

The Fiction of Civic Nationalism:  
Examining France and the Netherlands

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## ABSTRACT

### The Fiction of Civic Nationalism: Examining France and the Netherlands

Luke Moreau

Insofar as traditional nationalism scholarship broadly defines civic nationalism as political/Western/good and ethnic as cultural/Eastern/bad, the central argument of this thesis contends that such a dualistic approach to the study of nationalism is fundamentally flawed. Moreover, the argument that civic nationalism functions as an open political community - transcending the ethno-cultural elements of nationalism - is both simplistic and misleading. An examination of the historical development of the nation-state in Western Europe indicates that *all* nations - regardless of how they are labeled - are traditionally perceived as ethno-culturally homogenous. However, immigration since World War II has challenged the cultural homogeneity of Western European nation-states. The success of New Populist Parties in Western Europe, and their political influence on issues pertaining to immigration, national identity, citizenship laws and assimilation policies, challenges the civic/political conception of nationalism. France and the Netherlands serve as crucial case studies as they are defined and examined as paradigmatic "civic" nations within nationalism scholarship. Traditionally defined as "civic" cases, both countries use cultural values, traditions and histories to differentiate their native "French" and "Dutch" citizens from their immigrant communities, rendering the civic conception of nationalism unconvincing and empirically problematic.

For Nina and my parents



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Nationalism is an infantile disease. It is the measles of mankind.<sup>1</sup> – Albert Einstein

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.quotegarden.com/patriotism.html>

## Chapter 1: Introduction

The study of nationalism is challenging. Conflicts, both domestic and international, continue to erupt along nationalist lines, and notwithstanding extensive scrutiny and analysis, nationalism scholars remain perplexed as to why and when such conflicts occur. As a research field, nationalism studies have gone through distinct waves of inquiry. Nationalism has been discounted as a deplorable phenomenon specific to a time and place in human history,<sup>2</sup> only to be revitalized with the emergence of new movements. Notwithstanding the classical theorists who have addressed the ideas of nations - Lord Acton, Ernest Renan, Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim to name a few - the modern study of nationalism is generally accepted as having begun after World War II.<sup>3</sup> The scholarship during the post-World War II era, produced by the likes of Carlton Hayes, Hans Kohn, Karl Deutsch and Louis Snyder, is considered to be among most important and influential works in developing theoretical foundations.<sup>4</sup> And while much of these early works on nationalism have been re-examined, called into question and built upon, their influence on the field remains significant.

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<sup>2</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *Nationalism Old and New* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1965), p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> For more detail on how these classical scholars contributed to the nationalist scholarship see Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 9-16.

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that while most of these scholars wrote their seminal texts during the 1940s and 1950s both Carlton Hayes and Hans Kohn had published works on nationalism in the 1920s and 1930s. See Hans Kohn, *A History of Nationalism in the East*, translated by Margaret M. Green (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1929); and Carlton Hayes, *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism* (New York: Smith, 1931). For works during the 1940s and 1950s see Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background*, 6<sup>th</sup> printing (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956) originally published in 1944; Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry Into the Foundations of Nationality* (New York: MIT Press, 1953); and Louis Snyder, *The Meaning of Nationalism* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1954).

This initial interest in the study of nationalism during the post-World War II period stagnated in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s. During this time few “groundbreaking” theories were developed, and while interest in nationalism remained, especially during the period of decolonization, the study began to be dismissed as old and outdated. However, in 1983 three seminal texts on nations and nationalism were published, generating a renewed interest for nationalism. The publications of Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities*, Eric Hobsbawm’s and Terence Rangers’ edited *The Invention of Tradition* and Ernest Gellner’s *Nations and Nationalism* brought new conceptual understandings to the emergence and development of nations and nationalism. And while their individual theories will be discussed in Chapter 2, it should be noted that these texts are still considered groundbreaking and influential in the study of nationalism.<sup>5</sup> Based largely on these works, the following ten years involved a re-examination of much of the scholarship pertaining not only to nations and nationalism, but also to ethnicity, national identity and culture.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding these new theories, the interest in nationalism throughout the 1980s remained modest with most scholarship favoring “other kinds of ideolog[ies] and social movement[s].”<sup>7</sup> However, the interest in

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<sup>5</sup> Quite literally these works are cited in almost every book and article written on nationalism since their publication. And although Eric Hobsbawm’s “The Invention of Tradition” has been largely replaced with his later work, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) it nonetheless remains very influential.

<sup>6</sup> See Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986); Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991); and John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

<sup>7</sup> Smith, 1998, p. xi.

nationalism and issues related to it changed with two successive historical events - the collapse of the Soviet Union and the disintegration of Yugoslavia.<sup>8</sup>

Perpetuated by the fifteen Former Soviet Republics declaring sovereignty as independent nation-states, along with the nationalist fervor that emerged during the break-up of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, the study of nationalism was re-energized. And while these two events provided a renewed interest in the scholarship, it is new forces perceived to be undermining the traditional hegemony of the nation-state that is driving much of the scholarship today.

The emergence of globalization as a force in international and domestic politics has forced many academic disciplines to re-examine much of their work. And while the globalization process in the international system has arguably been around since the “diffusion of world religions and the establishment of transcontinental civilisations,” its modern incarnation has come in the form of a “financial-cum-cultural” type.<sup>9</sup> In the mid-1980s, neo-liberalism as *the* international financial system had begun to fully implement its economic policies on a global scale through international financial organizations. The opening of international markets through currency speculation, the privatization of state run industries and the reduction of trade tariffs would under the purview of neo-liberalism, benefit the world at large. Modern financial globalization in its process of

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<sup>8</sup> The renewed interest in nationalism after the collapse of the Soviet Union becomes obvious given the overabundance of scholarly research devoted to the subject since the early 1990s. Smith suggests that the research on nationalism has developed exponentially since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union’s break up. See Smith, 1998, p. xi.

<sup>9</sup> Göran Therborn, “Globalizations: Dimensions, Historical Waves, Regional Effects, Normative Governance,” *International Sociology* 15. 2 (2000): p. 158, 163.

turning the world into a global market propagated both interconnection and interdependence.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, globalization has also become synonymous with the idea of Western cultural imperialism and the concomitant perception that local cultures, in particular those of the developing world, are losing their uniqueness to a standardized Western influenced world. Although the idea of a global culture emerging has lost much of its salience in recent years - arguably because of a global resistance to it - it raised fears that unique national identities could be in jeopardy if not protected. This renewed interest in cultural belonging and preserving national identities is not unique to the developing world. Over the last ten years Western European countries have become increasingly uneasy with their immigrant populations, who are generally seen as challenging and altering the homogenous national identities and cultures of European nation-states. Furthermore, the successful emergence of New Populist Parties across Europe, and the salience and importance that many "native" Europeans are showing towards protecting their national identities, means the "immigration problem" will continue to influence Europe's political landscape for the foreseeable future. All of these recent developments have caused many nationalism scholars to re-conceptualize the theories within the literature. And while the traditional debates within the discipline continue - most notably between Modernists and Primordialists<sup>11</sup> - others, such as the civic/ethnic distinction, are

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<sup>10</sup> The interconnection of global economies became most obvious during the Asian economic crisis, when the Asian tiger economies began to fail during currency speculation. See Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002) 89-132.

<sup>11</sup> The Modernist/Primordialist debate is concerned itself the origins the nation and nationalism. Modernists argue that the idea of nationalism socially constructed the nation which first emerged during the French Revolution, while Primordialists argue that nations are naturally forming and are rooted in ancient history. See Smith, 1998, p. 8-24 and p. 145-169, and John Hutchinson, *Modern Nationalism* (London: Fontana Press, 1994), p. 1-38.

being challenged in both their theoretical reasoning and practical usefulness. This thesis represents a contradiction to the civic/ethnic debate.

## **Methodology**

The objective of this thesis is to critically examine the usefulness of separating nationalism into two separate and distinct categories: civic and ethnic. Insofar as traditional nationalism scholarship broadly defines civic nationalism as political/Western/good and ethnic as cultural/Eastern/bad,<sup>12</sup> the central argument of this thesis contends that such a dualistic approach to the study of nationalism is fundamentally flawed. The argument that civic nationalism functions as an open political community - transcending the ethno-cultural elements of nationalism – is both simplistic and misleading. This thesis argues that nationalisms should not be divided into civic and ethnic categories, as all nations are predicated on the idea of a “unique” national identity that differentiates one from another. The histories, myths, languages, traditions and overall cultures that helps form a nation’s unique national identity are powerful and emotive reminders of a nations shared past and communal attachment. Nonetheless, the distinction between civic/ethnic nationalism asserts that civic nations exist through a commitment to the political community and not ethno-cultural characteristics. Anti-immigration sentiment in “civic” Western Europe and the successive electoral success and influence of anti-immigrant Populist Parties places the “civic political nation” into question. Although anti-immigration sentiment is often equated as prejudice based on physiological differences, the Western European variety is largely based on the fear that a

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<sup>12</sup> An in depth literature review and critique of the civic/ethnic distinction will be examined in the following chapter.

nation's culture – and therefore the nation's identity – is being contaminated. There is a belief, often suggested by leaders of New Populist Parties, that nations and its concomitant national and cultural identities have territories, and that if an individual choose to leave their “home” nation then they should adopt the host nation's beliefs. The protection of national identity that has emerged across Western Europe is more of the ethnic variety of nationalism than the civic. As a result, in order to analyze the “myth of civic nationalism,”<sup>13</sup> it seems appropriate to examine the geographical area from which the so-called civic nation emerged, namely Western Europe, and more particularly France and the Netherlands.<sup>14</sup> France and the Netherlands serve as crucial case studies as they are defined and examined as paradigmatic “civic” nations within nationalism scholarship.<sup>15</sup> Although both nation-states have markedly different policies towards immigration, the perceived immigration problem in both countries provides two different yet equally powerful arguments against the existence of civic nations.

Given these attitudes towards immigration in Western Europe, and the increasing importance to, and protection of, the nation-state's identity, the idea that nations can exist

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<sup>13</sup> The “myth of civic nationalism” is influenced from three article bearing similar titles. Rogers Brubaker, “The Manichean Myth: Rethinking the Distinction between “Civic” and “Ethnic” Nationalism,” *Nation and National Identity: The European Experience in Perspective*, eds. Hanspeter Kriesi et. al. (Zürich: Verlag Rüegger, 1999); Bernard Yack, “The Myth of the Civic Nation,” *Theorizing Nationalism*, ed. Ronald Beiner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999); and Taras Kuzio, “The Myth of the Civic State: A Critical Survey of Hans Kohn's Framework for Understanding Nationalism,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25.1 (2002).

<sup>14</sup> Hans Kohn, often considered the father of the distinction, listed France and the Netherlands as two of five nations whose nationalism developed primarily as a “political occurrence” in his distinction between Western and Eastern nationalisms. Kohn, 1956, p. 329.

<sup>15</sup> France is almost universally defined as a “civic” nation within the literature on nationalism, See Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay et al., *Mapping the Political Landscape: An Introduction to Political Science* (Toronto: Nelson, 2004), p. 408-409; Dominique Schnapper, “Beyond the Opposition: Civic Nation versus Ethnic Nation,” *Rethinking Nationalism*, eds. Jocelyne Couture, Kai Nielson and Michel Seymour (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1998), p. 219-234. And while the Netherlands is not typically analyzed as a case within the civic/ethnic literature, both Rogers Brubaker and Stephen Shulman have cited Kohn's list, which included the Netherlands, in their own critiques of civic and ethnic nationalism. See Brubaker, 1999, p. 56; and Stephen Shulman, “Challenging the Civic/Ethnic and West/East Dichotomies in the Study of Nationalism,” *Comparative Political Studies* 35. 5 (2002): p. 555.



solely as political communities seems flawed. The “civic” nations of Western Europe are unlikely to allow their national identities to become altered or subsumed by the plurality of “national” identities within their own nation-states. In essence, the self-perceived “homogenous” nation-states of Western Europe are now realizing that they are in fact losing their cultural homogeneity, and are accordingly adopting traditionally “ethnic” characteristics of national protectionism. Notwithstanding the many Western Europeans who welcome diversity, anti-immigration sentiment has become a legitimate concern for many people. Highlighted in part by the emergence of New Populist Parties, this once politically incorrect issue has become mainstream: all political parties irrespective of where they stand on the left-right ideological spectrum, must incorporate policies that reflect their stand on the immigration issue.

As a result, this thesis examines the historical progression of civic and ethnic nationalism, arguing that the distinction is theoretically and empirically problematic. By examining the historical development of the nation-state in Western Europe, it becomes evident that *all* nations – regardless of how they are labeled – are traditionally perceived as ethno-culturally homogenous. However, immigration since World War II has challenged the cultural homogeneity of Western European nation-states. As a consequence, this thesis argues that the success of New Populist Parties in Western Europe, and its political influence on issues pertaining to immigration, national identity, citizenship laws and assimilation policies, challenges the civic/political conception of nationalism. Accordingly, this thesis argues that France and the Netherlands, historically defined as “civic” cases, use cultural values, traditions and histories to differentiate native

“French” and “Dutch” citizens from immigrant communities, rendering the civic conception of nationalism unconvincing and empirically problematic.

Finally, this thesis will provide both a theoretical argument and empirical evidence against the existence of civic nationalism. As mentioned above, two case studies will be used to demonstrate that nationalism is based on “ethnic” characteristics, and that these characteristics remain important to national identity of nations. However given the extensive research on subjects crucial to this thesis - nationalism, identity, immigration, citizenship in France, the Netherlands and New Populist Parties - the majority of the research derives from peer-reviewed journals and academic books and the excellent secondary literature on these subjects. Additionally, given recent events in the Netherlands, and to a lesser extent in France, Internet sources were used to give an up to date account of the current realities that pertain to this thesis. For the most part these sources were online versions of major news publications, including The New York Times, BBC News, and The Guardian.

### **Structure of Thesis**

The terminology of nationalism is famously difficult to pinpoint and dissect. Insofar as there are no universally accepted definitions of the terminology critical to any study of nationalism – nation, ethnicity and culture to name a few – this thesis acknowledges that its terminological “choices” are open to criticism. With this in mind, Chapter 2 provides definitions that best exemplify, and are consistent with, the overall themes of this thesis. In order to substantiate these choices, the body of the chapter will consist of an in depth literature review, tracing the “historical origins” of the civic/ethnic

distinction, to the growing number of critiques that have emerged in recent years. Finally, it will challenge the distinction using evidence from two relatively overlooked areas: citizenship laws and assimilation policies.

Chapter 3 is divided into two sections. The first section addresses some of the most influential contributions to nationalism literature concerning the historical evolution and construction of the Western European nation-state. In addition, it will explain why national identities and the idea of the unique nation-state remains a salient issue in contemporary Europe. The second section examines the emergence of New Populist Parties throughout Western Europe from the 1980s onward. Insofar as these parties claim to be the “protectors of national identity” and view immigrants as altering and challenging the national identities of their respective nation-states, it will be argued that the Populist Parties have successfully influenced politics by making their concern surrounding immigration a prominent political issue. Although they are not single-issue parties, this section is limited to their concerns on national identity and immigration.

Chapter 4 is a study of France. France is commonly acknowledged as the original “civic” nation and is therefore the most logical place to begin. Although France is multi-cultural in demographic make-up, it remains a Republican liberal democracy that requires immigrants to assimilate into the dominant French culture. Although France had success with its assimilation policies prior to World War II, immigration during the post-war economic boom has challenged the effectiveness of these mainstay policies. A historical analysis of French citizenship laws further reinforces the premise that a nation’s “openness” to immigrant communities does not necessarily parallel that community’s acceptance into the nation.

France is one of the first countries in Western Europe to have had political parties opposing immigration. For over thirty years, Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the *Front National* (FN), has led one of the most successful Populist Parties in Western Europe. Although, the early years of the FN were not successful, once immigration became a “real” issue, Le Pen became one of the most influential politicians in France. Therefore, Jean Marie Le Pen and the *Front National* are analyzed both in terms of their rhetoric on immigration and with regards to their influence and impact on the French population and political system.

Chapter 5 is a case study of the Netherlands. While the Netherlands is traditionally viewed as one of the most tolerant societies in the world, the last three years have seen a change in attitude by its “native” Dutch towards its immigrant communities. The Netherlands is an important case both because of its history as an ideologically segmented society, and because of its lack of tradition with parties on the extreme right. That is, the Netherlands considers itself a multicultural society, in that it acknowledges, and financially promotes, existing cultural differences. As a segmented society, the Netherlands is commonly referenced as an exemplary case for its ability to sustain a successful democracy through religious and class tolerance. This multiculturalism has become increasingly challenged for the lack of integration of many immigrant communities. While there is no doubt that public disdain towards immigration had been developing for many years, it was the populist leader Pim Fortuyn who single-handedly initiated the once “taboo” discussion on immigration. Although he was assassinated nine days before the national elections in 2002, his legacy and influence on the Dutch political system has been significant, as subsequent policies and attitudes towards immigration

indicate. Furthermore, the recent murder of Theo Van Gogh by an Islamic extremist with Dutch citizenship, and the subsequent rift between Islam and the “Dutch” further substantiates the argument that “civic” nationalism is illogical: national identities and cultures are strongly ingrained in all national communities.

The concluding chapter provides a cursory review of the key theoretical problems inherent to the civic/ethnic division of nationalism. Given the framework of this thesis, it argues that there are multiple problems which render the premise of civic nationalism implausible when it is applied to modern day realities. Insofar as once “homogenous” nation-states are perceived to be a lot less so, immigration and the gamut of issues that surrounds it has become the foremost politico-societal problem for the “civic” nations of Western Europe. The supposed inclusiveness of these nation-states is being challenged, not only by New Populist Parties but also by mainstream parties and citizens who, at a minimum, want immigrants to assimilate into the dominant culture.

Finally, insofar as the Modern way of organizing the world’s population into “groups” is the nation-state, the nation-state itself has long been assumed the primary purveyor of its population’s cultural identity. The final section of this chapter calls this very notion – and concomitantly “civic” nationalism – in question by suggesting that such an understanding of national identity is no longer relevant.

## Chapter 2: Re-Thinking the Civic/Ethnic Divide

The idea that there are two types of nationalism is an old concept within the study of nationalism. Civic nationalism is typically identified as Western, rational, voluntary and good, while ethnic nationalism is depicted as Eastern, emotive, inherited and bad.<sup>1</sup> Although scholars generally agree that the two are ideal types<sup>2</sup>, and that every nation contains elements of both, the dialectical division has remained a central part of the nationalism scholarship. However, this distinction within the nationalist scholarship is inherently flawed, and does not “match up to historical or theoretical scrutiny,”<sup>3</sup> in contemporary politics. The purpose of this chapter is to re-examine the validity of the civic-ethnic division, and to argue that all nationalisms must, above all, be composed of cultural markers that serve as a unifying force, irrespective of how they are labeled. Furthermore, where differences in nationalisms do exist, they are dependent on the cultural aspects that each nation highlights as most important, and how they define their culture in opposition to other nations.

This chapter’s aim will be to critically examine the theoretical inconsistencies inherent to civic nationalism. By reviewing the “terminological chaos”<sup>4</sup> within the nationalist scholarship, it will become evident that even a cursory distinction between nationalisms should be considered suspect. Insofar as terms such as “nation,” “ethnic group,” “culture” and “nationalism” – which are all intrinsically linked – have no

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Yack, “The Myth of the Civic Nation,” *Theorizing Nationalism*, ed. Ronald Beiner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> David Brown, “Are There Good and Bad Nationalisms?,” *Nations and Nationalism* 5. 2 (1999): p. 281.

