unity. This was intended to promote a Swiss feeling of togetherness. The viewer would identify this geographical space as his or her home. As such, this map played a central role in the construction of Swiss national identity.

The authors of *Expedition27* refer to the method of measurement used by Henri Dufour: triangulation. In this method, three geodetic control points, usually placed on mountains or towers, are determined in order to triangularly measure their distances and relative positions within the territory (Fig. 4). The authors translate this method into a contemporary mapping of the exposition site. In *Expedition27*, they employ "narrative triangulation" (*narrative Triangulation*) to place control points from history, experiences, or imagination in relation to physical places. This reveals connections that, in turn, promote affiliations, cross-community spaces, and interconnections. The landscape

23 "Diese einleitende Erfahrung der Navigation gehört wesentlich zur gesamtheitlichen Atmosphäre der Ausstellung. Noch bevor der Besucher die Ausstellung Offshore erreicht, ist er schon in die Weite der Seelandschaft eingetaucht." (Ibid.)

24 David Gugerli and Daniel Speich, *Topografien der Nation: Politik, kartografische Ordnung und Landschaft im 19. Jahrhundert* (Zurich: Chronos, 2002), 12.

already incorporates stories, the associations with which can lead to distant times and fictions. Each visitor is given a personal map to visualize their own expedition and to chart connections and affiliations beyond national borders. Thus, they keep track of their experiences, stories, and places, and write these into their personal 'life story' (which the authors of *Expedition27* equate with identity). Whereas moving through landscape tethers the visitors to a specific location, mapping connects local spaces with distant experiences. In contrast to the Dufour Map, which depicted Switzerland as a demarcated country, the narrative triangulation of *Expedition27* enables the visitors to construct identities beyond Swiss borders. Thus, the exhibition experience challenges the production of identity that only affiliates national or regional boundaries.

Fig. 4
Mountaintop geodetic control point for triangulating the territory
Photograph by the author

25 "die Ostschweiz neu zu lesen und zu erkunden", competition entry *La Suisse Orientale*, 2015.

In a similar sense, the authors of *La Suisse Orientale* call on the viewer to "read and explore Eastern Switzerland anew".[25] This call for a reorientation is amplified graphically by depicting the *Expo2027* region, Eastern Switzerland, on a map in an east–west rather than a north–south orientation (Fig. 5). Because of this change in perspective, the viewer must reorient him or herself to (newly) comprehend the places and their connections to various landscape elements. The promising name of the competition entry, *La Suisse Orientale*,

supports this interpretation. The Orient, or the East, is a mythical region from an Occidental point of view. Eastern Switzerland could also be regarded in relation to the Occident (Western Switzerland), thus opening up new relational interpretations. Spaces that are traditionally considered to be important (such as the Alps) and generic spaces (such as agglomerations) are reinterpreted by the authors and given new connotations.[26] At the same time, borders are reconceived from different perspectives, thus potentially overcoming the narrowing boundaries of a nation. By creating new spatial imagery, reinterpreting old spatial imagery, and putting these into new contexts, the authors attempt to reshape discourses about Eastern Switzerland. In this sense, *La Suisse Orientale* deconstructs and reconstructs identities through a landscape practice.
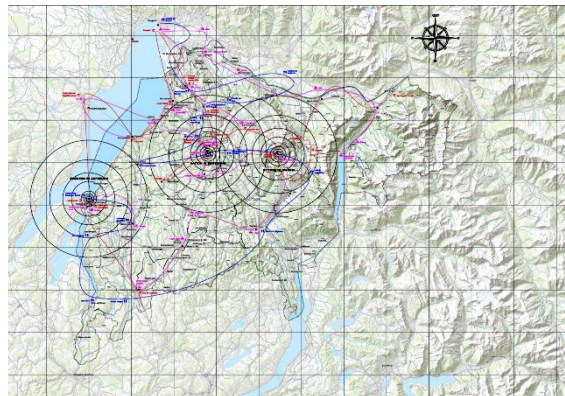

Fig. 5
Competition entry *La Suisse Orientale* oriented the *Expo2027* site with east at the top
Image courtesy of Christoph Kellenberger et al.

