Part II: Ethnicised Heritage Situations as a Hands-on Model to Study Pluralised Heritagisation

The supposed homogeneity and lack in diversity of small towns have been questioned by researchers from the field of small-town research and transnational mobility scholars. Small towns are, in fact, embedded in global space and shaped by forms of mobility, whether as international migration or residential mobilities, though in ways that might be different from bigger cities. Bryson et al. (2021) call to study the 'extraordinary geography of ordinary towns' as an under-researched site of globalisation and mobility as well as places of cultural diversity. As opposed to more densely populated areas and metropolitan areas, culture in small towns tends to be self-organised and not dominated by a cultural institutional landscape of theatres and museums. Political participation is, similarly, often deeply entrenched within everyday social life and less institutionalised, with individuals using the short ways between different relevant actors such as the municipality, local associations and political parties. Just as all spaces, small towns are shaped by forms of government regulation and policy regimes and co-constructed by the agency and imaginations of its inhabitants. They are socially constructed, rather than territorial spaces. Cultural diversity, as for example represented in ethnicised cultural festivals and associations in small towns, often reproduces national cultural repertoires in ways that might surprise migration scholars focusing on big cities. This does not mean, though, that processes of ethnicisation do not at times also resist the nation and question dominant majority culture.

Ethnicised Heritage Situations, a middle-range theory developed in this study, is a holistic analytical framework that allows for such study of small-town cultural diversity and processes of heritagisation therein. On the one hand, cultural heritage functions as a form of governance in regimes. On the other hand, heritagisation is a social process taking the form of everyday (e)valuations and categorisations in the small-town residents' lives whenever they employ (e)valuation criteria akin to a cultural heritage repertoire.

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Ethnicised Heritage Situations encompass the analysis of these two theoretical nodes that have to be imagined as two sides of a continuum of processes of (e)vlauation. Heritage regimes operate as worldmaking aspects of heritagisation in Ethnicised Heritage Situations, and everyday (e)valuations operate as its sensemaking aspects. The two perspectives are theoretically enriched by repertoire theory approaches in sociology and the study of heritage regimes in Critical Heritage Studies (chapters 5.2 and 5.3).

The sociological approach to the analysis of situations that makes it possible to study both aspects simultaneously and in their interaction is centrally shaped by Situational Analysis as developed by Adele Clarke. This pragmatist, post-structuralist, and feminist version of grounded theory methodology is, as Clarke herself is keen to point out, more than a method (although it is also that) and more than a methodology (it is also that). Instead, she describes SA as a research programme composed of a 'theory-method package' (Clarke et al. 2018: 15), signifying that epistemology and ontology are 'joined at the hip' (Clarke 2005: 15).

In Situational Analysis, the definition of the situation is different from more classical sociological understandings, where the situation is an empirically observable face-to-face moment to be reconstructed according to the definition of the situation of people observed in the field. Instead, in Situational Analysis, the definition of the situation and its boundaries are defined by the researcher in the research process, that, therefore, needs to be centrally shaped by the researcher's reflexivity.

All things often considered in classical sociological approaches as context to concrete research situations, such as discourses and constructions of collective actors, organisational elements, non-human elements, the local and the global, and so on, in Situational Analysis form specific relations within the situation of research. In Clarke's words:

> To clarify, in SA, a situation is not merely a moment in time, a narrow spatial or temporal unit or a brief encounter or event (or at least rarely so). Instead, it usually involves a somewhat enduring arrangement or relations among many different kinds and categories of elements that have its own ecology. (2018:17)

The concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations entails and is built upon Clarke's understanding of the situation (chapter 5.4) as is the overall methodological approach of analysis in this study (chapter 6).

Ethnicised Heritage Situations also shares many commonalities with the Critical Heritage Studies field and the perspective of Laurajane Smith (2006), whose foundational text in the field situates heritage not as being passively received from the past or solely about a consensus version of history implemented by state regulation. Rather 'heritage may also be a resource that is used to challenge and redefine received values and identities by a range of subaltern groups' (Smith 2006: 4).

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Ethnicised Heritage Situations recognises the agency of individuals, as conceptualised by the approach of repertoires of evaluation (Lamont and Thévenot 2000). It departs from a focus on the active, mindful, and therefore strategic and intentional use of cultural heritage by individuals and collective actors. By assuming that all cultural endeavours in postmodernity entail moments of reflexivity, Ethnicised Heritage Situations questions the metacultural form of heritage and instead conceptualises it on a continuum from everyday forms of (e)valuation to more generalised and institutionalised ones. Cultural heritage is a resource, a repertoire for producing membership and belonging.

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5. World- and Sensemaking in the (E)valuation of Cultural Endeavours for Symbolic Boundary Making

The local newspaper in Cuxhaven introduces the annual Fatima procession as a representation of the town's Portuguese guest workers' tarditions. In doing so, it engages in processes of worldmaking, of evaluating the festival by reifying dominant discourses about the Portuguese minority in Germany as one of its so-called guest workers and defining the festival as a cultural heritage of the town. If one, however, participates in said procession, one encounters definitions of the situations quite different from those stated in the newspaper. Individuals' sensemaking that values their volunteer participation in this cultural endeavour shows no sign of connection to a history of work migration in the 1960s, as they only immigrated in the 1990s. People tend to foreground the collective effort of organising the festival as a social event, rather than as a representation of some common tradition. This coexistence of world- and sensemaking in processes of heritagisation is difficult to grasp for approaches from Critical Heritage Studies, which tend to overemphasise either the power of local grassroots sensemaking or of the domination of heritage governance over such sensemaking followed by processes of alienation, and, most importantly, thereby, address the two as opposites. The contribution of the concept of the situation by Situational Analysis as a socoiologial 'theory-method package' (Clarke 2012) gives the conceptual freedom to stay much closer to the complexity of the empirical world in which both world- and sensemaking shape culture and heritagisation in pluralised societies.

To take situations as the main units of empirical analysis also prevents starting an analysis of ethnicised heritages from their supposed bearers, reifying specific communities of migrants or people generally in the analysis. Instead, ethnicisation is but one form of symbolic boundary making that takes place in the (e)valuation of cultural endeavours, understood as a situation in the sociological sense.

Insights and theoretical concepts from the Sociology of Valuations and Evaluation centrally shape this viewpoint (Kjellberg and Mallard 2013; Lamont and Thévenot 2000). Two definitional features of cultural heritage are relevant to my conceptual framework in this context: The supposed metacultural nature of heritage and its form as a situated practice. Both these features lead me to develop

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an understanding of cultural heritage as a process and practice of (e)valuation in everyday lifeworlds – sensemaking on the one hand, and of heritage as a process of (e)valuation of already existing orders of worth – worldmaking, on the other hand. Following these insights, I introduce the concepts of heritage regimes and heritage as a repertoire of evaluation as my conceptual framework to study heritage from both angles.

The distinction between heritage as a world- and sensemaking is grounded in the Sociology of Valuations and Evaluation, wherein the focus is set on how (e)valuations come into being as a process, and a distinction is drawn between two types of (e)valuation processes. On the one hand, (e)valuation is a process that is imminent to orders of worth (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), wherein these are reproduced, and people and objects are classified and put in relation to one another. On the other hand, (e)valuation can also mean that orders of worth are generated first (Krüger and Reinhart 2016:492). Cultural sociologist Lamont (2012:205) takes this distinction and discusses valuation as a practice of *'giving worth or value,'* constructing order, and evaluation, which *'assesses how an entity attains a specific type of worth'*. Here, the world is (e)valuated according to established dominant orders. Hans Kjellberg and Alexandre Mallard (2013:16) were the ones to term the distinction one of world- and sensemaking in the opening editorial of the then-new Journal of Valuation Studies.[1]

Delineating between the sensemaking and worldmaking aspects of heritage is crucial for analysis, as highlighted by two key features in theoretical accounts of the cultural heritage category. Firstly, a consensus within the Critical Heritage Studies field posits that intangible heritage results from metacultural operations (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). In the initial segment of my argument, I expound upon this perspective and articulate my stance toward a prevalent assertion in Critical Heritage Studies regarding heritage's emergence from metacultural operations. I assert that heritage serves as a metacultural force in worldmaking due to the generalisation and institutionalisation of specific criteria for evaluation within heritage regimes (Bendix et al. 2012). Secondly, I demonstrate that another fundamental characteristic of heritage, namely its status as a situated practice, entails processes of classification and (e)valuation in everyday life, rendering it a force of sensemaking. The concept of repertoires of evaluation (Lamont and Thévenot 2000) is the theoretical perspective I introduce across this type of (e)valuation process.

1 Although I do explicitly distinguish between world- and sensemaking in this thesis, I also consider both processes deeply intertwined. It is for this reason that I write of "(e)valuation".

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5.1 Heritage as a Social Process of Worldmaking and Sensemaking

> 'What the heritage protocols do not generally account for is a conscious, reflexive subject. […] Performers are carriers, transmitters and bearers of tradition, terms which connote a passive medium, conduit or vessel, without volition, intention or subjectivity' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004: 58).

The notion of heritage as metacultural is coined by anthropologist Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2004), who explains how the UNESCO listing of Intangible Cultural Heritage extends museological values and methods to living persons that it brings into this realm and who, thereby, become metacultural themselves. In this sense, it is quite paradoxical that by preserving heritage as living cultural practice, UNESCO and other heritage institutions fix and musealise them, thereby, creating something new out of what were customary cultural practices or popular culture. Heritage, in this understanding, is culture's second life, a reflexive form of culture, as Ulrich Kockel (2007) writes in his distinction of traditions from heritage. The reflexivity of heritage refers to how heritage interventions change people's relation to their cultural surroundings, where they gain a reflexive, more strategic or instrumental relation to it. This creates a sort of view from the outside; according to anthropologist Valdimar Hafstein, 'the distance this introduces between the subject and itself enables the recognition of the collective subject of cultural heritage: the cultural "we"' (2012: 514).

A minor strand of Critical Heritage Studies scholars convincingly questions the metacultural nature of heritage by arguing that all culture is metacultural in (post)modernity, thereby calling into question the existence of two empirically or analytically separable modes of culture (Bendix 2011: 6; Tauschek 2011; Tschofen 2012). Regina Bendix notes the amount of time that has passed since Kirshenblatt-Gimblett introduced the notion of metacultural mechanisms in the 1990s, a period in which the number of cultural heritage designations has grown immensely:

> Given the density of heritage nominations and the space they occupy on economic and political stages, I argue in favour of no longer attaching a 'meta' to these processes: They are now themselves part of the cultural toolkit and, considering some actual or becoming World Heritage sites, are more important than the intangible cultural heritages, tangible cultural monuments and cultural landscapes themselves that are to be honoured (Bendix 2011: 6, my translation).

Bernhard Tschofen similarly states that doing culture and doing heritage have become almost congruent in the current age: 'Today (and maybe in modernity in general), the 'metacultural' is the usual mode of application.' (2012: 37).

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Markus Tauschek (2011: 60) builds on German folklore and ritual studies to make an argument that is less time-diagnostic and more theoretical, namely that first and second-hand cultures are identical. There is no metaculture, Tauschek says, only culture. By this he means that reflexive moments concerning cultural practices prevail in scientific contexts and the doings of people on the ground:[2]

> Reflexive aspects that have been produced through metacultural mechanisms can become habitus again and vice versa. This is the way since the invention of tradition culture as a process works. Reflexive traditions are constantly in the flow, involving reflexive and habitual elements that are constantly rearranged (Tauschek 2011: 56).

Kristin Kuutma (2013: 28) argues that the metacultural is permanently embedded in the cultural. Therefore, the new cultural forms created by metacultural heritage regime operations must be seen as permanently embedded in local culture.

I do not follow the above definitional claims of heritage being metacultural in the sense of a reflexive access to or second life of culture. Instead, it is more useful to look to alternative understandings of heritage's metacultural nature as developed by scholars such as Dorothy Noyes (2015) or Pablo Alonso González (2019). These authors do not consider heritage as a second life of an otherwise authentic culture but as a historically specific form of symbolic accumulation by dispossession:

> By virtue of being hailed into ICH [intangible cultural heritage], cultural forms are transformed into comparable objects. When Prince UNESCO comes calling, the slipper must be made to fit a disappearing local dialect, a vibrant communal festival, a suspect healing ritual, a court dance, a style of mask: phenomena at different scales, differently embedded in social life, different in status and visibility, now become the same kind of thing. (Noyes 2015: 300)

To Noyes, understanding heritage as metacultural and how heritage is addressed in public policy is a process in which the incomparable is made comparable, thereby ascribing a global exchange value. Alonso González (2019: 24) provokingly states that UNESCO acts like a central bank, legalising globally interchangeable heritage and producing new forms of sociality.

The process of cultural heritage listings in heritage regimes and the associated (e)valuation criteria are formalised, even under constant negotiation (Brumann 2018). In this understanding of heritage's metacultural nature as assigning it an

2 The idea of all culture being reflexive can also be found in Niklas Luhman (1999), who analysed the very idea of culture being related to the experience of difference and comparisons, and categorizes the idea of culture as a second-order observation and mode of comparison in modernity.