<sup>3</sup> Taras Kuzio, “The Myth of the Civic State: A Critical Survey of Hans Kohn’s Framework for Understanding Nationalism,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 25.1 (2002): p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Walker Connor, *Ethnonationalism: The Quest for Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 89.

universally accepted definition, applying the civic predicator to nationalism greatly underestimates the potential hostility that can emerge when there is a perceived threat to the nation. Supported by a review and critique of the conventional and contemporary literature on the subject of civic and ethnic nationalism, it will be argued that civic nationalism cannot be separate from cultural markers that are inherent to their historical development and from what, therefore, makes them unique. While “civic” nations may promote an open citizenship policy of *ius soli* (law of the soil), by definition they all, to some degree, promote policies of assimilation which are based on the cultural ideals of the specific state. Finally, the overarching aim of this chapter is to show that all nationalisms, regardless of how they have been traditionally defined, are composed of cultural symbols that are necessary in order to bind a society together along nationalist lines.

**An Ethnic Group is not a Language, is not a Culture, is not a Religion, is not a ...<sup>5</sup>**

The study of nationalism is laden with seemingly straightforward terms such as “nation,” “ethnicity” and “culture.” However, analysis of the scholarship dealing with nationalism proves not only that these terms are abstract and difficult to define, but are often used interchangeably, providing for a certain confusion within the scholarship. Consequently, an overview of nationalism scholarship and an examination of the evolution of its corresponding vocabulary is essential in order to offer any terminological clarity. The following will therefore attempt to define these terms in a manner that

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<sup>5</sup> This is influenced by Walker Connor’s article, “A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group, is a ...,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 1. 4 (1978): 378-400.

correlates with the argument of this thesis, beginning of course, within the larger concept of nationalism and its corresponding idea the *nation*.

The nation, as Walker Connor claims, is “intangible [:] a psychological bond that joins a people and differentiates it, in the subconscious conviction of its members, from all other people in a most vital way.”<sup>6</sup> For Connor, scholars who define the nation in terms of “homogeneity, sameness, oneness, belonging, or consciousness” fail to differentiate the nation from other types of groups.<sup>7</sup> He claims that few scholars define the nation as a “kinship group” and usually explicitly deny that the notion of shared blood is a factor.<sup>8</sup> Although, few if any nations contain a single genetic strand, what matters to a nation is “not *what is* but *what people believe is*.”<sup>9</sup> The psychological belief of an idealized Adam and Eve spawning an uncontaminated nation is what is important, regardless of whether there is any truth to the claim.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, apart from the psychological attachment that may be felt towards a nation, a nation can further be defined “as named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members.”<sup>11</sup> Both are therefore important to the definition of the nation. While Anthony Smith provides a general description of what nations actually are, Walker Connor’s defines the importance of psychological kinship, which irrespective of any actual blood relation can determine the behavior and belief of a “nation.”

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<sup>6</sup> Connor, 1994, p. 92.

<sup>7</sup> Connor, 1994, p. 93.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*. Original emphasis.

<sup>10</sup> Connor, 1994, p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press 1991), p. 14.



Insofar as nations and nationalism are closely related phenomena, nationalism can be defined as “an ideological movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf of a population deemed by some of its members to constitute an actual or potential ‘nation.’”<sup>12</sup> Yet nationalism has also been defined as “primarily a political principle, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.”<sup>13</sup> Although both definitions of nationalism are important in terms of the political aspirations of a nation, they nonetheless ignore an important aspect of all nationalism: the concept of exclusion. According to Judith Lichtenberg, “nationalism, even liberal nationalism, puts emphasis on the distinction between insiders and outsiders, members and non-members.”<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Raymond Breton argues that nationalist movements claim “principles of inclusion and exclusion.”<sup>15</sup> Breton argues that nationalist movements are able to distinguish between the “insiders, that have the right stuff,” and the “outsiders” who do not.<sup>16</sup> Further, he argues that nationalist movements are also conscious of, and compare themselves to, other groups. This comparison occurs on a multitude of levels – economic, political and cultural – and these differences are highlighted to distinguish, ‘the nation’ in terms of history, values and way of life.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it could be stated that nations and their “unique” national identities are

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<sup>12</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000), p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (London: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Judith Lichtenberg, “How Liberal Can Nationalism Be?,” *Theorizing Nationalism*, ed. Ronald Beiner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 182.

<sup>15</sup> Raymond Breton, “From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism: English Canada and Quebec,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 11.1 (1988): p.85.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid*

<sup>17</sup> Breton, 1988, p. 86.

constructed against the “other”, and nationalism is the method used to bind the society in its assertion to the nation.<sup>18</sup>

Perhaps even more confusing is how ethnic groups are defined in relation to nations and culture. While ethnic groups and nations may seem similar, Connor argues that, “an ethnic group may be readily discerned by an anthropologist or other outside observers, but until the members are themselves aware of the group’s uniqueness, it is merely an ethnic group and not a nation. While an ethnic group *may*, therefore, be other-defined, the nation *must* be self-defined.”<sup>19</sup> An ethnic group, Connor argues, is often incorrectly defined as “a group with a common cultural tradition and a sense of identity which exists as a subgroup of a larger society.”<sup>20</sup>

As such, to define an ethnic group according to cultural tradition, notwithstanding that a common tradition is likely within said group, is problematic. Certainly “culture” can be defined in many ways. However, if culture is defined “as the habits, traditions, values, beliefs, ways of life, manner of thinking and behavior in a community, and with a feeling of belonging to a society which shares the same history,”<sup>21</sup> then one can suppose that culture will usually manifests itself along religious, historical, linguistic and traditional lines. The difference between ethnicity and culture, however, simply exists in

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<sup>18</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman., *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2002), p. 96.

<sup>19</sup> Connor, 1994, p. 103.

<sup>20</sup> George Theodorson and Achilles Theodorson, *A Modern Dictionary of Sociology* (New York: Crowell, 1969), p. 135, quoted in Connor, 1994, p. 101. Although, this definition appeared in a 1969 text, contemporary scholars continue to define ethnicity with cultural components. For example, Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner define ethnicity as “a highly inclusive (and relatively large-scale) group identity based on some notion of common origin, recruited primarily through kinship and typically manifesting some measure of cultural distinctiveness.” Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, “Introduction,” *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Democracy*, eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), p. xvii.

<sup>21</sup> M. Parés i Maicas, “El concepte d’identitat cultural,” *Simposi Internacional, Comunicació, Identitat Cultural I Relacions Interculturals* (Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, 1991), cited in Michael Keating, *Nations Against the State: The New Politics of Nationalism in Quebec, Catalonia and Scotland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2001) p. 10.

the proposition that ethnicity cannot be chosen. These two terms appear to become confused largely due to circumstances of birth: one is born with certain ethnic traits, and depending on the geography of one's birth, specific language(s), tradition(s) and religion(s) will become implicitly tied to one's ethnicity. However, it is possible for others of different ethnic groups to also learn these cultural traditions and to embody them within their larger group identity. Cultural markers, such as language, tradition and religion, insofar as they are learned cannot be considered the inherent or exclusive characteristics of one specific group. The following section therefore gives a brief review of the emergence and development of the civic/ethnic debate, while highlighting the very inconsistencies and flaws of differentiating nationalisms.

#### **Nationalism is Political...is Ethnic...is Cultural...is...**

The first distinction between the two types of nationalism, according to Anthony Smith, was made by Friedrich Meinecke, who, in 1908, distinguished the *Kulturnation*, the largely passive cultural community, from the *Staatsnation*, the active, self-determining political nation.<sup>22</sup> Other scholars have attributed the civic/ethnic differentiation to Ernest Renan, and Johann Gottfried Herder.<sup>23</sup> Renan's civic ideal of a "daily plebiscite," which was influenced by the French Revolution, was primarily

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<sup>22</sup> Smith, 1991, p. 8.

<sup>23</sup> Michel Seymour, Jocelyne Couture and Kai Nielson, "Introduction: Questioning the Ethnic/Civic Dichotomy," *Rethinking Nationalism*, eds. Jocelyne Couture, Kai Nielson and Michel Seymour (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1998), p. 2-3.

voluntary in nature.<sup>24</sup> Herder's ethnic/*volk* idea of a nation, influenced by German Romanticism, was based on language, culture and tradition.<sup>25</sup> However, as Seymour et al. correctly note, this definition reflects what today would be considered cultural nationalism because at the time Herder wrote, "[legend had it that] if people shared the same language, culture, and history they usually also shared, up to a certain point, the same ancestry, the same lineage, and the same blood."<sup>26</sup>

Regardless of whether it was Meinecke, Renan or Herder who made the first distinction, most scholars of nationalism will concede that it is Hans Kohn's book, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background* that has been the most influential on scholarship dealing with the civic/ethnic debate. Kohn conceived of this distinction as an East/West dichotomy, which in turn, became the foundation for the civic/ethnic divide.<sup>27</sup> Kohn argued that in the Western World, (England, France, The Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States), nationalism was primarily a "political occurrence," based on forging a nation on the "present," while the rise of nationalism in Asia and Central/Eastern Europe occurred during a "backward stage of social and political development" with desire for the "sentimental...past."<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Kohn argued that because of this "backward" state, nationalism outside of the Western world

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<sup>24</sup> This reading of Renan's daily plebiscite is almost universally connected to the political definition of the civic nation. See André Lecours, "Ethnic and Civic Nationalism: Towards a New Dimension," *Space & Polity* 4.2 (2000), p. 155; and Seymour, Couture and Nielson, 1998, p. 2-3. However, both Rogers Brubaker and Bernard Yack have questioned this reading of Renan as only one aspect of his definition of the nation. Renan also defines the nation as "the culmination of a long past of endeavors, sacrifice, and devotion." Ernest Renan, "What is a Nation?," *Becoming National: A Reader*, eds. Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 52, quoted in Rogers Brubaker, "The Manichean Myth: Rethinking the Distinction between "Civic" and "Ethnic Nationalism," *Nation and National Identity: The European Experience on Perspective*, eds. Hanspeter Kriesi et. al. (Zurich: Verlag Rüegger, 1999), p. 61. Also see Yack, 1999, p. 106-107.

<sup>25</sup> Seymour, Couture and Nielson, 1996, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid*

<sup>27</sup> Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in Its Origins and Background*, 6<sup>th</sup> printing (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956), p. 329.

<sup>28</sup> Kohn, 1956, p. 329-330.

found its roots in the cultural field and “developed out of the myths of the past and the dreams of the future, an ideal fatherland, closely linked with the past, devoid of any immediate connection with the present, and expected to become a political reality.”<sup>29</sup> In addition, Kohn suggests that nationalism in Eastern states was influenced by the West, and that this dependence caused a “wounded pride of the native educated class” which in turn forged the development of its own nationalism not based on a liberalism and rationalism.<sup>30</sup> Kohn argued that nationalism in the West arose in an effort to build a nation in the “political reality and the struggles of the present without too much regard for the past.”<sup>31</sup> As a result, Western nationalisms were connected with “individual liberty and rational cosmopolitanism.”<sup>32</sup> While Kohn may be considered the architect of the civic/ethnic dichotomy, since then almost all scholars of nationalism have acknowledged that the distinction is useful.

For example, Michael Ignatieff’s *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, argues that civic nationalism is, as stated above, based on equal rights for all citizens and a “patriotic attachment to a shared set of political practices and values...regardless of race, colour, creed, gender, language, or ethnicity, who subscribe to the nation’s political belief.”<sup>33</sup> He argues that civic nationalism is “necessarily democratic” and that it is democracy and its procedures and values which gives individuals the rational ability “to shape their own lives with their need to belong to a

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<sup>29</sup> *ibid*

<sup>30</sup> Kohn, 1956, p. 330.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*

<sup>32</sup> *ibid*

<sup>33</sup> Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1994), p. 6.

community.”<sup>34</sup> Therefore, Ignatieff argues that it is the law, not common roots, which hold a society together.<sup>35</sup> Similar to Kohn, Ignatieff locates the emergence of ethnic nationalism in Germany’s reaction to the French ideal of the civic nation-state and its Enlightenment notions that the state that created the nation.<sup>36</sup> The German conception of nationhood was based on “pre-existing ethnic characteristics: their language, religion, customs, and traditions,” whereas ethnic nationalists believe that the “individuals deepest attachments are inherited, not chosen.”<sup>37</sup> This became the model that was copied by Eastern European states, which, imperial rule, sought the right to self-determination.<sup>38</sup>

Although both Kohn and Ignatieff separate nationalism into two types, there is an increasingly important number of scholars who argue that the idea of civic nationalism is simplistic and ethnocentric in itself.<sup>39</sup> Taras Kuzio argues that “civic/Western” and “ethnic/Eastern” nationalism are ideal types that exist only in theory, and all “civic” states, are in fact based on an “ethno-cultural” core.<sup>40</sup> Although Kuzio presents six major critiques of Kohn’s framework, two are of specific interest here.

The first point that Kuzio raises is that all nationalisms must, regardless of geographic area, “share cultural horizons, values, identities and historical myths in a common identity that is the ‘nation’.”<sup>41</sup> Without some perceived common cultural attachment, real or imagined, “there would be no reason for people to seek agreement

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<sup>34</sup> Ignatieff, 1994, p. 6-7.

<sup>35</sup> Ignatieff, 1994, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid*

<sup>37</sup> Ignatieff, 1994, p. 7-8.

<sup>38</sup> Ignatieff, 1994, p. 7.

<sup>39</sup> Yack, 1999, p. 105.

<sup>40</sup> Kuzio, 2002, p. 20.

<sup>41</sup> Bernard Yack, “The Myth of the Civic Nation,” *Critical Review* 10. 2 (1996): p. 201, quoted in Kuzio, 2002, p. 24.

with any one group of individuals rather than another.”<sup>42</sup> If civic nationalism is, as it has been claimed, based on political institutions, then there is no reason why Canada and the United States should not be unified as a single nation.<sup>43</sup> Yet a unitary North American state seems unlikely: although both states believe in democracy and individual rights, they nonetheless differ in terms of histories, identities and beliefs.

Kuzio also takes issue with Kohn’s argument that Western nationalisms have been civic since their inception and have “always been fully inclusive of social and ethnic groups.”<sup>44</sup> Consequently, even if one is inclined to accept the idea of a “civic” nation, one would find the emergence of the civic state according to its specific ethnic heritage. For example, full civil rights in eleven states were only given to African American in the 1960’s.<sup>45</sup> Therefore according to Kaufmann, the transformation of the United States into a civic state could only occur after “Anglo-Saxon hegemony had been established.”<sup>46</sup> This claim is important, because if one looks at all so-called “civic” states one finds their origins in the assertion of their ethnicity. Only after the majority ethnic group had become “self-confident within its own bounded territory” did it “open the community to ‘outsiders’ from other ethnic groups.”<sup>47</sup>

A further difficulty, stemming in part from the lack of cohesive definitions within the scholarship, the propensity of nationalism scholars to equate ethnic nationalism with cultural nationalism, and to misuse the former term to describe the latter case. Will

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<sup>42</sup> *ibid*

<sup>43</sup> Francis Fukuyama, “Comments on Nationalism and Democracy,” *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Democracy*, eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), p. 24.

<sup>44</sup> Kuzio, 2002, p. 26.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid*. The treatment of First Nations Peoples in Canada and Australia also highlights this point.

<sup>46</sup> Eric Kaufmann, “Liberal Ethnicity: Beyond Liberal Nationalism and Minority Rights,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 23. 6 (2000): p. 1097, quoted in Kuzio, 2002, p. 27.

<sup>47</sup> Kuzio, 2002, p. 36.

Kymlicka is correct to critique Ignatieff when he equates ethnic nationalism with cultural nationalism: Insofar as “cultural nationalism defines the nation in terms of common culture, and the aim of the nationalist movement is to protect the survival of that culture.”<sup>48</sup> As such, he criticizes Ignatieff for ascribing to the Flemish and Quebecois the ethnic nationalism label when these nationalisms are in actual fact culturally based.<sup>49</sup> That is, Kymlicka finds that Flemish and Quebecois nationalisms are not exclusive, but rather are relatively inclusive of immigrant populations, with the proviso that the immigrant groups learn their languages and histories.<sup>50</sup> Although this is a contentious point among scholars who question whether immigrants can ever truly become part of their adopted nations, Kymlicka’s point is still useful. It highlights the very problem of equating ethnic and cultural nationalism when, as previously discussed, the former is ‘fixed’ whereas the latter can be learned.

The point is that both civic and ethnic nationalism contain cultural components. The determination of whether a nation is “peaceful, liberal and democratic, or xenophobic, authoritarian and expansionist”<sup>51</sup> is predicated on which cultural components a nation chooses to highlight. Moreover, it should be noted that even if one were to accept the actuality of the civic ideal, events such as mass immigration may cause the ethnic majority in “civic” states to embrace what are traditionally defined as ethnic characteristics.

While nationalist movements are not typically seen as emerging against immigrant groups, this type of “protectionist nationalism” is being increasingly

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<sup>48</sup> Will Kymlicka, “Misunderstanding Nationalism,” *Dissent* Winter (1995): 131.

<sup>49</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Kymlicka, 1995, p. 132.



recognized as a development specific to contemporary Western Europe.<sup>52</sup> Protectionist nationalisms are therefore the product of post-World War II realities. The increased integration of European nation-states, in addition to the massive immigration in post-war Europe from non-European countries, is the causes for this type of nationalism. Furthermore, protectionist nationalism “is primarily driven by fear of unpredictability in societies experiencing rapid demographic, racial, and cultural changes.”<sup>53</sup> In addition, “this kind of nationalism is characteristic of majority nationals in states that have for a significant time enjoyed effective sovereignty over their territory and have been successfully reproducing a national culture that is widely shared by their population.”<sup>54</sup> As a result, protectionist nationalisms are developing in states that believe they are homogenous, and feel that their unique national identity is being challenged by “other” nations.

In addition to these perceived changes, the idea that a civic nation is based purely on political identity disregards the fact that political identity must also be based on some sort of cultural norm. For example, “the political identities of France and the United States were also culturally inherited artifacts, no matter how much they develop and change as they pass from generation to generation.”<sup>55</sup> Therefore, the civic identity of English Canada “has no less an inherited cultural artifact than the “ethnic” Quebecois.”<sup>56</sup> Yack argues that Canadians “have all kinds of cultural baggage”: a connection to Great

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<sup>52</sup> Nationalist movements in Europe are typically studied under the typology of traditional, substate and transsovereign, however Zsuzsa Csergo and James Goldgeier, argued that protectionist nationalism has developed because of the new social realities of Western Europe. For a brief description of traditional, substate and transsovereign see Zsuzsa Csergo and James Goldgeier, “Nationalist Strategies and European Integration,” *Perspectives on Politics* 2. 1 (2004): 21-30.

<sup>53</sup> Csergo and Golgeier, 2004, p. 29.

<sup>54</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Yack, 1999, p. 105.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid.*

Britain and British political culture, a history with French speaking people, and a relationship with the United States.<sup>57</sup> These items show the importance not of a civic nation, but of a cultural distinction that has helped shape the unique Canadian identity. In addition, to argue that even the most “civic” of nations - namely France and the United States - do not use culture and history to shape their identities is incorrect, since their histories and different cultural traditions are what makes them unique.<sup>58</sup> Michael Billig, whose theory on nationalism will be developed further in Chapter 2, argues that political leaders in the West frequently “flag the homeland” in order to create a sense of nationhood, by using the sentimental past.<sup>59</sup> Although Billig does not discuss the civic/ethnic division directly, his point is useful in discrediting the claim that “civic” nations are exclusively forward looking. Billig’s excellent survey of political speeches from the United States and Britain shows that Western leaders constantly play to the past in hopes to evoke national sentiment by referring to former historical glories.<sup>60</sup> Leaders use words such as ‘us’, ‘we’ and ‘ours’ in order to create a sense of common identity against the ‘other’ who may force ‘us’ to abandon ‘our’ beliefs.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, to argue that “civic” states do not use their past in order to promote loyalty is discredited through state use of sentimental characteristics to promote loyalty to the nation-state in primary education curriculum, public monuments and holidays.<sup>62</sup> Claiming that civic nations do not use the past in order to create a national consciousness is at best dubious. The notion

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<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Yack, 1999, p. 106.

