Unity and Multiculturalism
in the United Kingdom and the Netherlands

Elise Rietveld

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the

requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy

CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

School of European Languages, Translation and Politics

2014

Summary

Political theorists agree that some form of unity is necessary for culturally diverse citizens to act collectively and take collectively binding decisions. But they seldom specify what they mean by such unity; agreement on political values, an emotional bond between citizens, shared fundamental ends? Moreover, these political theorists often aim to be of practical use and intend to shape the ideas and guide the actions of political elites. But they neglect to examine how these elites already conceive unity and it is not clear whether they can, as these are the ideas they seek to shape or alter. This thesis responds to these two gaps, making three contributions: it clarifies why studying existing ideas helps political theorists to be 'practical'; it clarifies how unity is conceived by political theorists and by political elites; and it argues that one conception of unity is not only most defensible but also plausible within two contexts. I develop my argument as follows.

In chapter 1 I show that political theorists remain unclear about what they mean by unity, while often aiming to be 'practical'; and in chapter 2 I explain why such practicality entails studying the ideas of the elites theorists intend to influence and I outline how to study these. In chapter 3 I present and analyse four hitherto implicit conceptions of unity advanced by political theorists; and in chapters 4 and 5 I show how British and Dutch political elites, respectively, conceive unity in different ways. In chapter 6 I show the implications of how political elites think about unity for political theorists, so I can argue for one of their conceptions of unity in chapter 7. I thus show that paradoxically, in a time when multiculturalism is often considered divisive, a 'multicultural' conception of unity proves both most defensible and plausible.

DECLARATION:

This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.

Signed …………………………..…… (candidate)   Date …………………………

STATEMENT 1:

This thesis is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD.

Signed …………………………..…… (candidate)   Date …………………………

STATEMENT 2:

This thesis is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references. The views expressed are my own.

Signed …………………………..…… (candidate)   Date …………………………

STATEMENT 3:

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Signed …………………………..…… (candidate)   Date …………………………

STATEMENT 4: PREVIOUSLY APPROVED BAR ON ACCESS

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loans after expiry of a bar on access previously approved by the Academic Standards & Quality Committee.

Signed …………………………..…… (candidate)   Date …………………………

Acknowledgements

Over the past years I have met many people who have inspired me and helped me along the way and while I am of course grateful to all of them, I want to say a special thanks here to those who were, in one way or another, indispensable to my reaching the finish line.

First, of course, I would like to thank my supervisors, Peri Roberts and Stephen Thornton. I also want to particularly thank Bruce Haddock for insightful comments and conversations that have helped me greatly. Finally, I would like to thank Maykel Verkuijten for accommodating me at ERCOMER, Utrecht University, for a brief visiting scholarship and a number of illuminating discussions.

Meanwhile, I could not have finished this intellectual journey without the knowledge that there was also life outside the books. For that, I should thank my parents Marc Rietveld and Els van der Vlist and my sister Henriette Rietveld, for always supporting me and being such a secure foundation. I am also profoundly grateful to my friends for being such great people and company. At the home front, Jorien Boerefijn, Keke Schipper and Suzan Goes: you add the shine. And to my companions in Cardiff (and beyond), for making it a temporary home and keeping me sane throughout: Mustafa Hameed, Artemis Maipa, Melanie Buckley, James Wakefield and Karlijn Muiderman. And finally, I want to thank Varun Uberoi, for everything and becoming so much more. I could not have done this without you.

Table of Contents

1 Introduction

Scholars agree that unity among culturally diverse citizens is necessary (Habermas 1995; Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2000b; Rawls 1993; Taylor 2007). But they do not specify exactly what unity is, often using metaphors such as 'the ties that bind' (Kymlicka 1995, p. 187) to describe it instead. So it is not clear if they think we should understand unity as agreement on fundamental ends, or procedures; a common concern for each other; a sense of civic friendship; ties of culture and tradition; a commitment to a way of life, or something else still. And as these scholars are unclear about what unity is, they cannot say much about how we can know when it is sufficient, or if it is growing or eroding and how it may be fostered. If culturally diverse citizens must be united enough to make sacrifices for one another, like paying taxes to provide public services that they may never use, to trust one another not to be free-riders, to not feel threatened by their diversity (Parekh 2000b, pp. 196-238), and so on, then how can we know when they are if we do not know what unity is? Little wonder, therefore, that Kymlicka (2002, p. 257) claims that understanding what 'is needed to sustain social unity' is 'one of the great unresolved questions of contemporary political philosophy'. This challenge is taken up in this thesis that looks at how unity is conceived both by political theorists and by political elites involved in shaping political responses to fostering it.

Leading liberal political theorists such as Rawls (1993) and Habermas (1995) recognise the importance of unity for stability and legitimacy. Hence, Rawls (1993, p. 137) argues that the exercise of power is legitimate only if it is based on principles and ideals captured in a 'political conception of justice that all citizens might be reasonably expected to endorse', which suggests these citizens are united by shared political beliefs. But he (Rawls 1993, p. xlix) focuses his attention on explaining the appropriate *basis* for social unity rather than defining what the latter is and admits that 'this concern is not pursued as far as it might be'. In other words, he does not specify exactly what he means by unity: what is the whole that is united; who belongs to that whole; and how do they belong to it? As this remains unclear, he also cannot clearly explain how such unity might be impeded and fostered.

Liberal nationalists such as Miller (1995) also affirm the importance of unity and associate it with the nation. He (Miller 1995, p. 30) notes how modern ideas of the nation comprise 'the idea of a body of people capable of acting collectively and in particular of conferring authority on political institutions' that is central to democratic legitimacy. National unity, then, enables citizens to participate on the basis of equality in collective political self-determination, deciding on how to govern the territory they inhabit together: it captures the democratic ideal of 'government of the people, by the people, for the people' (Lincoln 1863). It is also considered necessary for the pursuit of social justice: 'If […] Leninist levels of coercion are ruled out and justice is to be achieved by relatively consensual means, social justice will be politically feasible only in a polity with a high degree of communal solidarity' (Canovan 1996, p. 28). Citizens need to feel connected to each other enough to sacrifice resources for redistribution, and trust their state enough to handle such distribution. As Miller (1995, p. 93) puts it, welfare states need to be 'rooted in communities whose members recognise such obligations of justice to one another'. But while he dedicates much attention to specifying what nations and national identities are, he does not clearly state what unity is and how it relates to them.

Leading multiculturalist political theorists such as Kymlicka (1995), Parekh (2000b) and Modood (2007) also recognise the importance of unity and accept that it is necessary to avoid fragmentation and to enable peaceful political cooperation, especially in societies where diversity might at times give rise to disagreement as well as misunderstanding, fear, prejudice and hostility between groups. Such societies, therefore, need some form of unity to assuage negative responses to diversity and manage potential disagreements. Thus, Parekh (2000b, p. 196) notes how paradoxically, 'the greater and deeper the diversity in a society, the greater the unity and cohesion it requires to hold itself together and nurture its diversity', and this is important because without 'a strong sense of unity and common belonging among its citizens, […] it cannot act as a united community able to take and enforce collectively binding decisions and regulate and resolve conflicts'. Nonetheless, he does not explain what such unity consists in so it remains unclear how we can know when it is sufficient and how it may be fostered.

Political theorists hence agree that unity may be important for different reasons. But they neglect to clearly explain what it is. This thesis aims to do precisely that: it outlines the properties conceptions of unity have in order to then recognise and reconstruct how political theorists and political elites conceive unity in multicultural societies in different ways. In so doing, it also addresses a second gap. For while political theorists often think that their work is of practical use and may offer insights to those involved in shaping political action (e.g. Miller 2008, p. 44; Parekh 2008, p. 7), they have largely neglected to look at the ideas these actors already have. Yet it is not clear that they can, as their practical aims imply that these are the ideas they intend to shape. This thesis explicates this implication and studies parliamentary debates from the UK and the Netherlands so as to see how unity is conceived by political elites involved in shaping political responses to it. It will conclude by arguing that one conception of unity presents the most defensible approach and is also plausible within these two contexts.[1]

The choice for these case studies is not accidental: debates about unity are particularly salient here because these are the two countries most strongly associated with what scholars have called a 'crisis' of (Phillips and Saharso 2008, p. 291), a 'retreat from' (Joppke 2004, p. 238) or a 'backlash against' (Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010a, p. 7) multiculturalism in Europe that has been discerned since about 2001 – even though the reality and meaning of this alleged crisis remain contested (Duyvendak and Scholten 2011; Koopmans 2008; Meer and Modood 2009; Uberoi and Modood 2013b; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010a). Part of this contestation probably stems from the fact that it is not always clear what is meant by multiculturalism and some of this confusion will be cleared up below, but for now note that both these countries were initially upheld as champions of multiculturalism but are now seen to have instigated a 'retreat from official multiculturalism policies' (Joppke 2004, p. 238; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010b) that publicly recognise diversity.

---

[1] This is the multicultural conception of unity that will be presented in chapter 3; because this conception is not yet clearly specified, I do not elaborate here as that would unnecessarily confuse the discussion.

During this perceived crisis, critics of multiculturalism suggested that it inhibits unity: multiculturalism is said to breed division and segregation, particularly where it concerns Muslims (see: Joppke 2009; Kalra and Kapoor 2008; Kundnani 2007; Modood et al 2006; Worley 2005). Recognising cultural diversity allegedly exacerbates its divisive potential, so it is no wonder that these debates have focused on immigrants (and their children) rather than national minorities (such as the Scottish in the UK) that tend to be less culturally different from the majority. Multiculturalism is also said to erode national identity, cohesion and solidarity between citizens – all associated with unity (Barry 2001, pp. 12, 325; Putnam 2007; but see: Hooghe et al 2009; Kymlicka and Banting 2006; Letki 2008; Phillips 2006). According to Joppke (2007, p. 244), this retreat from multiculturalism coincides with a convergence on a set of civic integration policies in different countries in Europe. These policies emphasise national unity: they highlight the features (such as language and values) that all groups in society must share and subject immigrants to obligatory integration courses and tests in order to ensure this (see: Carrera 2006; Goodman 2010; Joppke 2004, 2007; Triadafilopoulos 2011). Issues relating to unity and diversity thus play an important role in this alleged crisis and they have received sustained public attention in these two countries.

This apparent tension between unity and diversity can be understood once we consider that traditionally, unity has been explained most convincingly as a corollary of nationhood (Canovan 1996, pp. 1-50). It is famously difficult to define what a nation is, and chapters 3 to 5 will show how it is conceived in different ways by political theorists and political elites, but for now a working understanding comes from one of nationalism's leading scholars, Smith (2001, p. 13): a nation is 'a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members'. Meanwhile, a national identity reflects these features and characterises the nation and enables individual members to identify with it and each other (Parekh 2008, pp. 56-65).

But representations of national identity in most European states tend to be rather homogeneous following the nation-building strategies of the 19th century (cf. Leerssen

1999) and that means they may become destabilised by new levels of diversity in society. Thus, Goodman (2010, p. 769) suggests 'diversity in liberal nation-states and the content of national identity, despite modernising forces like globalisation and transnationalism, are not as complementary as we assumed, or as compatible as we had hoped'. Although there is no way of knowing it is multiculturalism that destabilises national identity and not other factors (Uberoi 2008, p. 404), it is true that cultural diversity has changed character in the second half of the 20th century. Immigration increased and technological developments meant that ties to countries of origins became much easier to sustain (Parekh 2008, p. 82). Diversity is now a fact because it is safeguarded as an expression of individual freedom in liberal democracies (Rawls 1989, pp. 234-235): it 'can neither be wished out of existence nor suppressed without an unacceptable degree of coercion and often not even then' (Parekh 2000b, p. 196). Moreover, earlier ideas about assimilation were replaced by new ideas about human equality that inspired challenges to 'the legacies of earlier racial and ethnic hierarchies' (Kymlicka 2010, p. 100).

The concept of multiculturalism is often associated with such changes, and it is commonly used to refer both to the fact of cultural diversity in society and to a political response to this fact that comprises a particular set of policies (e.g. Barry 2001, p. 22; Joppke 2004, p. 239; Parekh 2000b, pp. 2-6) that aim 'to reduce fear of cultural difference, as well as the inequality, exclusion and disadvantage that are often experienced by cultural minorities in subtle yet significant ways' (Uberoi and Modood 2013a, p. 130). Uberoi and Modood (2013a, p. 130) include a third understanding of multiculturalism, as such policies work towards a particular 'vision for the nation' that is open to diversity. Such a vision includes a particular understanding of unity: multiculturalists (Modood 2007; Parekh 2000b; Uberoi 2008; Uberoi and Modood 2013a) think that by accommodating diversity, a state can make its policies and institutions more inclusive of minorities which enables the latter to identify with it and feel valued. These policies also encourage wider society to recognise that the nation is multicultural and cherishes that fact. Hence, contrary to what appears to be the accepted popular opinion during the perceived crisis of multiculturalism, multiculturalists do not aim to abolish unity altogether but pursue a specific form of it

(even if they fail to clearly delineate that form), and this understanding of unity forms part of their broader multicultural theories and orientations.

The remainder of this introduction will begin to outline the different parts of this thesis. The next section will show how political theorists disagree about how unity should be conceived when they talk about related matters such as multiculturalism and national identity. These theorists often aim to be of practical use and section 1.2 explains what such practical political theory entails: it clarifies potential tensions between unity and diversity and explains why certain responses are more defensible than others, and in so doing suggest what political actions would be appropriate in actual (rather than ideal) societies (Miller 2013, p. 34; Parekh 2008, p. 7). This thesis focuses on two actual societies and these case studies, the UK and the Netherlands, are introduced in section 1.3. Finally, section 1.4 will present the structure of the thesis and the argument it makes.

1.1 Unity and diversity in multicultural societies

While political theorists contributing to the contemporary debate about unity in multicultural societies often remain unclear about exactly what they mean by unity, they do gesture at why there might be a tension between unity and diversity: members of a polity with diverse beliefs need to achieve a sufficient degree of unity to cooperate and coexist peacefully. In so doing, they offer rather different perspectives and this section concisely introduces this disagreement to clarify why unity might pose a problem in multicultural societies.

As suggested above, states have in the past used their machinery to promote national identities that aimed to unite citizens by making them the same in terms of features such as language, culture and values (Leerssen 1999). Such identities do not leave much space for minorities or indeed cultural or moral diversity because they suppose that unity requires cultural and moral sameness. This idea seems present in the communitarian conception of the nation defended by MacIntyre (2003, pp. 291-299), who sees it as a community characterised by emotional attachment, loyalty and identity that is based around a common morality. It can likewise be recognised in

Scruton's (2003, pp. 278-284) defence of a conservative conception of the nation as a pre-political source of social unity based in piety, tradition and common descent. National identity is characterised by sameness, captured in a shared language, culture and history, sustained by historical continuity and intergenerational ties of obligation.

A consequence of such understandings of national identity is that immigrants or new minorities who do not share these ties and the cultural values and sensibilities of the majority have no choice but to adapt if they want to become fully part of the nation (which may actually be impossible because they can never share its common descent [cf. Scruton 2003, p. 274]), and such assimilation is often painful and difficult (Parekh 2000b, p. 198). The nation, as constitutive of its members, then takes precedence over individual desires and concerns (Beiner 1995, p. 18). Such demands for assimilation, however, have become somewhat discredited in the post-1945 era of human rights that saw increasing support for the rights of minorities, as equal citizens, to cultivate their own identities (Kymlicka 2010, pp. 97-103).

This leads some political theorists to abandon the concept of national identity in favour of notions that apparently require a lower or easier to attain degree of sameness – like shared political values – that lack the connotations of commitments to ethical principles, emotive attachment and exclusionary community loyalties. Rawls (1987) thus argues that political communities, made up of different groups with their own identities, should not be based around shared conceptions of morality or the good life but rather on a shared commitment to the rights and liberties that constitute democratic citizenship, expressed in a political conception of justice. He believes that citizens of multicultural societies can agree on certain basic political values despite, and without jeopardising, their differences in terms of values and identities, by appealing to and affirming ideas that are present 'in the public political culture of a democratic society' (Rawls 1987, p. 6).

Habermas (1995, p. 264) similarly argues for locating unity in rational agreement on political principles that transcend ethical-cultural differences and are laid down in the constitution: 'the political culture must serve as the common denominator for a constitutional patriotism which simultaneously sharpens an awareness of the

multiplicity and integrity of the different forms of life which coexist in a multicultural society'. Diversity in society here is considered an expression of individual freedom that the state should not impinge on by imposing a national identity or morality.

Such political conceptions of unity seem to pay more respect to diversity as they only require allegiance to a limited set of values that all could share across their cultural differences. They recall a civic nationalism that is defined as 'liberal, voluntarist, universalist, and inclusive', in contradistinction to its ethnic variety that is 'illiberal, ascriptive, particularist, and exclusive' (Brubaker 1999, p. 56). Markell (2000, p. 39) considers somewhat sceptically such a 'strategy of redirection' that

> 'claims to render affect safe for liberal democracies by redirecting our attachment and sentiment from one subset of objects (the 'ethnic') to another subset of objects (the 'civic'). Since the ethnic conveniently turns out to be the source of all of affect's pathologies, the civic can offer all the benefits of affect while 'eschewing exclusion' at the same time'.

There are two problems with this strategy. First, these values supposedly unite citizens by being so abstract that they do not reflect the cultural predispositions of any of them. Such abstraction makes them void of any links to concrete situations, which means they are minimal statements of what is important that do not apply to particular cases in a straightforward way. Yet in this strategy, they need to inspire a sense of duty and motivate citizens to make necessary sacrifices, such as paying their taxes for redistributive programmes, and it is not clear how they can if they are this neutral and abstract. For values to thus motivate and unite citizens, they need to be grounded in a community with its particular understandings in order to be intelligibly applicable and gain motivational force (Calhoun 2002, pp. 151-158; Laborde 2002, pp. 591-597; Markell 2000, pp. 41-53).

At this point it becomes unclear whether what is doing the work is a rational commitment to these values or an emotional tie to the (usually national) community that harbours them, or alternatively, as Mason (2010, pp. 868-873) suggests, a shared allegiance or loyalty to the institutions that embody these values. Actually, Rawls'

appeal to the public political culture is compatible with this need for particularity and can be read as expressive of a pre-existing shared political (O'Neill 1997, pp. 419-420) or national (Miller 1995, p. 93) identity. And Müller (2008, pp. 72-87) admits that constitutional patriotism requires grounding in a specific community: the point is not that the values that unite citizens are universal, as they are embodied in a particular constitution, but that they can be shared across differences and are held critically rather than unquestioningly.

But if unity requires agreement on universal values *as they appear grounded in particular communities*, this strategy runs into a second problem. For that means these values can no longer be seen as separate from concrete democratic traditions and institutions, and hence that they may be no less historical and plural than wider cultures (and nor are they completely a-cultural). The civic, then, is not devoid of exclusionary potential, as in modern multicultural societies these values may not automatically meet full consent or endorsement from all groups in society (Brubaker 1999, pp. 61-63; Canovan 2000, pp. 420-421; Markell 2000, pp. 51-53; Uberoi 2007, p. 148). Perhaps political values cannot be seen as separate from the culture that produced them; and therefore do not offer the neutral source of allegiance they pretend to.