Reading borders through landscape

In order to understand one's collective's identities, it is important to understand one's position within society. Spatial demarcation is a key element of this self-understanding. It is worth noting that none of the competition entries define Eastern Switzerland in terms of cantons; neither do they define Switzerland in terms of its national entity. Instead, they chose three landscape zones (urban, lake, and mountain landscapes: see *Creating imagery through landscape*) as demarcations that run across domestic and international borders. Geography

26 Detlev Ipsen, "Was trägt der Raum zur Entwicklung von Identität bei?," in *Dortmunder Beiträge zur Raumplanung 98, Räume der Identität – Identität der Räume*, ed. Sabine Thabe (Dortmund: IRPUD, 1999), 150-59.

knows no administrative territories. Lake Constance does not define the national border through its shoreline, but via an open border area. Neither the summits of the Alps, nor their valleys, define the national border. Finally, the urban landscape does not geographically end at the Rhine, but reaches the agglomeration of the Alpine Rhine Valley. Thus, I argue, the authors of the competition entries do not construct a single national identity, but redefine identity around local and regional aspects that one finds in landscape zones. Consequently, they read borders through landscapes instead of through nations, and thus establish "affiliation rather than territorial integrity, narratives rather than demarcation, cross-community spaces and international relations rather than one-dimensional administrative territories, and (inter) regional references rather than uniqueness and homogeneity".[27]

The authors of *Offshore* go one step further and situate Switzerland within a global context by looking not for national similarities, but for similarities that are based on shared landscapes, here the international lake landscape: "Let us take a distance from our surroundings, let us detach from our lake water level, to discover other bluish mirror images. We will see that at a global level, similarities and differences among the lakes are part of a new identity, [one that is] less narrow, more open. We do not call this globalization but globality, the positive side of a humanism that is neither colonial nor solely oriented towards the West".[28] This community is found among the lakeshore inhabitants of all fifty-six international lakes around the world. "Lake-dwellers" (*Seeanwohner*) or "lakeside residents" (*Seeuferbewohne*r) are linked to a global "lake community" (*Seegemeinschaft*), making them "lake-cousins" (*Seecousins*).[29] By defining a global lake culture, I argue, the authors create a mental bond among lakeside inhabitants. The definition of a community (and, at the same time, dissociation from those who do not belong to this landscape) creates a sense of belonging that constructs collective identities.

But the authors of *Offshore* also physically connect the fifty-six international

27 "Zugehörigkeit statt territoriale Integrität, Erzählung statt Grenzziehung, gemeindeübergreifende Räume und internationale Beziehungen statt eindimensionale administrative Territorien sowie (über)regionale Bezüge statt Eindeutigkeit und Homogenität", competition entry *Expedition27*, 2015.

28 "Nehmen wir also Distanz zu unserer Umgebung, entfernen wir uns von unserem Seespiegel, um andere bläuliche Spiegelbilder zu entdecken. Wir werden sehen, dass auf globaler Ebene Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen den Seen Teil einer neuen Identität sind, weniger eng gefasst, offener. Wir nennen das nicht Globalisierung, sondern Globalität, die positive Seite eines Humanismus, der weder kolonial noch einzig auf den Westen ausgerichtet ist." Competition entry *Offshore*, 2015.

29 Ibid.

lakes: the lakeside residents of each will build and install floating platforms on the lakes they inhabit in advance of *Expo2027*. These will function as information platforms for the Swiss National Exhibition, and will later be transferred to Lake Constance to form the offshore archipelago. Thus, they are already part of the upcoming exhibition on Lake Constance and create the spirit and the essence of the archipelago experience: the lake identity. Through the building process, they write their place identity into the built matter.[30] Hence, these swimming pavilions physically and mentally link the lakeside residents of these international lakes and their visitors with the inhabitants of Switzerland and the visitors to *Expo2027* on Lake Constance, and hence create a global collective identity through the local.
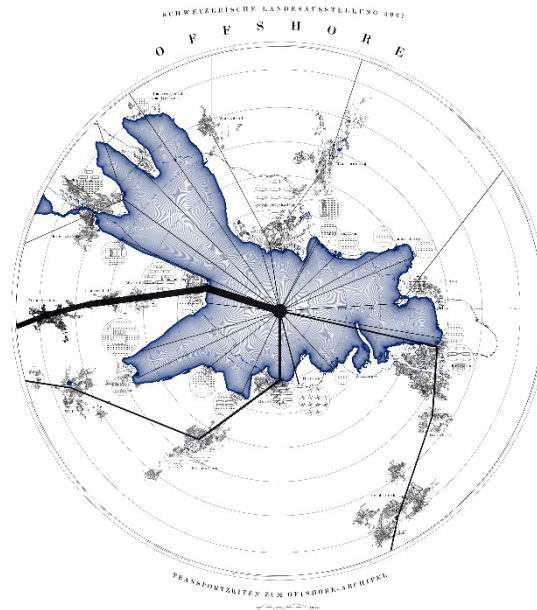