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exchange value, heritage is not a second life or separate reflexive mode of cultural production, but is a specific, powerful generalisation and institutionalisation of what societies consider valuable, an 'outstanding universal value', for example (Schäfer 2016).

Heritage scholar Christoph Brumann (2014b) has already termed elitist and anthropological understandings of culture circulating in UNESCO decision-making processes on heritage listings a process of 'worldmaking'. This term can be usefully theorised for cultural heritage within the Sociology of Valuations and Evaluation, positing such highly institutionalised forms of (e)valuation and their use in the (e)valuation as worldmaking. Heritage regimes (Bendix et al. 2012) are the theoretical concept that are the most helpful in accessing this type of (e)valuation in the research field.

In Critical Heritage Studies, intangible cultural heritage is not merely an officialised system of classification but a continuously and performatively constructed and situated social practice oriented towards the present. This is the second defining feature of cultural heritage: sensemaking.

Tauschek points out that 'what in the context of heritage regimes is called intangible heritage is also performative culture that has very different sociocultural values in and for certain groups.' (2011: 51). Heritage, then, is not primarily about an ordering of the past but about relationships with the present and the future, an active process of assembling objects, places, and practices and a creative engagement with these (Harrison 2013: 4). In other words, it is a process and a value-added or value-laden practice (Ashworth et al. 2007: 3). It is this perspective on heritage as always being situated in practices and practised in situations that makes it a sensemaking force

Tauschek (2011) proposes a 'two-way approach' to studying cultural heritage.[3] He suggests not entirely giving up on the idea of heritage as metacultural operations but being careful to distinguish between concepts (heritage interventions, bureaucratic structures, etc.) that I have described as worldmaking, and content (traditional practices, performances, rituals, etc.) and the relationship between the two as shaped in specific local situations, that I describe as sensemaking.

The equivalent of this understanding of sensemaking in Sociology of Valuations and Evaluation is the practice of giving worth or value (Lamont 2012: 6). This type of (e)valuation in Sociology of Valuations and Evaluation, however, is much less a focus

3 Others do similarly: In an editorial titled "UNESCO on the Ground," Foster invents the notion of 'esocultural' to study how the metacultural intervenes in the cultural: 'what we are trying to unpack is something even tighter, more localized, and more limited—the microcultural or, to coin a term, the esocultural, with the prefix eso- suggesting "within" in contrast to the "above" and "beyond" of meta.' (2015: 146).

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of empirical research. Stefan Hirschauer (2017: 9), therefore, proposes that (e)valuation has to be studied more as a range of fundamental social processes (distinguishing, comparing, categorising, classifying, valuing, evaluating) rather than only particular and standardised modes of assessing, such as rankings, dating platforms, or heritage lists.

In organisational sociology, the concept of sensemaking was introduced by Karl Weick (1995) as how people in organisations co-create reality by retrospectively making sense of situations they find themselves in. Andrew Brown et al. describe it as going beyond meaning-making:

> Sensemaking thus involves not merely interpretation and meaning production but the active authoring of the situations in which reflexive actors are embedded and are attempting to comprehend. People engage in partially overlapping processes in which they construct 'realities' and then retrospectively make sense of them in a continuing dialogue of discovery and invention in which identities and social worlds are concomitantly referenced and fabricated. (2015: 267)

Actors orient their sensemaking along the prevalent criteria of the social worlds they live in, and it is bound to situations such as Ethnicised Heritage Situations. Organisational sociology underlines the agency of actors in situations, as does Sociology of Valuations and Evaluation, for example, in the form of Lamont's and Laurent Thévenot's concept of evaluation repertoires as 'elementary grammars that can be available across situations and that preexist individuals, although they are transformed and made salient by individuals' (2000: 5). Such cultural repertoires are actively employed in individuals' sensemaking.

It is important to clarify that sensemaking and worldmaking in (e)valuation processes interact, and the distinction is often merely analytical. They can be studied empirically not as separate practices but as a continuum of levels of generalisation (Nicolae et al. 2019: 14). As Hirschauer states for the processes of Human Differentiation, *Humandifferenzierung*, which describes lingual, physical, and spatial processes of categorising people and leads to reified memberships in societies:

> Thus, discursively disseminated categorisations can be reflected in habitualized language use or vocabularies that guide everyday interactions and group processes. […]. Everyday categories can also be formalised and systematized through expert discourse and become entrenched in statistics, documents, and administrative settlements that normatively endow categories with validity, making them, in turn, the points of reference for interactions. (2017: 12, my translation)

Such perspective on processes of (e)valuation and catgorisation can be made productive in the study of heritage. Cultural heritage then appears as a highly

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specialised and standardised mode of (e)valuation and classification that finds its way into and is produced by fundamental social processes in everyday lifeworlds. This is specifically useful in understanding how heritage works in the social. I agree with Benjamin Weineck (2015: 8) that a cultural heritage framework's analytical strength in research is precisely being able to study the connection of heritage regimes and governance with individuals and their strategies of classification via cultural repertoires of (e)valuation.

In this study of three small northern German towns, I gathered data from both ends of the continuum of world- and sensemaking, so to say, by adding the concept of cultural repertoires of evaluation and symbolic boundary making as developed by Lamont next to heritage regimes. Lamont's work can be situated within Sociology of Valuations and Evaluation, which already underpinned the insight in this sub-chapter. This conceptual framework allows me to develop the holistic theoretical model of Ethnisiced Heritage Situations as my project's central object of analysis.

5.2 Heritage as a Cultural Repertoire for the Production of Membership

The non-metacultural aspect of culture, meaning a supposedly non-reflexive and everyday form of doing culture within discourses around intangible heritage has been described as a repertoire in heritage research. The notion has been employed by scholars such as Kirschenblatt-Gimblett (2004: 60) and Helmut Anheier and Yudhishthir Raj Isar (2011: 4), who contrast it to notions of archive or repertory, which, in their view, more accurately capture heritage's metacultural essence. Cultural sociologists Lamont and Thévenot, coming from a theoretical tradition of repertoire theory, define repertoires as: 'elementary grammars that can be available across situations and that preexist individuals, although they are transformed and made salient by individuals' (2000: 5). Their concept of 'cultural repertoires of evaluation' does not differentiate between reflexive and non-reflexive forms of employing such repertoires (2000). Different approaches to 'repertoire theory' gained prominence in the 1980s when sociologists sought to understand culture's role in shaping action without deterministic views (Vaisey 2019). Ann Swidler's (1986) article 'Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies' is foundational, proposing that culture acts as a toolkit rather than a set of values directly determining action. [4]

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4 The concept has varied origins across fields. Charles Tilly's 'repertoires of contention' describe known methods of opposing public decisions and are often used in social movement research such as by Della Porta (2013). Mark Steinberg (1999) analysed 19th-century English cotton spinners' discursive repertoires. Debates on cultural repertoire theory have been documented in the Comparative and Historical Sociology Section of the American Sociological Association's newsletter (*Comparative & Historical Sociology* 2002). Ilana Friedrich Silber highlighted the lack of a unified front in repertoire theory, noting differences in theoretical issues

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Cultural repertoires of evaluation can be used to comprehend how individuals value the ethnically marked cultural production in which they are engaged. The concept can also be used to study how membership and a sense of belonging are produced in these processes of (e)valuation. In researching the three small towns, the concept can be used to explore which criteria of (e)valuation people mobilise constitute a heritage repertoire, as understood through intangible heritage. In essence, heritage repertoire criteria are already accessible in the everyday activities of the town inhabitants I met, and they subtly influence their lives. This sensemaking may exhibit commonalities with the worldmaking of heritage regime institutions and discourses to align with in the future.

5.2.1 Heritage as a Cultural Repertoire of Evaluation

Social groups and individuals use repertoires of (e)valuation in various ways, influenced by the social worlds in which they are engaged. They can potentially transform or shift the repertoires, which, as cultural structures, both enable and constrain individual action. Next to Swidlers' conceptualisation of culture as a 'toolkit' (1986), Lamont's and Thévenot's sociologiy of (e)valuation is also explicitly built upon the work of Luc Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) on orders of justification and Lamont's examination of Pierre Bourdieu's work. However, she approaches the question of how people employ cultural systems of classification in action empirically and inductively by essentially not presupposing the stability of such systems and instead study which classifications and orders actually matter in everyday life. In an interview with Anders Hylmö, Lamont describes that the categorisations people employ differ in different societies and geographical spaces (2019: 168). Americans of the upper middle classes do, for example, embrace a cultural laissez-faire different from more rigid classification systems in France.

'National cultural repertoires of evaluation' are a theoretical tool used for comparative cultural sociology that avoid the culturalist pitfalls of more traditional research on national cultural differences (Lamont and Thévenot 2000: 1). Research on national cultural differences traditionally focused on either the universality of the national idea or on the specificity of its cultural manifestations, such as banal nationalism in everyday life (Bonikowski 2017: 149). Lamont and Thévenot (2000: 1) propose a middle-ground solution to these two poles to make possible a non-essentialist form of comparative research: They combine their analysis of national cultural repertoires with a focus on public conflict around multiculturalism or pluralism, thereby focusing on the often conflictual relation of different criteria of (e)valuation in and across repertoires. Mirroring Swidler's toolkits, these provide cultural

and the inclusion of non-discursive practices. Michele Lamont (2012) linked repertoire theory to frame analysis, national narratives and orders of justification.

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tools that are 'unevenly available across situations and national contexts' (Lamont and Thévenot 2000: 1). As Bart Bonikowski states for nationalism research, the main advantage of this assumption is that 'not only is the nation itself [I might add national heritage regimes in my case – D.S.] pervasive and deeply institutionalised, but the same may be true of the range of options available to everyday people for conceptualizing the nation's meaning.' (2017: 164).

In their edited volume, Lamont and Thévenot (2000) present different case studies and reconstruct the saliency of different (e)valuation criteria in the national repertoires of the USA and France. Their analysis of cultural repertoires of evaluation provides structure to these repertoires, identifying the (e)valuation criteria involved in symbolic boundary work. Furthermore, they aim to elucidate when and how individuals draw upon these repertoires to make sense of their everyday lives and to justify their actions.

But while the socio-political power of national repertoires is impactful and persists over time, I agree with Ayelet Banai and Avihu Shoshana (2019: 4) that other repertoires also shape membership formations. This can be in the form of the transnational, such as in global cities or diasporic situations, or in subnational repertoires, in province, region, or district, for example. This study is therefore not only limited to the comparative study of national cultural repertoires but also pays attention to their interrelation with subnational repertoires, such as categories associated with small town repertoires or transnational repertoires, such as heightened in situations of migration.

Applying cultural repertoires of evaluation as a conceptual tool in my research project means taking an inductive empirical approach, which is different from the orders of worth approach by Boltanski and Thévenot (2006). With Lamont (2019: 114), instead of constructing several preliminary criteria of (e)valuation and their associate orders of worth, I look for them in the material 'bottom-up.' Still, global heritage discourse poses some essential hints about what heritage as a repertoire entails, such as approaching cultural heritage with categories of recognition of communities, or economic regional development.

Lamont's and Thévenot's empirical approach to repertoire theory addresses a significant challenge in studying cultural repertoires: the question of their content and inner structure. Many existing repertoire theory approaches struggle to reconcile cultural repertoires' flexibility with the need to establish some organisational principle for these entities (Silber 2003: 432).[5] However, their work provides a solution to this dilemma by empirically delineating criteria of (e)valuation as grammars

5 Silber bemoans that Ann Swidler's toolkit approach provides us with a 'largely unstructured approach, which proposed no internal distinctions or any principle of internal organization that may have guided us, or the actors, in putting some order within their respective "cultural tool-kits".' (Silber 2003: 431).

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for social action. The idea of grammars as a sort of inner logic of repertoires, their content, allows me to address some interesting aspects of how the category of heritage functions. It is possible to move beyond mere constructivist understandings of cultural heritage by identifying and analysing the (e)valuation criteria in cultural heritage repertoires. As Birgit Meyer and Mattijs Port (2018 :3) emphasise, heritage's socially constructed nature should be the starting point, not its end point.

5.2.2 Heritage and the Socio-Symbolic Organisation of Difference: Symbolic Boundaries

Research on ethnicised boundary making often assumes that the specific cultural elements chosen to delineate such boundaries are inconsequential, the 'cultural stuff' – so to say – does not matter at all (Barth 1969: 15). But with the concept of heritage as a cultural repertoire that can be ascribed a number of categories of (e)valuation as the inner structure/grammar, the causal significance of culture for symbolic boundary making emerges. One can then ask how cultural heritage shapes and influences processes of ethnicised boundary making as processes of in- and exclusion.

This research studies Ethnicised Heritage Situations. While I have mainly been discussing my approach to the term heritage, I will now illustrate my use of the term ethnicised. To call it ethnicised and not ethnic is deliberate; it underlines the processual nature of ethnic membership formations that are explicitly not understood as primordial or premodern. As Nathan Glazer and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (1975) see it, the word 'ethnicised' is distinctly modern in the context of group membership formation in multicultural societies. Here, the ethnic groups refer to 'minority or marginal subgroups at the edges of society' (Glazer and Moynihan 1975: 5). The equalisation of ethnicised heritage with minority heritage can also be found in Critical Heritage Studies, where ethnic heritages are marginal to and potentially subvert dominant national heritages. Mathias Bös and Antonio Chiesi (2013: 20) point out that most cultures in nation-states are also ethnic. Claire Alexander et al. (2007) show that in dominant national discourses, ideas of culture, community, and nationhood are often conflated. These discourses ascribe abstract versions of community to ethnic minorities, which are challenged by the concrete communities created through personal networks, friends, and family.