Whether for intrinsic reasons of identity and community or for more instrumental reasons of stability, social justice and democracy, then, some theorists therefore argue that a shared identity has a role to play in generating unity in modern multicultural societies. The above suggests that such an identity needs to be 'thick' enough to inspire attachment and motivation, while avoiding the imposition of particular characteristics on diverse groups in society. Political theorists that seek to meet these aims argue that unity does not require uniformity: they propose thick versions of a shared identity that appeal to a shared culture, but are nonetheless hospitable to diversity and take care to avoid the exclusion of minorities. Perhaps they can offer a solution to the apparent conundrum that 'nationalism and multiculturalism are doomed to remain strange bedfellows' (Laborde 2002, p. 591).

One of the most famous advocates of national identity, Miller (1995), defends it as a source of unity. Such a national identity reflects a mythical shared past as well as a

'common public culture' (Miller 1995, p. 25) best characterised as 'a set of overlapping cultural characteristics – beliefs, practices, sensibilities – which different members exhibit in different combinations and to different degrees' (Miller 1995, p. 85). Although its properties can be hard to pin down, this common culture is what makes the nation distinctive and sustains shared loyalties. According to Miller (1995, pp. 92, 121-154), if national identity is to function as a source of unity, it is crucial that it is inclusive. In multicultural societies, that means it needs to reflect not only majorities but also minorities, and include them on equal terms. National identity is understood as the result of an on-going conversation in which all groups must participate equally to debate what kind of society we are, what kind of things we value, etc. Although national identity is based in history, its specific content can therefore change over time (Miller 1995, pp. 40, 127).

And where national identity continues to reflect the ethnic identity of the historical majority, it needs to be adapted to make it more hospitable to minorities, to meet their need for belonging; 'existing national identities must be stripped of elements that are repugnant to the self-understanding of one or more component groups' (Miller 1995, p. 142). It is through the re-imagination of national identities that minorities should be included, rather than through the recognition of their cultural or ethnic identities: these are no more authentic than national identities and should be private, like other sources of identity, as their recognition would risk fragmentation (Miller 1995, pp. 121-154). The state, in other words, is not neutral with respect to identities but only recognises the national one – suitably adapted to reflect minority identities. On this view then, unity reflects diversity.

Multiculturalist responses to the relationship between unity and diversity have emphasised that minority cultural and national identities can both be public without conflicting. Leading multicultural theorist Parekh (2000b, p. 196) acknowledges the importance of national unity for democratic legitimacy and peace and harmony in society. Such unity flows from the experience of living together within shared parameters such as political institutions and a national identity, and the interaction and dialogue between different groups in society on an equal footing which will result in a

'multiculturally constituted common culture' (Parekh 2000b, p. 221) that is a mix of elements from all cultures. Diversity does not have to be transcended but rather engaged in a collective dialogue (Parekh 2000b, p. 341).

National identity, for Parekh (2000b, pp. 231-237), is based in political institutions but also reflects this common culture and it needs to make sure to include all citizens as legitimate members of the nation and value minorities equal to the majority. In reality, however, institutions tend to be historically skewed towards the majority and to overcome this bias, minorities should receive appropriate accommodations so that they may feel at home, accepted and valued members of society; only through such public recognition will they share in the sense of belonging that national identity is meant to foster. Multicultural policies here are a precondition for the integrative function of national identity in diverse societies where mainstream institutions would otherwise reflect the majority only.

Political theorists, then, clearly think unity is important and clarify why it might stand in tension with diversity and be problematic in multicultural societies. But even as they offer different responses to such issues, it often remains somewhat unclear what exactly they think unity is and that makes it difficult to know when enough of it exists and how to pursue more appropriate forms of it. Achieving a clearer view of unity, as this thesis facilitates, helps to respond to these questions that also have obvious political and practical significance, and the next section will explain that political theory often aims to be of practical use.

1.2   Normative political theory as practical guidance

Political action is conditioned upon a number of factors including power, interests, and limited resources. But it equally invites normative reflection: what actions are legitimate; what goals should they aim to realise; which political values should take priority (Swift and White 2008, p. 50)? Normative political theorists may aim to aid political elites involved in shaping responses to unity in multicultural society in such reflection by offering clarifications and suggesting why certain courses of action are more defensible than others (Parekh 2008, p. 7; Miller 2013, p. 34). For as Parekh (2011,

p. 40) explains, political theory 'shapes people's ways of thinking about themselves and their world, and through that, their choices and actions'. Such a practical approach to political theory thus entails an interest in the ways these people already think: if theorists hope to shape the ideas and decisions of political elites, it helps if they know the beliefs these elites already have because it is through understanding these that it becomes clear where they may need to be developed or challenged and how. This commitment implicit in a practical approach to political theory is made explicit and clarified in this thesis and this section begins by outlining what practical political theory is and distinguishing it from other methodological paradigms.[2]

Parekh (2011, p. 39)[3] describes political theory as three-dimensional: it analyses political concepts; critiques conventional political practice; and constructs an imaginative 'vision of human life' that is meant to inspire people. All three dimensions clearly bear on political life and it therefore seems plausible and legitimate when political theorists aim to offer practical guidance (although they do not need to), understood here not as concrete directions but rather as clarifications that offer insights that are useful for making decisions about courses of action. Such a practical understanding of political theory, in fact, is not uncommon (Farrelly 2007, p. 845; Lane 2011, p. 135; Martineau and Squires 2012, p. 523; Miller 2008, p. 44; Modood 2007, p. vii; Parekh 2000b, p. 15, 2008, p. 7, 2011, pp. 38-45; Swift and White 2008, p. 51). Thus, the prominent political theorist Sandel (2005, p. 5) in a recent book for instance attempts to 'bring moral and political philosophy to bear on contemporary public discourse'.

Political theorists concerned with unity in multicultural societies also often aim to be of practical use. Thus, Miller (1995, pp. 178-182) illustrates his theoretical position with practical suggestions for nation-building in Britain. Kymlicka (1995, p. 1) presents his work as a response to issues related to diversity that have arisen in democracies across the globe, which suggests he intends it to offer helpful insights to those political actors

---

[2] By paradigm I simply refer to a typical pattern: methodological paradigms present different accepted views of how research should be undertaken.

[3] Parekh talks here about political philosophy. The terms political theory and political philosophy are often used interchangeably, and Parekh (2000d, pp. 242-259) does so elsewhere. However, I prefer to use the term political theory as my own work is more concerned with applied rather than philosophical problems.

dealing with these issues. Parekh (2000b, p. 15) explicitly addresses his work to both political theorists and 'ordinary citizens and political activists and leaders'. Modood (2013, pp. 5-9) presents multiculturalism as a political idea embedded in actual liberal democratic practices and focuses specifically on Britain, which suggests his work might hold useful insights particularly for those engaged in British politics. Even the rather more abstract ideal theory proposed by Rawls (1971, p. 9) is intended to serve a practical ultimate purpose: ideal theory, he argues, provides 'the only basis for the systematic grasp of these more pressing problems' we face in day to day politics.

But practical use may vary in form and what is intended here goes beyond the indirect guidance offered by ideal theory. Such theory tends to be concerned with the great problems of politics that are encountered across time and place and presents a long-term goal to aim for that reflects the best possible outcome given the limits of the human condition and physical laws. It proceeds by reasoning, abstracting away from contextual contingencies to offer clarifications of principles to strive for that claim universal validity (Simmons 2010, pp. 7-12; Stears 2005, pp. 333-337). Such abstraction often means that it cannot offer more specific guidance to political elites grappling with particular issues within a political context – in Carens' (1996, p. 168) words, ideal theory 'may be irrelevant to the moral issues we face' and to which we may need to devise political responses. Practical political theory aims to be of practical use in a more applied sense: it is concerned not with the specification of ideal principles but offers insights that might illuminate political debates about unity in multicultural society and guide the actions of political elites.

That means, effectively, that practical political theory begins by asking the question: 'What course of action should we pursue in this particular context?' (Carens 1996, p. 160). Hence, it does not begin with a fully pre-specified system of universal principles, which sets it apart from nonideal theory (Rawls 1999, p. 216) that takes the principles designed in the ideal theory stage and then applies them to the messy real world, determining what can be achieved and what compromises need to be made (Stears 2005, pp. 330-336). Nonideal theory tends to focus on the practical failures of actual

institutions to live up to the ideal and suggests how they may be improved to progress towards an integrated vision of the wholly just society (Simmons 2010, pp. 12-24).

But there are good reasons to question the guidance offered by such nonideal theory: the principles of the ideal theory stage are designed under assumptions of what an ideal society would look like under the most favourable conditions we can imagine. Real societies are much more complex so that these principles cannot simply be assumed to be equally appropriate here (Farrelly 2007, p. 848).[4] Existing societies may give different weight and meaning to such principles than the political theorist does (Parekh 2011, p. 44). And institutions designed for ideal societies probably would not yield the same results in real societies (Farrelly 2007, p. 856; Sabl 2011, pp. 171-173): by design, they 'cannot achieve their own ends' (Shklar 1989, p. 1139). Hence, the application of ideal principles to real societies may end up generating or reinforcing injustice (Swift and White 2008, pp. 59-60).

Instead, the approach furthered here is more closely associated with a variety of approaches that have been classified as 'realistic' (Carens 1996, p. 156), 'contextual' (Carens 2004, p. 117; Miller 2013, p. 43) and 'inductive' (Triandafyllidou et al 2006, p. 6).[5] Such approaches do not have to suffer from lacking fully pre-specified goals to aim for: Sen (2006, pp. 221-235) argues that even with an incomplete understanding of perfect justice, we can make judgments about injustice; and even if we cannot agree on the ideal, we could agree on actions that advance justice in the here and now.[6] These approaches develop a deep awareness of the context at which they are aimed in order to provide practical guidance to political elites. In fact, a lot of multicultural theory attains such contextual grounding (most importantly: Kymlicka 1995; Parekh 2000b).

---

[4] To provide a simple illustration to this point: racism probably does not exist in an ideal society so institutions would not be equipped to challenge it.

[5] There are differences between these forms of theory but their detailed clarification is beside the point: the approach described here draws insights from all these approaches that, in contrast to ideal theory, are grounded in real political dilemmas and contexts.

[6] Of course, some conception of what justice means needs to guide such judgments. Whether that needs to be a fully developed principle, as Miller (2013, p. 235, note 14) argues against Sen, however, is unclear.

Such approaches start within context, acknowledging the institutions that already exist and aiming to improve them (Honig and Stears 2011; Sabl 2011, p. 165). Paying attention to institutions and political context is considered useful as they may contain wisdom about justice and political order that has not been captured in political theories (Carens 2004, p. 122; Favell and Modood 2003, p. 490)[7], so that theory and context can be engaged in mutually challenging dialectic interaction, where theory can be used to criticise contextual realities, but also vice versa (Carens 2004, pp. 123-132).[8]

Practical political theory attends to the complexities of the issue at hand: there will always be competing interpretations, and it will have a history in which it is likely that some have experienced injustices at the hands of others. Practical suggestions and clarifications are sensitive to these circumstances, especially as the latter will impact on the outcomes of any political action (Favell and Modood 2003, pp. 491-493). Policy typically is not made on a blank slate. Therefore, such practical political theory draws on social science evidence to be aware of the likely outcomes its suggestions will result in (Miller 2008, p. 47); not only in terms of effectiveness, but also with regards to symbolic and political effects, altering the relative position of groups in society (Favell and Modood 2003, pp. 492-493). It pursues justice and other principles not in the abstract but in real societies and uses contextual awareness to avoid, as best as possible, counterproductive outcomes. Hence, it attempts to address complexity rather than abstract it away (cf. Modood 2007, p. 103).

But while such practical political theory avoids being irrelevant to particular decision-making contexts, it is not without dangers of its own. Carens (1996, p. 164-166) points out how an unreflective use of a realistic approach to political theory would too readily take for granted the conditions that happen to exist. By emphasising the 'need to avoid too large a gap' (Carens 1996, p. 164) between how things are and how they should be, it could fail to go beyond what existing actors think (Miller 2013, p. 5) and challenge

---

[7] Recall that multicultural policies were being developed in Canada well before the first theoretical statements of multiculturalism.

[8] This is reminiscent of Rawls' reflective equilibrium, where moral judgments are reached by going back and forth between facts, intuitions and principles. Given the complexity of this concept it is not further developed here, because the discussion does not depend on it.

current circumstances where that would be morally required, such as for instance in the case for the abolition of slavery (Carens 1996, pp. 164-166; Stears 2005, pp. 340-341).[9] It is important to recall that people's beliefs may be wrong so we cannot simply know or derive how things should be understood and approached by studying how they are now.[10] The contingencies of context are the starting point of reflection, not its end point.

Practical political theorists hope precisely to challenge and reshape these beliefs where they are unclear, morally dubious, incoherent and so on (cf. Parekh 2011, pp. 39-40): this is implied in their commitment to guiding political action, because the clarifications they offer and courses of action they suggest do not merely attempt to be compatible with these ideas regardless of what they are, but to bring issues, relationships and values into clearer view. A political theorist may understand herself as a partner in conversation (Parekh 2000d, p. 250) and that implies there are other partners, and for the practical political theorist, these are not only academics but also politicians and citizens – and most significantly, those elites involved in shaping political action. A good conversationalist is aware not only of her own position but also of those of others. So it is interesting to note that none of the political theorists concerned with unity and aiming to be of practical use cited above have systematically taken notice of how these partners in conversation actually conceive unity. After all, reshaping beliefs presupposes knowing them. This thesis therefore analyses how unity is conceived by parliamentarians because these political elites are both important figures in wider political debates and involved in shaping political courses of action.

By analysing and responding to these ideas, this thesis not only *claims* to contribute to political conversations but demonstrates how it does so by showing where it builds on or rejects them. A practical political theorist who asserts to know the positions

---

[9] Miller (2013, p. 44) distinguishes between conventionalism or relativism, and contextual theory: the latter can make objective claims with a universal character (i.e. that hold if particular conditions hold) and that are distinct from people's beliefs, which may be false.
[10] That does not necessarily mean that the two are entirely unrelated, or that how things should be can only be understood from a perspective external to the moral understandings current in real contexts. Walzer (1985, p. 25) points out that most cases of moral progress are reinterpretations of existing principles: in the case of slavery, the existing moral principle of equal dignity was extended to include a new group of previously excluded people as equals.

advanced in political debate but neglects to show that she does and to specify how she knows them (as she would for academic partners in conversation) leaves herself open to the objections that she simply asserts to know them; that she may be wrong about the internal logic of these positions; that she cannot therefore show that her clarifications indeed pertain to the issues that concern political elites and offer useful insights; or worse, that she may have intentionally distorted them to more forcefully present her own position. If political theorists aim to contribute practical guidance, a more systematic examination of the debates they contribute to helps them to avoid such charges.

This thesis, therefore, analyses how political elites conceive of unity before responding to these ideas. This locates it within an emerging methodological paradigm that combines normative reasoning with empirical analysis (Favell 1998; Klosko 2005; Laborde 2008; Meer and Modood 2009; Modood et al 2006; Uberoi and Modood 2010, 2013b; Uberoi 2008). Three prominent examples that illustrate this paradigm have particularly inspired the approach. These can be understood as studies that 'bridge questions of political reality and questions of what political agents should do' (Sabl 2011, p. 155). These examples all focus their empirical analysis on political debates. They study the normative dimension of the ideas present in these debates and analyse how the questions they are interested in are answered here: they explicate the normative commitments already inherent in the positions put forward.

First of all, Modood, Triandafyllidou and Zapata-Barrero (2006) present an edited volume that brings together chapters on several European countries. The book aims to build 'multicultural theory from the ground upwards rather than deontologically or from first principles, and approaches the normative from substantial case studies within a comparative European framework' (Triandafyllidou et al 2006, p. 7). These case studies take the form of an analysis of public debates on multicultural controversies that also considers 'how the national and local debates relate to wider normative principles and ideas of equality, liberalism and citizenship' (Triandafyllidou et al 2006, p. 14). Like this book, this thesis approaches the normative question of pursuing unity in multicultural societies by reference to European case studies that

focus on how this question is approached in actual political debates. The thesis spends somewhat more time than this book on drawing out the link between the empirical and the normative analysis that underpins this type of research and that is often left implicit in research undertaken within this paradigm. This leaves the latter open to methodological objections that might undercut its normative arguments, and the thesis (particularly the next chapter) hopes to add some clarity to this complex link.

Secondly, Laborde (2008) analyses French debates on the Hijab controversy to clarify what Republicanism looks like in this context and how French Republicanism can contribute to 'the normative republican response to multicultural conflict' (Laborde 2008, p. 3). Her critical republicanism incorporates 'critical social theory into republican normative philosophy' (Laborde 2008, p. 8): it takes seriously the normative significance of sociological facts but also the implicit assumptions that colour the context in which rational justification takes place. The approach taken here equally uses empirical analysis to inform a normative response – or a 'principled strategy for reform' (Laborde 2008, p. 13) – sensitive to the status quo. In contrast to the approach taken by Laborde, however, this response is not based in an ideal theory, for the reasons outlined above.

Finally, Favell (1998) examines the political practices that constitute the response to multiculturalism in Britain and France. He focuses on the ideas and justifications present in political argument and translates these into comparable normative theories – in each country, he identifies a 'public philosophy' (Favell 1998, p. 2) comprising a set of consensual interpretations of core political concepts that directs policy development. This interdisciplinary study of 'political theory' as it is practised or embodied in politics uses empirical methods and normative analysis to clarify the normative commitments of these political consensuses and explains how they came about and are sustained. This concern for the normative content of political ideas is taken up here, but used for a slightly different purpose: whereas Favell focuses on a longer period of time to explain policy developments, here, political ideas defended in political debates are studied to show how a conception of unity can respond to them plausibly.

The next chapter will explain how practical political theory, aimed at shaping the ideas of political elites involved in devising responses to unity, can study their ideas to enhance its practical use. Such theory, it will be argued there, can be conceptualised as a contribution to democratic debate that needs to avoid the pitfalls of both abstract ideal theory and overly realistic theory: proposals should be both morally defensible, that is, not unreflective reformulations of ideas current in society that may be unjust; and politically plausible, or responsive to the complexities of context.

1.3   Case studies: the UK and the Netherlands

The thesis analyses the ideas about unity that political elites in the UK and the Netherlands express in political debate, in order to subsequently respond to them effectively. Such debate is set within a particular context: it responds to local events as they arise and is structured by historical developments and traditions. This section will introduce the British and Dutch contexts in which the debates analysed are held, or the institutional and ideational settings that form the background to the analyses in chapters 4 and 5.

The notion that European countries have developed immigration and integration policies in line with national traditions and self-conceptions, or national models, has been an influential one in the comparative social science literature (e.g. Brubaker 1990; Joppke 2007; Koopmans and Statham 1999). Regardless of whether these models are decreasing in relevance (Joppke 2007, pp. 243-244), and of whether they form an appropriate analytical framework or misrepresent the coherence of national policy developments (Bertossi 2011, p. 1562), such accounts do have some descriptive value as they point to cross-national differences in the way minorities are dealt with. Koopmans (2008), for example, identifies a number of specific policies according to which he classifies countries as more or less multicultural. From such a comparative perspective, both the UK and the Netherlands are classified as multicultural (Bertossi 2011, p. 1561; Joppke 2004, p. 239, 2007, p. 244; Koopmans 2008, p. 2): they display a number of policies and attitudes that are relatively open to the recognition and accommodation of cultural difference, in contrast to the 'French' assimilation and the 'German' separation

approaches.[11] This section will introduce the development of such policies, or the 'trajectories of multiculturalism' (Winter 2010) in the UK and the Netherlands.