Fig. 6
Competition entry *Offshore* does not show the border, which is normally depicted in maps as a line, here Image courtesy of Daniel Zamarbide et al.

In addition, the authors de-emphasize national borders at the cultural level and create a "cross-border nationality" (*grenzgängerische Nationalität*) between the lake cultures. Since the offshore archipelago drifts in the water, the neighbourhood conditions also unceasingly change and, consequently, so

30 Prohansky, Fabian, and Kaminoff, "Place-identity," 57-83.

too do the borders surrounding them. Like a cloud formation, the archipelago changes constantly. Its boundaries are blurred and without physical connections. Visually, the authors depict their idea of undoing and crossing borders by not showing a borderline in their plans (Fig. 6). By negating national boundaries, I argue, the authors create new ones, namely those on the edge of the lakescape; borders are never removed, but merely shifted.

INTERACTING WITH LANDSCAPE

Following the approach that identity is a discursive formation, landscape can become part of this discourse as shown by the four landscape practices: creating imagery, moving, mapping, and reading borders through landscape. The top four winning competition entries of *Expo2027* attribute a narrative character to landscape that requires the visitors to develop new stories as they pass through it. In the competition entries, this narrative is assumed to be stronger than national borders. Narratives, the entries suggest, redefine the landscape along new borders, engendering in turn new forms of community both on a local (such as the expedition community) and on a global scale (such as a lake community). This process takes the form of an interaction: not only do the designers project a narrative onto the existing landscape, but the landscape's character, atmosphere, and physical shape influences its inhabitants in their ways of thinking and behaviour. By moving through these landscapes, the human being fuses with them, assumes their characteristics, and as a result adapts his or her own cultural practices. Through mapping – understood as a visual and narrative depiction – these practices are recorded and inscribed in personal as well as collective life stories. By creating two worlds (reality and narrative) and simultaneously linking them together (by mapping), the competition entries create new contexts, which can provide explanations and mentally re-locate the participants of the exhibition on local and global scales. By altering people's perspectives of places and by questioning those places, the competition entries achieve a critical discussion, reinterpretation, and

reorientation. This constant transcendence between reality and narrative leads the visitor to a state of reorientation. This helps the expedition community – national and international visitors, designers of the exhibition architecture, as for example the archipelago, or exhibition site's inhabitants – to question their identities, to de- and reconstruct them, and even to design new identities at local and global, as well as regional and national, scales.

The competition entries use physical and mental movement – or in other words travelling – as a means to question and explore Swiss identities: on a local scale through means of transportation, for instance; on a regional and national scale through the Writer's Room, for example; and on a global scale as illustrated through the lake community. Travelling opens up spaces, landscapes, and places, and creates a mental network of the *Expo2027* area that connects reality and fiction as described, for example, by narrative triangulation. Following the authors of *Expedition27*, "landscape is created by movement in space and by the succession of changing perspectives [...] The country is created by a community to become landscape — both physically elaborated and ideally interpreted".[31] Similarly, anthropologist Michael D. Jackson describes travelling as a precondition to form stories of life:

> To say that storytelling moves us, transports us, carries us away, or helps us escape the oppressiveness of our real lives, is to recognize that stories change our experience of the way things are. But stories are not only like journeys because of the effects they have upon us; stories are so commonly and conspicuously about journeys [...] that one may see in journeying one of the preconditions of the possibility of narrative itself.[32]

He describes "being as a mode of journeying" or to put it in other words, journeying (re)constructs identities.[33] Interactions between human and landscape practically never take place from a neutral position. They are

31 "Landschaft entsteht durch Bewegung im Raum und durch die Folge stets wechselnder Blickwinkel und deren Triangulation. Sie benötigt ein mobiles und handelndes Subjekt. Das Land wird durch eine Gemeinschaft gemeinsam zur Landschaft geschaffen – sowohl physisch bearbeitet, wie auch ideell gedeutet." Competition entry *Expedition27*, 2015.