The voluminous literature on cultural repertoires often explores how repertoires contribute to establishing or negotiating ethnic and other symbolic boundaries. In an article examining the phenomenology of ethnicity among Mizrahi Jews in three countries, Shoshana and Banai (2019) offer insight into how dominant cultural repertoires influence the lived experience of ethnicity. Their conceptual framework contributes to studies focusing on migration regimes and bureaucratic encounters by highlighting the role of cultural repertoires in shaping individuals' experiences. Drawing on the work of Richard Alba (2005), Banai and Shoshana (2019: 4) dis-

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tinguish between solid and weak repertoires wherein the former are 'readymade' and the latter are smaller. Similarly, repertoires can be based on bright, that is, unambiguous, boundaries, or on blurred boundaries, wherein there is a zone for people to locate themselves on either side of the boundary.

In the context of my research on sensemaking in Ethnicised Heritage Situations, akin to Michael Billig's (1995) concept of 'banal nationalism', ethnic membership is (re)produced in everyday lifeworlds. However, the significance of ethnic identities may vary, and individuals may not always prioritise or emphasise ethnic affiliations (Zifonun and Muller 2010). Additionally, the mere use of ethnic categories in speech by individuals does not necessarily indicate the presence of collective forms of ethnicised subjectivation (Bohnsack and Nohl 2002).

The selection of my cases – Portuguese, Dutch, and East Frisian – demonstrates that ethnicity is not exclusive to ethnic minorities nor is it inherently tied to migration experiences. Ethnicised groups are cultural groups, from a historical perspective, closely related to racialised or nationalised groups (Hall 2017). The idea of a homogenous nation represents a specific form of ethnicised membership formation where 'ethnic features and state authority' (Bös 2005: 20) are melded.

I understand ethnicity as a construction that becomes effective as a 'real fiction', a construction with real consequences (Thomas and Thomas 1928). Following Max Weber (1985), it is central that those involved in an ethnic group have a shared belief in their ancestry. In this sense, ethnicity is never the cause of a specific (collective) action but rather arises (or does not arise) in processes of change and action. Methodologically speaking, ethnicity is always a dependent variable. In Marxian terms, it is never in itself but always only for itself (Bös 2015: 138). Herbert Gans (1979) has coined the concept of 'symbolic ethnicity' to describe how third or fourth-generation US immigrants resort to purely symbolic forms of boundary making without the need to be a part of ethnic cultures or organisations. In the context of East Frisian and Dutch research participants, 'ethnic options' help understand their boundary work. Mary Waters (1990) uses the term to describe that ethnicity for white European descendants in the US is optional and can or cannot be employed from their family histories.

Bös clarifies the relationship between ethnicity and culture in a way that resonates with my research findings on how heritagisation and ethnic boundary work relate in Ethnicised Heritage Situations. While ethnicity is closely intertwined with heritagisation, they are not synonymous:

> Given its reflexive nature, ethnicity is always a cultural phenomenon, but ethnicity is not the same as culture. Culture encompasses the meaning, structure, and praxis of human beings in their material and nonmaterial aspects. In the ideal typical case of a totally isolated human group, culture might be congruent with the borders of a (protoethnic) group, but in real life, owing to the diffusion of things,

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> ideas or common traditions, culture is never limited to a single group. (Bös 2015: 139)

While I explain the role of culture and cultural heritage as sense- and worldmaking, I do not predicate this analysis solely on assumed or perceived ethnic group membership.

The misperception that a form of cultural heritage is somehow congruent with a group is often a consequence of the high (e)valuation of one type of membership seen as the 'master membership' that trumps all others, like the nation-state or an ethnic or racial group. Georg Simmel (2009) developed the idea of analysing groups as a cultural phenomenon. As he noted, subjectivation involves being part of a web of group affiliations, meaning multiple memberships play an essential role. We are all members of many different groups: for instance, in a family, a football club, an enterprise, in a group of women, in a nation-state, or even humanity. Our lives are characterised by a complex set of affiliations to groups of all kinds, and each individual is further characterised by their configuration of unique group memberships (Pescosolido and Rubin 2000: 56).

In this web of group affiliations, I ask which symbolic boundaries research participants draw on concerning their cultural endeavours. Frederick Barth's (1969) theory of ethnic boundary making processes focuses on the relational character of ethnicities and the role of 'ethnic markers' in stabilising group membership. Andreas Wimmer (2008) developed a comprehensive approach to the study of ethnonational boundaries, and he underlines, among other things, variations in groupness in such processes and their influence on the structures of social networks and access to resources.

Lamont and Virág Molnár (2002) are prominently associated with studying symbolic boundaries within comparative contexts. Their work comments on Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and fields, challenging the assumption that the content of boundaries remains consistent across various situations. Instead, they study symbolic boundary work as a form of sensemaking in situations where a plurality of criteria of (e)valuation are being taken up by individuals. Lamont and Molnár define symbolic boundaries as:

> conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality. […] Symbolic boundaries also separate people into groups and generate feelings of similarity and group. They are an essential medium through which people acquire status and monopolize resources. (ibid: 172)

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They further describe such boundaries as mental maps of symbolic distinctions that produce processes of in – and exclusion (Lamont and Molnár ibid:172).

Lamont (2014: 815) takes an approach that is as comprehensive as Wimmer's but less structuralist. She studies different types of symbolic boundaries and tries to determine their role in reproducing inequality. Her focus is on 'micro-cultural processes' that are not always oriented towards instrumental goals, such as gaining resources, and that do not solely depend on the actions of dominant actors. They can be embedded in routine (ibid: 817), which makes her perspective very helpful in studying symbolic boundaries and the sensemaking of research participants in Ethnicised Heritage Situations.

In this study, I employ the framework of cultural repertoires of evaluation and symbolic boundary making proposed by Lamont et al. to investigate the role of heritage as a situated practice of everyday (e)valuations in Ethnicised Heritage Situations. This conceptual framework serves two primary purposes. First, it allows for exploring heritage's internal logic and content as a cultural repertoire of evaluation, shedding light on how heritage functions as a category within pluralised societies. Second, it facilitates the analysis of how cultural heritage influences processes of symbolic boundary making and the formation of memberships within these contexts. Through an abductive, not deductive theoretical approach, my empirical study delineates the specific contents of heritage as a cultural repertoire and identifies the types of meaningful (to the research participants) symbolic boundaries drawn in Ethnicised Heritage Situations.

5.3 Heritage Regimes

Next to heritage understood as a cultural repertoire of (e)valuation employed in everyday life, heritage regimes are also an essential concept helping to analyse the worldmaking aspect of heritagisation. Cultural heritage and its role are so entangled with national and international cultural policy and, therefore, are essential instruments by which governments and non-governmental actors 'regulate the space and subjects they seek to govern' (Groth and Sutter 2016: 43). Heritage regimes allow for this worldmaking aspect of cultural heritage to be studied; they are power-ridden spaces, sometimes tied to specific institutionally influential people, like heritage experts, wherein heritages and classifications are generalised and institutionalised. When heritage regimes are investigated through a Critical Heritage Studies lens, together with ideas from migration studies on mobility and migration regimes, it can be seen that heritage regimes are about both domination and power in their enabling form.

As opposed to understanding heritage as an entity governed by outside forces, the heritage regime concept includes politics and governance and, centrally so, the

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role of the nation-state in making heritage and associated citizen subjects (Geismar 2015: 73).[6] The idea of the regime is based on international regulatory theory: it comprises a set of rules and norms regulating the relations between a state government and society on a global level. Or, in the words of international relations scholar Steven Krasner, 'sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of international relations' (1982: 186). Often, on a level of international regulation, negotiations end in the production of conventions or treatises, accompanied by the formation of associated institutions and organisations (Bendix et al. 2012: 13). Specialist organisations and standardised governance protocols are established in response to the recurring need for decision-making and rule generation. These institutions, exemplified by intergovernmental committees tasked with advancing UNESCO's heritage conventions, also monitor the advancement of convention objectives and address emerging issues.

The edited volume by Bendix et al. (2012) that first introduced the concept of heritage regimes into Critical Heritage Studies expands the understanding of regimes within international relations by embracing a more flexible approach, influenced by Foucauldian perspectives on governance, that understand regimes not merely as international regulatory systems and abstract state systems of domination but also as modes of power that produce and reproduce specific subjects to be governed in processes of subjectivation. This departure from conventional understandings of regimes is essential because traditional governmental frameworks need to capture more fully the complexities of entities like the UN. As a result, non-state actors, organisations, and various processes must be incorporated into the analysis. Both governmental bodies and other governance actors contribute to establishing bureaucratic structures and implementing procedures outlined in treaties and conventions. This process often requires adaptation and translation across different levels, from the international to the state and local levels (ibid).

A similar evolution in understanding regimes has occurred within migration and mobility research. Initially viewed as networks of rules and norms, the concept of migration regimes has expanded to encompass migrants' agency in navigating, circumventing, and resisting practices of control or mobility within these regimes

6 In a review article, Thomas Schmitt (2015) provides a structured analysis of the applicability of realistic and neorealistic, interest-based, and cognitive or knowledge-based regime research approaches to studying the genesis of a World Heritage Regime. Interestingly, he concludes that while the latter approaches 'with their emphasis on the importance of new ideas, epistemic communities [...] and role expectations in respect of state governments' (ibid: 18) are most helpful for analysis, there is, in many respects, no conceptual space for a World Heritage Regime in any of these approaches.

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(Pott, Rass, and Wolff 2018). Additionally, there is a recognition of the role of discourses and ideologies rooted in histories of colonialism and racialisation and their impact on migration regimes. Moreover, contemporary discussions on migration regimes also consider their role in perpetuating social inequality and shaping the identities of citizens and non-citizens (Romens 2021: 405).

In this line of migration regime research, a regime is not a repressive political system but 'refers to complex scenarios with a multitude of actors, unclear power structures and emergent rules' (Rass and Pott 2018: 25). According to migration scholar Jochen Oltmer (2018), migration regime research is not apparatus-centred, focusing on the nation-state's power alone. Instead, a regime is a 'contact zone, an arena in which more or less powerful actors, ranging from persons to organisations and state institutions, constantly negotiate the migration regime's structure and hierarchy' (Rass and Pott 2018: 35).

The concept of heritage regimes, then, is more than just an abstract denominator of state power. Such perspectives call for an analysis of how the regime is made up of interactions. This can be done by analysing micro-level situations to see how the regime interacts with the constitution of local society and for example migration movements therein, which is precisely what I do with an analysis of heritage regime actors and discourses in the context of the negotiations around ethnicised minority heritages in the three small town arenas of Cuxhaven, Zeven and Aurich.

Even though there is no standard definition of the concept of migration regimes, its development, for example, in German migration sociology, makes more apparent relevant aspects of heritage regimes in a broader understanding. They involve negotiations over power in different territories, such as in state-level regulation and bureaucratic apparatuses, including organisations, as well as dominant discourses and ascribed intelligible collective and individual subject positions, which can be called 'places of recognition' (Taylor 2009: 41). The economy is a further site of power struggle that, although not central to migration regime research, is to heritage regime research.

The worldmaking force of cultural heritage is well established in heritage regime research. Culture, in general, and cultural heritage in particular have become powerful global phenomena that shape the relations between people and their cultural endeavours more and more. Kuutma probes 'cultural politics not as an 'always already,' but as an emergent framework formed in the nexus of culture, management, and community' (2013: 31).

Accordingly, scholars employing the concept of heritage regimes call to study them on a continuum from sensemaking in everyday lives and the worldmaking of heritage regimes, even though they might not explicitly use these terms. Bendix et al. (2012:14) argue that 'the implementation of the international heritage regime on the state level brings forth a profusion of additional heritage regimes' on local or regional levels. Cristina Sánchez-Carretero (2013) found in her study in Galicia, Spain,

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that several heritage regimes – in the plural – are employed by different social actors: Spanish and Galician national-level regimes and the church and a municipal-level regime. Heritage regime scholars also call for specific and rigorous research at the periphery of state authority and international heritage regime power because even though a hegemonic Authorised Heritage Discourse (Smith 2006) dominates many aspects of heritage-making as a socio-political practice, the often so-called 'communities of practice' addressed by regimes do practice cultural heritage in their everyday sensemaking.

Consequently, as Chiara de Cesari frames it:

> It is crucial [...] to understand these processes from below [...], which means to understand the reasons why a group of people decides to appropriate the language of heritage to further their goals, and the kinds of imaginaries and expectations elicited by the heritage discourse. (2013: 406)

My concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations is therefore a contribution to systematically studying heritage-making processes from below, however in a way that allows to understand the relation between everyday sensemaking and the worldmaking power of heritage regimes in heritage situations.