<sup>59</sup> Michael Billig, “Flagging the Homeland Daily,” *Nationalism: Critical Concepts in Political Science* Vol. 4, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 1430-1469.

<sup>60</sup> Billig, 2001, p. 1438.

<sup>61</sup> Billig, 2001, p. 1439.

<sup>62</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “The Nation as Invented Tradition,” *Nationalism*, eds. John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 77-78.

that common nationality is derived from citizenship,<sup>63</sup> common laws and political institutions is alone untenable: shared history and civic culture cannot be separated from one another.

The importance of cultural aspects in both civic and ethnic nationalisms has not been lost on all scholars. For example, Kai Nielsen argues, "that all nationalisms are cultural nationalisms of one kind or another and there is no purely political conception of the nation, liberal or otherwise."<sup>64</sup> However, these cultural characteristics must be highlighted in order to ensure group loyalty. As a result, the usage of "flags, coinage, anthems, uniforms, monuments and ceremonies" are employed to help remind the nation of their "common heritage and cultural kinship" and to solidify their belief of belonging.<sup>65</sup> Smith argues that, "nations must have a measure of common culture and a civic ideology, a set of common understanding and aspirations, sentiments and ideas that bind the population together in their homeland."<sup>66</sup> Suggesting that national identities are predicated on institutions, laws and inclusiveness, as the civic nation claims, is misleading since "nationalism in all its forms is a political doctrine, and it concerns how cultures may express themselves publicly and thus necessarily has implications for what is politically permitted, required, and forbidden."<sup>67</sup> All states have different cultural values they are required to protect, and they use political institutions in order to do so. This becomes particularly evident when analyzing the types of policies that states

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<sup>63</sup> David Miller, *On Nationality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 189.

<sup>64</sup> Kai Nielsen, "Cultural Nationalism, Neither Ethnic nor Civic," *Theorizing Nationalism*, ed. Ronald Beiner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), p. 127.

<sup>65</sup> Smith, 1991, p. 16-17.

<sup>66</sup> Smith, 1991, p. 11.

<sup>67</sup> Lichtenberg, 1999, p. 175.

implement with regards to immigration: these policies flow from each state's particular background.

Policies of assimilation are intrinsically linked to the definition of "civic" nationalism. Assimilation, defined as the process of becoming similar, or of making or treating as similar,<sup>68</sup> is an approach that "civic" nations use in order to integrate immigrant groups into the dominant society. And while the strict assimilation of immigrants has been abandoned in many countries in favor of multiculturalism, some degree of assimilation is still required in all states.<sup>69</sup> Multiculturalism aside, the defining characteristics of "civic" nations are openness and equality under the law. It is therefore easy to understand why "civic" nations are described as democratic, in that the traditional definition of liberal democracies does not favor, support or recognize differences between groups that challenge the inherent liberal premise that all citizens are equal under the law.<sup>70</sup> France, which will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 3, is an excellent case in point. On the one hand France is considered a "civic" nation. However, it is also a Republican democracy that requires immigrants to assimilate to the dominant French

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<sup>68</sup> Rogers Brubaker, "The Return of Assimilation? Changing Perspectives on Immigration and its Sequels in France, Germany, and the United States," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24. 4 (2001): p. 534.

<sup>69</sup> Although the study of multiculturalism is an important aspect to nationalism it will not be developed in this thesis. There are, however, at least two problems that emerge in regards to "civic" nations when multicultural policies are implemented. The first problem is whether or not multicultural societies can be defined as "civic" nations. On the one hand, it remains inclusive in that, theoretically, membership can be attained by anyone. However, if multicultural societies recognize immigrant groups as distinct, and allow and promote cultural differences, then an argument could be made that they are not "civic" because there is a recognition of cultural differences that is antithetical to what "civic" nations are supposed to be. The second problem is that countries that have policies of multiculturalism still require immigrants to practice non-political activities that may conflict with their own cultural heritage. This is most obviously found in the officially recognized public holidays that are celebrated in all countries. For example, Canada celebrates Victoria Day, which is based on Canada historical connection to England, as well as Easter and Christmas which have obvious religious connotations. And while this may be a simplistic example, the cultural beliefs of polygamy and female circumcision in some cultures, are however, seen as unacceptable in Canadian society. Therefore, immigrant groups are required to assimilate at least partly to the norms and mores of their host society.

<sup>70</sup> Pierre van den Berghe, "Multicultural Democracy," *Nations and Nationalism* 8. 4 (2002), p. 436.

nation. If assimilation is the process of making someone similar to the dominant group, then it seems logical to assume that French assimilation includes the imposing of its cultural beliefs on its immigrant communities. While the "civic" nation supposedly refers only to political principles, it seems unlikely that cultural beliefs are not implicitly imposed: the reality of assimilation is not only that the state is prioritizing its own political system, but it is also imposing its own national language, culture and beliefs over those that are "different." In the strictest sense, groups within "civic" nations should not receive special concessions based on cultural beliefs insofar as such concessions would admit ethno-cultural differences, which is exactly what civic nations are supposedly transcending. Furthermore, while partial or full assimilation of immigrant communities may still be favored by many Western nation-states, a further problem emerges in the supposed inclusiveness of the "civic" state. In reality not anyone can become part of a "civic" nation, just as some can not become part of an "ethnic" nation. Policies on immigration and citizenship have built in mechanisms of exclusion, the degree of which depends largely on policy changes. No "civic" nation is open to all immigrants wishing to emigrate, and every state decides how many immigrants will be accepted as well as requirements that those prospective immigrants must meet. However, even when immigrants are allowed to move to the host nation, they do not automatically become *members* of its "civic" nation. Membership is therefore predicated on the citizenship laws of each nation-state, and these can differ according to countries.

Citizenship also proves to be a problem to the "civic" nation. Like nationalism, the scholarship on citizenship has also advanced two theoretical varieties that position access to citizenship, and therefore membership to the nation, on a similar ideological

continuum. The principles of *ius soli* (law of the soil) and *ius sanguinis* (law of the blood) respectively base the acquisition of citizenship on birth on the territorial soil, and on descent from a national of the country concerned.<sup>71</sup> Although these principles refer literally to soil and blood, it is generally accepted that *ius soli* also incorporates the openness of citizenship in nation-states that confer citizenship to immigrants provided that they meet certain criteria, (usually length of stay within the country and a sworn “civic” oath of loyalty.) As Stephan Castles succinctly states, “*ius sanguinis* is often linked to an ethnic or folk model of the nation-state, while *ius soli* generally relates to a nation-state built through incorporation of diverse groups on a single territory.”<sup>72</sup> Like civic and ethnic nationalism, these legal principles have also been attributed to the French and German notion of citizenship.<sup>73</sup> In their theoretical readings, one can logically infer that a policy of *ius soli* would describe a civic nation while policies of *ius sanguinis* would describe an ethnic nation. However if one examines the civic/ethnic debate through the lens of citizenship studies, it is logical to assume that membership to the nation is actually based on the legal process of what constitutes a citizen, and not on a “naturally” emerging citizen. Nation-states are intrinsically dependent on these laws of citizenship, which can become more inclusive or exclusive based on policy whims. If, for example, Germany is now moving towards granting citizenship to third and fourth

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<sup>71</sup> Stephan Castles and Alastair Davidson, *Citizenship and Migration: Globalization and the Politics of Belonging* (New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 85.

<sup>72</sup> Stephan Castles, *Ethnicity and Globalization: From Migrant Worker to Transnational Citizen* (London: SAGE Publications, 2000), p. 193.

<sup>73</sup> Rogers Brubaker argues that citizenship in France is based on the *ius sanguinis* principles, but that because it integrates “substantial elements” of *ius soli* it is therefore a “polar” case when compared to the *ius sanguinis* type of Germany, see Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 81. For the traditional distinction of *ius soli/sanguinis* see Dominique Schnapper, “Beyond the Opposition: Civic Nation versus Ethnic Nation,” *Rethinking Nationalism*, eds. Jocelyne Couture, Kai Nielson and Michel Seymour (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1998), p. 228; and Castles, 2000, p. 194.

generation Turkish immigrants while France still promotes policies of assimilation, an argument could be made that Germany is becoming more “civic” in terms of becoming more inclusive, while France, in its attempts to preserve its cultural heritage, behaves as if it were an “ethnic” nation. Therefore, it is often the policies of the government in power that dictates if a nation is “civic” or “ethnic”. Still, the fact that all nations use their cultural differences as a means of creating loyalty renders any distinction doubtful, because all nations must have cultural markers that differentiate them from other nations. It therefore becomes the responsibility of the state to maintain the uniqueness of nations culture and to promote its history and future legacy.

The purpose of this chapter has been to re-think the validity, and question the usefulness of distinguishing nationalisms into two ideologically distinct categories. Neither “civic” nor “ethnic” nationalisms can exist without a shared culture or without another nation to differentiate itself from, be it through law, religion, language, history, beliefs or way of life. Ethnic nationalism should not be understood as based on the belief of common blood given that “the genetic approach to ethnicity is plainly irrelevant, since the crucial base of an ethnic group as a form of social organisation is cultural rather than biological.”<sup>74</sup> Similarly, those who argue in favor of civic nations should be able to discern that “political values are only a part and generally a small part, of a culture, which generally consists of common language, folkways, and customs.”<sup>75</sup> By recognizing that *all* nationalist movements emerge against an external or internal other, perceived to be threatening the cultural and national identity of the said nation, renders the distinction of civic and ethnic nations superfluous. The underlying assumption that “civic” nationalism

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<sup>74</sup> Eric Hobsbawn, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 63.

<sup>75</sup> Lichtenberg, 1999, p. 170.

is always good implies that it will not develop “ethnic” characteristics when a perceived threat to their national identity emerges. However, the recent anti-immigration sentiment and the electoral success of new populist parties throughout Western Europe seriously challenges this belief. Therefore, the re-conceptualization of all nationalisms as a culturally based movement best explains the “crisis of identity” in European nation-states given the relatively new social realities and challenges of immigration.



A nation is a society united by a delusion about its ancestry and by common hatred of its neighbors.<sup>1</sup> – William R. Inge

To me, it seems a dreadful indignity to have a soul controlled by geography.<sup>2</sup>  
– George Santayana

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.quotegarden.com/patriotism.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.quotegarden.com/patriotism.html>

### **Chapter 3: From the Birth of the Nation to the Rise of Populist Parties**

As the previous chapter argued, the debate that continues to divide nationalism studies into two dichotomous concepts is theoretically problematic, and underestimates the cultural foundation inherent to *all* nationalisms. While the theoretical distinction between “civic” and “ethnic” nationalism persists within the scholarship, the likelihood of any nation transcending its “ethno-cultural” bond in favor of a community based purely on political principles is improbable. Moreover, not only is the theoretical characterization of two types of nationalisms unconvincing, it ultimately fails when it is applied to actual cases. Accordingly, this chapter’s focus will be to further the argument against the very notion of “civic” nationalism by examining the continued importance placed on maintaining the nation-state’s unique national and cultural identity. The first section of this chapter presents an investigation of nationalism scholarship’s central Modernist theories that serve to facilitate our understanding of the emergence of the modern Western European nation-state. Drawing primarily from the seminal works of Benedict Anderson, Ernest Gellner and Eric Hobsbawm, it will become evident that the objectives of the early nation-state building project was to construct a homogenous populace through the implementation of a standardized mass education system, which in turn harmonized the nation-states desired language[s], culture[s] and history[ies].

Still, the creation of the perceived homogenous nation-state addresses only the historical foundations behind the emergence of national identities. It does not, however, address why psychological attachment to the nation continues to be so important to even the most established and self-assured nation-states in Western Europe. By utilizing

Michael Billig's overarching theory of banal nationalism, it will become evident that the subtle "flagging" of the nation-state by politicians and the media has had the effect of strengthening an already powerful psychological bond to the nation. Through constant references to "Us" – members of the nation – and "Them" – those who are not members – a banal loyalty for the nation has developed in Western Europe. However, when nations are perceived to be threatened either by international or domestic forces, an affirmation of loyalty will emerge to protect it from the *perceived* "Other".

As a result, the second section of this chapter will examine how New Populist Parties throughout Western Europe have been able to create the belief that the prolonged acceptance of immigration is threatening unique national and cultural identities. While the immigration issue is by no mean the only source of the Populist discourse, it will be argued that the electoral success of these parties, and their concomitant influence on Western European politics, can largely be attributed to the "Othering" of immigrants. Insofar as, Populist Parties are gaining electoral successes in virtually all Western European countries a general overview of their rise and importance in contemporary European politics will also be discussed.

### **The Birth of the "Nation"**

Modern national identity, Benedict Anderson claims, "is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their

communion.”<sup>3</sup> Imagined communities then, and their concomitant national identities and nationalisms, are constructed not by a simple positing of geographical borders, but by the very imagination of multiple human psyches that perceive themselves to be a nation. Accordingly, national identity is difficult to grasp because of its psychological make-up. Undisputedly, conviction of national identity and loyalty to imagined communities are notions very real to the human psyche and the modern world. Yet, prior to the birth of the modern nation-state – which is usually attributed to the French Revolution – the human psyche did not imagine belonging to communities larger than immediate families and villages.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, because human consciousness “can be assumed to have persisted unchanged through the many millennia of the existence of the human race”<sup>5</sup> it is not sufficient to suggest that national identities and nationalism are deeply rooted in the human psyche itself. Rather, the re-engineering of human identity can be located in the technological innovations and societal changes that signal the birth of modernity. In a mutually reinforcing relationship of imagination and practical realization, modernity re-constructed human identity from its immediate and fixed social-based identity to one that could imagine itself as belonging to a greater community. Notwithstanding ample dispute within nationalism scholarship as to *why* this re-engineering of human identity took place, there is a general consensus as to *what* interrelated historical events helped to

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<sup>3</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (New York: Verso, 1991), p.6. Original emphasis.

<sup>4</sup> On the concept of modern national identity, Charles Taylor, argues that the concept of identity in pre-modern societies “was largely fixed by one’s social position. The background that explained what people recognized as important to themselves was to a great extent determined by their place in society, and whatever roles or activities were attached to this position.” Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” *Multiculturalism*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (London: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 34-35.

shape modern national identity: namely, the invention of the printing press, mass education, the creation of national tradition and the modern centralized state.<sup>6</sup>

The invention of the printing press, in conjunction with one of the earliest forms of capitalist enterprise, print publishing, may be the single most critical historical event that broadened the conception of identity.<sup>7</sup> Over the course of one hundred and fifty years, as the Latin-speaking market became saturated, print publishers looked to the majority of Europe to sustain their business, and consequently, began publishing print material in different vernaculars.<sup>8</sup> Although the material was largely religious propaganda, which also undoubtedly began to create a greater sense of community than had previously existed, the most important consequence of print capitalism was the assembling of related languages through the imposition of common grammar and syntax.<sup>9</sup> French-, English- and Spanish-speaking peoples for example, who spoke variances of the same languages and had difficulty communicating with one another in conversation, found common understanding once the fixity of their languages emerged through print and paper. Anderson notes that the codification of common languages had a two-fold effect on the process of modern identity formation. On the one hand, print capitalism created a notion of identity based on *inclusion* as the awareness of belonging to a common language group of people spread. On the other hand, this process of identity-

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<sup>6</sup> Ernest Gellner, for example, predicated his nationalism thesis on the premise that nation-states were created to facilitate industrial economic growth. However, engaging in a lengthy debate over the exact reasons why nations developed is ancillary to our argument here. Rather, by drawing on a variety of different schools of thought on this topic, this thesis takes the point of view that certain events occurred in history that, regardless of their points of origin, were critical to the development of modern nation-states and national identity.

<sup>7</sup> Anderson, 1991, p. 37.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, 1991, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> Anderson, 1991, p. 44.

formation had a concomitant *exclusionary* component insofar as people became aware of only those to whom they linguistically belonged.<sup>10</sup>

Accordingly, by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the technology of the printing press and the logic of market expansion central to print publishing combined to lay the foundations of national identities as peoples began to define themselves as French-, Italian- or English-speaking. Notwithstanding the central role of the codification of common languages to the development of national identity and the nation-state, the spread of fixed vernaculars cannot be separated from print publishing enterprise, the success of which was necessarily contingent on literate, or partly literate, societies. Mass-literacy, of ultimate importance to the development of the national identity, was therefore itself predicated on the education of the mass population. Significantly, and although the printing press had been in existence for nearly three hundred years, most of Europe remained illiterate far beyond the beginnings of the industrial revolution and the creation of nation-states themselves. Indeed, dramatic changes in European literacy levels only begin to surface in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Marriage registrars in France, for example, indicate that 31 percent of marrying men and 46 percent of marrying women were illiterate in 1854, while by 1900 these numbers had diminished to 5 and 6 percent respectively.<sup>11</sup> Accordingly, the temporal emergence of mass literacy suggests that although the codification of common languages via print capitalism was central in the shift towards modern identity formation,

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<sup>10</sup> Anderson, 1991, p. 44. This point is similar to David Laitin who argues that language is one of the most important cultural components of national identities. In addition, Laitin maintains that despite European integration national identities in Europe will remain multiple. David D. Laitin, "The Cultural Identities of a European State," *Politics & Society* 25. 3 (1997), p. 278. Also see David D. Laitin, "Nationalism and Language: A Post Soviet Perspective," *The State of the Nation: Ernest Gellner and the Theory of Nationalism*, ed. John A. Hall (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

<sup>11</sup> Montserrat Guibernau, *Nationalisms: The Nation-State and the Nationalism in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), p. 68.

the propagation of national identity *itself* ultimately relied on the nation's education of its people.

Ernest Gellner argues that central to the emergence of modern national identity is the link between the birth of the nation-state and industrialization whereby the shift from agrarian to industrialized economies had a concomitant societal, or cultural, shift.<sup>12</sup> Agrarian societies, predicated on the mass population serving as food-producers for the minority elite, were culturally separated insofar as although the peasant masses and elite were linked to one another economically, they were almost completely cut off from one another socially and culturally. The 'low culture'<sup>13</sup> present in agrarian societies, Gellner argues, began to diminish with the birth of the nation-state as industrial economic growth became tied to the state's specific geographic territory. The state's "monopoly of legitimate education [became] more important, more central than [its] monopoly of legitimate violence"<sup>14</sup> as an educated population became a necessary prerequisite for a sustained industrial economy. Literate and sophisticated 'high cultures'<sup>15</sup> thus emerged through the solidification of 'national' industrialization and standardized, public education. Accordingly, the construction of literate national societies, necessary for the industrial development of the state, also served to unify once indifferent and culturally stratified communities into the greater, singular and more homogenized 'imagined community' of the nation-state. As noted by Charles Tilly, a substantial phase of national histories can thus be located in the "deliberate attempts of state-makers to homogenize

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<sup>12</sup> For an excellent analysis and critique of Gellner's theory of nationalism, see Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 27-46, and Guibernau, 1996, p. 76-80.

<sup>13</sup> Anthony D. Smith, "Memory and Modernity: Reflections on Ernest Gellner's Theory of Nationalism," *Nations and Nationalism* 2. 3 (1996): p. 379.