The literature discussing the development of multiculturalism in the UK (Bleich 2011; Cheong et al 2007; Favell 1998; Grillo 2007, 2010; Modood 2006, 2007; McGhee 2003; Parekh 2000b; Pilkington 2008) reveals a more complicated picture than the 'multicultural model' analysis would suggest. Multiculturalism here developed in a piecemeal manner, with policy development pragmatically responding to local issues (Favell 1998, pp. 98-134). Consequently, the UK never fully developed a coherent, comprehensive strategy or model at the national level (Bertossi 2011, p. 1569). A broad consensus existed nonetheless on the need to keep race issues off the political agenda and prevent racial tensions from becoming public order issues. This was reinforced by Conservative Shadow Defence Secretary (1965-1968) Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech in 1968 that opposed Labour's introduction of race relations legislation and presented immigration as divisive and dangerous, and threatened to rally white Britons around an anti-immigrant platform.[12] Political elites quickly defused this threat by settling on the policies and institutions of British multiculturalism that Favell (1998, p. 123) hence characterises as 'a calculated, paternalistic attempt to engineer a kind of social harmony and multicultural equilibrium well in advance of the preferences of the general public'.

Integration in the UK was indeed conceived in a way that might be termed multicultural: Roy Jenkins, Labour Home Secretary from 1965-1967 and 1974-1976, defined it 'not as a flattening process of uniformity, but cultural diversity, coupled with equality of opportunity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance' (quoted in Favell 1998,

---

[11] Note that this classification is based on a number of empirical characteristics and in comparison to other countries (i.e. in terms of social science evidence) and not in terms of how they measure against multicultural ideals and principles as specified in normative political theory.

[12] Powell's (1968) speech suggested that high levels of immigration would irreversibly change the country; he suggests that immigrants crowd out native Britons in housing and public services and that they are unwilling to integrate because they want to dominate society. The speech receives its name from Powell's quote from the Aeneïd: 'As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I see "the River Tiber foaming with much blood".' Powell was fired from the Shadow Cabinet the day after the speech and never held a prominent political position again.

p. 104). Integration was not seen to be antithetical to minority cultural identities, and was about equality rather than uniformity or even commonality. Multiculturalism here was characterised by progressive race relations legislation, non-discrimination, and local accommodation. Following the example of the US (Bleich 2011, p. 61), issues of race became the pivotal questions, with progressive interpretation in case law extending the reach of the legislation to other characteristics of minority groups (Favell 1998, pp. 107, 120).

Bleich (2011, p. 65) notes a shift in the 1970s from colour-blind non-discrimination policy to more pronounced and pro-active race-consciousness. Another shift took place in the categories that policies target: following race, ethnicity became important in the 1990s (Grillo 2010, p. 58), allowing for further differentiation among minorities, thus enabling South Asians to mobilise on the basis of their shared ethnicity (Favell 1998, pp. 214-218; Modood 2007, pp. 40-42). More recently, the focus has shifted to faith (Grillo 2010, pp. 58-60), illustrated by the appeal for the recognition of 'religious identity and communal rights in the practice of the law' made on behalf of Muslims and others by such a leading figure as Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury (Williams 2008, p. 267).

Overall, it is said that Britain has provided exemptions and accommodations of cultural difference to a degree rarely found elsewhere in Europe (Joppke 2009, p. 455), even if their justification was mostly consequentialist and aimed at preventing disorder (Favell 1998, pp. 116-117). It may have seemed like British multiculturalism was firmly established when the Macpherson (1999)[13] and Parekh (2000)[14] reports expressing its spirit were published (Pilkington 2008).

---

[13] This report (the outcome of a public inquiry carried out by Macpherson) presents the investigation of the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence and finds that the police is 'institutionally racist', meaning it fails to deliver its services appropriately to ethnic minorities because of the persistence of structural and often unconscious prejudice. It spurred a renewed concern for racial equality.

[14] This report (produced by the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain set up by the think tank Runnymede Trust and chaired by Parekh) favourably and coherently articulates the ideas at the basis of British multiculturalism and provides a list of recommendations to take it further. Among those is the idea that traditional notions of British national identity need to be

Grillo (2007, p. 987), however, warns against understanding this multicultural consensus as too strong: British multicultural integration was a political project to deal with diversity but stopped short of institutionalising recognition of minority identities in the public sphere and special representation measures. In addition, it was never uncontested. Perhaps the most significant challenge to British multiculturalism was the Rushdie affair in 1989. Muslims in Britain, as globally, felt offended by the publication of Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. Following domestic unease the affair came to a head with the fatwa issued by Ayatollah Khomeini that called for Rushdie's death. Because of the limited focus on race in British multiculturalism, the grievances of Muslims as a religious (rather than racial) group could not be addressed under the existing legislation. Debate quickly focused on the limits of toleration and the importance of free speech rather than their concerns, and questioned the appropriateness of multiculturalism as a strategy for integration (Favell 1998, pp. 219-225; Parekh 1990, 2000b, pp. 295-306). The aforementioned Parekh report also met with severe opposition in the press and subsequently by political actors, because its argument for a more inclusive national identity reflecting diversity in society was taken to discredit British identity (Pilkington 2008).

The British 'crisis of multiculturalism' that has allegedly erupted since the riots of 2001 in Oldham, Burnley, Leeds and Bradford[15] hence was not completely without precedent.[16] The investigations and numerous reports that followed these riots expressed a concern that communities – particularly Muslims – in these cities were living 'parallel lives', with segregation occurring simultaneously in several dimensions, including education, housing, and work (Grillo 2007, p. 988; Kalra and Kapoor 2008, p. 6). It was widely argued in the media and by political actors that multiculturalism had allowed this separation to occur by institutionalising difference, and thereby facilitating isolation, but also radicalisation. Diversity itself came to be seen as

reconceived to reflect British minorities as well as the majority and discard older racist connotations.

[15] These riots were sparked by racial tensions but fuelled by a number of complex interdependent factors.

[16] After all, there had been 'race riots' in Britain before (in 1958, 1981, 1995, and, arguably, again in 2011). The 'crisis' starting in 2001 was also, of course, inevitably influenced by the 9/11 attacks in New York (2001) and the 7/7 London bombings in 2005.

problematic from the perspective of solidarity (Goodhart 2004, p. 30; see also: Putnam 2007). Policy therefore was re-orientated towards the promotion of citizenship, shared values, and a national sense of belonging (Cheong et al 2007, p. 28).

The new 'community cohesion' strategy shifted its focus to interaction as a means to overcome the fear and prejudice that both flow from and sustain segregation. It aimed to build relationships between different cultural groups, thereby overcoming the divisions that were exposed by the riots. Cultural groups needed to overcome their differences (while retaining their identities) and converge around common values in an open and inclusive civic realm, reflective of a newly invigorated sense of citizenship that invites sustained and equal dialogue (Cheong et al 2007, pp. 28-29; Grillo 2007, pp. 988-993; McGhee 2003, pp. 381-391). The simultaneous focus on national identity, or Britishness, as a means for providing unity and cohesion was furthered especially by a series of speeches by Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer (1997-2007) and later Prime Minister (2007-2010) Gordon Brown (see: Lee 2006).[17] Cheong et al (2007, p. 32) point out how strong community ties that were once seen as contributing to integration were now cast as threatening solidarity and unity. The focus on shared values, cohesion and national identity points to the idea that a reinvigorated sense of unity is needed in the face of the fragmentation that multiculturalism had allegedly allowed diversity to give rise to.

Critics argue that community cohesion neglects material inequality and racism (McGhee 2003, pp. 392-393; Pilkington 2008); and demarcates Muslims as fundamentally different (Kalra and Kapoor 2008, p. 2; Worley 2005, p. 491), thereby normalising a new type of anti-Muslim racism targeting values rather than skin colour (Kundnani 2007, p. 24). It is sometimes understood as a move away from multiculturalism to assimilation (Grillo 2007, p. 980; Kalra and Kapoor 2008, p. 11). Others, however, question such a move: they point to the fact that the UK still has its

---

[17] The popular argument that Brown's engagement with Britishness can be explained by reference to his Scottishness is considered irrelevant here. That is not to deny that these speeches also addressed the issue of devolution: the conception of Britishness was precisely supposed to tie together members of different cultural, ethnic, religious, and so on, as well as national communities.

multicultural policies (cf. Koopmans 2008, p. 7), and has seen increased political support for the multiculturalist idea of an inclusive national identity (Uberoi and Modood 2013b, pp. 23-26), so that the emphasis on citizenship might be better interpreted as a 'civic re-balancing' of multiculturalism (Meer and Modood 2009, p. 473).

The literature on Dutch integration policy (Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007; Duyvendak and Scholten 2009, 2011, 2012; Entzinger 2006; Penninx et al 2005; Prins and Saharso 2010; Scholten 2011; Timmermans and Scholten 2006; Vasta 2007) also presents a more nuanced picture than the 'multicultural model' notion would imply. Here, a more or less coherent paradigm did develop, but was subsequently replaced: policy has developed as a sequence of relatively stable periods ruptured by substantial paradigm shifts. Three paradigms that roughly coincide with the 1980s; the 1990s; and the 2000s are commonly discerned in policy and discourse, each with its own understanding of integration, policy goals, and policy instruments.[18] Only the first of these paradigms could be straightforwardly classified as multicultural.

The 'multicultural' paradigm is associated with the 1983 Ethnic Minorities Policy (EMP) that developed as an acknowledgement of the permanence of immigrants in the Netherlands. This policy was characterised by widespread consensus and de-politicisation. It aimed to prevent the permanent marginalisation and isolation of particular groups in society that were specified by both cultural/ethnic and socio-economic criteria (Guiraudon et al 2005, pp. 76-77).[19] EMP could be considered multicultural because it aimed to promote equality through the recognition of cultural identity (as well as in other ways) and to pursue a culturally and religiously diverse society. Ethnic minorities were encouraged to emancipate, or cultivate and strengthen

---

[18] Sometimes a fourth one is added: before the 1980s no official, coherent policy was put in place to deal with immigrants. There was a general assumption that they would either assimilate automatically or go back home.

[19] 'Guest workers, Moluccans, Surinamese and Antilleans, refugees, gypsies and *woonwagenbewoners* [caravan dwellers]', (Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007, p. 15). These were groups that occupied a poor socio-economic position and that the government felt responsible for, because of colonial history or active labour recruitment policies. Hence, relatively rich minorities such as the Chinese were never targets of this policy.

their cultural identity. This was believed to help them integrate into society – both as groups and as individuals (Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007, pp. 12-17).

This approach to cultural identity and integration is commonly linked to pillarisation, a Dutch tradition for dealing with diversity that saw society divided into several 'pillars' representing different worldviews: Catholics; Protestants; Socialists; and Liberals.[20] These pillars had their own institutions that straddled most of society and included political parties; broadcast channels; schools; sports clubs; and hospitals. Communities lived largely separate lives in their pillars, but their elites were brought together in government, which formed an overarching structure. This institutionalised pluralism was then extended to immigrant groups that were encouraged and subsidised to develop their own representative organisations and institutions as well as elites to be consulted in policymaking (Entzinger 2006, pp. 123-126).

To what extent this paradigm was actually multiculturalist is disputed: society by then had started to become 'depillarised' and an Islamic pillar never developed because minorities lacked the necessary resources (Vink 2007, pp. 342-348). EMP, moreover, developed out of earlier efforts to provide immigrants with services that would allow them to retain their cultural identities but did so with the aim of their repatriation (Kymlicka 2008, pp. 804-807). Lenard (2012, pp. 188-189) hence argues that its intent was actually exclusion rather than inclusion: developing separate institutions for minorities allowed the pre-existing ones to avoid change.

A paradigm shift took place at the beginning of the 1990s. It was felt EMP had not lived up to its promise as minorities were still mired in economic inequality, and that too much attention had been paid to the cultural element of integration policy, to the detriment of individual participation. Socio-economic concerns took centre-stage in the new Integration Policy (IP), framed in terms of citizenship, that shifted the emphasis from the group to the individual. It emphasised rights and duties, and encouraged self-sufficiency and responsibility. Integration became the priority: immigrants needed to be familiar with Dutch language and society in order to participate, through education

---

[20] This latter pillar was not as comprehensive as the others and could alternatively be described as the 'general' pillar.

and labour, in the institutions of Dutch society and achieve equality with native Dutch citizens. Culture became a private matter (Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007, pp. 16-20). Policy no longer targeted ethnic minorities, groups that were defined in the old policy by criteria of birth place as well as socioeconomic conditions, but *allochtonen*, individuals defined only by their foreign origin (and contrasted to *autochtonen*, or citizens of native origin) (Guiraudon et al 2005, pp. 77-78; see also: Yanow and Van der Haar 2010).

Although the socio-economic position of immigrants and their children improved gradually, the persistence of inequalities in combination with international and internal experiences with Islamic fundamentalism[21] fuelled a narrative of policy failure and failed integration (Entzinger 2006, pp. 134-137; Timmermans and Scholten 2006, p. 113), hinged on the notion of a 'clash of civilizations' (Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007, p. 19). The Integration Policy became increasingly unpopular. Where integration issues in the past had been kept off the political agenda, they now moved right to its top. This is the Dutch 'crisis of multiculturalism', announced evocatively in an influential op-ed piece by Left-wing intellectual Scheffer (2000) entitled 'The Multicultural Tragedy', which blamed the multicultural policies of the past for the enduring marginalisation of minorities.

The Integration Policy New Style (IPNS) of the early 2000s, in response, was designed as a definitive break with the past. It retained the emphasis on citizenship and individual rights and responsibilities but focused on cultural rather than socio-economic aspects of integration: it moved from 'active' to 'common' citizenship (Scholten 2011, p. 81). Where culture was seen as a means to emancipation in EMP, it was now considered an obstacle to integration; especially for Muslims, who were portrayed as adhering to values that clash with supposedly Western values such as

---

[21] A number of events raised tensions around multiculturalism, including: the terrorist attacks in the US of 9/11; the sudden rise in Dutch politics of Pim Fortuyn on an anti-immigrant platform in 2002; his murder by a left-wing fanatic briefly before the 2002 elections; the murder in 2004 of famous film-maker and Islam critic Theo van Gogh, who had just released a provocative film displaying texts from the Koran on naked female bodies, by a Dutch-Moroccan; the controversy around Ayaan Hirsi-Ali, an MP of Somali origin and stridently critical of Islam, who participated in the aforementioned film and received dead threats, and was also found to have lied to obtain asylum in the Netherlands.

freedom of speech, gender equality, and democracy (Entzinger 2006, p. 128; Winter 2010, p. 174). Perceived integration failure was explained as a lack of effort by immigrants (Entzinger 2006, pp. 130-131). Policy therefore became more demanding and centred on instilling a sense of shared ('Dutch') norms and values.

This has led some (Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007, p. 3; Vasta 2007, p. 714) to proclaim that the Netherlands has moved from multiculturalism to assimilation. Others (Koopmans 2008, p. 7; Vertovec and Wessendorf 2010a, pp. 17-18), however, emphasise how more multicultural policy legacies remain influential and changes have taken place in rhetoric more than in policy. The Dutch engagement with multiculturalism thus reads as a mixed picture. What is clear, however, is that similar to what we saw in the UK, INPS suggests the idea that a greater degree of unity, based in shared values and commonalities, is needed in the face of cultural diversity.

Although the policy traditions of both these countries may be multicultural in comparison to other European countries, this legacy plays out in different ways. Multiculturalism as a political idea in both cases rests upon an understanding of integration as hospitable to diversity (which has now become contested) and policies to accommodate minorities and enhance their position in society. Yet in the UK, it centred on race relations and accommodation, and moved to community cohesion, while in the Netherlands, it was based around pillarisation and ethnic minorities, and shifted to the integration of *allochtonen*. The specific policies deployed hence may differ, but they are similar enough in nature and intention to still be characterised as multicultural (at least in the first phases) (cf. Uberoi 2008, p. 405). Policy traditions can have enduring effects on how issues are perceived so that they may structure the debate on unity in each case study (e.g. Favell 1998; Schmidt 2008). The trajectories of multiculturalism described above, therefore, form the context and background in which the debates that will be analysed in chapters 4 and 5 are set.

1.4   The structure and argument of this thesis

This final section will sketch the argument this thesis presents by briefly discussing its chapters. Recall how this chapter noted that political theorists have neglected to clearly

specify what they mean by unity, even as they agree on its importance and suggest alternative routes to fostering it. Moreover, when they offer clarifications of issues relating to unity and diversity and suggest why certain courses of action are more defensible than others, they often hope to be of practical use. That implies shaping the ideas and guiding the actions of political elites involved in shaping political responses to unity, but they have largely neglected to look at the ideas these elites already have (which are the ideas they intend to influence). Responding to these gaps, this thesis makes three contributions.

First, in the next chapter it clarifies how political theorists can be of practical use and shows that this aim entails a commitment to shaping the ideas of the political elites involved in shaping political action. Shaping these ideas presupposes knowing them, and studying them helps political theorists to demonstrate the practical use of their insights as it allows them to clarify how their proposals are not only morally defensible but also politically plausible.

Second, the thesis clarifies what unity is by specifying the different properties a conception of unity needs to have: it specifies what the whole that is united is; who belongs to this united whole; how they belong to it; and how such unity may be impeded and fostered. Chapter 3 shows that different political theorists give different meanings to these properties so that they advance different conceptions of unity. Chapters 4 and 5 then show that British and Dutch political elites, respectively, also conceive unity in different ways.

Third, the thesis argues that what can roughly be designated here as a multicultural conception of unity is both most defensible and politically plausible in the UK and the Netherlands.[22] Chapter 6 explains the implications of the case studies for political theorists: it distils the existing patterns of thought about unity that they need to pay attention to when proposing a politically plausible conception of unity, and highlights the significance of pluralism. Chapter 7 then shows that a multicultural conception of unity is not only most defensible, as it is better able to withstand theoretical objections

---

[22] This conception is based in the multiculturalist ideas introduced in this chapter and will be further developed in chapter 3.

than its rivals; but is also politically plausible in these two countries where multiculturalism nonetheless, paradoxically, has been portrayed as a failure (Cameron 2011) or a tragedy (Scheffer 2000) by leading figures in public debates.

2 Practical political theory

The previous chapter showed that political theorists agree that unity is important but rarely clearly specify what it is, and that they often aim to be of practical use. This chapter clarifies how they may achieve the latter by explicating the contribution practical political theory makes: it offers clarifications and suggests why certain courses of action are more defensible than others (Miller 2013, p. 34; Parekh 2008, p. 7) and in doing so aims to be not only morally defensible but also politically plausible. Such insights illuminate political debates in order to shape the ideas of political elites and guide their actions. That implies engaging with the ideas these elites already have. This commitment implicit in practical political theory has largely gone unnoticed and this chapter draws out its implications by explaining why and how practical political theorists might engage with these ideas. The remainder of the thesis then shows how unity is conceived not only by political theorists (chapter 3) but also by political elites (chapters 4 and 5; and discussed in chapter 6) in order to show that a multicultural conception of unity is most defensible and also politically plausible in the UK and the Netherlands (chapter 7).