5.4 Synthesis: The Model of Ethnicised Heritage Situations

Heritage regimes and heritage as a repertoire of (e)valuation in the production of difference are the theoretical and conceptual frameworks I started with in the research process. They allow me to look at worldmaking processes as generalised and institutionalised heritagisation processes and sensemaking by ordinary individuals in their volunteer cultural endeavours. Applying these two perspectives to heritage regimes and everyday symbolic boundary making, to individuals and processes of governing, is precisely the analytical strength of a cultural heritage framework in the context of neoliberal times it gained its momentum. As Weineck states:

> The conduct of contemporary (neo-liberal) government relies on enhancing individual and collective agents ('communities') ability to act upon themselves, rather using ideas of freedom, self-fulfilment, and responsibility than domination, law or coercion. (Weineck 2015:8)

The exercise of power in heritage regimes is not one that shows itself in processes of domination, but of self governance and subjectivation that can be traced in the study of how regimes operate in particular situations. This is precisely what the theoretical

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model of Ethnicised Heritage Situations allows researchers and heritage experts to do.

Adele Clarke uses the situation as her basic unit of analysis, and her conceptualisation is central to the concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations for more than just analytical reasons. In much sociological theory, the concept of the situation is understood in concrete terms as a situation of interaction in the here and now, bound by place, time, and social situatedness attached to the knowledge and definition of the situation of the people in the field involved in that concrete situation.

David Diehl and Daniel Mc Fahrland (2010: 1715) term the concept of the situation in sociology a 'black box' and Andreas Ziemann (2013: 9) states that the idea was suppressed from many sociological and philosophical academic debates.[7] Robert Gugutzer describes the common ground of possibly all sociological theories of the situation:

> People live in situations at all times. Situations are the 'primary homes, sources and partners' of all human behaviour, experience, imagination, expectation, desire or will. Situations frame and shape human thoughts, feelings and actions, just as they are created, stabilised or transformed by them. (2017: 155, my translation)

Anselm Strauss, a major influence on Clarke, considers the communicative and interactive elements of individuals and small groups central to the definition of the situation in research (Egloff 2015). Erwin Goffman (1974) most clearly developed a concept defined by face-to-face interaction that is, therefore, limited in space and time.

Clarke addresses the situation concept in Strauss's and Corbin's grounded theory methodology. She states that it focuses on action and interaction, leaving other elements of the situation as contexts to a situation to be analysed in their 'conditional matrices' (2018: 45–47). If my research field were to have such definitions of the situation, then global heritage regimes and discourses would be the mere context for my analysis because officialised heritage institutions and heritage vocabularies in my research field are relatively absent at first sight.

Clarke's (2018: 17) conceptualisation of the situation as a basic unit of analysis offers a way to analyse small-town arenas as spaces where heritage regime discourses and vocabularies are not mere contexts but are intrinsic parts of the situation of research. She bases the concept of the situation theoretically on the works of William Thomas, Donna Haraway, and John Dewey, as well as many others (Karl Mannheim,

7 The invention of the concept of the definition of the situation is generally credited to W. I Thomas and Dorothy Thomas developed it in studies on immigration and reform pedagogy to describe the interactions between individuals, groups, and cultures and the differing rationales, perceptions, and value orientations in their actions (Egloff 2015).

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Norman Denzin, Brian Massumi). However, her argument for its development is always oriented towards its methodological qualities and practicability in concrete empirical research practice. This means the concept is well developed for empirical research but is only rudimentarily theorised.

Due to Clarke herself under-theorising the concept of the situation in favour of its usefulness in empirical research, Reiner Keller's interpretation of her use of the concept is useful. Keller first translated her work to German and is the one who explicated Clarke's work as the 'situating of the situation' (2023: 67), distilling a theoretically more straightforward argument. Clarke argues that pragmatists' definition of the situation ignores the situatedness of phenomena and research itself in ways that Haraway (1988) described as situated knowledge. They also neglect the role of non-human actors in situations and the role of different social worlds coming together in discursive arenas. Most importantly, the situation in concrete terms with a context to it blinds the situation's role of co-constitution in a complex relational ecology of elements. This leads Clarke to claim that 'there is no such thing as context' (Clarke 2009: 208), meaning that the contexts are present in the research situation, co-constituting it.

With Clarke, situations are not in the here and now, among attendants, but often things or arrangements such as cloning, reproductive medicine, or, in the case of my research, the emergence of cultural heritage. In a reflexive move, Clarke defines the research process as a situation to be determined by the researcher.

For this argument, Clarke first builds William Thomas's concept of the situation as introduced for everyday action. Thomas and Znaniecki state that '[e]very concrete activity is the solution of a situation.' (1918: 67). This does not mean, as Keller (2023: 75) points out, that in a given situation a specific problem emerges, but rather it is understood as people actively intervening (or not doing so) in a situation, for example buying a bus ticket. This leads me to ask: Who is involved in the (re)production of ethnicised cultural production and why? What 'problems' are people solving with their involvement? What are the criteria of (e)valuation and repertoires they call upon in doing what they do?

According to Keller, Clarke also takes up Dewey's thinking on the logic of doing research. Not only is everyday action built upon definitions of the situation, but day-to-day research action also requires the situation be defined. For Dewey (1938, quoted in Clarke et al. 2018: 47), the situation of research is a 'contextual whole' (ibid), wherein researchers aim to solve and work on specific problems by 'transferring them from a state of indeterminacy – "What is the case here?" – into a provisional, revisable, but well-founded form of determinacy – "That is the case here"' (Keller 2023: 77). An undefined situation in the research context only becomes a problem through the research process. This research aims to systematically explore and transform definitions of the situation via methods that guide the direction towards 'warranted assessability'. The research process itself is a situation of action. In Clarke's words,

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'the situation in SA is a distinguishable and loosely connected entity whose contours are empirically determined in the research' (2018: 49).

This does not imply that definitions of the situation of those researched and observed in the field are unimportant. Clarke repeatedly urges her students to stay close to their empirical material and theorise without aiming towards any 'grand theory'. It merely follows, as is common knowledge in feminist research practice, that situations are co-constituted by different participants and, therefore, by various definitions of the situation, including my perspective. As the researcher, I define the research situation's boundaries within the research process. Determining the research situation's boundaries is an open process that involves the situation as an emerging phenomenon. This allows me to use the concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations not only as an analytical tool in empirical research but also as a way of learning about the category of heritage in more abstract terms.

The researcher, Clarke states, has to decide which elements are part of the broader situation and which are not:

> If it seems to matter, as the analyst, you should stretch the boundaries of the situation to include it in the analysis. If not, don't, but memo it and revisit these boundaries of the situation again later. Decisions made during the research process don't need to be final. Nothing is written in cement until publication. This is one facet of what it means to say the situation is 'emergent.' (2018: 17)

To summarise, Clarke departs from classical sociological understanding of the concept of the situation as she finds a way to 'situate the situation of research' (Keller 2023:67) in two ways. Her definition clarifies the role that different definitions of the situation play in the research situation as a process of knowledge production, including the researcher's definition prominently. Second, the situation with Clarke is 'emergent' as it constantly develops. Individuals and collective actors in Ethnicised Heritage Situations bring and act upon categories of (e)valuation as definitions of the situation that are negotiated and coexist within the situation, including such definitions of the situations that would be considered as mere 'context' to a situation in more classical sociological theory. These multiple definitions may or may not stem from a cultural heritage repertoire, making the latter emerge, or not emerge, in the situation. A possibility that unsettles the sphere of heritage management and even much Critical Heritage research that tends to presuppose the importance of cultural heritage to human beings as a constant.

Ethnicised Heritage Situations therefore constitute my main research object, as does the situation understood broadly in Situational Analysis. As a concept claiming a holistic perspective on local cultural ecologies, Ethnicised Heritage Situations involve the coming together of heritage regime aspects – worldmaking – with everyday criteria of (e)valuation – sensemaking – including my interpretations in the

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research process. Ethnicised Heritage Situations is an empirical, analytical tool but, on a more abstract note, provides an approach to understanding the potential for heritage to emerge. It thereby opens up the possibility for heritagisation not to happen in specific situations, for the (e)valuation of culture to stay non-generalised and flexible, suiting people's everyday social needs rather than a more abstract principle of (national) membership or nostalgia of a lost past.

Already Diehl and McFarland underline the situation's principal openness for 'contingency and creativity, process and emergence, and cognition and emotion' (2010: 1713). Clarke also underlines the openness of situations referencing Michel Foucault's concept of 'conditions of possibility' (Clarke 2018: 28), wherein an episteme provides the necessary framework for the possible appearance of a given list of entities.

There is an openness to the emergence of cultural heritage as a category in heritage situations that can also be described as a virtual potentiality to be updated or realised. This differs from looking for equivalences to heritage in territories where officialised heritage regimes and vocabulary play a minor role. Instead, my focus on the potential for heritage to emerge is based on the assumption of heritage's metacultural nature, a generalised and institutionalised type of (e)valuation that is exchange-oriented. Alonso González, whose research approach was inspirational for this thesis, terms such analysis 'categorical criticism' and states: 'Categorical criticisms analyses precisely why heritage is not a significant category for many people, and to map its emergence in the field as it appears in different social spheres' (2019: 42). Ethnicised Heritage Situations do not approach cultural heritage as deus ex machina but allow us to analyse its emergence in relational and entangled ways.

The concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations can therefore be used as an analytical tool and a theoretical concept to better understand the emergence of cultural heritage in pluralised societies. In Ethnicised Heritage Situations, heritage regimes and their worldmaking are entangled with the sensemaking of individuals and social worlds that draw on heritage as a cultural repertoire to draw symbolic boundaries and produce belonging. Consequently, the research process has to be understood as a heritage situation that I have dominantly constructed as a researcher. It comprises many other heritage situations to be reconstructed in empirical research.

Heritage situations provide an opening and a possibility for cultural heritage as a metacultural category to emerge. At the same time, as I will come to show, they are an analytical tool to analyse local cultural ecologies with different kinds of elements holistically and, as always, already integrated into global cultural processes and policies.[8]

8 The concept of heritage situations shares commonalities with assemblage theory (DeLanda 2016) or Foucault's dispositive analysis (Foucault 1978) in terms of complexity. Its grounding in empirical analysis allows more precision than to state the co-constitution of situations by

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The research undertaken for this project provides a relational analysis of different elements in the situation of research, and thereby provides empirical substance for the concept of heritage situations' 'operationalisation' via a description of a number of relevant elements in the situation such as for example the role of the mobility of concepts circulating in global heritage discourse (chapter 2), of economic gains (chapter 7) the reproduction of the social sphere (chapter 8), multiple localisms (chapter 9) or majority-minority relations (chapter 10), all of which may or may not be part of the emergence of cultural heritage. To analytically reconstruct these elements is to take seriously different definitions of the situations within the situation, including my own ones as the analyst. It is in this context that the reflexivity of the researcher as the one delineating the boundaries of a situation becomes a central methodological challenge in research.

different elements. My concept of heritage situations aligns with SA in that they both do not end with this finding of multiple elements in a situation but allow one to give attention to the specific relations between them as they form (Clarke 2018: 95).

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6. Being Situated: Situational Analysis as More Than a Method of Research and Analysis

In a pervasive ethos of academic capitalism that often glorifies the extraordinary and emphasises innovation and groundbreaking revelations, the seemingly ordinary nature of my research terrain – small-town life, under-researched minorities, and everyday cultural sensemaking – at times raised doubts and anxieties within me during the research process. I wondered whether delving into the nuances of these seemingly banal yet profoundly significant aspects of society would be perceived as trivial. At the same time, in my chosen role as a critical scholar, I demanded of myself to conduct an inquiry that has the potential to work towards social justice. Consequently, during the research and writing process, I tended to write and think for different audiences of academics and non-academics.[1] I had to remind myself of the role of a PhD: A dissertation is, first and foremost, a meaningful way to establish oneself as a researcher and scientist, with the possibility of it being transformed for other audiences and purposes afterwards.

My initial engagement with the field of Critical Heritage Studies focused on the governmentality of heritage listings, the inclusion of cultural practices into a symbolic and economic global market, and their effects on the local social fabric. It deepened my critical distance towards cultural heritage as a category and project of ideology, its conservative appropriations and history in nation-building processes.

Christoph Brumann considers such strong positionalities of researchers to be expected in the field. He describes the three categories heritage researchers and managers fall into: 'heritage believers'; 'heritage atheists'; and 'heritage agnostics' (2014a: 174). Heritage believers endorse conservation and consider heritage inherently good because it serves education, economic development, reconciliation, nation-building, or world peace. Initially, I positioned myself as a heritage atheist, which is opposed to heritage belief.

1 I have discussed the trouble this has gotten me in an article reflecting my research experiences for my Master's thesis project (Peeck and Sielert 2019).