<sup>14</sup> Gellner, 1983, p. 34.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, 1996, p. 379.

the culture of their subject populations through linguistic, religious, and, eventually, educational standardization.”<sup>16</sup> Whereas the ‘low culture’ of agrarian societies divided communities into *exclusive* identities, the ‘high’ culture afforded through increased industrialization and education provided an overarching *inclusive* national identity and culture.

Accordingly, the importance of the printing press and the development of a standardized, education-based, literate society were of paramount significance to the imagined community of the modern nation-state. These two historical occurrences served as a socialization mechanism whereby the nation state could provide an overarching national culture that would minimize the linguistic, religious and social differences within the new political polity. Additionally, and to this end, these ‘imagined communities’ also required ‘imagined traditions’. Both the formation and the reinforcement of national identity also relied on the common history of its population. Insofar as communal identification afforded through the homogenization of language served a central role in modern national identity formation via state-run education programs, so too would ‘imagined traditions’ solidify the nation into a culturally inclusive homogenous entity by providing symbols of a population’s common history. Where Anderson notes that in providing fixity to ‘common’ languages print capitalism “helped to build the image of antiquity so central to the subjective idea of the nation,”<sup>17</sup> Eric Hobsbawm offers a complementary thesis with respect to shared traditions as central to national identity

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<sup>16</sup> Charles Tilly, “Reflections on the History of European State-Making,” in Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p.78.

<sup>17</sup> Anderson, 1991, p. 44.



whereby he identifies the “invention of tradition” as a “process of formalization and ritualization, characterized by reference to the past, if only by imposing repetition.”<sup>18</sup>

Whether these traditions can actually be identified as formal constructs or whether they emerged in a less traceable manner,<sup>19</sup> Hobsbawm argues that nations invent traditions in order to homogenize histories, a point similar to, as noted by Tilly, the nation-state’s “deliberate attempts to homogenize their subject populations through [the enforcement] of substantial phases of their histories.”<sup>20</sup> These shared experiences – real, imagined or invented – help facilitate a collective loyalty and symbolic attachment to the state by highlighting the sacrifice, resolve, strength and glory that the nation’s history embodies. And while nations emphasize different aspects of their histories in order to create the perception of a communal attachment, upon sovereignty, all unveil the universal symbols that represent nation-states. As Firth notes,

“The National Flag, the National Anthem and the National Emblem are the three symbols through which an independent country proclaims its identity and sovereignty, and as such they command instantaneous respect and loyalty. In themselves they reflect the entire background, thought and culture of a nation.”<sup>21</sup>

Notwithstanding the emotional feeling that these symbols invoke within a given population, it should be remembered that they are powerful inventions, universally adopted by all nation-states. Moreover, while the devotion to a colorful piece of cloth, a song and a sign may seem irrational, the psychological and emotional attachment that these symbols represent is very real. The powerful emotional symbolism evoked by the

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<sup>18</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, “Introduction: Inventing Tradition,” *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983a), p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> Invented traditions are “both [those that are] actually invented, constructed and formally instituted and those emerging in a less easily traceable manner within a brief and dateable period [that establish] themselves with great rapidity.” Hobsbawm, 1983a, p. 1.

<sup>20</sup> Tilly, 1975, p. 78.

<sup>21</sup> Official Indian government commentary, quoted in R. Firth, *Symbols, Public and Private* (London, 1973), p. 341, quoted in Hobsbawm, 1983, p. 11.

national flag, emblem and anthem, coupled with national public holidays that serve as yearly reminders of the nation's historically significant dates, are persuasive ways in which the nation-state unifies the entire population into a singular, unified, entity.

The most obvious and universally followed "invented day" is the celebration of national days. Often representing the successful struggle for independence, the national day symbolizes when a nation was able to take control of its own destiny. As common as national days are to nation-states, France's Bastille Day, which did not become a national holiday until over one hundred years after the actual event took place<sup>22</sup>, serves as a prime example of this psychologically powerful "invented tradition." The decision to make Bastille Day the national holiday in France stems from the country's military losses during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), which left the population demoralized, not only in terms of its military losses but also due to its territorial loss of a large part of Lorraine and the annexation of the Papal States by Italy. With the aim of, on the one hand, lifting the spirits of the French people and, on the other, ensuring the national unity of its population, France decided that a day of national celebration was necessary. Insofar as July 14<sup>th</sup> marked the beginnings of the French Revolution, Bastille Day was chosen for its symbolic significance. In addition to the creation of a national holiday, a symbolic figure, representative of the spirit of the French Republic, was also instituted.<sup>23</sup> Wearing the Phrygian cap, a French symbol of freedom, and draped with the French tri-color flag, Marianne became this symbol: Busts of Marianne were mass-produced, placed in public spaces all over the country, and French citizens could purchase her likeness in statues and paintings.

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<sup>22</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914", eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983b), p. 271.

<sup>23</sup> Hobsbawm, 1983b, p. 271-272.

Although France serves as the example here, the mass-production of symbolic monuments and memorials, reminding the people of the nation's past, its leaders, and strength and sacrifices during war, is common to all nation-states. The fact that many of these events may have been invented or exaggerated does not relegate them as trivial or any less important than actual events. Standardized schooling systems as a means of promoting a homogenous language also served as an indoctrination tool vis-a-vis the aforementioned "invented traditions," what served to solidify a nation's history and culture as existing since time immemorial. Anthony Smith, who has written one of the definitive books on national identity, best states this point:

"The task of ensuring a common, public, mass culture ha[d] been handed over to the agencies of popular socialization, notably the public system of education and the mass media. In the Western model of national identity nations were seen as culture communities, whose members were united, if not made homogeneous, by common historical memories, myths, symbols and traditions."<sup>24</sup>

Accordingly, as banal and simplistic as these methods of nation-state building may seem, the indoctrination of these national symbols, histories and cultures through the system of mass education has facilitated the rise of the homogeneous national community.

Still, while the creation of the nation-state – by design or accidental – in Western Europe is a remarkable feat, the powerful psychological bond and continued loyalty that nation-states are still able to invoke from the citizens is truly remarkable. Amid global integration, both on the European and global levels, it would seem reasonable to assume that the importance of national identity would begin to diminish. However, notwithstanding the increasingly popular idea of cosmopolitan citizenship, the uncertainty of rapid integration has also triggered a re-conceptualization and protection of

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<sup>24</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press 1991), p. 11.

national identity in virtually all of Europe's nation-states. Theoretically speaking, "civic" nations, as one that highlights the political attachment, should not be concerned with the perceived loss of their culture. In fact, the protection of cultural values better describes the "ethnic" or cultural variety of nations. Therefore, as the integration of European nation-states continues, the likelihood that a nation will let its *unique* national identity disappear is unlikely.

However, while the establishment of the first homogenous Western European nation-states is important, it only partly addresses *why* national identity remains so important to the nation's population. By drawing upon the social-psychological argument that groups in general, and nations in particular, define themselves against one another in terms of "Us" and "Them," it will be argued that national identities and cultures are the historical development and representation of the nation-state. This is a particularly strong argument in that nation-states not only need to define what "they" are, but also what "they" are not,<sup>25</sup> and that "the national community can only be imagined by also imagining communities of foreigners."<sup>26</sup>

In his book *Banal Nationalism*, Michael Billig contends that "in the established nations, there is a continual 'flagging' or reminding of nationhood [which is] so familiar [and] so continual, it is not consciously registered as reminding."<sup>27</sup> The "daily flagging" of the nation, which occurs in a relatively subtle and inconspicuous manner, serves to promote and maintain loyalty. Billig argues that in the West, the constant references to the nation by both politicians and the media has become so natural and banal, most people are unaware of how often they are subjected to it. Accordingly, while the

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<sup>25</sup> Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: SAGE Publication Ltd., 1995), 78.

<sup>26</sup> Billig, 1995, p. 78-79.

<sup>27</sup> Billig, 1995, p. 8.

homogenization of national language(s), educational systems and traditions helped organize the nation historically, the constant reference to the nation serves as a modern and sub-conscious way of maintaining loyalty.

As was seen in Chapter 1, politicians constantly refer to the nation in political speeches using terms such as 'us', 'we' and 'ours' both in referencing the country's historical past, but to invoke a *real* sense of community when speaking about the nation's future. Whether these references to the nation are by design or unintentional is unimportant: the world *is* separated into territorial boundaries, both physically and metaphorically, and politicians must be able to speak to "Us" all. Furthermore, the homeland must "be considered a special place from other homelands,"<sup>28</sup> not only so as to maintain a sense of loyalty within the imagined community, but more importantly, to create an underlining belief that that the shared history, identity and culture of the nation is unique, to other nations. Once it is understood that nations exist, in part because they are able to distinguish themselves from other nations, then it will become evident, as Anna Triandafyllidou aptly notes:

"That concrete elements like culture, religion or language are important not only to the degree that they reinforce the nation's identity but because they differentiate the ingroup from the outgroup and thus justify and make *real* this divided view of the world. Cultural traits, myths, traditions, historical territories form an integral part of the distinction between 'us' and 'them'."<sup>29</sup>

Although politicians may use the glories of the nation's past and hopes for the future for political reasons, it is the mass media that is the most influential tool in solidifying the unconscious bond that exists among the imagined community. The media's daily and

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<sup>28</sup> Billig, 1995, p. 75.

<sup>29</sup> Anna Triandafyllidou, "National Identity and the 'Other,'" *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 21. 4 (1998): p. 597. Original emphasis.

multiple mention of the nation, both in print and on television, has helped to reinforce the idea that all nations are unique by virtue of the news stories that are covered. National and local newspapers provide entire sections on the nation's daily activities. National politics notwithstanding, arguably the most banal conversations within the imagined community are about the nation's sporting events and the national weather, the details of which are derived from the media's extensive coverage: newspapers devote an entire section to sports both national and international, and spend a significant amount of print on the weather. Both serve as national unifiers providing a daily reminder that the nation exists and that it is a nation different from others. Therefore "national identity in established nations is remembered because it is embedded in routines of life, which constantly remind, or 'flag', nationhood."<sup>30</sup> Coupled with the celebrations of national holidays, flags, emblems, anthems, coins, monuments and memorials, members of Western nations are subconsciously inundated with "banal" stimuli that serves to bond the nation into a unified "Us."

When the nation perceives itself to be threatened by either an external or internal "other", the nation's reaction is to protect its national identity.<sup>31</sup> Although the external threatening other may seem more common in the international study of nationalism, Anna Triandafyllidou also identifies two types of internal threatening others, ethnic minority groups that have a legitimate territorial claims but lack sovereignty, and immigrant communities.<sup>32</sup> Although, the presence of an ethnic minority group as the

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<sup>30</sup> Billig, 1995, p. 38.

<sup>31</sup> It should be noted however, that the Other, need not only be seen as "threatening" but can also emerge in an "inspiring" form. For example, inspiring "Significant Others" may be groups that have successfully struggled in asserting their national identities and cultures against a suppressor by another nation in a similar position. Anna Triandafyllidou, *Immigrants and National Identity in Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 34.

<sup>32</sup> Triandafyllidou, 2001, p. 34-37

Significant Other is an increasingly important aspect to the study of nationalism, it has been the internal immigrant as the “other” that can best explain the rise of New Populist Parties across Western Europe.

### **Flagging the Immigrant Daily**

When one thinks of the 20<sup>th</sup> century European experience with political parties on the extreme right, the regimes of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini immediately come to mind. Indeed, their rise to power, charismatic leadership styles, influence over their respective populations, and the global reach of their destructive policies form the foundations of any WWII analysis. However, it is the rise of the European welfare state within the post-War reconstruction efforts that succeeded not only in facilitating regional economic growth, but is helping to mitigate the extremism that often emerges in times of economic desperation. Accordingly tied to the post-war economic boom, the social security provided by national welfare systems and the memory of the horrors wrought by extremism fresh in the minds of Europeans, far right political parties remained largely on the periphery of most European political systems throughout much of the second half of the twentieth century.

As the economic boom continued throughout this period many Western European countries began to import labor in order to fulfill their employment needs. “Guest-workers” from the European “have-not” states, such as Italy, Portugal and Spain, as well as from non-European countries such as Algeria, Morocco and Turkey were generally male, prohibited from bringing their families with them to their host-countries and, although legally allowed to work, were given only minimal political rights. Although

these migrant workers were providing essential labor to Europe's growing economies, they were assumed to be temporary and were expected to leave once their labor was no longer needed.<sup>33</sup>

However, during the 1960s many European governments implemented family reunification policies that allowed guest-workers to bring in their families. With the oil crisis and economic downturn of the 1970s forcing many European countries to rethink their guest-worker policies, the temporary nature of the reunification policies – predicated on the return of the guest-workers and their families to their native countries – was undermined on two interrelated fronts. The first was the miscalculation of European governments that their guest-workers would want to return to their native countries: those who came from politically or economically hostile states had little incentive to return home. As their families joined them in their host-countries, the incentives diminished even further, and those European countries that tried to pay their guest-worker families to repatriate were ultimately unsuccessful. Moreover, the unintended consequences of the social policies attached to reunification – such as the Netherland's policy of providing the children of guest-workers schooling in their native language to facilitate reintegration into their native countries when they moved home – would ultimately feed into the greater “immigration problem” as a political issue in the 1970s. Notwithstanding other possible factors, the political rise of New Populist Parties in Western Europe stems directly from the economic downturn across Western Europe and the enduring effects that guest-workers have had on their respected countries, the seeds of which were firmly planted by the 1970s.

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<sup>33</sup> Stephan Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration 3<sup>rd</sup> edition* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2003), p. 77.



Although there is a common perception that Austria and France were the first countries to embrace the New Right, the New Right's first electoral successes of any significance occurred in Scandinavia. In the early 1970s both the Danish and Norwegian Progress Parties emerged to challenge the centre-left governments in power. While immigration was an issue of their political platform, the promise to reduce government, lower taxes and open up a free market economy are the policies that ultimately helped the Danish Progress Party receive 16% of the vote in the 1973 National election, making it the second largest party in Denmark.<sup>34</sup> Also in 1973, the Norwegian Progress Party, whose policies included a substantial reduction in taxes, duties and governmental interference, received 5% of the national vote.<sup>35</sup> Notwithstanding these early successes, both parties suffered declining support throughout the 1970s, partly because of lack of leadership but also because of their growing hostility towards immigration that did not resonate with the electorate.<sup>36</sup>

While the early successes of these Scandinavian parties are important, it was the eventual and continued electoral gains of the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) and the *Front National* (FN) of France in the 1980's that firmly established the Right as a permanent part of European politics. Since the 1990s, the New Right has made significant gains in most Western European countries.<sup>37</sup> Not surprisingly, the early research and scholarship on the New Right that emerged in the 1990s focused on defining

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<sup>34</sup> Patrick Hossay, "Country Profiles," *Shadows Over Europe: The Development and Impact of the Extreme Right in Western Europe*, eds. Martin Schain, Aristide Zolberg, and Patrick Hossay (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 323.

<sup>35</sup> Hossay, 2002, p. 338.

<sup>36</sup> For further discussion on the rise and fall of the Danish and Norwegian Progress Parties throughout the 1970's and 1980's see, Hans Betz, *Radical Right-Wing Populism in Western Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 4-7; and Hossay, 2002, p. 322-325 for Denmark, and p. 338-339 for Norway.

<sup>37</sup> For profiles of how individual Western European countries have voted since the early 1980's, see Hossay, 2002, p. 317-345.

the parameters of this “new political phenomena.” the characteristics of the parties themselves, the political beliefs of their members, the events that caused their emergence, and their electoral base.<sup>38</sup> Notwithstanding the difficulty in producing generalizable theories pertaining to the emergence of the New Right resulting from the unique conditions of each country, most scholars continue to agree that there are enough similar characteristics and comparative criteria in Western Europe’s New Populist Parties to facilitate certain overarching generalizations and distinctions.

New Populist Parties are commonly referred to as fascist or neo-fascist parties, and their leaders referred to the modern embodiment of Hitler,<sup>39</sup> yet there are distinctions that can be made between them. For example, Piero Ignazi separates Extreme Right Parties (ERPs) into two categories: old and new.<sup>40</sup> Old, or traditional, ERPs maintain their historical link to fascism, while new ERPs refute this allegiance.<sup>41</sup> Even though new ERPs may have fascist like ideals, such as the defense of the “natural community,” they are the bi-product of post-industrialization and have developed in a completely different “sociopolitical climate” than their pre-war counterparts.<sup>42</sup> Paul Taggart disputes the claim

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<sup>38</sup> One of the many difficulties encountered in researching New Populist Parties is the sheer number of labels used in order to identify these parties. They have been identified as Extreme Right-Wing Parties - Piero Ignazi, “The Silent Counter-Revolution: Hypotheses on the Emergence of Extreme Right-Wing Parties in Europe,” *European Journal of Political Research* 23 (1992), p. 3-34; Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties - Betz, 1994, p. 4; The Radical Right - Herbert Kitschelt with Anthony J. McGann, *The Radical Right in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1995); and as New Populist Parties - Paul Taggart, “New Populist Parties in Western Europe,” *West European Politics* 18. 1 (1995): p. 34-51. Since these authors’ definitions differ only minimally, and they are generally referring to the same parties, New Populist Parties will be used as the identifier throughout this thesis. For the discussion of why Populism is a problematic term see Piero Ignazi, “The Extreme Right: Defining the Object and Assessing the Causes,” *Shadows over Europe: The Development and Impact of the Extreme Right in Western Europe*, eds. Martin Schain, Aristide Zolberg and Patrick Hossay (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2002), p. 22-23; and to see why New Populism is more accurate see, Taggart, 1995, p. 35-40.

<sup>39</sup> Both Jean-Marie Le Pen of the *Front National* and Jörg Haider of the Austrian Freedom Party have been accused of this, in large part to past comments seen as sympathetic to the Nazi regime.

<sup>40</sup> Ignazi, 1992, p. 12-13.

<sup>41</sup> Ignazi, 1992, p. 16.

<sup>42</sup> Ignazi, 2002, p. 27-28.

that New Populist Parties are similar to neo-fascist parties insofar as neo-fascist parties generally focus their energies on the streets and are more likely to be associated with “bootboy” ideology, while New Populists focus on change through the political and institutional channels and “are more likely to be wearing bespoke suits than military fatigues.”<sup>43</sup> More importantly however, is the distinction between neo-Fascist and New Populist parties with regards to immigration: the political agenda of the former tends to be exclusively anti-immigration, while the latter incorporates their anti-immigration stance into a broader political platform.<sup>44</sup>

Additionally, research has identified several common characteristics that can be attributed to the New Radical Right. First, New Populist Parties are a product of the post-industrialization of advanced capitalist states;<sup>45</sup> second, they initially developed as parties that were neo-liberal in terms of economic policy;<sup>46</sup> third, they are against the party system yet work within it;<sup>47</sup> and fourth, they have successfully used “racist,”<sup>48</sup> “nationalist”<sup>49</sup> and “xenophobic”<sup>50</sup> policies towards immigrant communities to further their electoral success. It is on this fourth point – namely the successful “flagging of the immigrant” as ultimately threatening to unique national culture and identity – that the New Radical Right discourse serves to undermine the very idea of civic nationalism. Unique to the emergence of New Populist Parties at the end of the twentieth century is

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<sup>43</sup> Taggart, 1995, p. 36.

<sup>44</sup> Taggart, 1995, p. 40.

<sup>45</sup> Kitschelt and McGann, 1995, p. 43; also see Ignazi, 2002, p. 27.

<sup>46</sup> Taggart, 1995, p. 35; also see Kitschelt and McGann, 1995, p. 43.