Practical political theory is considered 'a branch of practical reason – it is thought whose final aim is to guide action' (Miller 2013, p. 34), in contradistinction to approaches that restrict political theory to more philosophical goals and argue that it should ask 'not what we should do but what we should think, even when what we should think makes no practical difference' (Cohen 2003, p. 243). There are, of course, many ways of doing political theory, as reflected in debates about its method, scope and nature (Cohen 2003; Farrelly 2007; Floyd and Stears 2011; Leopold and Stears 2008; Stears 2005; Swift and White 2008). This chapter does not pretend that the approach furthered here is the best methodology for political theory, but it does clarify its distinctive quality. Section 2.1 explains that the insights practical political theorists offer can be conceptualised as interventions in political debate. These interventions attempt to shape the ideas of political elites involved in devising political action, in order to guide their actions. This suggests a concern for the ideas these elites already have and section 2.2 explains why these ideas matter by outlining what political ideas

are. Although knowing these ideas is important, however, they do not condition the content of practical political theory: section 2.3 explains that as a contribution to political debate, it benefits from meeting two criteria, moral defensibility and political plausibility. Section 2.4 then outlines a method to study political ideas, and section 2.5 discusses the research design of the empirical component of the thesis.

2.1 Practical political theory as a contribution to political debate

Practical political theory 'whose final aim is to guide action' (Miller 2013, p. 34) can be conceptualised as a contribution to political debate (Swift and White 2008, pp. 54-55), understood simply as debates held in a variety of formal as well as informal settings pertaining to political topics, however broadly construed. This section will build on the work of leading political theorists to develop this idea so as to explain how political theory may achieve practical use and guide action.

When political theorists clarify our ideas about political problems and specify how we should approach them and why certain responses are more defensible than others, they probably hope their arguments will lead to change and improvement in the situation they perceive as unjust or problematic (Parekh 1995, p. 172). But such impact is indirect: the theorist needs to enter into political debate in order to convince politicians and citizens to view the issue as they do, and in particular, to shape the ideas of those involved in devising political action. Such an intervention in political debate is possible because while it may be less reflective than theoretical debate (Freeden 1996, pp. 41-42; Parekh 2000b, pp. 304-313), it nonetheless draws on a shared vocabulary to express responses to political problems (Miller 2013, p. 42; Parekh 2000c, p. x). Moreover, as Freeden (1996, pp. 13-14, 40-45) argues, the nature of debate in these two realms is similar: both revolve around the construction of arguments that define and combine political concepts in particular ways in order to prescribe action and shape the social world. Supposedly, then, the arguments political theorists make should be intelligible also in political debates and may offer insights that political elites may draw on to devise and justify political action.

This presupposes the existence of open, democratic political debate, which reflects the 'middle-range' aims (Haddock 2011, p. 70; Levy 2007, pp. 187-190; see also for a related discussion: Carens 2013, pp. 300-311) of the thesis: it brackets the most abstract, eternal questions in order to focus on a particular type of multicultural controversy as it occurs within vested liberal democracies. As section 1.2 already explained, this type of practical political theory starts from within context and takes for granted certain political institutions and values, such as democratic debate and equal citizenship, that are deemed fundamental and widely supported and embodied in institutions and practices (if only in the form of a vague conception) in such contexts (Modood 2007, pp. 6-8).[23] Such a middle-range perspective should not be mistaken for conservatism or conventionalism (cf. Miller 2013, p. 49): after all, accepting the status quo as a starting position does not preclude challenging or transforming it.

When contributing to political debate, the theorist is not a philosopher-king that can dictate political action, but a 'professional thinker' (Freeden 1996, p. 30) trained in and dedicated to contemplation and reflection, which makes her particularly well-placed to contribute valuable arguments and illuminate the normative dimensions of political problems (Swift and White 2008, pp. 54-55); she acts as a 'social critic' who critically interprets the status quo in order to improve it (Walzer 1985, p. 30), or a 'public intellectual' (Habermas 2003, pp. 289-290) who contributes to political debates about the self-understanding of modern societies. In so doing, she must offer an 'account of civil life [that] illuminates the latter in such a way as to guide our choices' (Parekh 1995, p. 169). Crucially, such activity is not about simply repackaging existing traditions in more appealing terms, but about challenging, improving, and where necessary transcending or subverting them (Modood 2007, pp. 122-123; Walzer 1985, pp. 27-28, 43-53); and the result may be new positions. Where the other parties engaged in political debate do not already agree with the theorist, that means political theory 'should be in the business of changing political attitudes' (Miller 2013, p. 37). And of

---

[23] This is not to deny that these values may require further justification and are far from universally upheld, and that their precise meaning is contested within political theory as well as within political contexts.

course, such impact remains hypothetical, as its arguments might go unnoticed (Stears 2005, p. 343).

Political theory, then, can be seen as an intervention in political debate. Indeed, section 1.2 noted how some political theorists (Parekh 2000b, p. 15; Sandel 2005, p. 5) explicitly characterise their work in this way. This extends the conception of such debate: it is understood as an interactive process (Stears 2005, p. 347) that is characterised by argument and embraces both theory and practice. That is not to deny that politics is much more (or, perhaps, less) than rational argument, nor to deny the crucial importance of power. But political theorists are not politicians and can avoid such considerations in order to focus on clarifying what is at stake, proposing particular courses of action and explaining why these are most defensible.[24]

As a contribution to political debate, practical political theory does not simply aim to change political beliefs, but does so with the goal of inspiring political action. After all, in most cases it is not enough for people to change their mind about an issue: to improve a situation often requires political action in the form of policy or legislation. This link between political theory and practical guidance relating to institutional design and policy is not always clear but it has been acknowledged over a long period of time by such leading scholars as Miller and Siedentop (1983), Parekh (2001) and Waldron (2013).

Thus, Miller and Siedentop (1983, p. 2), ruminating on the active nature of political theory, note how political theory is about connecting and applying concepts to social conditions so that 'shaping social and political concepts is also, in the longer run, shaping social and political institutions'. Language is not neutral (as the next section will clarify further), so that theorising about institutions inevitably involves evaluation and prescription; engaging in political theory is a form of political action. More recently, Miller (2013, p. 43) supposes that the activity of doing political theory

---

[24] In contrast, some might argue that concrete proposals may violate moral principles if they help to bring about justice in the long run (cf. Stears 2005, pp. 345-346). Liberal institutions often came about through illiberal means. This, however, blurs the distinction between the politician and the theorist: whereas the former may rely on such expedient reasons, it is up to the latter to offer better – more just – alternatives.

involves that 'we have to assess the justice of a decision, or an institution, or a policy'[25] and clearly, such assessments of existing political structures are meant to inspire political action. Parekh (2001, p. 696) explains that the Parekh report[26] was a direct attempt at using political theory to influence policy makers: it sketches a political theory and uses it to explore social issues such as 'education, criminal justice […] and political representation' and to underpin 'appropriate recommendations concerning how best to eliminate the discrimination and disadvantage suffered by ethnic minorities'. And Waldron (2013, pp. 8-9, emphasis in the original) recently made an appeal to political theorists to loosen their exclusive focus on justice to include a concern for politics and institutions:

> 'Even if our main preoccupation remains with justice, liberty, and equality, we still need to complement and inform that work with an understanding of the mechanisms through which these ideals—these ends of life—will be pursued. This is what I mean by *political* political theory—theory addressing itself to politics and to the way our political institutions house and frame our disagreements about social ideals and orchestrate what is done about whatever aims we can settle on'.

Practical (or political, in Waldron's words) political theory, then, addresses itself to politics in an effort to shape political structures and courses of action in order for these to more effectively pursue and realise justice and other political values. This suggests that while the clarifications such practical political theory offers to political debate may help a variety of actors, including politicians and citizens, to understand issues of unity and diversity more clearly, political theorists who aim to be of practical use contribute

---

[25] Miller here discusses the difference between universalist and contextual approaches to political theory and notes how the former assumes that the same principles can be appealed to in all such judgments, thus presupposing that these judgments are what political theory is about.

[26] This report about multiculturalism in Britain was introduced in the previous chapter.

to political debates with a particular interest in shaping the ideas of those political elites involved in shaping political courses of action.[27]

2.2   Political ideas

Recall that section 1.2 noted how political theory 'shapes people's ways of thinking about themselves and their world, and through that, their choices and actions' (Parekh 2011, p. 40). In other words, choices and actions normally make sense because they reflect ideas so that it is through shaping the ideas of the political elites involved in devising political action that political theorists who aim to be of practical use may guide political action. But these actors are not blank slates: they come with a set of ideas. Shaping these is probably a lot easier once we know what they are to begin with and where they may need to be reformed, and chapters 4 and 5, therefore, present how British and Dutch political elites, respectively, conceive of unity. To understand why studying these ideas might be interesting for political theorists, and particularly to those working on unity, we need to first know what political ideas are.

Political ideas, or concepts, can be conceived as 'the constituents of thoughts' (Margolis and Laurence 2011); they make up the structures and patterns of human thinking and exist as mental impressions in the human mind. As such, they order experiences and make sense of reality: they are a medium for understanding. In Skinner's (2002, p. 176) words, 'our concepts form part of what we bring to the world in our efforts to make sense of it'. Freeden (1996, p. 52) defines political concepts as 'complex ideas that inject order and meaning into observed or anticipated sets of political phenomena and hold together an assortment of related notions'. Ideas enable meaning and understanding because they classify situations and experiences: they comprise a number of criteria in light of which particular instances are categorised as *this* rather than *that* type of phenomenon. Moreover, such classification often involves evaluation, certainly for the

---

[27] Note also that practical political theorists who are dedicated to more direct forms of democracy might target citizens and action groups rather than political elites; but most liberal democracies currently are representative democracies which means that change (including reforms towards more direct democracy) still needs to run through political elites so that paying attention to their ideas seems at least a plausible element of a practical orientation.

class of ideas this thesis is concerned with: concepts not only describe something but also praise or condemn it (Freeden 1996, pp. 57-59; Skinner 2002, pp. 160-162).

But ideas are not only categories for ordering experience: they also have an active dimension. Interpretation and action are enmeshed: the way an issue is interpreted and represented as a policy problem tends to imply the response it requires, or what political action is considered appropriate and effective (Freeden 2008, p. 198; Stone 2002). In other words, ideas play a role in policy development. Of course ideas are only one among other factors (such as power and interests) to explain policy developments, but they may have an influence nonetheless (Béland 2005; Campbell 2002; Goldstein and Keohane 1993; John 2003; Schmidt and Radaelli 2004). They can do so by functioning as roadmaps, providing guidance on which actions to take to obtain specified goals; or as focal points, standing at the basis of cooperation and coordination to overcome collective action problems by reducing uncertainty; or by exercising influence through their institutionalisation, with ideas becoming entrenched in norms and habits and routinely reinforced (Goldstein and Keohane 1993, pp. 11-24). Ideas may also function as paradigms that structure and filter information, modifying it to fit into the existing ideational framework (Hall 1993, pp. 279-281). When political theorists clarify issues and concepts, they hence may shape how these are perceived and subsequently responded to. That implies that they alter or refine existing political ideas so studying the latter helps to know where and how they may want to do so.

So far, this discussion has been rather general, suggesting that studying ideas helps political theorists to make a more effective practical contribution to political debate. However, this thesis is concerned with the issue of unity in multicultural societies and the nature of this issue presents an additional reason for studying existing ideas. This is because what unity is depends on how it is conceived. Phenomena like unity and national identity do not simply 'exist in the world independently of the beliefs people have about them, in the way that, say, volcanoes and elephants do' (Miller 1995, p. 17). What these concepts mean exactly depends on how they are defined and evaluated, or constructed, in debate and argument (although, clearly, that construction is limited by conventional empirical reference points) (cf. Blyth 2003; Campbell 2002; Finnemore and

Sikkink 2001; Freeden 1996; Phillips and Jorgensen 2002; Skinner 2002). Thus, Bauböck (2008, p. 8) considers that the change in political discourse about multiculturalism following its alleged crisis is important as it 'affects how the political community is imagined by the wider citizenry'. This means that unity cannot straightforwardly be studied through empirical tests or quantitative measurements but is more readily captured by an approach focusing on ideas.

Hence, political ideas help to make sense of political reality and structure responses to it: they influence decisions on political action and political theorists may attempt to shape them to that effect. Moreover, they capture something of the nature of the issue of unity, so that knowing them helps to gain a firmer grasp of what unity *is* within a particular context. Studying ideas thus facilitates a greater awareness of the phenomenon that most political theorists discussed in the next chapter address.

2.3   Two criteria for practical political theory

As a contribution to political debate, then, practical political theory not only clarifies issues and concepts but does so in an attempt to shape the ideas of political elites and that involves responding to the ideas these elites already have. But while engaging in debate certainly implies knowing and addressing the other positions that are being defended, practical political theory is not entirely conditioned by or contingent upon these positions: it needs to meet certain standards, which can be derived from the discussion of different methodological paradigms in the introduction and are outlined in this section.

It was suggested in section 1.2 that practical political theory would benefit from avoiding the dangers of both unreflective realistic theory (which risks unquestioningly affirming the attitudes, institutions and social relationships that exist within the context it targets) and overly idealistic theory (which might be irrelevant to political dilemmas in current societies). On top of the considerations that guide any form of political theory, such as a concern for clarity, consistency and coherence, practical political theory therefore pays particular attention to two criteria: it is both morally defensible and politically plausible. These criteria are not meant as formal conditions that can be

applied as a checklist, but simply aim to guide judgment. Clearly, this involves interpretation and sensitivity, and the criteria help by pointing to relevant considerations.

Moral defensibility is one element of wider defensibility: practical political theory needs to be able to withstand logical criticism, offer credible depictions and evaluations, and so on. Meanwhile, it is somewhat obvious that an argument put forward in normative political theory aims to be morally defensible. For while it may aim for impact, such theory is primarily normative in nature, even when its scope is not universal but restricted to a particular context. Hence, moral defensibility is prior to the political plausibility criterion discussed below. Indeed, the question of moral defensibility, or the specific content of 'what we owe to each other' (Scanlon 1999), has been the topic of much intelligent reflection in political theory over the centuries. Such reflection has not resulted in unanimous agreement, however, and the criterion outlined here does not seek to defend a fully determined theory of morality, justice or obligation, but rather point to different types of considerations that might be relevant when devising responses to particular cases: it sketches the outlines of a conception of what moral defensibility requires for practical political theory that aims to contribute insights to political elites in real contexts.

Moral defensibility can be approached as a product of taking up what has been called 'the moral point of view' (Gutmann and Thompson 1990, p. 71), which holds that a position should not favour the interests of a particular person or group; it should be impartial or fair and apply to all equally and identically. Such reciprocity expresses a commitment to the status of persons as free and equal as it does not discriminate between persons on the basis of any particularities they may have. But it may not be enough to determine the moral defensibility of a practical political theory that is not universal but forms a contribution to political debate within a particular context (although the moral defensibility criterion developed here is meant as a heuristic device to guide judgment in particular situations: it does not depend on a position concerning the metaphysical status of principles). As section 1.2 explained, the practical form of political theory subscribed to here has affinities with contextual

approaches to political theory. In the words of Miller (2013, p. 48), a prominent advocate of such approaches, determining moral defensibility demands that 'we interpret the context of decision in a certain way, and this tells us which principle to use'. That means such practical political theory is aware of its practical implications: it is sensitive to its likely consequences, and takes into account the importance of special relationships that create moral obligations (Bellamy 1999, pp. 6-7; Miller 2013, pp. 33-38, 46-48; cf. Parekh 2000b, pp. 127-128).

Reciprocity or impartiality as a consideration of moral defensibility corresponds to the 'Golden Rule' that has animated ethics since Antiquity: treat others as you would like to be treated. Rawls' (1971, pp. 17-22) Original Position[28] is one of the most famous thought experiments to bring out the importance of this principle. It depicts the conditions under which parties would agree to the principles ordering the basic structure of society: a fair agreement requires that all differences between the parties are abstracted away, so they are forced to take the perspectives of the others and will only agree to principles that do not privilege particular beliefs, positions or talents. Principles thus agreed would be in the interest of the many, not the few, and avoid the domination of particular groups or doctrines. For constructivists (e.g. Roberts 2007), the reciprocity principle should inspire practical reasoning to progressively detract all subjective beliefs and preferences so as to achieve moral objectivity. A legal analogy to the reciprocity principle is the non-discrimination article found in most constitutions: individuals and groups should be treated equally, regardless of their different backgrounds. Rules should be neutral and applied without reference to characteristics such as ethnicity, gender or religion.

In practice, however, reciprocity may not lead to desirable outcomes. Political theory that is practical in a more applied sense than Rawls' ideal theory acknowledges that the context it addresses will have a history of shifting power relations between different groups in society and a present in which actors are not located equally in terms of

---

[28] See the next chapter for a more detailed discussion of this concept.

symbolic and material resources.[29] These contextual factors are likely to impact on the consequences, both real and perceived, of the proposed action (Favell and Modood 2003, pp. 491-493). A seemingly neutral and strictly reciprocal position might end up disadvantaging some unfairly, or perpetuate existing injustices. It will simply not do to point to impartiality, if impartiality leads to unfair outcomes and fails to challenge covert domination (cf. Bellamy 1999, pp. 62, 120-121; Levy 2007, pp. 187-195; cf. Miller 2008, pp. 46-48).[30] To extend the legal analogy offered above, this consideration can be likened to the indirect discrimination legislation that is often adopted to complement the non-discrimination clause, to protect minorities from seemingly neutral rules that bear on them more heavily than on others.

Finally, practical political theory cannot ignore the special relationships we stand in to significant others and practices. Such relationships carry moral obligations: what we owe to our children, friends, religion or art is of a different urgency and nature to what we owe to a stranger (Bellamy 1999, p. 7; Miller 2013, p. 48). Some (e.g. MacIntyre 2003; Miller 1995) argue that nationality constitutes such a special relationship: nations are communities of ethical significance. Whether that is rationally justifiable remains contested (e.g. Carens 1987; Habermas 1995). Likewise, cultural membership can be seen as a special relationship (e.g. Parekh 2000b); although others understand it as a choice (e.g. Barry 2001). Which relationships should count as special clearly is difficult to determine, but is hard to deny that for most of us, the moral duties arising from special relationships often take precedence over more abstract moral obligations. If a man sees both his beloved wife and a stranger drowning in a pond and he can save only one, the question of who he should save is not really a question (Frankfurt 2004, pp. 35-37). Therefore, practical political theory does not ignore these demands.

---

[29] The importance of context also limits reciprocity in another way: strict reciprocity would require proposals to be acceptable to all people, i.e. universally (cf. O'Neill 1997). That restricts the detail or thickness of any proposal and it is unnecessary for the type of practical political theory discussed here. Rather, proposals need to be reciprocal between the people political action directly pertains to, i.e. citizens.