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> [D]espite, or perhaps because of, the hegemonic position of heritage belief in wider society, much work in the social sciences is informed by heritage atheism. By this, I mean a fundamental doubt about the value of specific heritage items or heritage as such. In this view, heritage is not a naturally positive force and instead serves all kinds of dubious or outright objectionable purposes that are not immediately obvious. (ibid)

In this position, the researcher's primary responsibility is to unveil the true nature of heritage by removing its facade and revealing it as inevitably something less appealing than how it is portrayed. Accordingly, in an arena where official heritage policies or vocabulary are absent at first sight, I wanted to map out the social fabric of the places that stand in danger of being alienated by structured cultural policies influenced by global heritage discourse.[2] I did find powerful heritage regime actors in the field and reconstructed quite some criteria of (e)valuation akin to a heritage repertoire. I realised there is no straightforward relation or distinction between a local cultural arena and global heritage regimes. This experience prompted me to follow Brumann in his third approach to studying heritage, which he terms 'heritage agnosticism'. Inspired by scholars studying religion, Brumann states:

> Heritage agnosticism doesn't share the certainties of heritage atheism. Whether heritage is indeed culpable of the usual sins is a matter of empirical investigation, and the possibility of surprises must be allowed. But heritage agnosticism doesn't share the unconditional commitment of heritage belief either, aware as it is of the social construction of all heritage categories and standards. (2014a: 179)

The theory-method package of SA served as a valuable approach to navigating these individual 'conditions of production' connected to my subjectivity as a researcher and inherent in my research project. From my theory chapter and beyond, it should become evident that conducting a Situational Analysis is applying a method, but it is also much more than that. Its conceptual vocabulary including 'the situation' of inquiry, 'social worlds' and 'arenas' is central to my theoretical model of Ethnicised Heritage Situations, as well as its ontological and epistemological assumptions shaping my own approach.

In critical qualitative research, specifically in a field that is so interrelated with policy areas and practitioners, the researcher's transparent positionality is of central importance. Still, selecting a method should primarily align with the subject of

2 Rereading this concern after the elections for the European Parliament in 2024 with right-wing and fascist parties gaining immense momentum, this concern, which is still true, is nevertheless relative as to what can be considered the main threats to the social fabric of small towns in peripheral areas.

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research and research questions rather than solely catering to the researcher's subjective conditions.

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the definition of my research subject within SA is intertwined with the method's theoretical framework and co-constructed by me as a researcher. This aligns with quality criteria in qualitative social research as outlined by Jörg Strübing et al., particularly the criterion of the 'Gegenstandsangemessenheit' (appropriateness of the subject matter), 'a way of producing the object of the research object, which takes the empirical field seriously and methods, questions and data types to a continuous ongoing adjustment requirements' (2018: 83, my translation). This criterion emphasises producing the research subject in a way that continuously adjusts to the empirical field, considering a crucial starting point to be how research participants define the situation, not merely reflecting the empirical world.

Other criteria for qualitative social research further guide the quality of the research: empirical saturation (how well the analysis is anchored in the data); theoretical pervasiveness (the quality of and irritating power of the theoretical references); textual performance, and originality (Strübing et al. 2018).

The chapter is composed of two parts: First, I introduce the project's core epistemological grounds, and Situational Analysis as a research programme that was well suited for my interdisciplinary research interests in the field of migration and ethnicity. These posed some ethical challenges and were guided by a number of central sensitising concepts. I then outline the research process, starting with the first decisions made in terms of research questions, places to study and the data sample, to the types of data collected and the analysis process. Central throughout all stages of the research process was the abductive moving between empirical data analysis and conceptual formation. I collected most data during a number of short research stays in the three small towns, which included interviews, some ethnographic observations and the gathering of local newspaper articles. Situational Analysis as a research programme is suited to analyse different types of data aiming towards a cohesive understanding of the situation of research. In doing research in the field of migration and ethnicity, the constructivist and feminist approach of Situational Analysis allowed me to avoid a number of pitfalls, such as presupposing the relevance or even presence of stable ethnic groups as social worlds in the small towns, what Brubaker terms 'groupism' (2002), or to assume the relevance of mobility experiences to be limited to migrant minorities' sensemaking. Moreover, the research process was conducted as self-reflexively as possible, with my role as a researcher being a relevant element to be mapped out and analysed alongside the other data. The epistemological grounds laid out in my chosen research programme, therefore, found their way into my decision-making as to the concrete shape of the research process as well as to my approach to writing.

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6.1 The Epistemological Grounds of Situational Analysis as a Research Programme

6.1.1 Staying with and Positioned in the Data Instead of in Disciplinarity

Academia's social and organisational structure is set up in disciplines, which remains a powerful barrier towards multi- or interdisciplinary research and developing my self-understanding as an interdisciplinary scholar. Throughout the project, I realised that my research could not solely be placed in the field of cultural sociology and is instead influenced by research and reflections from the much broader interdisciplinary fields of Critical Heritage Studies and Small-Town Research, which involve perspectives from disciplines such as archaeology or social work. In this sense, this project is intended to be an opening up of cultural sociology to the interdisciplinary fields of small-town research, that is, the specificities of cultural endeavours in provincial regions and to Critical Heritage Studies, that is, the study of cultural heritage as a phenomenon.

The theoretical grounds from which Clarke builds SA are interdisciplinary, stemming from symbolic interactionism, Foucauldian discourse analysis, science and technology studies, feminist standpoint epistemologies,[3] and, centrally, social world/arena theory. The latter focuses on meaning-making amongst social worlds, understood as group actors engaged in collective action (Clarke and Leigh Star 2008: 113).

Doing a SA involves three kinds of such mapping techniques (Clarke et al. 2018: 104). In situational maps, all elements in a research situation and their relationality are specified. Social world/arena maps help reconstruct central arenas of concern that serve different social worlds as a space of negotiation. Finally, positional map structure discourses a discursive position in the situation, which I used in my research process.

Jan Kalenda argues that social science disciplines frequently focus on specific aspects related to a situation, such as the mindset of individuals, their emotional experiences, the material components present, the discourses they engage with, or simply the actions and conduct of the individuals involved.

> What makes the SA approach different is its emphasis on the fact that all these elements create the research situation and that we cannot focus on just one of them, as this would break it away from its relations to the other elements of the situation that constitute it. (Kalenda 2016: 346)

3 Offenberger (2019) has shown how the feminist legacy of SA tends not to be recited in the German reception of it.

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Understanding SA's inherent interdisciplinarity helped me not doubt going along with my subjectivity as a researcher while validating my interdisciplinary approach with a recognised method.

To do research in an interdisciplinary way in Situational Analysis means to stay with the data in the practice of mapping. Clarke emphasises staying with the data in the field and theorising without prematurely closing the data analysis. This approach aligns with an agnostic position, where the researcher remains open to the data's complexities. Additionally, Clarke advocates for including the researcher's positionality in the research process through reflexivity. This practice helps to balance my tendency towards being a heritage atheist, allowing the researcher to acknowledge and navigate their perspectives without outright denial. In essence, maintaining an agnostic stance and integrating reflexivity contributes to a more nuanced and open-ended exploration of the research subject.

Incorporating my voice and reflective moments into the analysis chapters, I seize the opportunity to enhance the intersubjective comprehensibility and situatedness of the knowledge I have generated. Each analysis chapter commences with a puzzle – an anecdote drawn from the research process that struck me as surprising and significantly influenced the paths of my analysis. The decision to do so stems from Clarke et al. (2018: 197) strongly advising researchers to go along with such moments of surprise in field research and data analysis. In ethnographic fieldwork, these puzzles serve as 'moments of nonrecognition' (Glick Schiller, Çağlar, and Guldbrandsen 2006). They represent instances where constant questioning of the relationship between elements in the research situation leads to shifts in concepts and research questions, challenging initial assumptions. This approach enriches the analysis by embracing the unexpected and adapting to evolving insights within the dynamic research context.

6.1.2 Heritage Regimes, the Heritage Repertoire and Boundary Work

The concept of *the definition of the situation* is the theoretically most stimulating aspect of Situational Analysis. The situation of research is no longer defined in classical sociological terms as a face-to-face moment to be analysed. Instead, the situation of research is, as outlined in constructivist research approaches, centrally influenced by decisions made by the researchers as to, for example, the boundaries of a given situation. Moreover, the situation is composed of different kinds of elements (political, non-human, discursive, historical, etc.), including those that would normally be considered mere context to researched situations in classical sociological understandings (See fig 6.1. for a template showing possible types of elements in situations).

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Fig. 6.1: Situational Analysis Ordered Situational Map Template (Clarke 2018)

Individual Human Elements/Actors	***Non-human Elements/Actants***
e.g., key individuals and significant (unorganised) people in the situation, including the researcher	e.g., technologies; material infrastructures; specialised information and/or knowledges; material "things"
Collective Human Elements/Actors	***Implicated/Silent Actors/Actants***
e.g., particular groups; specific organisations	As found in the situation
Discursive Constructions of Individual and/or Collective Human Actors	***Discursive Construction of Non-human Actants***
As found in the situation	As found in the situation
Political/Economic Elements	***Socio-cultural/Symbolic Elements***
e.g., the state; particular industry/ies; local/regional/global orders; political parties; NGOs; politicised issues	e.g., religion; race; sexuality; gender; ethnicity; nationality; logos; icons; other visual and/or aural symbols
Temporal Elements	**Spatial Elements**
e.g., historical, seasonal, crisis, and/or trajectory aspects	e.g., spaces in the situation; geographical aspects; local, regional, national, and global spatial issues
Major Issues/Debates (Usually Contested)	**Related Discourses (Historical, Narrative, and/or Visual)**
As found in the situation; see positional map	e.g., normative expectations of actors, actants, and/or other specified elements; moral/ethical elements; mass media and other popular cultural discourses; situation-specific discourses
Other Kinds of Elements	

In this chapter, I delve into how Situational Analysis has enabled me to navigate and sidestep particular challenges commonly associated with research in migration and ethnicity and challenges in the study of culture as a causal mechanism addressed in repertoire theory. Constructivist-oriented ethnicity research and diaspora and migration studies highlight some of these challenges faced by research and policy when using an ethnic lens or employing ethnic/diasporic groups as the basic unit of analysis. Issues such as internal diversity, 'superdiversity' (Vertovec 2007), and variations in groupness (Wimmer 2010) underscore the need for re-

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search designs that address the pitfalls of 'groupisms' (Brubaker 2002; Werbner 2015), 'methodological nationalism' (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002), and ethnicity bias (Fox and Jones 2013). Scholars advocate for strategies that recognise de-ethnicisation processes to avoid reinforcing the reification of groups. Additionally, there is a call to de-ethnicise research designs when necessary by not presupposing the importance and existence of clearly bounded ethnic groups (Dahinden 2009; Fox and Jones 2013; Glick Schiller et al. 2006). Janin Dahinden (2016) takes this approach a step further by proposing strategies to de-migrantise research, aiming to avoid uncritically reproducing categories of an institutionalised nation-state migration apparatus. To study small town arenas as places struck by mobilities of all kinds, whether residential, social or indeed international is a perspective helpful in de-migrantising and de-ethnicising research designs.

In the study of arenas, Situational Analysis, being grounded in social world analysis, allows us not to presuppose the relevance of (ethnic) communities and other groups in the field and in peoples' sensemaking. The decision as to which social worlds are relevant in a given situation is to be made in and with the empirical material and never in advance. Situational Analysis's post-structuralist and feminist approach sensitises towards the constructed nature of meaning and therefore cautions to reify cultural repertoires as too easily determining action or social structures, something that has often been described as the culturalisation or ethnicisation of phenomena. One of my main research interests is to determine the role of migration as a taking of routes and ethnic boundaries in how people value the cultural productions they are involved in, such as festivals and associations. It is also relevant because the moments when heritage is employed as an evaluative repertoire are the points at which symbolic boundaries in such sensemaking are drawn. The art of creating a research design sensitive to these dangers is one that can 'capture the complexity of social experience in ways that do not privilege – nor censure – ethnicity' (Fox and Jones 2013: 391), or, it should be added, migration experiences.

These insights had tangible consequences in my research practice. I chose to compare three cities based on their substantial ethnic and migrant minority populations and the observable presence of Ethnicised Heritage Situations within them. I refrained from presupposing the importance of these inhabitants as collective actors or communities in the field. I avoided assuming the relevance of ethnic subjectivation and boundary making to the individuals I encountered. This approach aligns with the principles of Situational Analysis for two reasons.

First, as previously explained, Situational Analysis centres on the situation and the interplay between human and non-human elements, allowing for a nuanced examination of social ecologies. Within these elements and their relationality in situations, the role of collective human actors or the discursive construction of collective actors is one aspect among many. By employing Situational Analysis, I concentrate on understanding situations in which ethnicity, as a form of symbolic boundary

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making, may or may not be produced in everyday life, encompassing various forms of experience. This analytical approach helps me to avoid uncritical assumptions regarding the significance of ethnicity for individuals and ethnic groups as collective actors.

Second, I study Ethnicised Heritage Situations in small-town arenas and subscribe to the city scale level, which is another point that draws my research away from taking ethnic communities as the basic units of analysis or assuming their relevance in heritage situations. Grounded in the work of Anselm Strauss (1978), particularly his social world approach rooted in US-American pragmatism, Clarke has embraced and expanded grounded theory and systematically integrated Strauss's perspective into her research programme (Clarke et al. 2018: 149). In the arenas of concern, multiple social worlds come together to debate and negotiate particular issues. As discursive sites, narratives about themselves and others are constructed in arenas. In the context of my research, the small towns that are my research field are understood as arenas: not territorial entities or containers but socially and discursively constructed in human relations. Within these arenas, I focused on how the production of the towns' ethnicised (Portuguese, East Frisian, Dutch) heritages is negotiated in Ethnicised Heritage Situations.