<sup>47</sup> Taggart, 1995, p. 39; and Ignazi, 1992, p. 21-23; also see Kitschelt and McGann, 1995, p. 43.

<sup>48</sup> Kitschelt and McGann, 1995, p. 43.

<sup>49</sup> Taggart, 1995, p. 35.

<sup>50</sup> Martin Schain, Aristide Zolberg and Patrick Hossay, “The Development of Radical Right Parties in Western Europe,” *Shadows over Europe: The Development and Impact of the Extreme Right in Western Europe* eds. Martin Schain, Aristide Zolberg and Patrick Hossay (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2002), p. 7.

that much of their political success has come from their stereotyping immigrants as the “Threatening Other” with regards to economic and social issues.

Notwithstanding the occasional clash between “native” and immigrant during the economic boom following World War II, immigrants were generally seen as non-threatening. Although they may not have been seen as an “inspiring Other,” as “virtually no...immigrant population [has],”<sup>51</sup> immigrants were by no mean seen as a threat to the majority population. However, as mentioned above, the economic downturn during the 1970s began to cause resentment towards immigrant communities. Specifically, this resentment and hostility was, and remains, generally directed to non-European immigrants even though guest-workers from Europe continue to make-up a large portion of the immigrant population in many countries. Why one group was and is discriminated against over another is a complicated matter: perhaps factors such as the enlargement of the European Union has created a greater sense of community among all Europeans, or, possibly, European guest-workers who stayed in their host-countries have done a “better” job at integrating into society, hold well paying jobs and are not perceived of as abusers of the welfare system. Triandafyllidou proposes that, “the process of Othering the immigrant is [] activated towards specific group,”<sup>52</sup> when

“their different language, religion or mores are perceived to threaten the cultural and/or ethnic purity of the nation. The nation is likely then to engage in a process of reaffirmation of its identity. It is also likely to seek to redefine its identity, so as to differentiate the ingroup from the newcomers...The negative and threatening representation of the immigrant seems to be an intrinsic feature of the host-immigrant relationship, and this derives, in part, from the fact that the immigrant’s presence defies the social and political order of the nation.”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Triandafyllidou, 2001, p. 36.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid*

<sup>53</sup> Triandafyllidou, 2001, p. 36.

Accordingly, the Othering of non-European immigrants, insofar as they have been painted as threatening the cultural purity of *the nation*, has facilitated much of the success of New Populist Parties. While anti-immigration sentiment often provokes accusations of racism, it is the highlighting of cultural differences – and not biological differences – that have provided the New Populist Parties with a certain degree of mainstream social acceptability. Although these parties and their members may often be seen as racist, their racism, or prejudice, is manifested in a subtle form which allows them to operate within, not at the fringe of, the institutional political arena.<sup>54</sup>

Noted by Pettigrew and Meertens, subtle prejudice is comprised first and foremost of the defense of traditional values, where the in-group's traditional values are seen as acceptable behavior within the society, and any deviation from these values by the out-group is deemed unacceptable.<sup>55</sup> The second component of subtle prejudice is the distinction, or exaggeration, of cultural differences between the in-group and out-group.<sup>56</sup> Rather than appeal to the genetic inferiority of blatant prejudice, subtle prejudice uses stereotypes to embellish the differences between cultures by simply exaggerating the differences among groups: the out-group is culturally distinguished as 'a people apart' from the in-group which in turn validate the in-group's disdain for the out-group.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> The research on racism is obviously immense and a full analysis cannot be done here. However, for greater analysis on 'new' subtle or cultural racism's and 'old' blatant or biological racism's see T.F. Pettigrew and R.W. Meertens, "Subtle and Blatant Prejudice in Western Europe," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 25. 1 (1995): p. 57-58; Stephan Castles, *Ethnicity and Globalization: From Migrant Worker to Transnational Citizen* (London: SAGE Publications, 2000), p. 171-175; Nora Räthzel, "Developments in Theories of Racism," *Europe's New Racism?: Causes, Manifestations, and Solutions*, ed. The Evens Foundation (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), p. 3-26; and for an quantitative analysis of the two types of racism see Colin Wayne Leach, Timothy R. Peng and Julie Volckens, "Is Racism Dead? Comparing (Expressive) Means and (Structural Equation) Models," *British Journal of Social Psychology* 39 (2000): p. 449-465.

<sup>55</sup> Pettigrew and Meertens, 1995, p. 58.

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*

<sup>57</sup> Pettigrew and Meertens, 1995, p. 58-60.

Although the study of prejudice, subtle or otherwise, is highly complex, the aforementioned distinction is important insofar as in their opposition to immigration, political leaders of the New Right generally emphasize the difference in culture rather than race. Furthermore, taking subtle racism into consideration provides for a clearer understanding of why Europe's New Populist Parties have been so successful. As the 'protectors' of national identity and defenders of traditional values, Populist Parties have influenced many of their fellow nationals into believing that immigration is threatening to "contaminate" the nation-state.<sup>58</sup> Besides the threat to national identity, Populist Parties have also been able to attach other threatening issues – crime, unemployment, welfare abuse and terrorism, to name a few – to the immigration issue. Although there is strong evidence that many immigrant communities do have higher rates of crime and unemployment, Populist politicians often claim that cultural differences render them inassimilable<sup>59</sup> and threatening. Still, the feeling that immigration is a problem is not simply confined to the segment of European population that actually vote for Populist Parties. For example, a 1997 Eurobarometer poll showed that 40 percent of Europeans believed that there are "too many" minority groups in their country.<sup>60</sup> In 1990, 76% of the French population thought that there were too many Arabs living in their country, compared to 46% too many blacks, 40 % too many Asians and 24% too many Jews.<sup>61</sup> As a consequence of this "overarching concern" with immigration, otherwise mainstream

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<sup>58</sup> Trinandafyllidou, 1998, p. 603.

<sup>59</sup> *ibid*

<sup>60</sup> Eurobarometer 1997, 1, 5, quoted in Hossay and Zolberg, 2002, p. 311.

<sup>61</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), p. 200.

political parties have begun to co-opt the issue of immigration into their own policies through restricting immigration and tightening citizenship laws.<sup>62</sup>

Interestingly, this once taboo issue deemed too politically incorrect to talk about is becoming increasingly accepted one of *the* major problems in Western Europe, and is presenting itself in the form of high voting rates for Populist Parties. The first national electoral success of the European New Right was in 1999 when Jörg Haider's Austrian Freedom Party received 26.9 percent of the national vote and entered into the national coalition government.<sup>63</sup> As a result of the Freedom Party's victory, the European Union, Israel and the United States imposed sanctions on Austria, forcing the eventual resignation of Haider as party leader. Although volumes could be written on Haider's questionable political statements and career, he and his party were the first Extreme Right Party to be democratically elected in post-war Europe. Interestingly, three years later when the anti-immigrant party Lijst Pim Fortuyn entered into a national coalition government in the Netherlands, much of the global indignation towards Europe's New Right had subsided.<sup>64</sup> One possible explanation for this "tolerance" is that in the early 2000s nearly all European countries had Populist Parties – with anti-immigration policies –gaining large percentages of votes. For example, in the 2001 Danish national election, the Far Right Danish People's Party received 12% of the national vote making it the third largest party in Denmark.<sup>65</sup> These numbers are comparable across Western Europe:

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<sup>62</sup> Hossay and Zolberg, "Democracy in Peril?," *Shadows Over Europe: The Development and Impact of the Extreme Right in Western Europe*, eds. Martin Schain, Aristide Zolberg and Patrick Hossay (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2002), p. 311.

<sup>63</sup> Hossay, 2002, 318.

<sup>64</sup> The Netherlands will be further examined in Chapter 4.

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.parties-and-elections.de/denmark.html>

Sweden's Liberal Party received 13.4% of the national vote in 2002<sup>66</sup> and the *Front National* in France received 16.9% of the vote in the same year, forcing a run-off election against sitting President Jacques Chirac.<sup>67</sup> Notably, in October 2003, the anti-immigration Swiss People's Party received 27.7% of the national vote making it the largest party in Switzerland.<sup>68</sup> The increasing popularity of European New Right Populist Parties serves as an excellent indicator that concerns about immigration on national identities and cultures are not only prevalent in Europe's nations, but are spreading within their populations.

## Conclusion

The development of the modern nation-state was successful in large part because it was constructed to make its population believe that it was homogenous. Even where linguistic differences did exist, the early nation-states were able to gain loyalty through the creation of national symbols that served as daily reminders of their population's common history. Furthermore, by classifying nations into Us and Them, a sub-conscious loyalty to the nation developed. Therefore when Western Europe began to experience mass immigration from non-European nation-states, Populist Parties were able to seize the issue of immigration and use the "impending" decline of national identity in order to gain success. Furthermore, issues such as crime, unemployment and welfare abuse have been successful blamed on immigrant communities in order to further deepen the division between "native" and immigrant populations. While the success of New Populist Parties

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<sup>66</sup> Andrew Osborn, "Swedish Left Wins but 'Integration' Snaps at its Heels," *Guardian Unlimited* 17 Sept. 2002. From, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,793415,00.html>

<sup>67</sup> Hossay, 2002, p. 329.

<sup>68</sup> Sandra Smith, "What they said about... the Swiss Elections," *Guardian Unlimited* 21 Oct. 2003. From, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/editor/story/0,,1067237,00.html>



has been contingent on a variety of issues such as tax reduction, the EU, and general protest votes against the traditional parties, immigration remains arguably the most important issue pertaining to their recent successes across Europe. Again, it should be noted that the concern over national identity by the “native” population is not contained to those who actually vote for Populist Parties. Although many observers may see the anti-immigration rhetoric as blatantly racist and hostile towards immigrants, New Right parties have influenced otherwise mainstream political parties: the increasingly popular idea of a “Fortress Europe” has influenced all parties to adopt similar immigration policies in an attempt to siphon the anti-immigrant votes from the far right.

Similar to nationalism, prejudice towards the immigrant “other” is complex. Indeed as Stephan Castles has correctly observed, “the dividing line between racism and nationalism has become less clear.”<sup>69</sup> The rise in popularity of the New Right and the general increase in anti-immigrant sentiment in European nations serve as indicators of a general fear that traditional, homogenous, European cultures are being threatened, and that these ‘old’ nations are being demographically changed into less authentic multicultural ones. The backlash towards this change is central to the argument against the ideas of “civic” nationalism. Furthermore, as integration between cultures and populations increases because of globalization and EU integration, traditional national identities will continue to fluctuate, and this is only likely to exacerbate the already growing “immigration problem.”

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<sup>69</sup> Castles, 2000, p. 164.

The key problem, I have said this for 20 years, is that of an immigration that equates with an invasion.<sup>1</sup> – Jean-Marie Le Pen

One million unemployed is one million immigrants too many.<sup>2</sup> – Jean-Marie Le Pen

I prefer my daughters to my cousins, my cousins to my neighbours and my neighbours to strangers.<sup>3</sup> – Jean-Marie Le Pen

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<sup>1</sup> Le Figaro Magazine, 12 October 1991. Quoted in Ineke Van der Valk, *Difference, Deviance, Threat?: Mainstream and Right-Extremist Political Discourse on Ethnic Issues in the Netherlands and France 1990-1997* (Amsterdam: Aksant Academic Publishers, 2002), p. 200.

<sup>2</sup> The immigration and unemployment first appeared in the late 1970s but has since been adjusted to reflect immigration and unemployment levels. Quoted in Peter Davies, *The National Front in France: Ideology, Discourse and Power* (London: Routledge 1999), p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Geoffrey Harris, *The Dark Side of Europe: The Extreme Right Today* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p. 64.

## Chapter 4: France

France is generally regarded as *the* paradigmatic civic case of nationalisms. Founded on the Revolution's principles of *liberté, fraternité* and *égalité*, France has long prided itself on defining national membership not through race, religion or culture, but through the political and legal status of "the citizen." Although France does not immediately confer citizenship to all immigrants born on French soil, it does practice "substantial elements" of *ius soil* that allows it to be considered relatively open in comparison to other nation-states. The French notion of citizenship, embedded with the principles of republicanism, requires "new" citizens to assimilate into the dominant French culture. As a consequence France does not officially favor, support or recognize any difference between groups, ethnic or otherwise, as all citizens are equally "French" under the law. Accordingly, immigrants who become citizens are expected to assimilate into the dominant French national identity, which includes their language, and culturally-based laws and social mores. This model of "civic assimilation"<sup>4</sup> enacted to avoid the emergence of "nations within the nation,"<sup>5</sup> can be located in the founding of the French Republic and was successful not only in homogenizing the linguistic and cultural differences of the "native" French population, but also in assimilating the early immigrant populations as well.

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<sup>4</sup> Although I am unaware of whether this term is commonly used to describe the French system, Marco Giugni and Florence Passy argue that France maintains a civic conception of citizenship, but is assimilationist in its view of cultural responsibility. Therefore, citizenship can be required *by anyone* provided they "give up ethnic-based identities in favor of accepting the republican ideal of the state." Marco Giugni and Florence Passy, "Migrant Mobilization Between Political Institutions and Citizenship Regimes: A Comparison of France and Switzerland," *European Journal of Political Research* 43 (2004): p. 59.

<sup>5</sup> Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), p. 106.

While France has not traditionally been a nation of immigrants, sizeable post-war immigration from the have-not regions of the Mediterranean and the Maghreb region of North Africa began to undermine assimilation policies. As was the case in all of Western Europe, France needed labor during the economic boom, and guest workers were seen as an integral part of the rebuilding process. While the relationship between the 'native' French and guest workers was amicable during the labor shortage, the oil crisis and subsequent economic downturn during the 1970s and 1980s caused many "native" French citizens to begin to resent the immigrant population. This point can be substantiated by Eric Dupin who has stated: "The French have never liked immigrants, and for a long time have nourished a particular hostility toward those who came from the Maghreb...It isn't the 'crisis' that has created racism and xenophobia...Economic difficulties have simply reactivated latent feelings in French society."<sup>6</sup>

Although a strong case against France's "civic-ness" can be made by drawing on earlier historical periods – most notably the Dreyfus Affair of the 1890s and the WWII Vichy regime – this chapter will challenge the existence of French civic nationalism by focusing on the period since the 1970s. In consideration of the French Republican model of citizenship and its policies of assimilation, the first section will provide the historical context from which the current debate on immigration has emerged. In addition, an analysis of France's assimilation policies will also be provided insofar as these policies are coming under increased criticism for their failure to assimilate large immigrant communities from North Africa and for their lack of recognition of different cultural beliefs.

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<sup>6</sup> Eric Dupin, *Oui, non, sans opinion* (Paris: Interéditions, 1990), p. 219, quoted in Harvey G. Simmons, *The French National Front: The Extremist Challenge to Democracy*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996): p. 72.

The second section of this chapter will analyze France's most famous critic of immigration, Jean-Marie Le Pen, founder and leader of the *Front National* (FN). Although France has had a long history with parties on the extreme-right, the FN's success has been contingent on the post-war realities of Western Europe discussed in Chapter 2.<sup>7</sup> Insofar as the FN is a multi-issue party, this section will focus primarily on the Le Pen's diatribes on immigration, his belief in preserving the French nation and his influence on the French political system.

The third section will examine the current debate in France with regards to immigration, specifically of North African Muslims and their future in French society. Notwithstanding issues such as poverty and unemployment, the banning of the *hijab* in the secular *laïcité* school system has furthered an already contentious relationship. Although the ban is not a direct attack on Muslims – the law bans all visible religious symbols regardless of denomination – the ban on the *hijab* has garnered the most domestic and international attention. In addition, the recent decision to encourage Imams to go to French university in order to learn French values and “build a moderate ‘French Islam’”<sup>8</sup> challenges the idea that France is a political (civic) nation. Not only is the policy attempting to regulate how Islam is practiced within its borders, it illustrates that the “French nation” perceives certain cultural norms of “Other’s” as problematic. As a result, these policies of *cultural* assimilation should not only be seen as limits on cultural freedoms, but should ultimately question France as a civic nation.

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<sup>7</sup> For a general survey on the history of the Right in France see, Nicholas Atkin and Frank Tallett eds. *The Right in France: From Revolution to Le Pen* (London, New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003).

<sup>8</sup> Jon Henley, “Imams to be Taught French Way of Life,” *Guardian Unlimited* 8 Dec., 2004. From <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1368587,00.html>

## From Political Revolution to Cultural Challenge

Rogers Brubaker stated that the French Revolution “invented both the nation-state and the modern institution and ideology of national citizenship.”<sup>9</sup> Prior to the French Revolution citizenship in the *ancien-régime* was based upon the exclusion of most social classes, both in terms of “legal” and “factual” rights.<sup>10</sup> Although class inequalities were commonplace in all countries at this time, citizenship in France “was determined in an ad hoc manner in particular cases to make it accord with legal judgments about inheritance rights.”<sup>11</sup> The historical developments pertaining to French citizenship laws has been well documented and it is generally accepted that the French Revolution, and more accurately *La Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen* (The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen), ushered in a new concept of citizenship *vis-à-vis* the people and the state.<sup>12</sup>

Citizenship in post-Revolutionary France has been described as relatively open insofar as the initial Constitution of 1791 based citizenship on place of birth and culture rather than on ethnic origin.<sup>13</sup> This citizenship policy was carried through in the Constitutions of 1793, 1795 and 1799, which continued to define “French” in accordance with the “status of French citizen.”<sup>14</sup> However, even with the markedly open policies of immigration, elements of *ius sanguinis* remained. For one, it was not until 1851 that third generation immigrants who were born in France could legally become citizens, with this

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<sup>9</sup> Brubaker, 1992, p. 35.

<sup>10</sup> Brubaker, 1992, p. 35.

<sup>11</sup> Brubaker, 1992, p. 39. For more on France’s pre-Revolutionary concepts of citizenship see See Edwige Liliane Lefebvre, “Republicanism and Universalism: Factors of Inclusion or Exclusion in the French Concept of Citizenship,” *Citizenship Studies*, 7. 1 (2003): p. 16, and Brubaker, 1992, p. 35-39.

<sup>12</sup> For an excellent history of French citizenship laws see Mirian Feldblum, *Reconstructing Citizenship: The Politics of Nationality Reform and Immigration in Contemporary France* (Albany: State University Press of New York, 1999).

<sup>13</sup> Anna Triandafyllidou, *Immigrants and National Identity in Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 66.

<sup>14</sup> Lefebvre, 2003, p. 19.

law being extended to second generation immigrant in 1889. In addition, upon age of majority, second-generation immigrants born on French soil had to pledge allegiance to the state of France in order to become citizens. And although France remained considerably open to immigrants throughout this period, it was not until 1889 that the policy of *ius soli* was formally established.<sup>15</sup>

As was argued in Chapter 1, the distinction between ethnic and civic nationalism is contentious. This premise is furthered by the notion that citizenship is inherently tied to the culture of a nation, and that culture in this instance should be understood as having both civic and ethnic components. Although France is not an “ethnically” homogenous nation, by the late nineteenth century the French nation began to see itself as such.<sup>16</sup> More accurately, France had become relatively homogenous in terms of culture, due in part to the implementation of a standard education system, and the “creation” of a shared history. As a result, it can be argued that once a nation achieves cultural homogeneity, the population will begin to *perceive* and *act* as if it is are a homogenous “ethnic” group even though they are only cultural homogenous. For example, Gérard Noiriel argues that, “France has a national myth of cultural homogeneity, which seeks to deny a long history of *migration* and *cultural mixing*.”<sup>17</sup>

Given that citizenship is a legal principle, it seems peculiar that the French nation-state should be considered “civic,” as asserted by Kohn and others, simply because it implemented a non-ethnic policy of citizenship. If one considers that during the 1880s France nearly completely abandoned the entire concept of *ius soli*, and that by 1886 there

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<sup>15</sup> Brubaker, 1992, p. 86.