[30] Of course, actions and particularly political actions may have unintended consequences and we can never be fully aware of all the processes set in motion; but a sincere and thorough attempt at understanding the consequences of a proposal would improve its moral defensibility.

Moral defensibility, then, entails sensitively balancing considerations of reciprocity, consequences and special relationships. These considerations may at times point to different courses of action, and participants to the political debate that practical political theory responds to may appeal to them (as well as different values, interests, and so on) in different ways. As indicated above, the specificities of the situation that practical political theory addresses should help to determine the best response to such conflicts (Miller 2013, pp. 48, 61-63). Contextual awareness helps to understand 'how these obligations interact with each other and what they demand, so that we can appreciate the distinctive force of the reasons involved in the dilemma' (Bellamy 1999, p. 12), in order to come to a balanced solution.

Thus conceived, the moral defensibility criterion likely avoids the risk of simply affirming existing beliefs, but also goes some way to avoiding the risk of irrelevance. However, to make a contribution that is of practical use, or to 'cast some light on the murky business of actual political debate or public policy-making' (Favell and Modood 2003, p. 485), practical political theory goes further: it is also politically plausible. This goes beyond the logical plausibility any political theory exhibits but does not involve empirical plausibility in a strict sense because, as noted above, unity is difficult to quantify, model and predict. Rather, practical political theory is politically plausible: it forms a credible contribution to a debate that is not abstract and eternal but rather concrete and contextual.

As noted above, this implies an engagement with existing positions defended in such debates. Such an engagement both presupposes and facilitates that practical political theory is relevant to the issues and the context it addresses: only when it speaks to the existing ideas of political elites will they recognise it as relevant and useful, and by taking care to explain how it speaks to these ideas, it demonstrates its practical use. This roughly translates into two considerations of political plausibility: first, practical political theory benefits from conceptual relevance, or a clear awareness of how the issue it addresses is understood so that it offers insights that are readily recognised as *applicable*; and secondly, engaging with existing ideas helps practical political theory to show that it could be *acceptable* in the context it addresses, or that it actually stands a

chance of being endorsed following democratic debate so that it may shape political action.

Practical political theory is conceptually relevant to the context it is aimed at: the concepts it uses and the propositions it defends reflect the situation it addresses so that it is clearly applicable. This might seem obvious, but some political theory operates at a level of abstraction that can make its propositions seem distant and foreign (cf. Carens 1996, pp. 167-169). In addition, political theory sometimes pretends or appears to have universal validity when it is really based in local experiences that structure its content more than it concedes. Some multicultural theory that is taken to apply to Europe in fact has a Canadian or North American bias; it was developed with indigenous peoples, national minorities and a particular type of religious communities such as the Amish in mind. The concepts that were developed to understand the appropriate relationships between minorities, majorities and the state in this context may not prove as useful when considering multiculturalism in other contexts (Favell and Modood 2003, pp. 487-495; cf. Levy 2007; Triandafyllidou et al 2006).

A more 'inductive' approach to political theory that starts from contextual knowledge likely enhances the use of appropriate concepts to respond to the issues raised by multiculturalism within the context of study (Triandafyllidou et al 2006, p. 6) and avoids excessive abstraction and false universality. For example, practical political theory about multiculturalism in Europe reflects the common understanding of this concept as referring to post-immigration cultural and religious diversity (cf. Modood 2007, pp. 1-5; Triandafyllidou et al 2006). Practical political theorists hence 'make use of the conceptual markers that are present in everyday judgment' (Miller 2013, p. 42) so that it is clear what they are talking about and so that people will recognise that practical political theory has 'practical force, in the sense that people will be motivated to act on its requirements' (Miller 2013, p. 42). In other words, political theorists share a language or vocabulary with other participants to the political debate to which they contribute, and practical political theory operates within the bounds of this shared language rather than obfuscate it. In the words of the Parekh report (Parekh 2000c, p. x):

'We are fully aware of these and other limitations of the dominant language of debate. Inventing a wholly new vocabulary does not make sense, for such a language would be too abstract, artificial and unrelated to the idioms of everyday life to be intelligible, let alone provide a vehicle for meaningful dialogue'.

Studying how central concepts are understood in political debate helps political theorists to remain grounded in this shared language and offer clarifications and suggestions that are readily recognised by other participants to the debate as useful and applicable.

Secondly, practical political theory is relevant to the context it targets and that means there is a real possibility that its suggestions are feasible – a concern that characterises realistic theory (Carens 1996, pp. 160-164). As Miller (2013, pp. 36-37) explains, such feasibility not only pertains to physical possibilities but also to political factors: practical political theory proposes courses of action that could actually be adopted following political deliberation. In other words, it is acceptable not only in a more abstract sense but also within a particular context: such practical political theory speaks to existing political ideas. However, *contra* Miller (2013, pp. 33-35), that does not mean that practical political theory takes as given the fundamental beliefs current in a given society. It is hard to distinguish fundamental from non-fundamental beliefs, especially as such beliefs may be prioritised differently by different people, and (as Miller [2013, p. 33] himself notes) even fundamental beliefs may change over time. And these fundamental ideas may actually be wrong.

That means any existing consensus is contingent and a practical political theorist may, or indeed should, try to alter it if she believes it flawed (Baier 1989, pp. 782-785; Stears 2005, p. 339-347; Swift and White 2008, p. 67). The moral defensibility criterion, therefore, is meant to stop the approach developed here from being 'contextual all the way down' (Levy 2007, p. 193), or 'political in the wrong way' (Rawls 1989, p. 250). That is, while practical political theory responds to existing ideas in order to be plausible, it needs to be defensible first. While the practical political theorist takes existing ideas seriously 'as prima facie worthy of respect, as objects that are rightly accommodated or taken into account (perhaps because doing so is democratic, or

consensual) rather than merely denounced to the extent that they fail to track a given ideal' (Sabl 2011, p. 170, note 34), she may aim to radically transform them. That means effectively that while practical political theory does not follow the positions that already exist in debate, it is aware of them in order to show how it engages with them and challenges them where necessary. The acceptability consideration, then, mainly functions as a signpost.[31] Practical political theory already achieves a sufficient degree of acceptability by meeting the moral defensibility criterion and applicability consideration, but bears in mind and responds to existing ideas as the background at which it is targeted and the positions in debate it addresses in an attempt to win them over (cf. Parekh 2000b, p. 308).

Yet as noted before, while political theorists such as Miller (2013, p. 38) may recognise the 'need to explore the structure of those [pre-existing political] beliefs', they have failed to do so systematically in the debate on unity in multicultural society (but see: Modood et al 2006; Uberoi and Modood 2010, 2013b). Of course, political theorists may claim to know these ideas because they are simply aware of them, embedded as they are in the same society, language and political debate as the political elites they attempt to influence. A more systematic study of these ideas then seems unnecessary for practical political theory. But as the introduction explained, this leaves political theorists open to the charge that they merely assert knowledge of these ideas without showing evidence for it (as they would do for scholarly expressions of ideas) so that they may be accused of misunderstanding or distorting them.

Practical political theorists can use a more systematic study of the ideas they intend to shape to more credibly achieve their practical aims, as they can then lend empirical support to their claims that they know these ideas and therefore know that their suggestions are applicable and acceptable, and therefore politically plausible, within the context they address. Studying political ideas thus helps political theorists to advance positions that are not only morally defensible but also politically plausible; and to demonstrate rather than assert the latter.

---

[31] Such that proposals only need to make it likely that they might be adopted following democratic debate.

2.4 Analysing political ideas

The previous sections have explained that practical political theory can be conceived as a contribution to political debate and as such it responds to existing ideas, and such a response is facilitated by studying these ideas. Now that we know why the study of the existing ideas of political elites might be useful, this section will turn to how they can be studied. Applying this method will enable this thesis to make an innovative contribution to the debate on unity in multicultural societies in contemporary political theory that not only responds to theoretical disputes but can also demonstrate its practical use within the context of the UK and the Netherlands by responding to the ideas about unity that already exist here.

The analysis of existing political ideas in chapters 4 and 5 will provide information about political realities, but it also aims to exemplify the political debate to which a practical political theory contributes. As suggested before, this requires the possibility of communication between positions defended in political theory and those defended in political debate, which implies a certain similarity in the structure of their arguments. Indeed, Freeden (1996, pp. 13-14) argues that political debate is not inferior to theoretical debate but rather a distinct genre of political thought. It may not follow the same standards of rationality and coherence, but 'the differences between them […] are insufficient to warrant the analysis of their political thinking as belonging to entirely discrete categories' (Freeden 1996, p. 44). That is, the political ideas expressed in parliamentary debates can be analysed as 'amateur political theory' (Favell 1998, p. 15), or in ways similar to how historians of ideas analyse the ideas they find in historical texts (Laborde 2008, pp. 5-6).

The analysis, hence, is interested primarily in the meaning of the positions defended in these debates: understanding their internal logic helps to know how to respond to them. That sets the method developed here apart from approaches in the social sciences that aim to establish the causal importance of ideas (and their supporters) in explaining political developments (e.g. Béland 2009; Campbell 2002; Goldstein and Keohane 1993; Hall 1993; Yee 1996): such approaches largely bracket the content or meaning of these ideas and instead focus on the explanation of their effects.

Understanding the meaning of ideas requires interpreting them. Interpretation, however, can be approached in different ways. Finlayson (2013, pp. 313-314) distinguishes between three ways of approaching language in political theory: first, the 'Kantian tradition' is concerned with 'setting limits to what will be considered reasonable language, and with policing the borders of linguistic legitimacy' (Finlayson 2013, p. 313) through designing principles for deliberation. Many political philosophers dedicate their efforts to determining the best possible definition of particular concepts such as justice (Freeden 2005, p. 121). Yet they continue to disagree, and such disagreement is mirrored in politics (Floyd 2011, p. 44), which leads Miller (2013, pp. 41) to question:

> 'What […] is the point of theorizing about justice if the only result of our efforts is to produce yet one more theory to lay alongside the existing array, with no real prospect of converting anyone who already adheres to a rival theory?'

A second, 'Wittgensteinian tradition' (Finlayson 2013, p. 313), therefore, 'place[s] a question-mark against all those neo-Kantian projects of our time in which we encounter an aspiration to halt the flux of politics by trying definitively to fix the analysis of key moral terms' (Skinner 2002, p. 177). Instead, it focuses on how concepts can be used to express different meanings. Of course, the fact that concepts are currently understood in a variety of ways itself does not mean that no best definition is possible. But it does suggest that to understand how political elites conceive of unity in multicultural society, a more interesting path is to look at how they define and relate central concepts in different ways. Interpretation thus shifts from a concern with truth or the establishment of a singular correct understanding of a concept (cf. Sartori 2009), to a concern with what agents believe to be true. As Skinner (2002, p. 47) puts it when discussing historical interpretation, this means trying 'to think as our ancestors thought and to see things their way'.

It is this conception of interpretation that the thesis follows, and it can be distinguished from a third tradition that is loosely based in Critical Theory and emphasises how ideas are vehicles for power and domination. Their interpretation consequently involves uncovering power dynamics that can then be challenged through their

reformulation (Finlayson 2013, pp. 313-314; cf. Phillips and Jorgensen 2002). It would be foolish to deny that power is central to politics, and it may operate through language and ideas (Agger 1991; Fischer 2003; Freeden 1996, p. 23; Hajer 1995; Lukes 1974)[32]: as indicated above, ideas structure interpretation and action, and every 'serious utterance will always be doing something as well as saying something, and doing it in virtue of what is said' (Skinner 2002, p. 106). Politics may be understood as 'a discursive struggle to create and control systems of shared social meanings' (Fischer 2003, p. 13): when a particular representation of the social world becomes dominant it will structure subsequent actions and policy decisions. However, the empirical analysis is interested in the different positions in debate, in order to subsequently engage with them, rather than in exposing power dynamics. It is primarily concerned with the structure of the ideas that are defended, rather than their relative importance or support or how they reflect power.

The thesis, hence, will interpret the positions defended in debate as compositions of concepts in use. The approach to the study of these positions proposed here differs from that pioneered by Skinner (2002). While he equally directs attention to how concepts can carry a variety of meanings depending on their location in larger structures of argument, he suggests studying context in order to explain why agents hold the beliefs they do and to elucidate their intentions in expressing them, so as to fully grasp the meaning of a text. Such analysis is inappropriate here because in contrast to the canonical texts of political philosophy he studies, the parliamentary debates analysed here are contemporary; much more obviously already contextual (as they respond to political events); less rigorously reflective and complete in terms of argument (Freeden 1996, pp. 39-40); and more 'political': positions may be defended with more strategic liberty (Béland 2009; Campbell 1998; Swift and White 2008, p. 64), such that actors are seen to defend alternative perspectives at different times, in line with their political goals (Jacobs 1998, p. 358).

---

[32] Lukes (1974) distinguishes between three forms of power that specify different ways in which governments can make people behave in certain ways: they may impose coercive rules; they may keep certain issues and interests off the political agenda; and they may use ideological power to shape the desires and needs of people, such that they will want what the government tells them to want.

A more appropriate basis for studying different conceptions of unity advanced in political debate is offered by Freeden's (1996) influential approach to the analysis of ideologies (understood not as distorted views of reality but simply as political orientations or worldviews) that focuses on how concepts are defined and related in larger structures of argument. Such ideologies, Freeden (1996, pp. 22-23, 33-35; 2008) argues, are produced and consumed by groups rather than individuals: they are ubiquitous forms of political thinking and while individual actors may shape, alter or contribute to them, they exist independently of them and authorship is not easily attributed – such that their interpretation also requires reconstructing unintended or implicit meanings. Political actors behaving strategically, then, draw on such ideologies to delineate their position.

The conceptions of unity analysed in chapters 4 and 5 in fact are only partial ideologies: they offer only a limited view of social and political reality and do not specify a definite orientation to most other political values. As such, they may be compatible with different political outlooks. But as partial ideologies, they are still clusters of concepts that are defined in particular ways. Such concepts, Freeden (1996, pp. 47-67) argues, are somewhat indeterminate because they are essentially contestable: their meaning is never ultimately fixed and depends both on traditional usage (which effectively renders it rather stable) and the position they take in connection to other concepts within a particular argument. Such arguments, then, form a temporary 'decontestation' (Freeden 1996, p. 6) of these concepts that responds to both logical and cultural constraints: the forms, or meanings, concepts may take on are limited by logical concerns of intelligibility but also by what is perceived to be normal and legitimate within a particular cultural context (Freeden 1996, pp. 67-75). Freeden (1996, pp. 47-67) suggests a three-dimensional analysis of the form of political concepts that identifies and analyses the larger structure or arrangement in which concepts are embedded; the concepts at its core; and the attributes of these concepts.

Freeden's (1996) ultimate focus is on the concept because his aim is conceptual analysis and clarification of the different ways in which concepts are used. But the aim of this thesis is slightly different: it seeks to understand and then engage with the positions

found in debate. That is, whereas Freeden's aims are strictly interpretative, here they are also normative. Freeden (1996, pp. 6-8; 2005, pp. 133-134; 2008, pp. 210-211) argues that the analysis of political ideologies needs to be a separate activity from a substantive engagement with the topics they address. It is about interpreting and decoding messages, not about judging them in terms of validity or appeal. However, while it is certainly important to retain a critical distance during the activity of interpretation so as to render different positions fairly[33], it is unlikely that a political theorist can ever switch off her judgmental capacities completely. The study of competing normative positions, be they political theories or ideologies, will likely result in a considered judgment that favours some over others. The worry is perhaps that making that judgment explicit, or 'taking sides', might make the discussion of the different positions seem biased, but leaving it implicit does not take away that possibility, just like transparency does not necessarily increase it.

Hence, this thesis switches between interpretative and normative logics: when it uncovers how unity is conceived by political theorists (chapter 3) and political elites (chapters 4 and 5) it seeks to understand what they think unity is and why they think it is important, and it interprets their arguments in order to present their positions as impartially as possible. But subsequently, it will argue that a multicultural conception of unity presents the most defensible approach to unity and is also politically plausible. Ultimately, therefore, the focus here is not on the concept but on the positions that arrange and delimit concepts, because these are the positions that are responded to in the second stage. The analysis of how concepts are used, then, is a means to understanding what is being argued for in a proposition (Swift and White 2008, p. 65).

The suggested focus on larger structures of argument rather than concepts also brings into clearer view how ideologies are not only internally structured but also respond to external factors such as political or social events, and other ideologies in debate (Finlayson 2012, pp. 757-758). Thus, Finlayson (2012, p. 757) notes that more than simply an arrangement of concepts, 'an ideology is a way of making political claims,

---

[33] And the positions analysed in chapters 4 and 5, hence, do not reflect my opinion, although they follow from my interpretation and reconstruction of the arguments.

proving judgements and staging interventions in ways that might persuade others to assent to them'. Ideologies, effectively, seek to convince their audience that the propositions and the perspective on the social world they defend are valid and appropriate (Finlayson 2012; cf. Parekh 2000b, p. 308): they are moves in an argument (Skinner 2002, p. 115). That means that analysing and contrasting the different perspectives that are responding to each other may help to recognise their full shape: a plural perspective can 'use each [position] to illuminate the insights and expose the limitations of others' (Parekh 2000b, p. 339). This helps to identify conflicts and overlaps between them.

The analysis of positions comprised of ideas found in political debate presented in chapters 4 and 5, then, interprets their meaning that is partly contextual, and proceeds to translate it 'into general categories, give it a rational grounding and a formally logical structure' (Laborde 2008, p. 5), with the aim of accounting 'for their justificatory force by interpreting and reconstructing their logic as accurately as possible' (Laborde 2008, p. 6). Context shapes the way concepts are conceived and related within larger structures of argument – or, as Freeden (2005, p. 115) puts it, 'access to our understanding of political thinking [is] always mediated through its spatially and temporally contextualized instances' – and the introduction of political and social context in the previous chapter and the case study chapters is meant precisely to explain their shape. Nevertheless, the content and structure of these arguments can be appreciated in their own right. Interpretation brings out the reasons, rationale and commitments of the positions on unity in multicultural society that are defended by political elites in the UK and the Netherlands. These positions are thus interpreted and reconstructed into something like 'political theories' that can be compared across linguistic contexts (Favell 1998, p. 5). This process of reconstruction draws on the insights into the normative issues and potential justifications for different courses of action that the next chapter offers in order to draw out the implications of the sometimes incomplete arguments political elites make (cf. Swift and White 2008, pp. 62-63).

To put to practice these somewhat abstract insights and analyse how concepts are defined and combined in different ways in different perspectives on unity articulated in parliamentary debates from the UK and the Netherlands, the approach developed here draws on frame analysis. This method developed in the social sciences and offers more practical suggestions for data analysis. It focuses on how social issues are interpreted and represented differently: any issue can be 'framed' in different ways, for actors can highlight different dimensions, provide alternative explanations, attribute blame and responsibility in different ways, and downplay or ignore different elements (see: Bacchi 2000; Béland 2009; Rein and Schön 1994; Stone 2002).