Social worlds are the principal affiliative mechanism via which people organise their social life, and they align their sensemaking and criteria of (e)valuation while they most often participate in and are committed to more than one social world. As a collective actor, they can be leisure groups, a profession, and an academic discipline, more or less institutionalised groupings with 'life of their own' as a collective (Clarke et al. 2018: 148). They can be small or vast groupings that share some primary activity, goal, resources, and sites (ibid: 14). Sometimes, more formal organisations can evolve out of social worlds, but often, they are more loosely bound. Within the context of the World Heritage regime, 'local communities of practice' are one of the leading social worlds addressed and presupposed by intangible heritage policies as bearers of such heritage.

Clarke et. al (ibid: 148) underline that social worlds and arenas are changing and dynamic, a 'reopening that which seems closed is always possible', thereby profoundly relational. Having social world and arena analysis in my theoretical framework allowed me to analyse the operations of heritage regimes and associated bureaucratic apparatuses, their worldmaking, in the small-town arenas and sensitised me to how the arenas, their ethnicised heritages and social worlds are constructed from different perspectives (accessed at times via specific types of data). These different perspectives describe the development of or discursive construction of social groups and organisations as collective actors and their ways of drawing symbolic boundaries along differing criteria of (e)valuation. Using social world and arena frameworks of analysis means that maps can reconstruct

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the powerful worldmaking of relevant actors in Ethnicised Heritage Situations and collective landscapes of membership formation via symbolic boundary making.

Despite my theoretical awareness not to overly culturalise phenomena and actions influenced by other societal factors, there remains the risk exposed by repertoire theory in cultural sociology to the challenges of engaging in causal explanation that precede specific situations. In these situations, analysing the situatedness of action would have been the more appropriate analytical approach. The reconstruction of how research participants use cultural heritage as a repertoire to draw symbolic boundaries – their sensemaking – was primarily conducted through positional analysis. This discourse-analytical method opens up the data in Situational Analysis, allowing me to reconstruct people's repertoires of (e)valuation, explaining their sensemaking and action strategies.

Clarke's concept of the situation supports engaging in such a causal explanation. In an article on culture as a causal explanation, Matthew Norton (2014) argues that opening the black box of an action's situation and understanding how it functions enables one to comprehend culture in action by specifying cultural mechanisms without sacrificing the deeply intersubjective and relationally organised nature of sensemaking in social life. Norton emphasises that 'actors realize cultural systems qua systems in situational interactions, and this mechanism is essential to understanding the causality of culture.' (ibid: 143).

My primary focus on studying Ethnicised Heritage Situations in small-town arenas is framed using Situational Analysis's conceptual and epistemological vocabulary. This approach helps me sidestep the pitfalls of groupism in studying migrant and ethnic minorities. Additionally, employing social world and arena analysis enables examining the powerful worldmaking processes involving cultural heritage regimes and actors. Finally, the concept of the situation facilitates the study of repertoires of evaluation and criteria of (e)valuation as a form of causal explanation that extends beyond individual situations.

6.1.3 Sensitising Concepts in Situational Analysis

Within Situational Analysis's theory-method package, sensitising concepts is a crucial research strategy (Clarke et al. 2018: 54). In qualitative empirical research, sensitising concepts are theoretically or literature-driven, as well as at times early data analysis-driven assumptions that shape the researcher's' perspectives and therefore analysis process. The researcher enters the research process with such concepts and refines them throughout. Developing such concepts is, therefore, a central step in theorising as an outcome of a research project. This underlines Situational Analysis's paradigmatic openness for the new to emerge, as sensitising concepts are not definite or unchangeable throughout the research process, they instead accompany it in flexible ways.

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The Ethnicised Heritage Situations concept emerged only towards the end of my research process and can still be considered a sensitising concept, albeit a more theoretically substantiated one. However, several other and more hands-on central concepts developed my research process and led me to emerge with the Ethnicised Heritage Situations paradigm. These are: entrepreneur/maverick, boundary objects, taking routes, and setting roots.

In grounded theory-oriented research, developing (middle-range) theories generally follow an inductive approach that start from the data rather than from preexisting theories. Middle-range theories in sociology fall between abstract 'grand theories' and concrete empirical observations. Different strands of grounded theory research take different stances on what is meant exactly by 'grounding analysis in the data'. Clarke, sharing this with Kathy Charmaz's constructivist grounded theory, follows the Straussian route rooted in symbolic interactionism, where this orientation involves an active researcher to strive towards interpretation accuracy, rather than passivity and positivist approaches to the data. This also moves research from purely inductive to abductive approaches, meaning that analysis moves forward and back between the data-specificities and conceptual formation. The researcher's interests and situatedness highly influence this process; as I have shown, Clarke et al. (2018: 118) goes so far as to argue that the researcher defines the borders of the research situation, with self-reflexivity in the research process becoming central (Zaidi 2022: 5). Practising this at every step of the research process does not produce subjective analysis but rather analysis that does justice to the complexity of the empirical world. In this sense, sensitising concepts are also reflexivity tools, as they build the researcher's prior knowledge, interest, and presumptions into them.

Shehr Bano Zaidi finds that sensitising concepts are closely bound up with concept formation, albeit not in definite terms. She applies a variety of others' labels – 'methodological' or 'heuristic' device or 'guiding principles' that describe 'initial ideas to pursue', possibly shaped by disciplinary perspectives – to give direction for research but to leave space (2022:3). They give direction for research but leave space open for new possibilities to arise from the analysis of the empirical world, which is why they can change during the research process. In Situational Analysis, generating sensitising concepts is integral to grounded theorising wherein the main goal is not to produce a grand theory which overgeneralises or abstracts research findings, but rather to theorise in an ongoing 'modest and partial but serious, useful, and provocative grounded analysis' (Clarke et al. 2018: 55).

Sensitising concepts allow the researcher to frame and focus the research and to situate it in the extant literature without prematurely terminating the analysis (Clarke et al. 2018: 122). I share with Sarah B. Evans-Jordan (2023) the experience of feeling 'unsettlingly unsettled' by Clarke et al.'s call to stay with the mess of inclusive situations and the ongoing conundrum of not terminating analysis too early. My research process often consisted of striving towards some closure, some findings

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to hold on to, and stating that my research was an instance of X or Y. Only because I pushed myself to stay with the analysis did I arrive at the concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations as my definition of the situation and the operationalisation of its elements in small-town arenas in northern Germany.

With Clarke et al., heritage situations themselves are sensitising concepts, as they write: 'A key aspect of Situational Analysis as an interpretative approach is focused on the sufficiency of grounded theorizing through the development of sensitising concepts and integrated analytics' (2018: 54). I would like my concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations to be understood as a holistic device, a tool to approach the nexus of intangible heritage, belonging, and the social in its complexity from various perspectives.

Earlier in the research process, I mapped out a number of other sensitising concepts, namely the concepts of entrepreneurs/mavericks in social world/arena analysis and the question of the role of taking routes and setting roots in the places under study.

'Over the years', Susan Leigh Star and Clarke (2007: 117) report, 'a toolbox of useful concepts with which to think about the relational ecologies of social worlds, arenas and their discourses has been generated.' In chapters 7 and 8, I employ the concepts of entrepreneur/maverick and boundary object to better understand the role of festivals and the motivations of individual highly engaged volunteers in the small-town arenas' relational ecology. Entrepreneurs are individuals or organisations that exist across different social worlds and have a powerful role in shaping rules within them. Mavericks position themselves at the margins of or in opposition to social worlds (Clarke and Leigh Star 2008: 118). Boundary objects are entities at the intersections of diverse social worlds, serving mutual concerns, though they only loosely bind social worlds together (ibid: 121). The relevance of these concepts for my analysis stems directly from the data, and my initial analysis aimed to find what is comparable across cases.

One of my central intentions in this research project is to determine the role of migration experiences in how people employ heritage as a repertoire to produce difference. This is evident in the choice of cases, wherein the Dutch and Portuguese minority inhabitants of Zeven and Cuxhaven do indeed have international migration experiences, the research participants from Aurich in East Frisia, however, do not. In all their cultural endeavours, though, ethnicisation played some kind of role. My choice of making 'taking routes' instead of the originally chosen 'migration expericences' a sensitising concept, is witness to the fact that I found mobility experiences do play role in all three cases. Setting roots became another sensitising concept, though not from my research interest or previous knowledge, but rather as an in-vivo concept stemming from the data. Both sensitising concepts are codes stemming directly from participants' verbatim or their perspective referring to 'common sense language and knowledge' (Zaidi 2022: 3).

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6.2 Inside the Research Process

Situational Analysis comes with a theoretical legacy that is well suited for my research project. As a well-developed interpretative qualitative research programme, Situational Analysis provides researchers with hands-on advice on how to do profound empirical analysis. Researchers nowadays can profit from Situational Analysis handbooks that provide detailed and honest insight into all steps of an Situational Analysis research project (Clarke, Friese, and Washburn 2015; Clarke et al. 2018).[4] The rest of this chapter outlines the concrete, 'hands-on' aspects of my research process as a Situational Analysis project: From the first situational maps that helped to decide what to concretely compare in the three case studies (associations and festivals), via data gathering, to social world/arena maps and positional maps as tools to reconstruct the worldmaking and sensemaking aspects of the (e)valuation processes of people engaged in Dutch, Portuguese and East Frisian associations and festivals. Situational Analysis approaches the analysis of situations of research from different perspectives and different kinds of data, allowing for a level of complexity while also generalising findings in the process of theorising. I found that worldmaking does appear in the form of heritage regime operations of, for example, large organisations in the arenas, such as the church of the military or in the form of criteria of (e)valuation associated with global heritage discourses, such as recognition or the reification of collective identities. At times these worldmaking aspects of Ethnisiced Heritage Situations harmoniously coexist with individuals' and actors' sensemaking in the small-town arenas, but often they follow different logics, and other times they are a cause of conflict. To reconstruct these dynamics, it was helpful to combine Situational Analysis with an explicitly comparative research design that structures different kinds of comparisons.

6.2.1 Composing a Comparative Research Design: Data Gathering as an Iterative and Reflexive Process

As a hands-on empirical method, Situational Analysis involves several mapping techniques that must be understood as analytical tools rather than as visual representations of research findings and that replace the 'conditional matrix' of more traditional grounded theory (Clarke et al. 2018: 16). Maps are grounded in empirical data and can include different types of data. In my case, I undertook ethnographic observations, analysed local newspapers, and conducted interviews (Fig. 6.2.). The data sample I gathered consists of 12 interviews, 132 newspaper articles, seven

4 I further benefited from the Situational Analysis Working Group's peer feedback. We meet regularly to discuss each other's maps or challenges encountered in the research process. For more information visit: https://situationsanalyse.jimdofree.com/ (accessed June 6, 2024).

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ethnographic field visits, and 11 participatory observations. While I transcribed the interviews, the other data types entered analysis directly via mapping. The interview quotes in this thesis were edited, tightened and translated in cooperation with my student assistant, Julia Frisch.

Fig. 6.2: Overview of data gathered and analysed in the research project

Type of Data	Case & Amount
Interviews	Expert interviews (3) Zeven (5) Aurich (3) Cuxhaven (4)
Local Newspaper Articles	Zeven (29, 1963–2018) Aurich (14, 1995–2018) Cuxhaven (89, 1966–2018)
Ethnographic field stay with participatory observations	Zeven (3) Aurich (2) Cuxhaven (2, by student assistant)

In accordance with grounded theory, theoretical sampling is the sampling method of choice in Situational Analysis and in this project. It involves iteratively gathering and analysing data to refine and develop theoretical categories, rather than relying on pre-defined sampling strategies. Traditional grounded theory sampling, then, is a matter of 'constant comparison'. Data gathering is finished when one feels the sample to be saturated in that not many new findings emerge in this iterative analysis process. At times, practicalities such as the limited amount of research field visits or an assigned budget do interfere with saturation as a criterium of data sampling. Importantly then, decisions on which data to gather in theoretical sampling are made in communication with preliminary data analysis from the very beginning of a research process to its end. For example, local newspapers only entered the data sample at a later stage in the research process in order to make more visible how dominant discourses enter the local small-town arenas.

One of the big challenges in this project in terms of developing a feasible comparative research design was its multi-sitedness, including three case studies on Portuguese, Dutch and East Frisian cultural productions, with no clear idea of what and how to concretely compare these. From discussions in cultural anthropology, I was aware that ethnicised cultural productions might, in fact, not be so easily comparable in their singularity as empirical phenomena. I determined that I was less interested in comparing specific singular cultural productions (e.g., one festival with an-

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other) than in comparing (e)valuation processes and criteria associated with these cultural productions as world- and sensemaking. Sociologists theorising comparison in sociological research, such as George Steinmetz (2004), Joachim Matthes (1992), or Irene Bloemrad (2013), explicitly advise doing comparative analysis at the level of generative causal mechanisms (Steinmetz 2004), of 'cultural exchange processes and their regulations' (Matthes 1992: 94) or 'causal mechanisms' (Bloemraad 2013: 28). This is so as not to compare empirical events on a phenomenological level that prove to be particular, and that, as Matthes (1992) points out, can only be made comparable by the invention of abstract and, too often, Eurocentric categories, such as the family.