<sup>16</sup> Brubaker, 1992, p. 98.

<sup>17</sup> Emphasis added. Gérard Noiriel, *Le creuset français: histoire de l'immigration XIXe-Xxe siècles*, Paris: Seuil (1988), cited by Stephan Castles, *Ethnicity and Globalization: From Migrant Worker to Transnational Citizen* (London: SAGE Publications, 2000), p. 17,

was a general agreement in government that *ius sanguinis* should be the primary tenet of citizenship,<sup>18</sup> the foundational “civic principles” of French citizenship customs and laws are brought into question. Had France adopted the *ius sanguinis* approach to citizenship it would not be considered a “civic” nation as it would have ceased to be *inclusive* based on *political principles*. Yet significantly, the reason France decided not to abandon the policies of *ius soli* was that the French government had such faith in policies of assimilation that it believed it was turning “immigrants into Frenchman.”<sup>19</sup> The civic-ness of French citizenship policies should therefore be understood as inherently tied to the French “ethnic,” or cultural, outlook vis-à-vis the necessary homogeneity of the French nation.

Still, the creation of the homogenous nation-state, as was argued in Chapter 2, requires governmental policies on education and traditions, but also needs to establish citizenship laws dictating who can and cannot become a citizen. The French Republic has had a long tradition of assimilation. As was defined in Chapter 1, assimilation refers to the process of making something, or in this case someone, similar to the dominant group. Still, the implicit reality of this policy is that the French state is not only prioritizing its own political identity, but is also imposing its own language and culture on immigrant communities. Consequently, to assimilate invariably means that those who are not yet part of the “French nation” must adopt and accept the cultural and national identity of the French majority. Stephan Castles correctly argues that the French Republican Model “appears to be purely political, yet it brings culture in through the back door.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Brubaker, 1992, p. 96.

<sup>19</sup> This phrase has been modified from the original “Peasants into Frenchman.” See Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchman: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914*. Stanford: Stanford University Press 1976.

<sup>20</sup> Castles, 2000, p. 138.



Similarly, Rogers Brubaker contends that although “French nationhood is constituted by political unity [...] it is centrally expressed in the striving for cultural unity.”<sup>21</sup> Although France may not be as “ethnically” nationalist as some nation-states, the fact of the matter is that national identity and culture remain pivotal aspects of the French nation. Notwithstanding the dismissal of *ius sanguinis* as unnecessary to French political ordering, the assimilation of the population into a single national entity with a common language and culture was an intrinsic element of France’s consolidation into a stable political community.<sup>22</sup>

While the system of assimilating immigrants worked relatively well for most of France’s history in creating a nation of “Frenchmen,” the influx of non-European guest-workers and the decolonization of Algeria in the 1960s and 1970s began to strain French assimilation policies and its concept of citizenship. As previously mentioned, France needed imported labor during the post-War economic boom, and from the 1950s onward, tens of thousands of Algerians began to seek employment in France. Notwithstanding the war of independence in Algeria, many Algerians were able to put aside their political views in order to provide a better life for their families. However, when Algeria gained sovereignty in 1963, the French government was forced to reform their citizenship laws in order to address the new realities of post-colonialism. In 1973, a reform to the Nationality Code extended citizenship to many former colonial citizens without their knowledge. As stated above, French policy on citizenship was contingent on second generation immigrants being born on French soil, provided that they resided in France from the age of 13-18, and swear an oath of loyalty to the nation. However, the 1973

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<sup>21</sup> Brubaker, 1992, p. 1.

<sup>22</sup> Lefebvre, 2003, p. 19.

reforms automatically conferred citizenship to many Algerian children without their, or their parent's, knowledge. Because citizenship is only bestowed at birth if the father was also born in France, many Algerian children became automatic citizens simply because their fathers had all been born in French Algeria. This caused problems on two fronts. Among the Algerian population, especially those who had fought for Algerian independence, there was large-scale resentment: they had fought against France for their independence, yet they were now producing French children.<sup>23</sup> In addition, many French citizens became infuriated by the fact that "many" French-Algerians recognized French citizenship for its practical usefulness. With a French passport, French-Algerians were able to travel internationally with greater ease, and were left alone by police if they had a French citizenship card. This enraged Far Right politicians, especially Jean-Marie Le Pen, who saw citizenship as the lifeblood of the French nation and not as an easy way to travel to Spain.

Additionally, during the 1980s it became apparent that Algerians, and the Muslim population in general were failing to assimilate into the French society,<sup>24</sup> a problem further exacerbated by the fact that minority groups do not receive any special recognition in France. Assimilation of French Muslims into the dominant French culture

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<sup>23</sup> Feldblum, 1999, p. 26-27.

<sup>24</sup> Although research pertaining to Islam and the West has been both divisive and controversial, it is quickly becoming one of the most analyzed issues both in academia and in mainstream journalism. An exhaustive analysis cannot be provided here, although some of the main arguments pertaining to the French case should be mentioned. The general belief, and this is by no means exclusive to France, is that Islam is incompatible with the Western notion of democracy. The argument is that because Islam is not only a spiritual religion but also political, attempts to adopt the secular notions of Western governance will both test and undermine the faith. Some argue that this is a Western construction of Islam and, because the media usually portrays Islam in its radical form most do not see the moderate side. See for example Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Touchstone, 1996); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978); Gerd Nonneman, "Muslim Communities in the New Europe," *Muslim Communities in the New Europe*, eds. Gerd Nonneman, Tim Niblock and Bogdan Szajkowski (Berkshire, UK: Ithaca Press, 1996), p. 3-24; and Ceri Peach and Günther Glebe, "Muslim Minorities in Western Europe," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18.1 (1995): p. 26-45.

has been problematic on two fronts. On the one hand, many “native” French believe that French Muslims lack the willingness to assimilate because doing would undermine substantial parts of their religious traditions. Insofar as this “Muslim worldview” goes against the French tradition of assimilation to maintain “national unity,” there is widespread stereotyping and disdain towards the Muslim population. On the other hand, many in the Muslim communities has argued that even if they did fully assimilate into the French way of life, the “natives” would never accept them as French. Yet, regardless of whether there is a lack of will to assimilate or a lack of acceptance, Muslim communities have become the underclass of French society: there are widespread *beliefs* among “native” Frenchmen that the Muslim population is responsible for a majority of crime in the country; that they abuse the welfare system, have the highest unemployment rates of any “ethnic” group and the lowest educational achievement levels. These perceptions, no matter how misguided, feed into the increasingly prevailing notion that French national identity is in jeopardy. And it is to these very fears that the rhetoric of the French New Right resonates most strongly.

### **Jean-Marie Le Pen and the *Front National***

The rise of Jean-Marie Le Pen as a force in French politics since the 1980s has generated a great deal of scholarly research. Every aspect of Le Pen and the FN has been explored: from the biographical details of his life to the type of voter he attracts;<sup>25</sup> from

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<sup>25</sup> Nonna Mayer, “The French National Front,” *The New Politics of the Right: Neo-Populist Parties and Movements in Established Democracies*, eds, Hans-Georg Betz and Stefan Immerfall (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1998), p. 17-20

his influence on the French political system to,<sup>26</sup> and above all else, his policies on immigration. Given that Le Pen has never censored himself in front of the media there is an abundance of speeches and interviews documenting his opinions on the French nation, its culture and the detrimental effect of its immigration policies on both. Le Pen's rhetoric against immigration is controversial and he has been portrayed as a racist, a fascist and a xenophobe by his dissenters. He willingly admits that Marshal Pétain, leader of the Vichy regime, was a hero of his, and has appointed neo-fascists, anti-Semites and racists to top positions within his party.<sup>27</sup> Certainly, public statements made by Le Pen early in his career reinforce his characterization as a racist:

“It is necessary to respect ethnic traditions: each group, whites, Jews, Arabs must respect the rules of the game. But one must recognize that some aren't “favored by nature.”...And when I see the Arabs with their shabby look, I ask if there isn't some kind of biological determinism at play.”<sup>28</sup>

Still, it appears that his recent tirades against immigration have become “socially accepted” in French society. In his own defense, Le Pen has stated: “The Front National...has never directed its criticism towards the immigrants. It has critiqued immigration politics and the politicians responsible for them for the past 30 years.”<sup>29</sup> Both his defense of the French nation and his stereotyping of immigrants as culturally different meet Pettigrew's and Meertens criteria of socially acceptable subtle racism as

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<sup>26</sup> Martin A. Schain, “The Impact of the French National Front on the French Political System,” *Shadows Over Europe: The Development and Impact of the Extreme Right in Western Europe*, eds. Martin Schain, Aristide Zolberg and Patrick Hossay (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 223-243.

<sup>27</sup> Simmons, 1996, p. 2, 12

<sup>28</sup> Gregory Pons, *Les rats noir* (N.p.: Jean-Claude Simeon, 1977), pp. 50-51. Quoted in Simmons, 1996, p. 40.

<sup>29</sup> This quote was taken from a radio interview with Jean-Marie Le Pen on RTL Radio, quoted in Ineke van der Valk, *Difference, Deviance, Threat?: Mainstream and Right-Extremist Political Discourse in Ethnic Issues in the Netherlands and France (1990-1997)* p. 205.

discussed in Chapter 2.<sup>30</sup> Notwithstanding whether his remarks are blatantly or subtly racist, there is no denying his influence and impact on the French political system particularly on the issue of immigration.

Interestingly, Le Pen's right-wing leanings were not initially because of immigration but because of the Communist threat both around the world and within France. In his autobiography he wrote,

"I returned from Indochina with a concrete revelation about the Communist enemy, its terrible methods, the pitiless manner of liquidating its adversaries, its technique of psychological warfare, its destruction of man from within...The Indochina humiliation and the first murderous encounters in the Algerian War decided my political engagement."<sup>31</sup>

Le Pen began his political career in the 1950s as a deputy of Pierre Poujadist's movement, the last successful far-right party in France until the Front National. The 1956 elections found the Poujadists with 2.6 million votes and fifty-three elected members to the National Assembly, including Le Pen.<sup>32</sup> However, Le Pen and Poujadist quickly grew apart, and nine months after entering the National Assembly he volunteered to go of to Algeria to defend French soil.<sup>33</sup> Upon his return to France he re-entered the National Assembly as an independent in 1957 but lost in seat in 1962.<sup>34</sup>

In 1972, the *Front National* formed as a coalition of far-right wing parties and Le Pen was elected its leader. The FN included former members of the Vichy, *Ordre Nouveau* (who advocated violent mean in order to further its political agenda), and the Poujadists. Although the early members of the FN came from a variety of far-right

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<sup>30</sup> For a general study of racism in France see, Nonna Mayer and Guy Michelat, "Subjective Racism, Objective Racism: The French Case," *Patterns of Prejudice* 35 (4) (2001) 6-18.

<sup>31</sup> Jean-Marie Le Pen, *Les Français d'abord* (Paris: Carrère/Laffon, 1985) p. 45 cited in Simmons p. 14.

<sup>32</sup> Simmons, 1996, p. 32.

<sup>33</sup> For an account of Le Pen's three months in Algeria see Simmons, 1996, p. 37-41.

<sup>34</sup> Simmons, 1996, p. 45.

parties, Le Pen had long believed in non-violence, and that it would be through democratic means that the FN would gain legitimacy and beat the Communists and the Gaullists.<sup>35</sup>

The early success of the FN was limited. In 1973 the FN ran candidates in the Legislative election and received only 0.5% of the vote. In the Presidential election the following year the FN did only marginally better receiving 0.8%.<sup>36</sup> Le Pen who campaigned on fiscal inquisition, abortion, nationalization, bureaucracy, restriction on the right to strike in the public sector, defense of the family, law and order, moral values, and a return to proportional representation. He barely mentioned immigration.<sup>37</sup> During the following years the FN continued to achieve only minimal success in the Legislative elections, and Le Pen was unable to secure the 500 signatures required in order to run in the Presidential election in 1981.<sup>38</sup> However having begun to integrate the growing “immigration problem” into his political rhetoric, by the late 1970s, the FN’s political “break” would in fact come with the 1981 Presidential Election that placed François Mitterrand in power.

This was the first time in 25 years that the center-right was out of power in France. Mitterrand’s government quickly became an easy target for the center and far right parties who took him up on his fiscal policies, which led to inflation and high unemployment, and on his immigration stance in promising non-citizen residents of France the right to vote in municipal elections. This promise was later rescinded amidst political uproar indicating the 1980s shift towards viewing immigration as a serious

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<sup>35</sup> Simmons, 1996, p. 62-63

<sup>36</sup> Nonna Mayer and Pascal Perrineau, “Why Do They Vote for Le Pen?,” *European Journal of Political Research* 22 (1992) p. 124.

<sup>37</sup> Simmons, 1996, p. 79.

<sup>38</sup> Davies, 1999 p. 3.

national "problem," an attitude which had accompanied the demographic shift in France's immigrant population from primarily European to non-European. In 1968, immigrants from European countries accounted for 72% of the immigrant community in France, but by 1982, European immigrants accounted for only 48% of the foreign population.<sup>39</sup> In addition, by 1982 an estimated 40% of the foreign population came from the North Africa, of which 22% were Algerian.<sup>40</sup> This influx of non-European immigrants coupled with high unemployment rates under Mitterrand provided the FN a political niche that could be exploited.

In 1983 the FN had its first political success in the small working-class town of Dreux, population 35,000, with the election of Jean-Pierre Stirbois and three other FN party members to the town's municipal council.<sup>41</sup> Stirbois had been railing against immigration since the late 1970s and had unsuccessfully run for office in Dreux since 1978. However, by 1983 Dreux had become 25 percent foreign-born, and Stirbois' message that immigration caused "unemployment and undermined law and order"<sup>42</sup> began to resonant with the electorate. Le Pen's electoral breakthrough came during the 1984 European election where he received 11% of the vote.<sup>43</sup> These initial electoral success provided Le Pen and the FN the necessary political forum to expand their policies on immigration in front of a mass audience. In addition, the intense media coverage of both elections, but in particular of the FN's electoral success in Droux, put many of the issues that the FN had linked to immigration into the minds of the French voter.<sup>44</sup> In the

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<sup>39</sup> Feldblum, 1999, p. 21.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Simmons, 1996, p. 72-73.

<sup>42</sup> Simmons, 1996, p. 73.

<sup>43</sup> Nonna Mayer and Pascal Perrineau, "Why Do They Vote for Le Pen?", *European Journal of Political Research* 22 (1992) p. 124.

<sup>44</sup> For a full account of the 1983 municipal election in Dreux, see Simmons, 1996, p. 72-77.

1988 Presidential election Le Pen received 14.4% of the national vote and has gained over 10% of the vote in every Presidential election since.<sup>45</sup> Although his popularity is not solely based on the issue of immigration, Le Pen's beliefs on immigration, the French nation and national identity are the cornerstones of his policy platform.

### **A Nation Challenged?**

In the parlance of nationalism theory, Jean-Marie Le Pen reflects a Primordialist position. His success as a populist politician can be attributed to his ability to invoke the importance of the French nation to the French people, both in his own political speeches and through the policies of the *Front National*. According to Davies, the FN's current political platform revolves around two themes: the nation and identity.<sup>46</sup> Although the promotion and preservation of the French nation has always been a significant part of the FN's mandate, its 1993 "Programme for Government" best exemplifies its position. With regards to the following issues, the FN's actual policies are: "Immigration ('reverse the tide'), family ('in favour of national preference'), education ('transmit knowledge'), culture ('defend our roots') and the environment ('safeguard our heritage')."<sup>47</sup> For the most part these issues can all be related to the greater issue of immigration insofar as they address directly the promotion and maintenance of the French nation.

Although Le Pen's views on immigration and citizenship generally follow the Germanic principles of *ius sanguinis*, he does believe that non-blood immigrants can become members of the French nation, provided that they completely renounce their

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<sup>45</sup> Mayer and Perrineau, 1992 p. 124.

<sup>46</sup> Davies, 1999, p. 65.

<sup>47</sup> Davies, 1999, p. 66.



nationality of origin and completely assimilate. In a speech Le Pen gave to French *Beur* population (second generation Arabs born in France) he said:

“If you are loyal to France, if you love it, if you adopt its laws, morals, language, way of thinking and, in a word, if you integrated yourself completely, we will not refuse you being one of us, so long as there is a spark of love and not only a material interest in your stay. But if you are loyal to your roots – which is something I would respect – and if you just pretend to live under our laws, with your own morals and culture kept to yourself, it is better that your return home because otherwise it could all end very badly.”<sup>48</sup>

Accordingly, for Le Pen, the lack of “will” to assimilate into the French nation is that which is not only insulting to French history, but poses the most severe threat to the unity of the nation. As the self-proclaimed “protector” of the French nation, Le Pen has been a vocal critic of successive governments that have not actively promoted the French tradition of assimilation. He has been equally critical of the media and its politically correct treatment of the immigration issue. He blames political leaders and the media for promoting the belief that France is a cosmopolitan nation, and for embracing ethnic, religious and cultural diversity,<sup>49</sup> when, according to Le Pen, they should recognize that the strength and unity of the nation comes from religious, linguistic and cultural homogeneity, and that any deviation from this is unacceptable. Le Pen also claims that “anti-French racism” has become the only socially acceptable form of group criticism permitted in France, and that “the only religion one can mock openly is Christianity.”<sup>50</sup> Although many of Le Pen’s statement may seem as though they are coming from a “xenophobic nut,” the fact of the matter is that an increasingly large number of the “French” population agrees with him.

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<sup>48</sup> Originally appeared in *Le Monde*, 4 April 1987, quoted in Davies, 1999, p.78.

<sup>49</sup> Davies, 1999, p. 75.

<sup>50</sup> Originally stated in speech by Le Pen and reprinted in *The Independent*, 11 May 1988, quoted in Davies, 1999, p. 76.

An estimated 30 percent of the French electorate have voted for the *Front National*.<sup>51</sup> Although largely ignored by the established parties in the 1980s, the FN's electoral successes at municipal levels have forced otherwise "mainstream" parties to enter into coalition governments with them. In 1999, the FN held four mayor-ships in the towns of Toulon, Orange, Marignane and Vitrolles, including hundreds of positions in local governments across France. Undeniably, the FN has become an established party, which has forced, often begrudgingly, other parties to accept it as a legitimate part of the French political system. However, while the FN has been elected to local governments, it is the party's influence at the national level that is the most impressive. Le Pen's biggest success has been to get the issues surrounding immigration on the policy agenda of the French government. According to Martin Schain, "parties on both the Right and the Left [have] attempted to co-opt and gain control of the issues of immigration and security."<sup>52</sup> All mainstream politicians from Jacques Chirac to Valery Giscard d'Estaing have at one time or another taken an anti-immigration stance given that the immigration issue has resonated so deeply among the French electorate.<sup>53</sup> The overall influence of the FN on the French electorate became even more visible during the 2002 National elections, when Le Pen received 16% of the national vote, beat the Socialist candidate, and forced a run-off election with Jacques Chirac. Although Le Pen was soundly beaten in the second round, there is no denying that the FN will continue to influence the French political system for the foreseeable future.

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<sup>51</sup> Pascal Perrineau, *Le symptôme Le Pen* (Paris: Fayard, 1997), p. 86, quoted in Hossay and Zolberg, 2002, p. 309.

<sup>52</sup> Schain, 2002, p. 240.

<sup>53</sup> Huntington, 1996, 201.