Such 'framing' is a way of constructing social reality, providing a more or less coherent picture of what is at stake and what needs to happen (Benford and Snow 2000). This corresponds to what Freeden (2005, p. 115) refers to as 'the construction of political visions'. Skinner (2002, p. 5) equally takes an interest in 'the power of words to underpin or undermine the construction of our social world'. Just like political theorists construct visions of social reality to aim for, so do political actors – although they do so more strategically: they frame or package their ideas to appeal to a broad audience (Benford and Snow 2000, p. 614). Typically, ideas are represented as being close to the central values of a society, displaying a good fit with national traditions and needs (Béland 2005, 2009), so that they may appear less abstract than in political theories.

To identify frames competing within a broader debate, analysis starts from a clear understanding of what they look like (Roggeband and Vliegenthart 2007; Triandafyllidou 2006). Frames perform three core tasks: they provide a diagnosis, or problem definition; a prognosis, or a solution; and motivation for actors to support and act on their content (Benford and Snow 2000, pp. 614-618). In other words, they make sense of reality and present arguments about how to respond politically to social issues. This roughly corresponds to the three interlinked components of a political argument that Favell (1998, pp. 14-15) distinguishes: they contain epistemological claims about the reality of the situation; explanatory claims about the causality of political action; and normative claims about what ideals to aim for. These tasks feed

into a list of 'sensitising questions' (Roggeband and Vliegenthart 2007, pp. 315-316; Triandafyllidou 2006, p. 136) to aid the recognition of frames (Appendix 1). In the social sciences, studies often identify frames in order to then draw out causal influences on their content (e.g. Timmermans and Scholten 2006) or to establish their importance in terms of frequency (e.g. Koenig 2006; Roggeband and Vliegenthart 2007), but as indicated, here they are considered in terms of their internal logic.

The interpretative quality of this method (like most qualitative research) inevitably brings in an element of subjective judgment. To substantiate the interpretation with evidence and lend it credibility, the frames will be presented through the use of quotes from the debates. These are the quotes that most pertinently express ideas that are central to the frames. Some of the quotes selected might fit with more than one of the frames, and this indicates how the frames overlap; their position in one frame rather than the other depends on the place the quote takes in the argument the speaker makes. As noted above, furthermore, the same speaker may refer to different frames, but the focus of the analysis is on the frame and not the speaker, so that the articulation of the idea is more important than who articulates it. To reiterate, this is because this thesis approaches the frames as positions in debate that it aims to address in terms of their content, and this content – unlike political significance – can be assessed independently of who utters it. These frames represent ubiquitous patterns of political thought that in some sense exist independently of political actors (who may draw on them to position themselves and in so doing may nonetheless modify them) (cf. Freeden 1996, pp. 22-23, 33-35). Finally, as the frames are interpretations and reconstructions of the arguments found in the debates, intended to model and clarify what is at stake, the relationship between the quotes and the frames is not completely direct (as the frames are not purely descriptions). The quotes illustrate the discussion of the frames, which also draws on other parts of the debate that sometimes expresses ideas in a less 'quotable' way.

This section has suggested a method for the analysis of political ideas that identifies different perspectives, or frames, within a wider debate and interprets these as instances of political thought, or in terms of how they specify and relate particular

ideas. This method will be applied to parliamentary debates from the UK and the Netherlands. The results this yields will provide political theorists with a view of the debate they address, so that they may engage with the positions that exist in this debate. Nevertheless, this analysis is also valuable in its own right as it tells us something about the world we live in by clarifying how questions about unity in multicultural society are understood in these two countries. In Freeden's (1996, p. 39) words, it supplies 'us with the abundant varieties of political thought from which to embark on a voyage of understanding of this facet of the human mind and its linkage with the worlds of government, power, and group-activity'.

2.5   Research design

This chapter has explained why practical political theory can benefit from studying political ideas (to be able to more effectively shape the ideas and guide the actions of political elites involved in shaping political action; and to be able to show its political plausibility); and how such ideas can be studied (by analysing frames comprised of ideas defended in debate as political thought). This section will now focus on what will be analysed: the sample of empirical data. The choice for this sample reflects the interdisciplinary quality of this thesis that combines interpretative and normative logics (cf. Laborde 2008, pp. 1-26): the analysis not only aims to interpret the ideas present in these debates but does so with the aim of subsequently responding to them.

The problem this thesis is interested in concerns attitudes to unity and diversity. The UK and the Netherlands are two pertinent examples of countries where such attitudes have recently attracted popular as well as scholarly attention: these are the two countries most strongly associated with a recent perceived crisis of multiculturalism as they were both initially upheld as models of multiculturalism and now seen to have turned against the concept (e.g. Bertossi 2011; Joppke 2007; Koopmans 2008). Multiculturalism and national identity have received sustained public attention here during this crisis, so that debates from these countries should form an interesting data source. Hence, the empirical analysis may offer an empirical counterpart to political theories of liberalism and multiculturalism (cf. Favell 1998, p. 14; Modood 2007, pp. 6-8). Comparing how unity is conceived in two different countries, moreover, helps to

highlight local idiosyncrasies (Laborde 2008, pp. 5-6), so that it may help to achieve 'a certain distance' (Sen 2006, p. 232) from the perspectives in each case that allows for the challenging of parochial prejudice (cf. Parekh 2000b, p. 339), and thus help to avoid the complacency that realistic theory might risk.

It is clear that this comparison is not a goal in its own right but rather intends to further our understanding of each case study. Consequently, the research design is not strictly comparative in a social scientific sense: the cases were selected for their familiarity with multiculturalism as a political idea, not because their analysis would warrant generalisation. This is in contrast to much comparative work on multicultural policy that has instead focused on countries with more contrasting approaches to diversity, such as the UK and France, to bring out differences and similarities across these different approaches and illuminate more general problems (e.g. Brubaker 1990; Favell 1998). This is because the ultimate aim of this thesis is normative rather than explanatory.

The analysis focuses on parliamentary debates. This is an interesting data source, because as Freeden (2008, p. 206) notes, these debates 'serve witness to the mores outlining the permissible and the knowable in a particular context'. After all, parliamentarians are involved in shaping legislation, which codifies and consolidates such mores. Therefore, ideas advanced in parliamentary debates help to understand how certain types of approaches might be considered more readily applicable and acceptable than others, not only by these parliamentarians but also by the wider population whose mores they supposedly represent. Parliamentary debates can be read as a subset of wider political debates because they are set within a context to which they are responsive, as parliamentarians want to appeal to their electorate, so that the ideas articulated here tend to reflect those in society. This is reinforced by the fact that Members of Parliament are important actors in the establishment of wider political frames (Huysmans and Buonfino 2008, p. 4): they attempt to shape how society views issues and are important actors in wider political debates. Parliamentary debates, then, form part of and reflect wider political debates that play out in civil society and the media.

This part of the wider debate is of particular interest because the political elites that participate in these debates are involved in shaping political action. As noted above, practical political theory normally contributes to political debate with the aim of guiding political action and such action runs through the ideas of political elites involved in shaping it. Parliamentarians shape legislation but also the wider context in which policy is made: they operate at the intersection of ideas and action. Their ideas about unity, multiculturalism and national identity are important because they influence political action, which in turn affects these phenomena. Parliamentary debates, thus, give an insight into how important political elites conceive of political dilemmas such as the problem of unity in diverse societies.

Parliamentary debates, furthermore, are interesting given the methodological position outlined above: the contribution this thesis aims to make can be understood as a contribution to political debate. These debates exemplify the background of existing ideas that it responds to, and as an instance of sustained political deliberation, they may give insight into any political agreement that already exists (cf. Uberoi and Modood 2013b). They hence point to the pre-existing consensus that practical political theory addresses and help to determine the acceptability of a position (cf. Miller 2008, pp. 47-48). Thus, Favell (1998, pp. 9-10) finds that in France and the UK a wide consensus exists on the terms of the debate and overall policy rationale. Although political actors engage in contentious argument, they agree on the structure of the debate and the meaning of a number of key concepts. Parliamentary debates showcase different positions in the debate on unity in diverse societies in interaction, while also pointing to overlaps between them.

Finally, parliamentary debates are well suited to the type of analysis outlined in the previous section. As a sample of institutionalised political deliberation, they are instances of political elites engaging in public reason-giving, elaborating their position and justifying their proposals, while trying to persuade their opponents. These actors do so through the reading of prepared speeches that is controlled by a chair who also manages interjections (Van Dijk 2000, p. 99). Van Dijk (2000, p. 100) describes how parliamentary debates follow a particular format: the speeches contain a problem

definition that is aligned with the ideology of the speaker; an account of the negative consequences that will occur if their proposed action is not taken; an evaluation of current policies and a critique of the proposals of opponents; and finally, a defence of proposals for improvement. This recalls the three functions of frames introduced above. Moreover, the topics parliamentarians address in these speeches and the way these are presented are strategic political choices (Van Dijk 2000, pp. 99-101); they are the result of conscious framing. The speeches that make up parliamentary debates set out positions that are indicative of frames and include the type of justificatory reasons that facilitate the interpretation of the argument as political thought.

A sample of parliamentary debates was selected for analysis. First of all, the time period for the selection was set to 2001-2011, as during these years questions of national unity received sustained public attention as part of a perceived crisis of multiculturalism fuelled by a series of events such as the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (2001), as well as those in Madrid (2004) and London (2005); the riots in Northern English cities (2001); and the murder of Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam (2004). In this context, questions of unity are debated in the register of multiculturalism and national identity. Transcripts of the debates are available online and can be searched for keywords. Both cases have bicameral legislatures and both Chambers are included in the analysis.

Selection occurs in two steps (cf. Huysmans and Buonfino 2008, p. 6). First, all debates that mention both multiculturalism and national identity (and the relevant substitute terms determined by a literature review for each case study: see Appendix 2) are collected. Second, a selection based on relevance is made following a first reading by assessing the topic the debates address; and the quality of the argument. That is, debates are selected if they address issues relevant to unity, multiculturalism and national identity – if they contain information about the normative questions that the thesis asks; and if they do so in a reflective manner, with participants giving reasons and justifications – if they provide the type of information that the thesis is interested in.

Debates that mention multiculturalism or national identity in passing, for example in relation to the war in Afghanistan, are thus excluded; and the sample consists of

debates that are weighed towards mostly reflective speeches, rather than those that are heavy with party-political struggles. These criteria reflect the aims of the empirical chapters of the thesis: the sample is meant to provide the best possible information about the conceptions and justifications of unity, multiculturalism and national identity current among parliamentarians in each country.

This selection strategy resulted in slightly different samples for both case studies (Appendix 3). In the British case, the most reflective debates on the most relevant topics were seven debates from the House of Lords. In the Dutch case, the overall relevance and reflectiveness was of slightly lesser quality than these debates, and the sample therefore is bigger: it consists of twelve debates, all from the 'Second Chamber' (which in the Netherlands is the directly elected chamber). This discrepancy between the samples stems from the selection criteria that are primarily concerned with the quality of information the debates contain. It is not an obstacle to the purpose of the empirical analysis, which is to understand how unity is conceived in these contexts; the research design is not strictly comparative, and although the selection may not represent exactly the same subset of political elites, it does represent the wider sample of debates on these issues, and indeed contains the most relevant and reflective ones.

This chapter has explained that political theorists who aim to be of practical use contribute to political debate to shape the ideas and guide the actions of political elites involved in shaping political responses to unity. Knowing the ideas these elites already have helps them to enhance and demonstrate the practical use of the clarifications they offer about what unity is and how it might be fostered. The next chapters will now clarify how unity is understood by political theorists contributing to the debate on unity in multicultural societies (chapter 3) and by members of the political elites practical political theorists attempt to influence (chapters 4 and 5).

3 Conceiving unity

The previous chapter explained that political theorists can be of practical use by offering clarifications and suggesting courses of action that are both morally defensible and politically plausible, and that they can study political ideas to demonstrably meet the latter criterion. But another important criterion for any political theory is clarity, and this has been lacking somewhat in the conceptions of unity offered by political theorists. That is, as chapter 1 noted, while they agree that unity is important, they have largely neglected to specify exactly what they mean by it. This chapter will first offer an outline of what any conception of unity entails and then use that to make explicit the hitherto implicit conceptions of unity advanced by different political theorists contributing to the debate on unity in multicultural societies in contemporary political theory. As the next two chapters will show, this perspective on unity also helps us to understand how British and Dutch political elites think about unity in different ways. After chapter 6 explains the implications of these existing political ideas for political theorists, chapter 7 will argue that the multicultural conception of unity, outlined in section 3.5 below, is most defensible and also politically plausible in the UK and the Netherlands.

The debate on multiculturalism in contemporary political theory developed from the early 1990s onwards, after claims for minority rights had been around in politics for a while. It was sparked in particular by Kymlicka's (1989, 1995) work. Much normative theory in this period was still heavily influenced by Rawls' (1971) seminal *A Theory of Justice*, to which this debate also responds. Although previous chapters have noted that his ideal theory is not practical political theory in the sense intended here, his work is included in this chapter because of its notable influence.[34] Multiculturalism developed as a broad range of thought that favours a political response to diversity based on the public recognition of minority cultural groups, in contrast to the liberal insistence on

---

[34] In fact, this chapter discusses the most influential advocates of these different conceptions of unity within the debate on unity in multicultural societies in contemporary political theory regardless of their conception of the nature and purpose of political theory (Kukathas' theory also has little direct practical guidance to offer).

individual rights in a neutral public sphere.[35] Such ideas were not entirely
unprecedented (Nimni 1999, p. 290) but received renewed attention and elaboration.

As chapter 1 indicated, multiculturalism sits uneasily with conceptions of unity that
require a high degree of cultural sameness. Yet some form of unity is necessary to
explain why diverse citizens would cooperate to generate, and abide by, collective
political structures and decisions and live together harmoniously with their
differences. As seen, political theorists are unclear about what unity is, even as they
disagree about how it may be fostered (and it is clearly difficult to foster something if
we do not know what it is, and therefore how to recognise if it is sufficient or lacking,
growing or eroding): while some, for example, argue for a political consensus (Rawls
1993), others advocate using a national identity (Miller 1995).

This chapter analyses the different conceptions of unity that are implied in such
positions advanced by political theorists. Section 3.1 explains what conceptions of
unity comprise and this perspective on unity is then used to make explicit how
political theorists think about it. Four such conceptions of unity that underpin or form
part of broader political theories can be distinguished. Section 3.2 presents and
dismisses a negative conception of unity: certain political theorists reject unity as a
potential source of oppression, but while their criticisms are important, their vision
does not help us to think about unity in actual societies. The remainder of the chapter
will present the other three conceptions of unity in their own terms, without judging
between them: the purpose of this chapter is simply to clarify how unity is conceived
in different ways and to uncover the internal logic of these different conceptions of
unity. Once we have a clear view of these distinctive conceptions, chapter 7 will then
evaluate them and argue for only one of them.

The three conceptions of unity are presented as three broad and loosely coherent
families of approaches which nonetheless overlap and intermingle and that can be
characterised as political conceptions of unity (section 3.3); national conceptions of
unity (section 3.4); and multicultural conceptions of unity (section 3.5). This distinction

---

[35] But, as chapter 1 explained, it also refers to a sociological reality, a political response to that
reality, and a vision for the nation.

is meant as a heuristic device rather than a strict typology, but it helps to illustrate the differences between conceptions of unity implicitly advanced by political theorists. Note that this presentation departs from a more conventional way of arranging this literature that identifies different 'modes of integration' (Parekh 2000b, p. 199; see also: Parekh 1999; Modood and Meer 2011; Modood 2012; cf. Walzer 1997), because these effectively focus on how states (should) respond to cultural diversity whereas here the focus is more directly on unity.

3.1 A perspective on unity

As noted before, political theorists often do not specify exactly what they mean by unity. In order to uncover and analyse their conceptions of unity, therefore, we need to first know what such conceptions consist in. Once we know the properties of conceptions of unity, we can begin to recognise and reconstruct them from the arguments political theorists make. This section therefore delineates what conceptions of unity comprise by offering a new perspective on unity.

Unity pertains to the bonds that hold a political community together (Canovan 1996, p. 30), or the attachments that most citizens need to feel for such a community to function (Uberoi 2007, pp. 142-143). As such, it is not simply an abstract value but a feature of social reality, in which something is united. It thus forms part of the view of social reality that a political theory expresses. Rawls (1989, p. 234) notes that any theoretical position 'presupposes a view of the political and social world'. Miller (2013, p. 73) emphasises how such a 'sociology' needs to be 'realistic', or empirically plausible. But this view of social reality is not only descriptive (cf. Modood 2007, p. 122). Kymlicka (1989, p. 162, emphasis added), for example, discusses how the '*moral* ontology' of liberalism only recognises individuals. These views of social reality, in other words, express beliefs not only about what society is, but also about what it ought to be. Indeed, recall that political theory constructs 'a vision of human life' (Parekh 2011, p. 39) to aspire to, and here such visions pertain to the ideally united society. The previous chapter already indicated that such views matter for they are not without effects: the 'linguistic turn' (Freeden 2008, p. 199) in philosophy raised attention to how language is dynamic and structures experience and action, so that 'to the extent that

our social world is constituted by our concepts, any successful alteration in the use of a concept will at the same time constitute a change in our social world' (Skinner 2002, pp. 117-118).

Political theories concerned with unity, then, can be read as expressive of a vision of the united society. So how do different theorists think the polity is, and should be, united? To answer this question, it helps to disaggregate such visions of social reality into the elements that are united and to examine the relationships between these elements. That is, unity is a cognate of unit and it implies that different elements are united into this unit, or whole. This logically implies the following questions: *what* is this whole that is united, how do we characterise it? *Who* belongs to this whole, or what are the elements that are united into it? *How* are these elements united into it, through what kind of relationships? And with that in mind, we can now see how such unity can be found lacking: how might it be *impeded* and how it can be *fostered* by uniting the different elements into the whole? Conceptions of unity provide answers to these four questions and as the next sections will show, they do so in rather different ways.

First, we need to know the character of the whole that is united. In modern liberal democracies, this comes down to the question whether a polity is, in first instance, a *nation* or a *state*. As Miller (1995, pp. 18-19) notes, nation and state are commonly used interchangeably, but it is important to distinguish between these two concepts as some states may contain several nations, and some nations may be spread out over several states: *nation* refers to a specific type of 'community of people', and *state* denotes a 'set of political institutions'. Indeed, Nimni (2009, p. 323) points out that most nations currently do not have their own state. This distinction also enables discerning a disagreement about what comes first: is, as nationalists assume, the nation a source of unity with a legitimate claim to political self-determination, preferably in the form of a state (Miller 1995, p. 81)? Or does national unity follow from state policies in the form of nation-building (Gellner 2010, pp. 77-78)? If this is the case, that means the state has some responsibility for the nation it builds and the national identity it constructs or reconstructs, as the products of its actions. Hence, there is a stronger claim that it

should be concerned with ensuring these are as just as possible – that equality between free fellow nationals is real. But, alternatively, maybe unity is not national but simply an effect of state sovereignty such that citizens are united through and under the law (cf. Miller 2013, p. 143).