And still, at the beginning of the research process, I was challenged to make decisions on a 'tertium comparationis', in the sense of finding an entry point into gathering data that is more concrete than 'ethnicised cultural productions'. Already in these first steps of composing the research project and in finalising the research design, situational and relational maps as well as memoing – the making of notes along with mapping – played a crucial role.

Maps help to 'open up' data from different perspectives early on in the research process, focusing on elements in the overall research situation and relations among them (situational maps and relational situational maps), main collective actors in the arenas (social world/arena maps) and discourses (positional maps). The maps became analytical tools to be developed and recomposed at different stages of the research project.

The first decision I made was to focus my analysis on three small-scale settings in three small towns: Zeven and Cuxhaven, with their significant Dutch and Portuguese minorities respectively, and Aurich as a small town in the region of East Frisia.[5] This decision moved me towards a clearer definition of the research situation, however, it was only made after I explored the broader field of Dutch, Portuguese and East Frisian actors and platforms in Germany. I documented this process by encircling my research situation in preliminary memos. Memoing is a technique in qualitative research, where researchers record their thoughts, reflections, and interpretations throughout the research process, either in text documents, hand-written drafts or in analysis software such as MaxQda, where

5 After deciding on three small towns as research sites, I gathered primary statistical data on the towns' number of inhabitants, economic sectors, and the composure of inhabitants with a so-called migration background. As is known from small-town research, there is a lack of statistical data available on such places that shows the level of regionality necessary for comprehensive analysis (Porsche, Steinführer, Beetz, et al. 2019: 6). The Mikrozensus 2017 census data confirmed the Dutch and Portuguese inhabitants of Zeven and Cuxhaven in significant numbers and further solidified my choice of field research sites.

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memos can be attached to single codes. I memoed in a MS Word document. By the end of the project, these memos amounted to more than 30,000 words.

To then familiarise myself with the research situation, I conducted desktop research on the small towns and their ethnicised cultural productions and actors, undertook a literature review, and interviewed three academic experts on the minorities in question. This early data was the basis of my first situational and relational maps. Situational maps and relational maps detail relations among all elements in a situation. Clarke et al. explicitly suggest preliminary situational maps and early memos to encircle the research situation and grasp its complexity. They state that 'this preliminary version of your messy situational map will likely not be particularly empirical or research based, though you may, of course, be somewhat familiar with the substantive topic and its literature' (2018: 111). Memoing is also encouraged as a constant and vital practice in situational analytical research (Clarke et al. 2018: 112).

Using selected relational analysis in situational maps, I worked out which events or actors could be the focus of field research. Initially, it looked as if specific historical points in time, such as the withdrawal of Dutch troops from one of the towns or the closure of the Portuguese mission in another town would become the focal point of the field research and data gathering (See Fig. 6.3).

After further mapping, I chose to focus on those individual and collective actors in associations that (re)produce public festivals as part of the towns' annual calendars nowadays. The main reason for this was that the relational situational map revealed more (diverse) relations between elements in the situation, making it more feasible to study the diverse sensemaking of those involved in cultural endeavours in the here and now, paying dues to the presence-orientation of cultural heritage, beyond a mere nostalgic perspective of what has been lost in specific historical moments (Fig. 6.3).

The early maps created in this phase still make determining units of comparison, associations and public festivals, comprehensible. The situational maps initially allowed me to represent the situations' particularity in the three towns to be expressed without defining observation units in advance. The relational analysis then allowed me to determine a tertium comparationis.

I limited producing situational maps to single case studies and to the beginning of the research process, as they appeared too complex and confusing for further analysis.

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Fig. 6.3: Situational Map with Relational Analysis

After the main decisions on the research field and tertium comparationes were made, I accessed the field by contacting ethnic associations in the small towns, asking for permission to participate in one of their events. Highly engaged volunteers, whom I describe as entrepreneurs within the small-town arena and different social worlds, functioned as gatekeepers and sometimes referred me to other possible interviewees or forwarded a call for interviews via their mailing list. At the beginning of my studies, I strongly felt what Rolf Lindner (1981) described as 'the researcher's fear of the field' (Lindner 1981, my translation). A fear that Lindner traces back to field research essentially being a moment of social interaction between the observer and the observed, a moment of reciprocity. For the researcher, observing something special is a conversation at one's coffee table, something much more every day for the interviewee. The reciprocity, Lindner argues, is the main methodological problem of participatory observation, wherein the observer 'is caught up in the very web of social interaction which he observes, analyses and reports' (Lindner 1981: 51, my translation). In my case, researcher anxiety led me to postpone answering responses to my call for interviews, made me take another 5-minute walk around the neighbourhood before ringing a doorbell, or led me to sit in the corner at an event doubting the legitimacy of my presence there. I was conscious about not introducing the con-

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cept of cultural heritage, which was not a part of people's definition of the situation, or not addressing people I met as members of a migrant or ethnic grouping. Lindner argues that the fears are 'an expression of the image that the researcher has of the image that the designated research subjects have of the researcher.' (1981: 54, my translation). In moments of interaction in the field, the otherwise unequal relationship between researcher and researched becomes equal in that sense and might even turn around. Lindner concludes that it is essential to take these seemingly 'disruptive disruptions' of the research process as a source of data that can be mined if one manages to be reflexive about it, which does not come as a surprise to a researcher trained in feminist research methods. Feminist research has long questioned the objectivity of knowledge production, underlining how social structures of inequality as well as standpoints and positionalities of researchers therein shape what knowledge is being produced in academia. The exchange with my close colleagues was essential for coping with anxieties and better interpreting moments that need such reflexivity in the field research process.

It is crucial to make transparent that I did have help in the field from a student assistant who gathered the data in Cuxhaven, which was explicitly helpful due to her knowledge of the Portuguese language, which proved to be essential in field access and helpful during interviews. All but one interview in the overall sample of this thesis was conducted in German, which is an essential indicator for the minority, but not profoundly disadvantaged or excluded minority status of the participants in this research.

My student assistant Carola Steenhoff and I collaborated closely throughout this project. Her meticulous field notes and insightful interview material proved indispensable resources for the analysis. In retrospect, active participation in the field research phase significantly impacts the depth of understanding. During the analysis, there were instances where I initially felt a degree of uncertainty about my findings. Relying on a specific intuition or instinct (for lack of a better term) played a crucial role in determining the plausibility of my conclusions. In these moments, I frequently sought validation by engaging in discussions with Carola to refine and solidify the aspects of my thesis.

Carola conducted two short-term ethnographic field visits and four interviews in Cuxhaven. I spent three short ethnographic field visits in Zeven, visited four events, and conducted five interviews. I visited Aurich twice, one together with Carola, where I conducted three interviews. The interviews lasted 1–2.5 hours and took place in people's homes (see Figure 6.4 for a list of interviewees), often alongside partners, children or dogs.

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Fig. 6.4: List of pseudomised research participants' names and their positioning vis-à-vis local ethncised social worlds and associations

Case Study/ Positioning	**Ethnic entrepreneur**	**Maverick**	**Outsider**
Cuxhaven	*Christina* *Rafael*	*Marta*	*Luis*
Zeven	*Hilde*	*Rubens & Merle* *Joris*	*Sebastian*
Aurich	*Clara* *Richard*		*Lena*

Fig. 6.5: Questions from Interview Guide

Narrative opening questions:

- **I would first ask you to tell me your life story as you have experienced it, especially with regard to how you got to where and who you are today.**
- **What is it like to live, work and grow up in XXX? What does everyday life here look like for you?**

Other questions

- Do you feel at home here? When do you feel most 'at home' and why?
- How would you describe the people in XXX? Who do you feel close to/similar to, who is rather different?
- What would you say characterises the culture here in XXX? Compared to XXX?
- If you could invite 12 people to XXX, what would you show them about your life here?
- You have already mentioned XXX (e.g. volunteering), where being Dutch/Portuguese/East Frisian plays a role. Are there other occasions or areas in everyday life where this is the case?
- What role do the association's activities play for you?
  - Is it important to you that the organisation/the festival lives on in the long term, that a younger generation takes over at some point? Will that happen?
  - This festival also exists in XXX and XXX? Would you say it is special here?
  - How much do the reactions of the wider public here in XX to your activities mean to you?
- You have had experience in two countries. What do you do differently here than there?
- (How) do you maintain contact with your country of origin? What does this contact mean to you?

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I constructed the interviews as problem-centred (Witzel 2000),[6] with two initial narrative questions. These questions were broad and were meant to trigger a more extended narrative in an attempt not to prime the narrative along an ethnic lens. I first asked: 'tell me your life story as you have experienced it, especially with regard to how you got to where you are and who you are today.' I underlined that I would try not to disturb their narrative. I then asked, 'What is it like to live, work and grow up in XXX? What is everyday life like for you here?' Later in the interview I asked more specific questions, such as where they feel at home, which kind of people in the city they do or do not feel close to, and about their volunteer work and the festivals (See Figure 6.5. for the complete interview guide).

As the interviews contained most personal data, anonymising the data is of central importance here. I intended initially to use pseudonyms for individual research participants and the three small towns. However, I realised that not naming the towns does have disadvantages as to the use of pictures, the quoting of newspaper articles and most importantly, a description of specific worldmaking aspects, such as policies, development plans, or regime actors central in the fields. This decision had implications for my publication-oriented work of anonymising the data. Werner et al. (2023) point out that anonymisation in social research entails much more than pseudonymisation. The task starts with data management and storage aspects, and the publication of research findings entails many decisions to be made throughout the research process. They state:

> This is an issue that appears simple on the surface, but on closer examination reveals blind spots and complexities. Anonymization is particularly time-consuming in qualitative studies with few participants, which may be conducted in small towns or manageable communities. (Werner et al. 2023: 3, my translation)

All interviewees consented to my use of their words for this and potential later research projects in accordance with the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All data that can serve to identify research participants directly is and was accessible only to myself and to my student assistant for limited amounts of time. I cut out of the text contextual data analysis that can be related to individual research participants and that was not relevant to the analysis. This includes the names of third parties, family relationships, affiliations to groups, locations (e.g. cities), institutions or roles, competencies and geographical references. (ibid: 10) This meant the exclusion of all data that could potentially be harmful to individuals, such as their

6 Witzel describes his interview method as 'inductive-deductive' (2000: 2, my translation). It is based on theory-generating procedures of Grounded Theory and opposes both deductive approaches as well as naive-inductive approaches to empirical research, which pretend the research is not situated in that researcher' enter the field and analysis with an interest and with presumptions.

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sexual orientation. My anonymisation strategy can generally be described as oriented toward publication (ibid:13). The concrete techniques I used were not naming, as well as generalising and pseudonymising data points.

My ethnographic field research phases were relatively short and focused on specific events and moments of interaction. They can be described as 'focused ethnography' (Knoblauch 2013), a form of ethnographic practice taking place in one's own culture and for a limited amount of time. During the short-term ethnographic visits of one or two nights, Carola and I soon came to realise that it was the informal conversations that were of great importance to understand the heritage situations better. These conversations were especially important in that many of the most useful ones happened with people we would not have associated with being active in the Ethnicised Heritage Situations, such as local businesspeople or important individuals without official roles in the associations. Our field notes became important places to document these conversations. Another moment of change in the sampling strategy regarding the interviews was when we realised that it was very important for people to position themselves via other members of the ethnic associations or an ethnic/diaspora community more broadly. This was when we found mavericks – people positioned at the margins of or opposed to the social worlds – to become a part of the interview sample alongside the entrepreneurs, who occupied a central position in and across the social worlds.

In the earlier stages of the research process, I decided to read local newspaper articles to gain background knowledge on the festivals and associations in the small towns and only later on included them in the data sample. Some of the more recent articles were accessible online; for most, I visited the local newspaper archive or contacted newspapers to send requested articles. In the case of Aurich, I included 14 articles in the sample, ranging from 1995 to 2018. In Cuxhaven, the sample was bigger with 29 articles ranging from 1966, when the Spanish centre was opened, to 2018, when a new executive board of the German-Portuguese Cultural Association was elected. In Zeven, I got a bit lost in the archive and included 89 articles from 1963, when the arrival of the Dutch military garrison in the city was announced, to 2018, when the Four Evening Marches festival turned 50 years old.

To sum up, the analytical practice of mapping is central to a Situational Analysis project from its very beginnings, laid out here to compose a research design, and in the process of gathering data along the principles of theoretical sampling. Mapping along with consistent memoing, while gathering different types of data from desktop research, expert conversations and later on from ethnographic observation, newspaper articles and interviews, is an iterative process of abduction, a constant moving between empirical data and theorising. The goal of this theorising in Situational Analysis is to understand the situation of research more clearly, a process that urges the researcher to actively reflect on and make transparent choices during the research process. It is this iterative process that leads to theorising and, in

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my case, the development of Ethnicised Heritage Situations as a theoretical model. While I have so far described the ways is which mapping helped to decide on a tertium comparationes, the associations and festivals in all three towns, other kinds of structuring comparisons became central in these later stages of the research process.