## Conclusion

Notwithstanding the electoral successes of the *Front National* and its influence on other parties with regards to the immigration issue, the FN is not the only indicator that challenges the idea that France is a civic nation. Two current French government policies – the ban on the *hijab* in secular school system and the decision to offer Imams University training on French values – further serve to undermine the “civic” nationalism of France.

Although the French government banned all religious symbols in the secular school system, the policy is generally perceived as an affront to the Islamic headscarf. This issue has become highly politicized, with protests coming from Muslims and their supporters in France and abroad: when two French citizens were kidnapped in Iraq, their captors demanded that the French government rescind the ban on the *hijab* to secure the release of the hostages. Although the French government publicly claims that the banning of religious symbols in the *laïcité* is to “preserve the republican values”<sup>54</sup> of France, the policy is seen as an implicit critique of Islam. Regardless of the political motivation behind this policy, it nonetheless highlights the problems concerning a “civic” French nation: France is a multicultural society, and although it continues to promote equality for all citizens, the assimilation of minority groups into the dominant French culture will continue to test its “civic-ness”. Approximately five million Muslims currently reside in France, and the ban on the headscarf is likely to only further alienate the Muslim community from the ‘native’ French culture. In October 2004, the Ministry of National Education began holding disciplinary hearings expelling students who were in violation

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<sup>54</sup> Elaine Sciolino, “Ban on Head Scarves Takes Effect in France,” *The New York Times* 3 Sept. 2004. From, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/09/03/international/europe/03france.html>

of the headscarf law.<sup>55</sup> The Ministry's had hope to expel the "hopeless cases" before the ten-day Catholic All Saints school vacation<sup>56</sup> – a contradiction and irony that should not be lost in the study of French "civic" nationalism.

In addition to the law banning religious symbols, the French government also announced that beginning in 2005 it would be offering university training to Imams on French law, civics, history and culture, with the goal of building a "moderate 'French Islam' that respects human rights and the Republican code."<sup>57</sup> Currently, 75% of Imams in France are not French, and with one-third of them unable to speak the French language, the idea behind this policy is to create "homegrown" French imams who speak the language. Although the success of this policy is yet to be seen, its very idea seems to be antithetical to what civic nationalism is supposed to represent.

As shown by the rise of the *Front National*, the banning of headscarves and the continued importance of assimilation policies, France is very much a cultural nation. Although France maintains relatively open citizenship policies, it still requires "new" citizens to assume the dominant French culture. Jean-Marie Le Pen and the FN have successfully influenced "mainstream" political parties into adopting tougher policies on immigration.

This chapter has shown that the French nation and its national and cultural identity are crucial to the French people, and that the likelihood of the French population forgoing its cultural community in favor of a political one is not only minimal, but would in fact be historically unprecedented. French "civic" nationalism has never been "civic" in the strictly political sense, rather, it has always been predicated on an "ethnic French,"

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<sup>55</sup> Elaine Sciolino, "France Turns to Tough Policy on Students' Religious Garb," *New York Times* 22 Oct. 2004. From <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/10/22/international/europe/22france.html>

<sup>56</sup> *ibid*

<sup>57</sup> Henley, 2004.

or cultural, orientation, and accordingly, the rise of Populist Parties should not be surprising.

The Netherlands has been too tolerant for the intolerant people for too long.<sup>1</sup> – Geert Wilders

If we don't do anything... We will lose the country that we have known for centuries. People don't want the Netherlands to be lost and this is something that I get angry about and I am going to fight for, to keep the country Dutch.<sup>2</sup> – Geert Wilders

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<sup>1</sup> Geert Wilders is an MP in the Dutch government. The Associated Press, "Quotes From Dutch Lawmaker Geert Wilders," *New York Times*, 19 Nov. 2004. From <http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/international/AP-Netherlands-Quotes.html>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 5: The Netherlands

The Netherlands has long been considered one of the most tolerant countries in the world. With liberal laws on soft drugs, prostitution, same-sex marriage and euthanasia, tolerance is seen as an integral part of the Dutch national identity. However, the last three years has seen a growing intolerance of the “native” Dutch population towards immigrants, specifically those from Muslim countries. As a result, issues said to be related to immigration – such as crime, unemployment, welfare abuse, terrorism, national identity and integration – now dominate the political agenda. However, up until three years ago, discussions concerning immigration remained taboo in both the political and social realms. Unlike France, the Netherlands does not have a tradition of far-right political parties bringing such controversial issues to the forefront of the political and public arenas. In addition, the Dutch tradition of tolerance, coupled with tough laws on racism, may have discouraged any critical examination of the immigration issue in the past. However, the sudden rise of populist politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002 pushed this “irrelevant” issue to the top of Dutch politics, and although Fortuyn was assassinated nine days before the 2002 National election his influence on the Dutch political system remains.

This chapter will challenge the “civic-ness” of the Netherlands given the perceived “crisis” of immigration over the last three years and the culturally-based assimilation policies that are currently being enacted. Insofar as throughout the twentieth century the Netherlands developed as an ideologically-fragmented society, the first section of this chapter will provide a historical overview of the Dutch system of

pillarization, whose breakdown allowed parties on the right to achieve political success. Additionally, this chapter offers an analysis of the events surrounding the 2002 elections, namely: factors that gave rise to the “immigration issue” for the Dutch electorate; policies of multiculturalism; and Pim Fortuyn’s subsequent influence on Dutch immigration policy. Insofar as these policies are clearly biased against non-Western immigrants and serve to legally promote Dutch cultural and national identity, it will be argued that the Netherlands cannot be regarded as a pure “civic” nation. Finally, the brutal murder of Theo van Gogh in November 2004 by a Dutch citizen of Moroccan decent will be briefly examined to highlight the exacerbated hostility of “native” Dutch towards its Muslim immigrants. In the immediate aftermath of van Gogh’s assassination, both mosques and churches were attacked, and although it is too early to tell what the outcome of the murder will have on the “Dutch”/Muslim relationship, current popular sentiment suggests that this relationship will get worse before it gets better.

### **And the Pillars Crumble**

In academic democratic theory, the Netherlands has been depicted as a “deviant case”<sup>3</sup> that should “theoretically not exist.”<sup>4</sup> despite severe social and religious cleavages, the Netherlands is one of Western Europe’s most stable and long lasting democracies. This success has generally been attributed to the “politics of accommodation” at the elite political level whereby each social cleavage was given representation.<sup>5</sup> Although the

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<sup>3</sup> Arend Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in the Netherlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 1-2.

<sup>4</sup> Robert A. Dahl is reported as telling a Dutch colleague: “Theoretically your country cannot exist.” H. Daalder, *Ancient and Modern Pluralism in the Netherlands*, the 1989 Erasmus Lectures at Harvard University (Center for European Studies Working Paper Series, 1989), p. 26. Quoted in Rudy B. Andeweg and Galen A. Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p. 26.

<sup>5</sup> Lijphart, 1968, p. 111.



politics of accommodation was undoubtedly an important factor in the success of Dutch democracy, it was the way in which the cleavages were separated from one another that has received the most scholarly attention. *Verzuiling*, or pillarization, was the organizational tool used to divide each group in all aspects of social and political life.<sup>6</sup> For example, both Catholics and Protestants had their own political parties, trade unions, schools, healthcare systems and media outlets. Similarly, the middle and working classes also had different political parties, trade unions and media outlets, but shared the secular state schools and universities. As a result of the pillarized system, no political party since 1919 has ever won a parliamentary majority.

However by the late 1960s these “pillars” of Dutch political and social ordering began to crumble. Researchers of the de-pillarization process agree that there was no single event, but rather a series of factors, that precipitated its demise. For example, the declining role of religion in Dutch society as well as the emergence of non-pillarized organizations such as broadcasting outlets and new political parties began to challenge the loyalties of the Dutch people to their respective pillars.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the homogenous messages broadcast via television served both to weaken these pillars and to create a sense of banal attachment among the divided Dutch population. Perhaps the strongest explanation for the demise of the pillars suggests its success in achieving its goal of protecting each segment of society. Through the politics of accommodation, Dutch societal cleavages had been minimized to a point where pillarization was no longer necessary insofar as a homogenous “Dutch society” had in fact developed.<sup>8</sup> It is therefore likely that the pillarization of Dutch society explains why there has been virtually no

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<sup>6</sup> Andeweg and Irwin, 2002, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> See Andeweg and Irwin, 2002, p. 34-38 for a full description of the depillarization process.

<sup>8</sup> Andeweg and Irwin, 2002, p. 37,

successful far right parties in the Netherlands: given that each pillar was politically represented by its own party, it seems reasonable to assume that there was little interest, or necessity, for any new political parties.<sup>9</sup> However, as societal changes in Dutch society weakened the traditional pillars, existing political parties could no longer rely on their traditional support. De-pillarization allowed for new parties to emerge reflecting these “real” and developing Dutch societal changes, such as immigration.

### **Pim Fortuyn and the Election of 2002**

Leading up to the 2002 Dutch National elections – elections that will ultimately be remembered for turning the reliable Dutch electorate upside down – there was little indication that the Netherlands was experiencing anything out of the ordinary. From 1994 to 2002 the Netherlands had been prospering economically under a coalition government known as the “Purple Coalition,” which included the Labour Party (PvdA), the Liberal Party (VVD) and the Democrats 66 (D66). Although Prime Minister Wim Kok (PvdA) was retiring, conventional wisdom had the incumbent party back in power.<sup>10</sup> However Kok’s retirement mirrored the change in leadership of other political parties, and the general change in the climate of political competition in the Netherlands. For example, in September 2001, the Christian Democrat (CDA) party was involved in an internal leadership struggle between the party leader and chairman. When both men subsequently resigned, little known Jan Peter Balkenende emerged as the leader of the CDA. One of

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<sup>9</sup> This is obviously a simplification of Dutch politics. The Netherlands is an almost pure proportional democracy, with only 0.67% of the vote needed to enter parliament. As a result, there has been an average of 10 political parties in parliament since 1945. Despite the amount of parties represented, the Netherlands has had four parties that typically dominate Dutch politics. Ian Bruff, “The Netherlands, the Challenge of Lijst Pim Fortuyn, and the Third Way,” *Politics* 23. 3 (2003): p. 157.

<sup>10</sup> For polls on how the electorate saw governmental performance on the economic, employment and personal finances, see Joop J.M. Van Holsteyn and Galen A. Irwin, “Never a Dull Moment: Pim Fortuyn and the Dutch Parliamentary Election of 2002,” *West European Politics* 26. 2 (2003): p. 54.

Balkenende's first public statements was to announce that if elected, the CDA would take a hard line on the issue of asylum seeking.<sup>11</sup> However, it was Pim Fortuyn, the openly gay former sociology professor, who would ultimately single-handedly shape the 2002 Dutch elections, signaling the grave changes in the Netherlands' political climate and the new focus on Muslim immigration as a politically salient issue.

Fortuyn had already come to some prominence prior to his foray into politics. In 1997 he wrote a book entitled *Against Islamicization of Our Culture*, later reissued following September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 as *Against Islamicization of Our Culture: The Centrality of Dutch Identity*.<sup>12</sup> Fortuyn announced that he would run in the parliamentary elections in August of 2001, and although he did not have a party at the time, he settled on the Rotterdam based Livable Netherlands (LN). However, his tenure as leader of the LN was short lived resulting from a February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002 interview in *de Volkskrant* where Fortuyn asserted that,

“there was no room for immigrant and asylum seekers in the Netherlands, that he was in favor of complete abandonment of the principle of non-discrimination, and that Islam was a backward religion: ‘If I can legally manage it, I would say: no Muslim comes in [to this country] anymore.’”<sup>13</sup>

With no party Fortuyn founded his own, The Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF), and it became immediately clear that the support he had garnered in his brief time as leader of the LN was for him personally, as virtually all this support transferred with him to the LPF.

Pim Fortuyn's two major election issues in the 2002 election were the restructuring of the public sector and a restrictive immigration and asylum policy. Much

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<sup>11</sup> Van Holsteyn and Irwin, 2003, p. 45

<sup>12</sup> Wim Lunsing, “Islam Versus Homosexuality?,” *Anthropology Today* 19. 2 (2003), p. 20.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.* For similar depictions see, Servaas Storm and Ro Naastepad, “The Dutch Distress,” *New Left Review* 20 Mar/Apr (2003), p. 132; and Paul M. Sniderman, Louk Hagendoorn and Markus Prior, “Predisposing Factors and Situational Triggers: Exclusionary Reactions to Immigrant Minorities,” *American Political Science Review* 98 (1) (2004): p. 46.

of Fortuyn's political discourse was focused on, and critical of, the Purple Coalition. His primary assault on the Purple Coalition was directed at their unfavorable handling of education, health care, and above, all asylum seekers and (ethnic and religious) minorities. Although Fortuyn was the most vocal on the issue of immigration, he was by no means the only party leader to voice his concerns. In addition to the aforementioned comments by the leader of the CD, Balkenende also argued that although immigration enriched Dutch culture, communal Dutch norms and values had to be maintained.<sup>14</sup> As these comments indicate, and for the first time in the Netherlands, issues related to immigration were going to be an important election issue. In an open ended question concerning the problems in the Netherlands the Dutch Parliamentary Election Study 2002 found that 40 percent of all respondents listed issues relating to asylum seekers, immigration and integration as major national problems.<sup>15</sup> Regression analysis on the 2002 election by Van Holsteyn and Irwin, found that by far, the two most statistically significant issues from which Fortuyn derived his popular support were his promise to "send back asylum-seekers" and his insistence that "foreigners should adapt" to Dutch culture.<sup>16</sup> Accordingly, in focusing on immigration and its ancillary issues, the larger issue of Dutch national identity was also put in the forefront. As was seen in Chapter 2, national identity and culture are paramount in the distinction of nations. However, in the Dutch case, the question of "Dutch" national identity had not been explicitly developed in any significance until Pim Fortuyn made it a central theme. According to Bruff, "the question of national identity and 'Dutchness' thus arose in conjunction with growing unease about the impact of immigration, a concern not being adequately addressed by a

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<sup>14</sup> Van Holsteyn and Irwin, 2003, p. 45.

<sup>15</sup> Van Hosteyn and Irwin, 2003, p. 45.

<sup>16</sup> Van Holsteyn and Irwin, 2003, p. 62.

government viewed as too 'politically correct' to confront such an issue."<sup>17</sup> The underlying argument being that Islam was not tolerant to the liberal ways of the Dutch people.

Pim Fortuyn was assassinated just nine days before the election, the first assassination of a political leader in the Netherlands in over 300 years. Riding a wave of sympathy the LPF received 17% of the vote and 26 of 150 seats making it the second largest party in the Netherlands.<sup>18</sup> It formed a coalition government with the CDA, headed by Jan Peter Balkenende as Prime Minister, and the D'66. The coalition government, however, lasted 86 days, due to the infighting and general incompetence of the LPF, and new elections were called for 22 January 2003. In the subsequent election the LPF lost nearly all their support, retaining only 8 seats. Yet despite the major loss of the LFP, Pim Fortuyn's legacy is continuing to influence Dutch politics.<sup>19</sup> Although the immigration issue has been a primary focus of political and popular debate in Dutch society in the post-Fortuyn era, his impact is particularly felt in the great scrutiny that long standing Dutch policies of multiculturalism are now receiving.

### **From Multiculturalism to Assimilation?**

As one of the first countries to formally adopt multicultural policies, the Netherlands has long been considered a "model case" in terms of respect of cultural differences around the world. As was the case in most of Western Europe, the Netherlands first experience with mass-migration was tied to the need to ease growing domestic labor shortages following World War II. Although early migrants came

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<sup>17</sup> Bruff, 2003, p. 159.

<sup>18</sup> Bruff, 2003, p. 158.

<sup>19</sup> Peter C. Hylarides, "A Dutch Reversal of Fortuyn," *Contemporary Review* 282. 1648 (2003): p. 272.

primarily from Italy and Spain, by the mid-1960s most came from Turkey and Morocco.<sup>20</sup> However, Dutch policies were markedly different from their Western European neighbors: almost immediately the Dutch government began to implement policies that would help migrant workers maintain their national and cultural identities. Children of migrant workers, for example could be schooled in their own language at the government's expense, so that upon return to their home country they could theoretically reinsert themselves into their society without much difficulty. Additionally, in large part because of the Dutch tradition of pillarization, the government earmarked monies to subsidize the building of mosques and prayer rooms across the Netherlands.<sup>21</sup> Certainly, such policies were implemented under the assumption that migrant workers would return home once their labor was no longer needed. However, the Netherlands, like its neighbors, found that when labor shortages occurred in the early 1970s, many migrant workers did not want to return home, either because of political reasons, or because of the lack of employment opportunities in their countries. As such, it was not until 1980 that the Dutch government formally recognized that migrant workers were going stay in the Netherlands.<sup>22</sup>

Despite the fact that multiculturalism was developed in order to help migrant-workers re-assimilate to their home "nations," once it became apparent that the

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<sup>20</sup> Rob Witte, *Racist Violence and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Britain, France and the Netherlands* (New York: Longman, 1996), p. 121.

<sup>21</sup> It has been estimated that roughly 100 Islamic "prayer halls" were subsidized from 1976-1984 under different government policies. W.A Shadid, "The Integration of Muslim Minorities in the Netherlands," *International Migration Review* xxv. 2 (1991): p. 361. For more information on the history and policies of the Dutch government towards Muslims see, W.A Shadid, 1991, p. 355-374; and Martin Custers, "Muslims in the Netherlands," *Muslim Minorities in the West*, eds. Syed Z. Abedin and Ziauddin Sardar (London: Grey Seal, 1995), p. 86-96.

<sup>22</sup> Han Entzinger, "The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism: The Case of the Netherlands," *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States*, eds. Christian Joppke and Ewa Morawska (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), p. 61.

Netherlands was no longer going to be “homogenous,” critical assessments of its multiculturalism policy began to emerge. The first such criticism by a political figure occurred in 1991 when Frits Bolkestein, then parliamentary leader of the VVD, stated that “Islam and Western values were irreconcilable,” and that “immigrants should adapt to the dominant cultural pattern and observe the existing rules wherever these clash with their own cultural background.”<sup>23</sup> Bolkestein statements were seen as controversial and he was largely “dismissed as a reactionary.”<sup>24</sup> In 2000, Paul Scheffer, a member of the Labour Party, wrote a highly influential article entitled “The Multicultural Tragedy” (*Het multiculturele drama*),<sup>25</sup> where he argued that:

“The “tragedy”...is that an “ethnic underclass” is developing that consists of people who do not feel attached to Dutch culture and society and who are unwilling and unable to integrate. Eventually this will undermine the social cohesion and functioning of the liberal democratic state particularly because of the supposedly illiberal ideas of Muslims...Respect for cultural identity has prevailed over defending the principles of liberal democracy.”<sup>26</sup>

Although Bolkestein and Scheffer’s critiques of multiculturalism were seen as controversial, they undoubtedly initiated a public discussion on the policies’ usefulness. As a consequence, when Fortuyn gained significant political success as a result of his beliefs on immigration/multiculturalism, it became clear that this once taboo subject was becoming a mainstream issue. As a result, following the death of Fortuyn, the Dutch governmental initiated a study on multicultural policies. The 2500 page report argued that

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<sup>23</sup> Frits Bolkestein, *Address to the Liberal International Conference at Luzern*, 6 September 1991 (The Hague: VVD, 1991). Quoted in Entzinger, 2003, p. 71.