Second, we need to know who belongs to the polity: 'who' are the elements that are united into a whole? In what Parekh (2000b, pp. 179-185) terms the 'dominant theory or model of the state', individuals, as citizens, are understood to belong directly to the state: they are united 'in terms of their subscription to a common system of authority' (Parekh 2000b, p. 181). This is the implicit sociology of liberalism, but Miller (2013, p. 73) argues that multiculturalism poses a problem for it, because in multicultural societies citizens may identify with communities other than the polity first. Schachar (1999, p. 89) therefore instead proposes a 'trichotomy' of the individual, identity groups and the state: she argues that multiculturalism attempts to redraft the relationship between the individual and the state, with citizenship no longer a direct link between them but sensitive to groups (see also: Canovan 1996, p. 37).

Such groups can be defined in terms of their structural position in society (whether they are oppressed) or in terms of their cultural (or other) identity (Young 2007, pp. 60-88) and they can be understood as associations entered into by choice (e.g. Kukathas 2003) or as inherited communities that shape their members (e.g. Parekh 2000b). Given the distinction between nation and state outlined above, the aforementioned trichotomy here becomes a fourfold structure: individuals and groups may belong in first instance to the nation or the state. Depending on how these concepts are defined, then, a polity may comprise only individuals or individuals as well as groups. A vision of what a united society does and should look like then includes some or all of these four concepts.

Third, now we have the elements that form the basic building blocks of conceptions of unity, we need to know how they are related. At this stage, these relationships remain somewhat opaque because they depend on how political theorists define individuals, groups, the nation and the state when they devise conceptions of unity that express a vision of a united society, and they do so in rather different ways (cf. Freeden 1996). To

give an indication, Uberoi (2007, pp. 142-143) suggests that unity requires three types of attachments: reciprocal attachments between citizens (as individuals and groups), and attachments that these citizens feel to a shared political life, as well as to the political process that makes it possible. Parekh and Canovan, on the other hand, suggest that citizens are not connected to each other directly but such attachments are mediated by the political community (Parekh 2000b, p. 341) or the nation (Canovan 1996, pp. 68-72). But how, then, do individuals and/or groups belong to the polity? Effectively, united citizens share something– be it certain experiences, forms of interaction, emotional ties, beliefs, sensibilities, cultural or civic values, a language, and so on – and they may do so in different ways, but political theorists disagree about the degree and kind of characteristics that need to be shared. Based on section 1.1 (and this will be further elaborated in the sections below), we may infer a rough distinction between approaches that emphasise rational commitments to shared political values; approaches that emphasise a shared national identity; and approaches that emphasise how citizens are united through being members of groups that are different but equal.

Fourth, now that we know how different elements are united into a particular type of whole, we can begin to discern different ideas about why unity might be lacking or impeded and, relatedly, how it can grow and be fostered. For example, if marginalisation and discrimination effectively exclude particular groups from full belonging to the nation, and therefore impede unity, then addressing these processes through multicultural policies is necessary to nurture the latter (Kymlicka 2007, p. 47). Or alternatively, if unity depends on shared political values, then it may be deficient if there are groups or individuals in society who do not adhere to these values and policies to rectify this might include civic education (cf. Canovan 2000, pp. 420-421). If the above questions aimed to draw an overall picture of unity, this question brings into perspective how it is not a static feature of social reality but dynamic. The previous chapter noted that ideas shape how issues are represented as requiring political intervention and such representations often imply certain responses. This dynamic dimension of unity implies how states should address it as it suggests a route towards more comprehensive, just or stable unity.

Taken together, responses to these four questions present a set of elements and relationships that may be defined in different ways and that combine into rather different conceptions of what unity is, and different visions of what a united society looks like. To provide a crude distinction that will become more precise in the following sections, such visions can be characterised as political (with citizens belonging to the state through rational beliefs); national (with individuals belonging to the nation through national identification); and multicultural (with individuals and groups belonging, the latter mediating the membership of the former, to both nation and state). As will become clear, these positions also offer slightly different reasons for why unity is important and desirable. First, however, the next section will consider why unity may *not* be desirable.

3.2   Unity as oppression

Chapter 1 already explained that for some, unity may have negative connotations given its traditional link to national identities that required a high degree of cultural sameness. Those with views and practices other than the majority would be marginalised or oppressed so that unity would require coercion. Hence, Young (1990) and Kukathas (2003) present (rather different) positions that share a suspicion of unity while giving space to diversity, the former of which Miller (1995, p. 131) therefore classifies as 'radical multiculturalism'.

Young (1990, p. 227) states that 'the polity cannot be thought of as a unity in which all participants share a common experience and common values'. Unity, for her, imposes homogeneity and suppresses and marginalises difference. That means that *what* is united in Young's (1990) view is clearly not a nation, as commonly understood. Indeed, the polity is better characterised as a state, which in her position is explicitly democratic. The state in Young's view (1990, pp. 96-121) should not be impartial, because the ideal of impartiality is a liberal myth that denies difference. Not only would transcending particularity mean something important would be lost, as it contains a perspective on reality; but it is actually not possible. An impartial state thus ends up reflecting a set of norms presented as universal and neutral that are in fact those of the dominant majority, while those of the minority are expulsed from the

public realm and 'constructed as deviance and inferiority'(Young 1990, p. 116). To challenge such hierarchies, these differences need to be brought into democratic deliberation so that the civic public is not homogeneous – made up of citizens who leave their differences behind in the private sphere – but heterogeneous.

Kukathas (2003, p. 22) thinks the good society should be conceived not as a 'social unity' but as an archipelago: a collection of communities that operate together in a sea of mutual toleration. As such, *what* is united is a political community that is only one of several associations individuals belong to (Kukathas 2003, p. 171-172). It does not constitute their identity and does not subsume other communities, as that would create pressures for homogeneity, suppress cultural diversity and lead to oppression. Membership is conventional rather than the result of significant relationships: the polity is not a nation, an inherited community with shared practices and values, but an association whose authority and stability are grounded in acquiescence, or its continued acceptance (as evidenced in the absence of protest) by its members (Kukathas 2003, pp. 178-210). This authority is commonly expressed in the state (although it could take different forms) (Kukathas 2003, p. 173). Hence, the polity both follows from the state as its boundaries reflect historical circumstances; and underpins the state, because the latter's authority is based in the continued acquiescence of the members of the polity.

Who belongs to the polity is conceived in rather different ways by Young and Kukathas. For Young, difference typically attaches to social groups so that it is groups who belong to her heterogeneous public. Their identities need to be publicly recognised in order to pursue equality between them (Young 1990, p. 163). Group difference is the result of interaction and social processes: it is ascribed, relational and dynamic, and it cross-cuts groups. These groups shape individual identities as individuals always find themselves already having a group identity and then need to decide how to respond to that identity; whether to endorse it passively or actively, alter it, or reject it (Young 1990, pp. 45-48). They are free to leave groups and shape their own lives, but 'group differentiation is both an inevitable and a desirable aspect of modern social processes' (Young 1990, p. 47). Citizens are inevitably characterised by

the groups they belong to and are part of the polity as group members: they can never totally shed their group identity and perspective. This is particularly obvious in the example of race, but clearly also applies to other types of groups. As for *how* these groups belong, it is clear that they do so precisely through their participation in democratic institutions, expressing their difference in the pluralised democratic institutions of the state (cf. Young 1990, pp. 163-191). That means unity is enabled through the existence of the state that empowers groups to assert their identities.

Kukathas (2003, pp. 41-72, 89-93), on the other hand, calibrates the relationship between groups and individuals in a different way. He (Kukathas 2003, p. 55) emphasises the importance of a shared human nature that gives rise to a fundamental shared interest in the absence of force to act or live against the claims of one's conscience. This translates into the priority of the principle of individual liberty, which implies freedom of association in groups that in turn give rise to diversity. For him, acquiescence underpins all associations that are therefore 'not fixed but highly mutable things which change with economic, legal, and political circumstances' (Kukathas 2003, pp. 78) – and that holds even for ethnic groups (Kukathas 1992, pp. 110-111). That is, if (for whatever reasons, including in response to changing circumstances) group members no longer accept the terms of the association they will leave or change it so that the group changes its nature or dissolves.

This also means that a free society upholds an exit option: people need to be free to leave their group without facing physical violence, and to join another association (Kukathas 2003, pp. 25-38). Meanwhile, toleration is central: the state should not intervene in internal group affairs, even where those affairs are illiberal (Kukathas 2003, pp. 160-162), and groups have the freedom to treat and educate their children in line with their convictions (Kukathas 2003, pp. 134-137). Groups, then, may shape individuals (and their conscience) but the latter always remain separate (Kukathas 2003, pp. 67-73) and ultimately prior, as the former rely on their consent. Hence, it is individuals *who* belong to the polity, which is one association among others, and it is clear that through their acquiescence is *how* they belong.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, both these conceptions of unity are rather thin and do not specify substantive shared experiences or features: Young's account locates it in groups that express their difference and Kukathas' grounds it in individual acquiescence. The answer to the fourth question posed above, how unity is *impeded* and, relatedly, can be *fostered*, takes a particular form here as both positions actually seem more concerned about how it can be avoided. Hence, Kukathas (2003, pp. 175-181) fears that the elevation of a political (or any other form of) community over other associations could lead to pressures for uniformity and the oppression of diversity – implying that unity can be fostered by emphasising shared features. Likewise, Young (1990, p. 179) rejects measures to promote unity such as for example the use of a public language in official institutions because it 'requires that persons transform their sense of identity in order to assimilate. Self-annihilation is an unreasonable and unjust requirement of citizenship'. While it is unfair that some citizens will have to learn a second language for use in public circumstances where others do not, we can question whether it really equals self-annihilation; it might simply be a relatively minor transformation or even an addition. Meanwhile, we could think of appropriate forms of compensation instead, particularly as sharing an official language facilitates civic interaction between different groups in society, which might help them to see themselves as part of a larger, united whole. But that presupposes that unity is desirable, and relatedly, that there are risks associated with disregarding it.

In fact, that claim seems reasonable once we consider that some conception of unity is necessary to explain and justify democratic political authority (Taylor 2007, pp. 138-146). Such authority is understood to be not purely coercive but reflecting the input of the citizens it governs, thereby respecting how they are free and equal (Habermas 1998, p. 215). But that means these citizens need to be united enough to 'take and enforce collectively-binding decisions' (Parekh 2000b, p. 196): to interact together to come to courses of action that all can accept as legitimate, even where these may not reflect the desires and needs of all groups in society equally at all times.

Unity is necessary to explain legitimate authority, and such authority is necessary to intervene in situations where groups mistreat their members. Kukathas (2003, p. 194)

would reject such centralised power, but does so at the risk of condoning the oppression of vulnerable group members such as women, children and dissenters at the hands of their own group for the dubious benefits of toleration, in an attempt to ensure that the state should never infringe individual freedom of conscience (see: Eisenberg and Spinner-Halev 2005a, b; Shachar 1999). This is what Shachar (1999, p. 88) calls 'the paradox of multicultural vulnerability': while multicultural policies may protect minorities from assimilatory pressures arising from wider society, they may also leave vulnerable group members unprotected from internal pressures. Okin (1998, 1999) famously brought home the point that multicultural policies that delegate authority to group leaders, who all too often tend to be patriarchal, traditional men, might make women worse off when they condone traditional practices aimed at controlling them.

Yet simply leaving may not be an option for these mistreated people as personal and group identities are entangled (Weinstock 2005, p. 236), it would mean a painful breach with family and friends (Reitman 2005, pp. 193-196), and may not even be conceivable following lifelong socialisation (Reich 2005, p. 215). History of course shows that exit is in fact possible as individuals have left their groups (Spinner-Halev 2005, p. 164), but other liberals would still argue for a more sensitive interpretation of the exit option. Barry (2001, pp. 146-162), for example, argues that membership in groups should be voluntary not in the sense of an initial choice, but because adults should be able to freely decide to leave without facing prohibitive material and physical costs (see also: Spinner-Halev 2005).

That leaves aside the question whether the exit option is fair or desirable, as it effectively presents persons that face harmful treatment by their group with the choice between their culture and their rights (Shachar 1999, p. 100), or simply leaves them in the rather bleak situation in which the costs of leaving are higher than those of staying (cf. Barry 2001, pp. 149-155). There is an argument for limiting the power of groups over their members, then, and that assumes political authority. Such authority was only considered legitimate, rather than coercive, if it reflects the equal input of

different but united citizens. It is clear that the positions discussed above do not offer a plausible account of such unity.

Note, however, that Young's position is not as radical as Kukathas'. For while she claims to reject unity, her position actually implies a conception of it that centres on constitutional democracy. Her heterogeneous public engages in principled deliberation (Young 1990, p. 190) which means it must conceive of itself as already united in some way and agrees to shared rules of dialogue (Miller 1995, pp. 96-98). Young (1990, p. 190) even suggests they share principles of justice and these likely find consolidation in the constitutional foundation that she (1990, pp. 93-94) argues democracy requires; itself a type of (at least political) unity. Moreover, as Miller (1995, p. 149) notes, her account assumes the existence of a state that can perform the act of public recognition, and such recognition itself ultimately aims for inclusion, equality and participation, processes that both presuppose and work towards a more fair form of unity: a more just society. In other words, the state is actively involved in shaping unity through challenging prejudice and inequality. Hence, Young's position implies a conception of unity that remains somewhat unclear but seems located in shared political sensibilities and may therefore bear some similarity to those to which we will now turn.

3.3   Political conceptions of unity

Advocates of a political conception of unity (Rawls 1971, 1993; Habermas 1995, 1998) accept the suspicion that unity based in cultural sameness could lead to the marginalisation and oppression of minorities, but reach a different conclusion. Rather than reject unity, they hold – contra Young, as seen above – that citizens can transcend their differences to agree on a set of political values that are acceptable to all because they do not favour any. Such unity is important for stability and legitimacy, which require generalised consent with politically coercive structures. *What* is united, then, is a polity that is characterised in decidedly political terms and associated with the state rather than interpreted as a nation.

Rawls (1971, pp. 6, 137) thinks unity is necessary for stability and legitimacy: a polity needs to agree on principles of justice in order to be stable and confer legitimacy on

coercive political institutions. In Rawls' (1993, p. 12) ideal theory, membership is not freely chosen but stable over the course of a lifetime: the polity's 'members only enter it by birth and leave it only by death', so it is not simply an association, as in Kukathas' view above. But Rawls (1993, pp. 40-43) emphasises that does not make it a community: it is not governed by a shared view of the good life. Rather, society can be characterised as a scheme of social cooperation that brings mutual advantage to all participants and in which individuals can freely cultivate their conceptions of the good (Rawls 1999, p. 4).

The inherited nature of Rawls' (1993, p. 12) 'closed society' means it somewhat resembles a nation (cf. Miller 1995, p. 93; O'Neill 1997, pp. 419-420) although, as will become clear below, the ties that define its unity are understood not as cultural or communal but as rational and reasonable. Habermas (1998) actually thinks that *what* is united is something that grows out of a nation. Although national unity, characterised by shared cultural values, practices and a sense of community, was necessary for the development of democratic states (to explain their boundaries and to sustain solidarity between citizens), we are now 'on the precarious path towards postnational societies' and are 'on the point of superseding' nation-states (Habermas 1998, p. 107).

Allegedly, the existence of democratic states enabled a new form of social integration to arise that sheds the cultural connotations citizenship had in earlier phases (so that *demos* becomes uncoupled from *ethnos* [Habermas 1998, p. 132]): democratic procedures themselves can sustain unity through facilitating communication and interaction. Thereby, such procedures obtain legitimacy as they ensure that all citizens are both the 'addressees' and the 'authors' (Habermas 1998, p. 215) of the law. The polity is 'primarily conceived as a legally constituted entity' made up of citizens who may 'uphold their constitution as an achievement in the context of the history of their country' but think of their nation primarily in universalistic and 'cosmopolitan terms' of international cooperation (Habermas 1998, p. 114). While unity used to flow from the nation, it now arises from the practice and values of democracy itself.

Clearly, *who* is united in both these accounts are individual citizens that are free and autonomous. That is, they are not simply subjugated to a common system of authority

but actively involved in shaping it, for the latter is presented as legitimate precisely because it rests on their consent. For Rawls (1999, p. 17), these citizens rationally pursue and revise their life plans, suitably adapted to the society in which they live. These individuals, nonetheless, also belong to groups that affirm the value of their life choices and their self-worth – society is 'a social union of social unions' (Rawls 1999, p. 462), an overarching framework embracing smaller social groups. But the diversity of beliefs these groups represent remains in the private sphere, as these individuals qua citizens transcend their particular group memberships to recognise how political values normally outweigh their other moral commitments where they may conflict (Rawls 1993, pp. 138-157). Reasonable citizens recognise that the political values of freedom and equality are fair because they would benefit members of all moral traditions equally.[36] This is because they are motivated not only by a rational conception of their good but also by a sense of justice that makes them want to do what is right (Rawls 1999, p. 17), which means that society has a shared end in the form of just institutions (Rawls 1999, p. 462).

Habermas gives somewhat more emphasis to the social nature of individuals. For him (1998, p. 145), citizens are shaped by the networks of communication in which they are embedded:

> 'a nation of citizens is composed of persons who, as a result of socialization processes, also embody the forms of life in which they formed their identities, even if as adults they renounce the traditions in which they were brought up'.

But while he thinks groups are important, it is ultimately only individuals who belong to the polity. Groups matter because the freedom of individuals can be protected 'only by simultaneously protecting the context in which their formation processes unfold' (Habermas 1998, p. 139), so that the principle of individual rights itself (Habermas 1998, p. 221) implies that in multicultural societies 'all persons must also be recognised as members of ethical communities integrated around different conceptions of the

---

[36] 'People are reasonable when […] they are ready to propose principles and standards as fair terms of cooperation and to abide by them willingly, given the assurance that others will likewise do so. Those norms they view as reasonable for everyone to accept and therefore as justifiable to them'. (Rawls 1993, p. 49).

good' (Habermas 1998, pp. 224-225). But it is not clear how such recognition can come about as Habermas 1998, p. 225) emphasises that it needs to be strictly 'uncoupled from the abstract political integration that includes all citizens equally' – i.e. as individuals – and which requires 'the legal system's neutrality vis-à-vis communities'.

Effectively, that means the political culture needs to be separated from any cultural group, even though it tends to be suffused by the majority culture, so this may be a difficult process (Habermas 1998, p. 118). It is based around a constitution that embodies universal principles that are interpreted in light of national histories.[37] Constitutional patriotism, then, relies on democracy to unite citizens: 'the citizenry as a whole can no longer be held together by a substantive consensus on values but only by a consensus on the procedures for the legitimate enactment of laws and the legitimate exercise of power' that is based in shared 'rationally based conviction' (Habermas 1998, p. 225). In other words, 'democratically structured opinion- and will-formation make possible rational agreement even between strangers' (Habermas 1998, p. 137). Unity, then, does not require homogeneity but rational agreement 'between citizens who recognize one another as free and equal' (Habermas 1998, p. 135): citizens rationally agree on democratic procedures, even if they share nothing else, and this is *how* they are united.

According to Habermas (1998, pp. 118-119) such constitutional patriotism motivates loyalty and unity in citizens precisely because 'democratic citizenship pays off not only in terms of liberal individual rights […] but also in the enjoyment of social and cultural rights […] in the form of social security and the reciprocal recognition of different cultural forms of life'. The latter suggests that while recognition is important, it needs to be reciprocally provided by groups rather than by the neutral state. This chimes with cosmopolitan positions that emphasise how diversity is dynamic, hybrid and eclectic in nature and call for open attitudes and interaction rather than public recognition (e.g. Gilroy 2004; Waldron 1992).