32 Michael D. Jackson, *The Politics of Storytelling: Violence, Transgression, and Intersubjectivity* (Copenhagen: Museum Musculanum Press, 2013 [2002]), 48-49.

33 Ibid., 48.

characterized by interests and power relations that arise from different perspectives and cultural understandings, as described by writer and activist Rebecca Solnit:

> [Landscapes] have political as well as aesthetic dimensions; on the small-scale they involve real estate and sense for place, on the large scale they involve nationalism, war, and the grounds for ethnic identity. [...] [Landscape is] not just where we picnic but also where we live and die. It is where our food, water, fuel, and minerals come from, where our nuclear waste and shit and garbage go to, it is the territory of dreams, somebody's homeland, somebody's gold mine.[34]

The competition entries also deal with the conflict between cultural understandings, power relations, and stereotypes. Typically, the picturesque Alpine Switzerland as a territory of dreams is opposed to Switzerland's generic midlands as industrial production space. To overcome this ambiguity, the competition entries use landscape to break up habitual patterns of thinking and to perceive Switzerland from a different angle: the Alpine region as a lovely and at the same time life-threatening mountain landscape; the agglomeration as a green settlement area with potential and, at the same time, ugly-spoiled industrial space; the lake as a separating border region and, at the same time, unifying cultural area. *Expo2027*, I argue, is a moment of an exceptional state when familiarity can be put into new light, to rethink and finally to reconstruct identities. Derelict spaces can be redefined around aesthetic qualities. The competition entry *Expedition27*, for instance, uses the Schönwüeschte Chläuse of the Appenzell New Year's Eve tradition to symbolize today's dichotomy between the "naturally archaic ('wüescht')" and the "technological civilized ('beautiful')". In this figurine (Fig. 7), landscape as a physical and mental construction can be seen as a starting point for a mutual interaction between human and landscape.

34 Rebecca Solnit, *As Eve Said to the Serpent: On Landscape, Gender, and Art* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003), 10-11.

CONCLUSION

Fig. 7
The Schönwüeschte Silvesterchläuse depicted by the competition entry *Expedition27* representing the naturally archaic and the technologically civilized
Image courtesy of Markus Schaefer et al.

Especially during world and national exhibitions, this interaction can help to reflect upon a collective's identities. Recently, Derk Jan Stobbelaar and Bas Pedroli observed that regional identity is suppressed by national identity in order to maintain national unity. However, "in times when the world is getting smaller [...] people are keen to identify with their local environment, in which they feel the basis of their regional identity. Thus, globalization increases the need for the regional identity".[35] However, I propose to work with both notions instead of placing these in opposition. Thus, talking about local identities does not negate global identities; nor do regional identities contradict national identities. Identity is never an entity but a construction that allows for fluidity and versatility. Landscape – as one part of our building culture – can help to overcome the dichotomy between local and global, as well as regional and national scales by looking at them as contrasting juxtapositions that mutually support one another. A lake landscape can create a lake identity that appears

35 Derk Jan Stobbelaar and Bas Pedroli, "Persectives on Landscape Identity: A Conceptual Challenge," *Landscape Research* 36 (2011), 330.

all over the world. Hence, it is a global phenomenon, located locally, that can define a region and connect bordering as well as distant nations. Groups are formed by many different identities. They are not comprised of one single identity, but potentially by local, regional, national, as well as global identities at the same time. Interacting with landscape can help link the different scales of identity construction. As proposed in this paper, the four identified landscape practices – creating imagery, moving, mapping, and reading borders through landscape – show design strategies to construct fluid identities at local and global as well as regional and national scales. Those proposals can potentially inform the many design processes of our social and built environment in today's globalized world.[36]

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