<sup>24</sup> Christopher Caldwell, “Holland Daze,” *The Weekly Standard* 27 December 2004 issue. From <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/005/059darxx.asp>

<sup>25</sup> Paul Scheffer, “Het multiculturele drama,” *NRC Handelsblad* 29 January 2000. Cited in Entzinger, 2003, p. 78. This article has also been translated as “The Multicultural Drama” by Caldwell, 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Entzinger, 2003, p. 78-79.

the thirty years of trying to create a tolerant multicultural society had failed.<sup>27</sup> Although the report acknowledged that most immigrant communities had assimilated successfully into Dutch society, it “attacked successive governments for stroking separatism.”<sup>28</sup> It found that the worst policy was that children of Turkish, Arabic and Berber backgrounds were allowed to attend primary schools in their respective languages rather than in Dutch, and argued that the roughly 850,000 Muslim immigrants must become “Dutch” if the country was going to hold together. Maxime Verhagen, the parliamentary party leader of the CDA, said that policies had to do more. He claimed that “immigrants in the Netherlands top the ‘wrong’ lists- disability benefit, unemployment assistance, domestic violence, criminality statistics and school and learning difficulties.”<sup>29</sup>

Since the 2002 election the “immigration/multiculturalism issue” has solidified its place as one of the top political issues in the Netherlands. The report, has led to new policies for both new and old immigrants. Here are some of the new official policies by the Ministry of Immigration and Integration according to the Dutch government’s official website:

- Those wishing to settle in the Netherlands must participate actively in Dutch society; they must learn to speak Dutch, understand Dutch values and comply with Dutch norms.
- The government will make it a condition of admission that those wishing to emigrate to the Netherlands on a voluntary basis and so to become part of the target group addressed by the Newcomers Integration Act first acquire a basis command of Dutch in their own country of origin. Once admitted to the Netherlands, they will be expected to exert themselves to acquire a deeper understanding of Dutch society.

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<sup>27</sup> Ambrose Evans-Pritchard, “Dutch Race Policy ‘A 30-year failure,’” *Telegraph* 20 January 2004. From <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2004/01/20/wneth20.xml>

<sup>28</sup> *ibid*

<sup>29</sup> *ibid*



- In addition, certain categories of established immigrants (yet to be defined, but at any rate including those who have an inadequate command of Dutch and are dependent on benefits) will be obliged to pass an examination to demonstrate integration.
- To ensure that family formation is combined with effective integration, new requirements will be set (subject to the limits imposed by international conventions) for those wishing to marry a person from outside the Netherlands. For example, they must be at least 21 and have an income equivalent to at least 120% of the statutory minimum wage.<sup>30</sup>

Although these policies “conveniently” leave the categories of immigrants as “yet to be defined” further research has found that they primarily target non-Western populations. Citizens from the EU, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan will be exempt from these pre-arrival courses. In addition, the Netherlands now requires all Muslim imams to take courses on Dutch values, which include tolerance on soft drugs, prostitution, gay marriage and euthanasia.<sup>31</sup>

The murder of Theo van Gogh<sup>32</sup> on 2 November 2004 has further exacerbated the problems between the “native” Dutch and Islamic. Van Gogh, who had directed a short film critical of Islam’s treatment of women, was shot and stabbed to death by an Islamic fundamentalist while riding his bicycle.<sup>33</sup> The brutal murder – by a Dutch citizen of Moroccan decent – has caused waves of attacks on Islamic schools and mosques, in addition to retaliatory attacks on Christian churches. According to the Anne Frank Center there were 174 racially motivated attacks in November 2004, an estimated 60% of which

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<sup>30</sup> [http://www.government.nl/policy/bronnen/regeerakkoord/42\\_17371.jsp](http://www.government.nl/policy/bronnen/regeerakkoord/42_17371.jsp)

<sup>31</sup> Clarisa Pereira, “Imams on Dutch Culture Course,” *BBC News*, 28 November 2002. From <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/2525407.stm>

<sup>32</sup> A distant relative of the famous Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh.

<sup>33</sup> Interestingly, the film project that van Gogh was finishing was about the rise, and assassination of Pim Fortuyn. Additionally, van Gogh was murdered exactly 911 days after Fortuyn, which has spawned all kinds of conspiracy theories.

were directed against Muslims.<sup>34</sup> In addition, a poll conducted shortly after van Gogh's assassination found that 47% of the respondents felt less tolerant of Muslims since the murder.<sup>35</sup>

Even prior to the murders of Fortuyn and van Gogh, Sniderman et al. found overwhelming support that hostility towards immigration in the Netherlands was due to a conflict of culture.<sup>36</sup> Based on a sample taken in 1997-1998 they found that hostility towards immigration is in large part because of perceived cultural differences and the protection of national identity. Their argument lends support to Michael Billig's thesis that nations in the developed countries have an instinctive sense of national identity whether they are conscious of it or not. Sniderman et al. maintain that their findings support the hypothesis of cultural conflict:

"A perception that Dutch culture is threatened is the dominant factor in generating a negative reaction to immigrant minorities. And the issue of cultural integration, when it becomes salient, evokes proportionately just as strong a reaction from those who are least concerned about a threat to Dutch culture as from those who are most concerned about one. This second finding goes substantially beyond the first – for it indicates that a readiness to respond on the issue of culture is not confined to those actively and consciously concerned about the issue. It instead extends throughout Dutch society."<sup>37</sup>

Even so-called "tolerant" and "open" nations have national and cultural identities that are important to the populace. As a result, Sniderman et al. theory lends support to Billig's argument of banal nationalism – when nations are perceived to be threatened by the "Other," it will come together for its own protection.

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<sup>34</sup> Carla Power, "New Imams: European Governments are Trying to Create a Homegrown Muslim Establishment," *Newsweek International*, 17 January 2005 issue. From <http://msnbc.msn.com/id/6804109/site/newsweek>

<sup>35</sup> Author Unknown, "Blast Hits Dutch Muslim School," *The Guardian*, 8 November 2004. From <http://www.guardian.co.uk/international/story/0,,1246191.00.html>

<sup>36</sup> Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior, 2004, p. 47.

<sup>37</sup> Sniderman, Hagendoorn and Prior, 2004, p. 47.

## Current Developments

Arguably one of the most “tolerant” and “open” nations in the world, the Netherlands has seen events over the last three years challenge the very concept of “civic” nationalism. Moreover, while the importance of identity and culture may seem banal and inconsequential at times, it always remains an integral part of the nation. Therefore, when a crisis is perceived to be challenging the national identity – in this case by the immigrant “Other” – then seemingly open “civic” nations may become unsympathetic to protect their way of life. As was seen in Chapter 2, the immigrant “Others” often becomes subject to hostility when “their different language, religion or mores are perceived to threaten the cultural and/or ethnic purity of the nation.”<sup>38</sup> Although discrimination cuts across all minority lines in the Netherlands, the brunt of it is against the large Muslim community. Currently there is widespread belief that the “native” Dutch population has been too tolerant of Islam which they perceive as being *intolerant* of Dutch culture.

The Muslim population of the Netherlands comprises roughly 6% of its 16 million people. However, the large cities of Rotterdam, The Hague and Amsterdam have much higher percentages. Rotterdam is estimated to be 30% Muslim, with similar demographic changes are expected for all major cities. As a result the council in Rotterdam has proposed banning all new refugees from settling in Rotterdam for the next five years in

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<sup>38</sup> Anna Triandafyllidou, *Immigrants and National Identity in Europe* (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 36.

addition to banning all immigrants that cannot find a job that pays 20% above the minimum wage.<sup>39</sup>

Although these policies may seem intolerant, anti-Muslim sentiment by the population is becoming a salient way of gaining political support. This chapter discussed at some length Pim Fortuyn's views on immigration, but Geert Wilders and Ayaan Hirsi Ali are seen as the two MPs that are the most critical of Islam. Both politicians have received numerous death threats – including one stabbed into van Gogh's body – with regards to their views on Islam. Hirsi Ali, who wrote and co-produced the film that allegedly got van Gogh killed, has been under constant police protection since his murder. A self-described ex-Muslim, she has been critical of Islam's treatment of women and has even called it a backward religion. Geert Wilders whose quotes were listed at the onset of this chapter is seen as the heir apparent to Pim Fortuyn. Wilders founded a new party called *Groep Wilders* in September after he was thrown out of the VVD party for his refusal to support the party line of Turkey's admission into the EU. He has been quoted as saying, "I would stop the immigration for the next five years for non-Western immigrants. Not because I have anything against foreigners or people from non-Western countries, but we have huge problems with integration."<sup>40</sup> Since the murder of van Gogh, public opinion polls have shown that if an election was held, Wilders and his party could gain as many as 30 of the 150 seats in parliament, making it the second largest party in

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<sup>39</sup> Sandro Contenta, "Anti-Immigrant Fever Run High; Get-Tough Theme Uniting the Right Across Europe Dutch Port Offers Lesson Is Decline of Liberal Tolerance," *Toronto Post* 29 February 2004. From <http://0-proquest.umi.com/mercury.concordia.ca/pqdweb?index=0&did=648618001&SrchMode=1&sid=2&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=POD&RQT=309&VName=POD&TS=1106093694&clientId=10306>

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*

the Netherlands.<sup>41</sup> Although much of the anti-Muslim support is because of the current climate in the Netherlands, it seems likely that the Dutch will have to ask themselves serious questions concerning the future of their immigration and integration policies. Although it is not yet clear what the outcome of van Gogh's murder will have, it seems that the Dutch government will continue to implement policies that will shift away from multiculturalism and move further towards integration or assimilation. The fallout of this event is yet to be seen, but widespread opinion across the Netherlands seems to have shifted solidly against the cultural differences represented by the Muslim community.

This chapter has argued that the supposed "civic-ness" of the Netherlands is unfounded, as civic nationalism is supposed to transcend cultural and ethnic boundaries. The debate between cultural differences is likely to continue in the Netherlands for the foreseeable future, which means that claiming the Netherlands as a "civic" nation is difficult to accept. National and cultural identities remain important to the Dutch population, and now that "Dutch-ness" has officially become a political and social issue, it seems unlikely that it will diminish in the imminent future. The importance of the nation to the Dutch people can also be seen in a recent television poll conducted amid van Gogh's murder. The participants were asked to vote for the greatest Dutch person to ever live. The poll found that the second greatest Dutch person of all time was William of Orange, often considered the father of the modern Dutch nation-state – and the greatest Dutch person to ever live - Pim Fortuyn.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Manfred Gerstenfeld, "Reverberations of a Murder," *The Jerusalem Post*, 9 January 2005. From <http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=JPost/JPArticle/ShowFull&cid=1105154358854&p=1006953079865>

<sup>42</sup> Author Unknown, "Fortuyn voted greatest Dutchman," *BBC News* 16 November 2004. From <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4015173.stm>

Rivalries and hatred between groups are nothing new. What is new is the fact that technology has brought these groups too close for comfort...Nations once safely separated by barricades of water or mountains are exposed to each other by air. Radio, jets, television, paratroopers, international loans, post-war migrations, atomic blasts, moving pictures, *tourism* – all products of the modern age - have thrown human groups into each others' laps. We have not yet learned how to adjust to our new mental and moral proximity.<sup>1</sup> – Gordon W. Allport

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<sup>1</sup> From the 1954 preface of Gordon W. Allport, *The Nature of Prejudice*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Reading Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1984), p. xv.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

Notwithstanding growing academic opinion that civic and ethnic nationalisms are “ideal-types” occupying “two ends of a continuum,”<sup>2</sup> their distinction remains a central aspect of nationalism studies. While this theoretical re-conceptualization argues that “good/civic” and “bad/ethnic” elements are common to all nationalisms, case studies continue to be labeled as “civic” or “ethnic”<sup>3</sup> according to fixed and simplistic characteristics such as geographic location, form of government and citizenship laws. The absence of analysis focusing on the social and political realities of each individual case reinforces the civic and ethnic nationalism ideals. For example, Germany continues to be considered the classic “ethnic” case study, due in part to the exclusivity on which citizenship has traditionally been based (*ius sanguinis*), even though it is now Western and democratic – two decisively “civic” characteristics. Likewise the civic misnomer continues to be applied to cases that prove to be more than simply an assertion of the “political community.” For instance, this thesis has argued that both France and the Netherlands, traditionally defined as “civic,” in fact invoke and seek to protect the “ethnic” characteristics of their nations. Notwithstanding the “relative openness” of their citizenship laws, France expects its immigrants to assimilate into the dominant French culture, and the Dutch government is currently implementing policies in order to better

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<sup>2</sup> André Lecours, “Ethnic and Civic Nationalism: Towards a New Dimension,” *Space & Polity* 4. 2 (2000): p. 155.

<sup>3</sup> Curiously, in depth case studies applying the civic/ethnic conception of nationalism are not as prevalent in the scholarship as one might expect. Two notable exceptions include David Breton, “From Ethnic to Civic Nationalism: English Canada and Quebec,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 11. 1 (1988): p. 85-102; and Eric Kaufmann, “Ethnic or Civic Nation?: Theorizing the American Case,” *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism* XXVII (2000): 133-154.

“integrate” immigrants into the Dutch way of life.<sup>4</sup> Distinguishing between nationalisms is counter-productive insofar as nationalisms continuously exhibit both ethnic and civic characteristics: case studies labeled as exclusively one or the other should accordingly be viewed with skepticism.

One of the fundamental problems within the civic/ethnic distinction is the emphasis on difference rather than similarity. This is curious insofar as the characteristics intrinsic to *all* nationalisms – common culture and territory – suggest a strong commonality between the two. Chapter 2 examined the terminological confusion inherent to the broader study of nationalism, and semantic traditions born of the civic/ethnic discourse. Admittedly, definitions, especially in nationalism, are subject to individual interpretation. However, nationalism defined as “primarily a political principle which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent,”<sup>5</sup> and as a “movement for the attainment and maintenance of autonomy, unity, and identity on behalf...[of the] ‘nation’”<sup>6</sup> provides the generally accepted conception of nationalism. Although both Gellner and Smith disregard the exclusionary aspect of nationalism,<sup>7</sup> both acknowledge the importance of the “national unit” or “nation” for its existence. Consequently, Smith defines a nation as a “named human population sharing a historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy, and common

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<sup>4</sup> For example, prospective immigrants from non-Western countries will be required to pass an integration exam in their own country before they obtain a visa. In addition, there will be an accompanied video that will provide insight into Dutch life and values, including women sunbathing topless and a gay marriage. Stephen Castle, “Dutch Unveil New Policy to Tackle Immigrant Issue: A Culture Exam,” *The Independent Online Edition*, February 5 2005. <http://news.independent.co.uk/europe/story.jsp?story=607940>.

<sup>5</sup> Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (London: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Anthony D. Smith, *The Nation in History: Historiographical Debates about Ethnicity and Nationalism* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Breton, 1988: p. 85.



legal rights and duties for all members.”<sup>8</sup> Although Smith’s definition incorporates political (civic) aspects of nationalism, it is also based on “imagined” (ethnic) elements.

Recall that “civic” nationalism is typically defined as political, western, liberal, rational, individualistic, voluntary and good.<sup>9</sup> More importantly it “does not equate cultural homogeneity with nationhood” but rather “insists on the territorial and legal dimensions.”<sup>10</sup> Antithetically, ethnic nationalism is defined as cultural, eastern, illiberal, emotive, collective, organic and bad.<sup>11</sup> It is “a sense of community which focuses on belief in myths of common ancestry, and on the perception that these myths are validated by similarities in physiognomy, language or religion.”<sup>12</sup> Insofar as nationalisms and nations contain both political and cultural aspects, it becomes difficult to accept that they should be separated into these exclusive civic and ethnic categories. Nationalist movements may emerge to further a group’s political goals (i.e. sovereignty and democracy), but these “political movements” contain a degree of cultural compatibility that justifies their goals to the nation. Whereas nations may value certain “civic” characteristics, they also have unique histories and cultural beliefs of which they are being consistently reminded.

On this understanding then, the “immigration issue” raised in previous theoretical and empirical discussions poses the greatest problem to the contemporary justification of “civic” nationalism. Although largely accepted to be civic nations, many Western European states remain under the illusion that they are “ethnically” homogenous and are

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<sup>8</sup> Anthony Smith, *National Identity* (Reno: University of Nevada Press 1991), p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (London: SAGE Publications, 2002), p. 96.

<sup>10</sup> Lecours, 2000, p. 154-155.

<sup>11</sup> Spencer and Wollman, 2002, p. 96.

<sup>12</sup> David Brown, “Are There Good and Bad Nationalisms?” *Nations and Nationalism* 5. 2 (1999): p. 282.

losing "their way of life" to an increasingly multi-national society. As Philip Spencer notes,

"Civic nations, it seems, have to control migration in order to maintain their territorial integrity. However, attempts to control migration are framed by and in turn reinforce dominant conceptions of identity which turn out to have a significant ethnic component, precisely what was supposed to distinguish ethnic nations from civic nations in the first place."<sup>13</sup>

As the homogeneity of a nation begins to transform into one that is multi-national, malice toward immigrants often emerges. In many cases this hostility has resulted in the success of New Populist Parties that are not only setting the agenda concerning issues of immigration, but are also influencing otherwise "mainstream" parties to adopt similar policies in order to siphon votes. Immigration not only challenges the concept of civic nationalism, it forces nations to re-evaluate its "ethnic" identity. Accordingly, as Populist Parties continue to turn issues concerning immigration and national identity into political success, "civic" nations should be treated with suspicion.

Immigration poses two additional theoretical/practical problems to civic nationalism. First, there is always a degree of cultural assimilation that immigrants will have to endure. However, forcing immigrants to fully assimilate into the dominant culture - as in France - is antithetical to the political ideals of "civic" nationalism. Although the degree varies, all states have built in mechanisms that require immigrants to assimilate into the cultural and political norms of the receiving country. This in turn suggests that culture remains an important aspect of every nation-state, regardless of whether they are "open" to new members or not. Even multicultural countries such as the Netherlands are

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<sup>13</sup> Philip Spencer, "Civic Nationalism, Civic Nations and the Problems of Migration," in *Migration and Mobility: The European Context*, eds. Subrata Ghatak and Anne S. Sassoon (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 99.

becoming reactionary towards those who do not respect its culture. Since the murder of Theo van Gogh, the Netherlands, with its history of tolerance, diversity and policies of multiculturalism, has introduced legislature to better assimilate its non-Western populations.

The second issues concerning immigration and civic nationalism is the relatively overlooked issue of citizenship. Arguably the most important difference in the theoretical reading of the civic/ethnic literature is that access to the nation is open to one while closed to others. However, the civic/ethnic scholarship generally regards this “access” as “naturally occurring” when in fact it is governmental policy that renders a nation politically inclusive or exclusive, and these policies are subject to change. Moreover, a government’s “open immigration” policy does not necessarily reflect the “openness” of its population: “legal” citizens are not, *de facto*, accepted as “true” members of the nation because of their legal status. Anthony Smith argues:

“Even where new, immigrant communities equipped with their own historic cultures have been admitted by the state, it has taken several generations before the descendants have been admitted (in so far as they have been) into the circle of the ‘nation.’”<sup>14</sup>

Citizenship should therefore not be equated with acceptance: classifying nations in terms of “openness” is not only one-dimensional but it serves to undermine the relevance of the potential hostility new citizens may feel from members of their own “nation.” Insofar as “civic” nations are just as likely to exclude as their “ethnic” counterparts, and vice-versa – the distinction between “good” and “bad” nationalisms proves fallacious, and ultimately serves to undermine a proper understanding of this unpredictable phenomenon.

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<sup>14</sup> Smith, 1991, p. 11.

Accordingly, this thesis has taken what it contends to be the increasingly important position that even a cursory distinction of nationalism is simplistic and unconvincing: “the distinction between civic and ethnic nationalism...is conceptually ambiguous, empirically misleading, and normatively problematic.”<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 5.

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