6.2.2 Doing Situational Analysis

My Situational Analysis praxis was centrally composed of three techniques: open coding of the interview material, mapping, and memoing. The interview material takes a unique position in the research as I only coded the interviews, not the other types of data, field notes and newspaper articles. This is because my main research interest was how the research participants draw symbolic boundaries and value the cultural productions they are engaged in from a subjective perspective.

Upon completing the interview transcription, I conducted three rounds of open coding, a pivotal initial step in the grounded theory research methodology, which encompasses two to three distinct coding phases, not all of which play a role in Situational Analysis. During open coding, I systematically coded segments of the interview material. Initially, my first code list was interview-specific, yet I continuously made memos about recurring aspects across different interviews. This laid the foundation for my second code list, which highlighted codes spanning interviews within a case.

This process resulted in the identification of 137 codes encompassing 728 coded segments. In the third phase, I employed MaxMaps as a visual analysis tool to cluster the codes around 'more enduring and analytically ambitious conceptual categories', as emphasised by Clarke et al. (2018: 5). As the codes evolved into more abstract representations during the open coding process, a fusion of bottom-up and top-down codes emerged through an abductive process. For instance, I systematically grouped various codes under broader categories, such as forms of boundary making or volunteer engagements, employing visualisations to enhance conceptual clarity.

The focus in Situational Analysis transitions to mapping after the open coding stage, while the relation of codes to maps remains unclear. Clarke (2018: 27) advises not to put codes on maps but rather to use coding to first break up the material. In my case, the ideas for specific maps and their content emerged from the open coding process and the memoing that went along with it.[7]

The project's central challenge at this stage in the research process lay in the various moments where comparison played a role. There is the question of the tertium comparationis in the early stages of the research process, along with the logic of

7 Templates of all three kinds of maps that I used for my own maps can be found here: https://study.sagepub.com/clarke2e/student-resources/templates (accesses June 6, 2024).

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theoretical sampling, as outlined in the previous sub-chapter. Beyond this, the research questions primarily concern how individuals within specific arenas compare themselves to others, a process that gives rise to symbolic boundary making and, potentially, group formation. In this sense, comparison itself becomes an object of empirical investigation. Finally, the project also examined how processes of (e)valuation operate in relation to the cultural practices and productions in which people participate – amounting to a comparative analysis of fundamental social processes. Situational Analysis enables the explicit and systematic integration of these diverse modes of comparison, which are central to sociological research (Sielert 2023). Comparison within this framework becomes a reflexive method, encompassing both abstract comparisons of social processes by the researcher and comparisons as an empirical object of investigation.

I profited from the eclectic work already being done by Clarke and others on doing comparative analysis in Situational Analysis (Sielert 2023). Some researchers have used Situational Analysis for explicitly comparative research designs (e.g., Schulte-Römer 2015; Shim 2005). In key Situational Analysis publications, there are aspects in which comparison appears as a research method. The 'method of constant comparison' (Glaser 1965) in data coding is most relevant, as already practised in grounded theory and partly in Situational Analysis. In addition, there is a practice of 'comparative mapping,' in which data types are analysed in separate maps to make the results comparable (Clarke et al. 2018: 235).

I produced social world/arena maps limited to one specific data source, such as participant observations and newspaper articles; maps limited to the data of a small-town arena; and maps integrating all three cases. The former helped focus the analysis on what is different across cases, while the latter showed what is similar.

As I have argued elsewhere (Sielert 2023), social world and arena maps are well suited to analyse comparisons at the level of the actors' practices of comparison (their definition of the situation), which draw symbolic boundaries between social worlds in the field. Social world/arena maps are a relational ecological form of organisational analysis (Clarke and Leigh Star 2008). Their empirical questions are: 'Who cares about which issues, and what do they want to do about them?' (Clarke et al. 2018: 148). Social world/arena maps proved to be especially fruitful in my research process not only to get a first overview of which actors participate in the (re)production of ethnicised festivals in small town arenas but also to analyse the role of the heritage regime's operations as state and otherwise governmental regulation via institution and organisation active in the arenas. In contrast to Barney Glaser's (1965) 'method of constant comparison,' the proximity to the empirical material and the correspondingly low level of abstraction means that the differentiations of the empirical world remain visible as differences in the various actors' boundary-drawing processes. Nevertheless, the maps also make it possible to visualise affiliation

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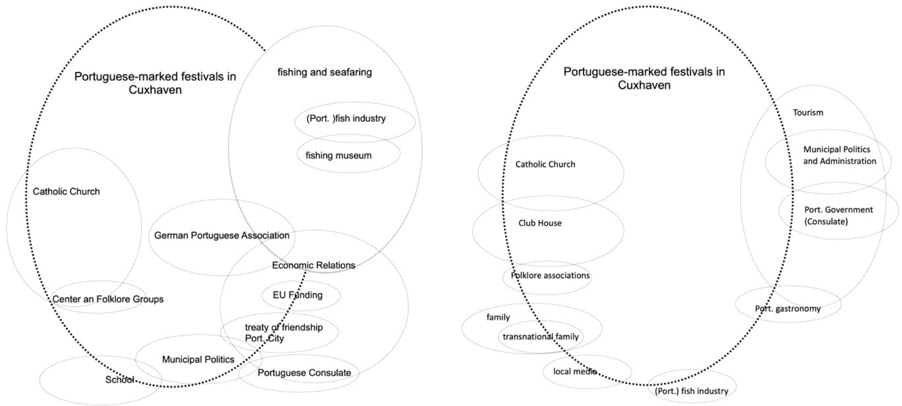
formations through social world relations in ethnically marked cultural production. It was these kinds of maps that were most differentiated per case and type of data

Fig. 6.6 & 6.7: Social World/Arena Maps based on newspaper articles (left) and ethnographic observation (right)



For example, it proved productive to confront the social worlds and symbolic boundaries constructed by dominant discourses and narratives about the small towns' minority inhabitants in newspaper articles with less dominant narratives and observations in the field (Fig 6.6 & 6.7). In the case of Cuxhaven, I found that while the dominant narrative in the local newspaper is to bind the city's Portuguese heritage to a history of its so-called 'guest workers,' for people in the field or within events, this history was somewhat absent.

Integrative maps that include data from all three cases are more abstract and already involve a certain amount of the research analysis; at times, they are an outcome of conducting maps per case or data. They operate on a level of scientific comparison, the comparison of social processes, rather than comparison as a phenomenon in the research field. Emile Durkheim (1984), for example, posited that comparison is not a particular branch of sociology, but all sociological work is comparative per se. Theory provides the framework within which different empirical objects can be compared.[8] The integrative social world and arena maps tended to move to this level of abstraction, which simultaneously focuses on what is similar rather than different across cases.

All positional maps conducted for this project were integrative, which means that they were constructed using all kinds of data from all three case studies. Po-

8 I have discussed the problematic side of this assumption in Sielert (2023).

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sitional maps offer ecologies of positions taken or not taken and contested issues in empirical situations. They bring elements of discursive analysis to the research process, which proved helpful for my reconstruction of relevant cultural repertoires (Lamont and Thévenot 2000). The focus in positional maps is not on individual and collective actors that employ such repertoires but on the criteria of (e)valuation that constitute them.

Fig. 6.8: Positional Map, integrative of all data and all cases

Positional maps are traditionally thought to map discourses and discursive positions in the material. Sarah Glück (2023: 18) argues that instead of taking discourses as a basis for positional maps, it is also possible to map out narrative structures with their help. In the context of my research, positional maps proved helpful in reconstructing different criteria of (e)valuation that, taken together, hinted toward relevant cultural repertoires of (e)valuation in the field and their content (Fig. 6.8.). This allowed for comparing different criteria of (e)valuation of cultural productions as causal mechanisms for boundary making. I, for example, mapped out the heritage repertoire from a more active approach of making and appropriating heritages to a more passive-oriented receiving of heritage or was able to reconstruct more in-depth the contents of small-town-repertoire participants in the studies drew upon in symbolic boundary making.

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Overall, I produced almost 20 versions of the social world and arena maps in analysis, which I developed throughout the research process and played with in the analysis. They first allowed the structuring of the comparative research design of the project. Second, they allowed me not to give up on the empirical material's complexity (and to stay open, as Clarke calls it) and to reach a certain level of productive analytical clarity.

As a tool for qualitative inquiry, I experienced producing and reworking maps as real work, which was sometimes tiring. I always had to make several maps before key insights jumped out at me. I use the language of insights 'jumping out' at me consciously to indicate how it felt in the moment and to underline how maps make the material speak for one's research interest – a process Strübing names 'abductive flashes' (2002: 324, my translation). At the same time, the maps enabled a transparency in the way I came to certain conclusions, which is, despite how it feels in the moment, much less a sudden instance of 'jumping out' but of hard analytical work.

6.2.3 More than Wrapping up – Writing as an Analytical Process

Writing played a foundational role throughout the entire trajectory of my research process. This encompassed various stages, ranging from crafting an initial project grounded in the existing literature to the ongoing practice of memoing, early drafts of chapters, and the formulation of conference papers addressing specific facets of the project. It extended to the critical process of translating intricate analytical maps, which inherently lack self-explanatory clarity, into cohesive written narratives in analysis chapters. Finally, the core writing phase involved synthesising the research findings and theoretical contributions into a coherent scholarly work, which in its initial phase involved a lot of freewriting in a 'stream of consciousness' style. Writing played a huge role in these later stages of the analysis process.

Writing is, as has been argued by qualitative and ethnographic researchers,[9] not a mere 'means to communicate research, but as its very aid. Writing is not just of research but as research.' (Mitchell and Clark 2021: 1). Writing involves interpretation at every step and must be considered a research method in itself; it helps to reflect on the data critically and becomes a means to enhance qualitative analysis. The meaning of the final thesis text is constructed in a fusion of horizons as an author and reader (Mitchell and Clark 2021). Accordingly, Strübing et al. (2018) added the category 'textual performance' to the list of quality criteria in qualitative research.

While I was very aware of and trained in the important role of memoing and writing an exposé as part of the research process, I have to admit that the step of

9 See, e.g., the Writing Culture debate of the 1980s/1990s (Zenker 2014).

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putting my analytical maps into writing analytical chapters and the analytical process that evolved in composing these chapters came as a surprise to me. While I did have experience writing an empirical research project for my M.A. thesis, until starting the PhD my writing experience was of the structured sort. I constructed lines of content and analysis in advance and had to write down these insights. In light of the years-long process and complexity of a PhD project to be published as a book, I ultimately had to change my habitual writing practices.

A first breakthrough in this respect came when I accepted that this phase of 'writing up' the project would sometimes be frayed and messy. I then embraced this aspect of writing and started to produce many pages of freewriting, asking myself questions like 'What will be the content of this chapter?' or 'what do I want to say here?'. With a lot of analytical work and clarity, the development of my overall narrative arose from this freewriting.

To begin to put my analytical maps into words[10] on a mere descriptive level was another step of writing that helped in the process. This also involved reviewing all my maps and memos to decide which results would become part of the final project and where to place them. Clarke et. al. strongly recommended going along with the feeling of surprise in the research process when making this decision. They write:

> We are always very happy when researchers discuss being surprised at an outcome of an SA project, because it usually means they are working very hard and confronting themselves as well as the data in seriously reflexive ways. (2018: 179)

Taking 'moments of nonrecognition' (Glick Schiller et al. 2006) as the starting point of each chapter, I followed their advice to go with the surprises.

Another of Clarke et al.'s suggestions in finalising a Situational Analysis project through writing that I found extremely helpful is to produce a final project map out of situational maps.

> SA project maps are, quite simply, maps of particular projects or of facets of particular projects prepared for presentations, research reports, published articles, or books. They are no longer maps pursued to further one's own SA, but instead are tailored to explicate particular aspects of that analysis for intended [...] audiences. (ibid: 202)

It was in this last step of putting my central social world/arena and positional maps into such a final situational project map that I managed to most clearly develop my

10 Special thanks to Anna-Lisa Klages and Tobias Fitzek, who accompanied me in this process through regular online exchanges.

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concept of Ethnicised Heritage Situations and the operationalisation of elements in this situation.

This chapter has outlined how Situational Analysis provided the groundwork for this study's research design and analysis. It enabled me to bring together theory, data, and emergent conceptual contributions in a reflexive manner. By working through the complexity of the three small towns, mapping proved particularly generative: it not only highlighted contrasts between everyday experiences and dominant representations in the literature and mainstream media but also structures comparisons and at times unexpected connections across the case studies. The iterative process involving mapping, memoing and coding showed how particularities of cases and experiences complicate generalised accounts, while also revealing patterns across cases by comparing the ways in which people categorise one another or (e)valuate their cultural doings.

The analysis process was not linear but abductive – moving back and forth between the empirical and the conceptual. Rather than treating theory as imposed from the outset, insights from the data are theorised, while theory in turn guided some of the questions I asked of the data. This dynamic interplay was central to the development of Ethnicised Heritage Situations as a theoretical model, which emerged not as an abstract construction but through the grounded, comparative work of Situational Analysis. This lays the foundation for the chapters that follow. The Ethnicised Heritage Situations model is taken forward as both an analytic and conceptual lens, allowing me to explore the processes of worldmaking and sensemaking that unfold in and across the towns.

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