---

[37] Habermas (1998, pp. 215-226) somewhat paradoxically both accepts that constitutions and states can never be ethically neutral and argues that they need to become more so in order to unite diverse citizens.

Rawls (1993) also thinks that a consensus on political values represents *how* citizens are united, but his conception is slightly different from Habermas' (1998, p. 225) 'procedural consensus'. Initially, he (Rawls 1999, pp. 102-160) also thought citizens could rationally agree on liberal principles of justice to order society's basic structure, and that they would do so through a process of reasoning represented in the device of the 'original position', where parties are placed behind a 'veil of ignorance' that obscures all knowledge of any talents, beliefs, customs, sensibilities and so on they may have, and their position in society.

But Rawls (1993) later thinks that this supposes too homogeneous a view of the moral beliefs in a society. Consequently, he now presents his theory as 'free-standing', or independent of any such beliefs (Rawls 1993, p. 10). It is a 'political conception of justice' limited to the political domain that citizens can agree on despite their reasonable disagreements brought about by the limits the 'burdens of judgment' pose on our reasoning (Rawls 1993, pp. 55-64). This conception lies at the basis of an 'overlapping consensus' that citizens support for different reasons (Rawls 1993, p. 134). This political conception of justice is justified using 'public reason' (Rawls 1993, pp. 212-230) which upholds the free and equal status of rational and reasonable citizens by avoiding any contentious claims and appealing only to a shared fund of political ideas latent in the public political culture of democracies and accessible to all.

The overlapping consensus, as 'the most reasonable basis of social unity available to us' (Rawls 1993, p. 149), is more than a 'mere modus vivendi' (Rawls 1993, p. 145) that groups would seek to overthrow if they became more powerful: it is supported from within the different doctrines that exist in society so that it appeals to moral conviction rather than expedient reasons. But it can grow out of a modus vivendi over time. Citizens may first acquiesce in and then come to affirm the political values embodied in the constitution because they recognise how the latter facilitates fair and just cooperation, so that a constitutional consensus arises (which can be likened to Habermas' position). Subsequently, sustained cooperation within stable institutions generates trust and confidence and citizens will develop political conceptions of justice to debate competing interpretations of the constitution that overlap because they draw

on the same set of fundamental ideas, and hence an overlapping consensus grows that is more elaborate as it also expresses shared principles of justice and applies also to basic institutions (Rawls 1993, pp. 158-168).

This already indicates that Rawls thinks unity is not realised until an overlapping consensus exists, or in other words, that it is *impeded* where a political conception of justice is not shared. Once liberal rights and institutions are put in place, it grows over time; the principles they embody enable unity and stability because they generate their own support as they will instil a sense of justice in the population over time (Rawls 1999, p. 119). Their acceptance 'forges the bonds of civic friendship and establishes the basis of comity amidst the disparities that exist' (Rawls 1999, p. 454): fairness and mutuality facilitate sympathy and friendship (Rawls 1999, p. 462). An overlapping consensus will come about through sustained interaction in shared institutions and appealing to a shared public reason, which will lead citizens to recalibrate their moral intuitions and affirm the political conception of justice.

Likewise, unity is *impeded* in Habermas' account as long as citizens have not yet reached rational agreement on democratic procedures; but he (Habermas 1998, p. 137) thinks rational communication in democratic institutions will result in shared commitments to the constitutional principles that enable democratic legitimacy, *fostering* unity that is no longer based in national myths of ethnic kinship but in constitutional patriotism. Indeed, if a genuine political public sphere develops at the European level, unity might at some stage become European rather than national (Habermas 1998, p. 153). Unity, on this view, is tied to the state (which for Habermas was originally linked to the nation; and for Rawls governs a closed society that is probably quite like a nation) and then arises almost organically as rational and reasonable individuals come to acknowledge how liberal institutions protect their freedom and hence affirm it from within their deepest convictions. That suggests the existence of the state (a liberal democracy) in itself is enough to inspire unity: states do not need to deploy any further policies to foster it.

But not everyone is convinced by the idea that we can simply discard the nation as a source of unity now that democratic procedures are in place. For as noted in section

1.1, it is difficult to tell whether what is doing the uniting in the accounts above is indeed agreement on political values, whether rational or reasonable, or the persistence of initial national ties between citizens.

3.4 National conceptions of unity

Advocates of national conceptions of unity consider that citizens are united through their membership in the national community. Nationalism can be defined as 'an ideological movement that seeks to attain and maintain autonomy, unity and identity for a population some of whose members believe it to constitute an actual or potential "nation"' (Smith 2004, p. 23). As such, it roughly divides into two forms that offer slightly different conceptions of unity. The first, more traditional version of nationalism has not found much support in political theory recently, although it can still be discerned in political contexts across Europe: the nationalism that inspires individuals to fight for their country and functions as an almost tangible emotional tie between country-members seems hard to capture and defend in rational and universal terms. Indeed, Freeden (1998) argues that it is not a coherent ideology in the way liberalism or socialism is. Most contemporary theoretical engagement with nationalism aims to shed its more radical aspects while retaining its attractive dimensions: it remains hard to conceive of another way of realising the solidarity and loyalty that viable democratic welfare states require (cf. Canovan 1996, pp. 45-46, 71-72). This second, liberal version of nationalism is a modification of the first version and to do justice to these attempts to liberalise it, the two will be presented separately in this section.

Clearly, *what* is united in the more radical version of nationalism is the nation. Note that nations remain somewhat hard to define: they may, for example, be understood as political creations (Gellner 2010, pp. 77-78), as social rather than political communities (Scruton 2003, p. 271), as the expression of individual and collective will (Canovan 1996, pp. 9-10) or as political communities that are imagined as its members may never meet face to face (Anderson 2010, pp. 56-63; see also: Calhoun 1993). But nationalists tend to emphasise how national membership is largely unchosen as people find themselves born into a particular nation (Miscevic 2010). They typically understand the

nation as an intergenerational, ethno-cultural community that predates the state (Scruton 2003, p. 278) and that is often presented as natural and organic (Freeden 1998, p. 762; see also: Kedourie 1966). The nation is the source of its own unity, and nations require self-determination: nationalists think nations need their own state to govern their homeland (such self-determination can also be understood as the expression of popular sovereignty against tyrannical regimes) (Freeden 1998, pp. 755-756, 760).

National membership is considered emotional and might be likened to membership in an enlarged family (cf. Walzer 1983, p. 41). Such common descent 'creates the obligations of inheritance: we must receive from our forefathers what we also pass to our children' (Scruton 2003, p. 274). It is precisely this intergenerational continuity, the inherited nature of national characteristics such as language, culture and so on passed on through familial ties, which is thought to facilitate the emotional pull of the nation that sustains in citizens the motivation for sacrifice and redistribution that democracy and social justice require (Canovan 2000, pp. 425-427; see also: Markell 2000). Therefore, for the nationalist, loyalty to the nation should override other loyalties, such as those to social groups (Smith 2001, p. 22).

In other words, groups are secondary to national membership so that it is individuals *who* belong to the nation here. National unity is important to individual well-being: MacIntyre (2003, pp. 286-300) explains that national membership enables people to make sense of their lives as they see these as 'enacted narratives' (MacIntyre 2003, p. 297) that connect them to significant others, and the nation is the largest morally significant community that embeds the individual in its story. It embraces and threads together the narratives of all the smaller communities in its midst and thereby gives meaning to individual lives. In so doing, it also specifies moral obligations: it tends to be in national languages, stories and symbols that morality itself is grounded (see also: Walzer 1989). Nationalists consider that because people value the regard of their fellow nationals, they attempt to live up to the moral standards their nation specifies (MacIntyre 2003, pp. 291-293). The nation, in other words, 'signifies the repository of social goods and values' (Freeden 1998, p. 757) of a given community.

Note that this conception of individuals and their relationship to the communities of which they are part is rather different from that underpinning the liberal positions discussed above: individuals are not autonomously committed to the polity but embedded in it and shaped by it. This is *how* individuals belong to the nation: through emotive bonds of belonging and obligation, actualised through membership and identity that comprise shared meanings and practices that facilitate reciprocal recognition, solidarity and trust (cf. Guibernau 2004, pp. 143-140).

This emphasis on shared features and experiences, however, suggests a certain hostility to cultural diversity. The tendency for nationalists to stress the distinctness of every nation often leads them to claim the superiority of their own (Kedourie 1966, pp. 60-103), which easily slides into aggression both externally and internally, towards minorities (Miscevic 2010). Indeed, nationalists assume 'that no polity can be stable and cohesive unless its members share a common national culture' (Parekh 2000b, p. 197). Hence, Scruton (2003, p. 278) once suggested 'the real price of community […] is sanctity, intolerance, exclusion, and a sense that life's meaning depends upon obedience, and also on vigilance against the enemy'. But Miscevic (2010) terms such aggressive nationalism 'invidious' and Freeden (1998, pp. 757-758) points to its logical proximity to fascism.

Indeed, because unity here requires a high degree of internal homogeneity, it would be *impeded* by the existence of cultural diversity. To rectify such an apparent or impending lack of unity, nationalists demand that minorities that are culturally different adapt to become part of the nation (Parekh 2000b, pp. 197-198). If this is considered impossible, the nationalist would suggest excluding minorities from the nation altogether (i.e. withholding citizenship rights and so on from them), or repatriating them, and severely limiting further immigration. This urge for internal homogeneity stems from an interest in cohesion and belonging that is considered important enough to (sometimes) outweigh the demands of diversity and individual liberty – where national unity is at stake, individual sacrifice may be required. In any case, nationalists believe that such sacrifice is beneficial, as it is precisely through absorption in the nation that the individual achieves fulfilment (Kedourie 1966, p. 73).

But national unity does not need to be conceived in terms of internal homogeneity. Liberal nationalists take seriously the liberal argument that citizens should be free to express and develop their own identities in their private lives. For them, unity does not require cultural assimilation: it only requires that all members of the nation share a national identity and traditions that leave enough space for their differences. Within the debate on unity in multicultural societies in political theory, this position is associated most poignantly with Miller (1995), who offers the most sophisticated account of it, and Kymlicka (1995), who plays a central role in the debate on multiculturalism.

A shared national identity, for Miller (1995), characterises *what* is united: the nation. For him (Miller 1995, pp. 17-47), the nation is a real community, although it depends on the belief of its members that it exists (which is different from the organic conception of the nation implied above), and it may legitimately feature in personal identities. National communities, argues Miller (1995, pp. 25-27, 41-46), have identities that distinguish them from other nations, the attributes of which are hard to articulate and need not be biological but can be cultural, consisting of values, sensibilities and practices. National identities reflect the common public culture – understood as a limited part of the wider culture, which makes this national identity more open to (private) cultural diversity than the version suggested above – and myths about a shared history. These identities feature in people's personal identities (albeit in different ways and with different degrees of importance, so that nations are internally diverse)[38] and thereby enable mutual recognition and provide them with a sense of community, belonging and attachment.

The nation, moreover, has a good claim to political self-determination (Miller 1995, pp. 81-118): national unity normally predates the state. Indeed, Miller (1995, pp. 73, 85-87, 100-101) thinks that nation and state should be closely connected, with the latter reflecting and protecting the national public culture. The state, then, is conceived not so much as neutral (as in the political conception of unity) but as national. Furthermore,

---

[38] Miller (1995, p. 14) notes how these identities may even be latent until they are activated by 'events that are genuinely momentous'.

Miller (1995, pp. 49-80) thinks the nation carries ethical significance: nationality is a source of moral obligation. The obligations that arise from it are such that nationals, out of solidarity and loyalty, make contributions to the community without expecting these will be matched directly or immediately, which means that redistribution programmes can go beyond strict reciprocity (Miller 1995, pp. 49-80, 2003, pp. 304-315, 2008). [39]

Kymlicka (1995, p. 76) thinks national groups are characterised by a 'societal culture', which 'provides its members with meaningful ways of life across the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational and economic life, encompassing both public and private spheres'. This understanding of what is shared between citizens is more capacious than Miller's emphasis on a public culture. Societal cultures are linked to a territory and a language and pervasive because they are embodied in shared institutions and social practices. Given this link to institutions, there is again a tight connection to the state. Indeed, states cannot but reflect societal cultures in their choice of official language, public holidays and so on, so that the state 'unavoidably promotes certain cultural identities, and thereby disadvantages others' (Kymlicka 1995, p. 108). Where these belong to nations, that is problematic and hence nations are entitled to self-government rights (either in an independent state or through appropriate accommodation within a multination state) in order to maintain their distinctive societal culture (Kymlicka 1995, pp. 27-30).

This is important because membership in such cultures for Kymlicka (1995, pp. 75-106) enables individual freedom. Individuals are free if they lead their life 'from the inside' (Kymlicka 1995, p. 81), that is, according to the beliefs they themselves value; and if these beliefs remain open to questioning and revision based in new information. They can only achieve such freedom if they have access to a 'range of meaningful options' (Kymlicka 1995, p. 83) from which to choose and such meaning typically resides within

---

[39] That means that social justice is not simply a collective insurance scheme that meets rational self-interests, but can extend to those misfortunes that citizens can reasonably expect will not be their lot, such as permanent handicaps. This is the case because the bonds of nationality provide motivation: nationals feel that the act of making a contribution in itself is valuable (Miller 1995, pp. 67, 72).

the shared understandings embedded in societal cultures. And membership in such cultures is a deep bond that is not easily shed so this kind of freedom cannot simply be obtained through accessing alien cultures. Consequently, maintaining societal cultures through their embodiment in political institutions is important. It is individuals *who* belong to the nation, then, and it should be clear *how* they do: they are embedded in a societal culture that does not determine them but enables them to signify, choose and revise the set of culturally shaped ends, beliefs and values they pursue (Kymlicka 1995, pp. 89-92). Meanwhile, non-national (ethnic) minorities that arise out of immigration do not have a societal culture as they have left it behind when they chose to migrate, and for them there is no other option but to integrate into that of the majority (Kymlicka 1995, pp. 30-31, 77-79, 95-101).

Miller also portrays national membership as individual and critical. While individuals are embedded in the ethical traditions and public culture of the nation and shaped by its identity and such membership is 'for the most part unchosen and unreflectively acquired' (Miller 1995, p. 43), that does not mean they cannot critically reflect on the content of these traditions, culture and identities. These simply present a starting point that individuals may revise as they work out their own identity through reasoning, and figure out how their national identity may relate to their other identities (Miller 1995, p. 45). For liberal nationalists, national identification which each other and the national community is *how* these individuals belong to the nation, but such identification is not uncritical and is reflectively endorsed rather than simply inherited. This distinguishes liberal from more traditional forms of nationalism (above).

National unity, here, depends on a shared national identity or shared membership in a societal culture, both of which are internally diverse (Miller 1995, pp. 25-27; Kymlicka 1995, pp. 121-123, 2001, p. 57). Therefore, it is potentially *impeded* where groups do not share in them. Hence, Miller (1995, pp. 92-99; see also: Kymlicka 1995, p. 77) suggests that groups can be a source of division in society if they are not united by an overarching national identity that enables trust between them so they may cooperate in democratic institutions and recognise obligations of social justice towards each other. This is especially problematic for groups characterised by ethnic identities, because

national identities often grow out of ethnic identities so they may conflict with those of minority ethnic groups (Miller 1995, p. 121); and public institutions reflecting the societal culture may not include such minorities as they do not automatically reflect how they also belong to these minorities (Kymlicka 1995, pp. 30-31, 107-108).

To *foste*r unity, both Miller (1995) and Kymlicka (1995) suggest integration, though their understanding of it is rather different. Kymlicka (1995, pp. 30-31, 77-79, 95-101) thinks immigrants need to become part of the wider societal culture while retaining their heritage, thereby making the former more diverse. This means public institutions need to fight prejudice and discrimination. It also requires 'polyethnic rights' (Kymlicka 1995, p. 30), or multicultural policies recognising and accommodating minority cultural identities, which aim for inclusion and participation through the adaptation of society's major institutions to better reflect the population's diversity (Kymlicka 1995, pp. 171-181). Kymlicka (1995, p. 188) thinks the 'shared identity' that social unity requires should build on shared history but does not entail uniformity or demand adaptation from minorities: it needs to accommodate diversity and accept that minorities 'belong in different ways' (Kymlicka 1995, p. 190) to the nation. Unity is founded on diversity and relies on the valuation of both diversity and the particular groups within the nation. However, that valuation is itself the product of, rather than the basis for, solidarity and identification, and their political creation may be impossible (Kymlicka 1995, p. 191).

Meanwhile, Miller (1995, p. 154) thinks that publicly recognising minority identities through multicultural policies would worsen the situation: such policies might 'ossify group differences, and destroy the sense of common nationality on which democratic politics depends'. For him, integration proceeds through recasting national identity through 'a collective conversation in which many voices can join' (Miller 1995, p. 127) about the nature of membership. This is about finding 'a story that can be told in different ways and with different emphases by different groups' (Miller 1995, p. 138). Integration is a two-way process in which national identity is 'stripped of elements that are repugnant' to minority groups; that in turn give up those values that are

incompatible with it, while they 'are inducted into the national traditions and ways of thinking' (Miller 1995, p. 142), for example through a national education curriculum.

Hence, while liberal nationalism remains somewhat uncomfortable with group diversity, it does not contend that unity requires its assimilation but suggests more complex responses that allow minorities to retain their cultural identity in private, alongside a shared (public) national identity that is internally diverse, or shared institutions that reflect the diversity of the population. Effectively, in order to be united, citizens (including minorities) no longer need to share a moral value system but only to take part in wider, overlapping shared ways of life. Nonetheless, this goes somewhat beyond the political values and institutions advanced as generating unity in political conceptions of unity. As liberal nationalism requires minorities arising out of immigration to integrate into the culture of the historical majority, some think it disadvantages minorities who are expected to change more than majorities are, and the multicultural conceptions of unity discussed in the next section offer an alternative.

3.5   Multicultural conceptions of unity

Advocates of multicultural conceptions of unity (Modood 2007; Parekh 2000b) are more optimistic about the possibilities of forging a new and plural form of unity in a multicultural society. Such unity is considered important not only for stability and to enable collective action but also, as noted in chapter 1, to enable the harmonious coexistence of different groups: without it, 'a weakly held society feels threatened by differences and lacks the confidence and willingness to welcome and live with them' (Parekh 2000b, p. 196).

For Parekh (2000b), *what* best characterises the whole that is united is a state. He (Parekh 2000b, p. 184) notes how modern states presuppose homogeneity as they expect all citizens to 'subscribe to an identical way of defining themselves and relating to each other and the state'; and such homogenising pressures mean that a state 'has a tendency to become a nation' – hence understood here as a relatively homogeneous community. Unity, then, originates not in the nation but in the state, but in multicultural societies this conception of the state is problematic as it ignores how

different cultural groups have different ideas about its 'nature, power and goals' (Parekh 2000b, p. 185). Because the state's citizens 'do not, and cannot be made to, share a moral and cultural consensus, it is no longer a cohesive cultural unit [i.e. a nation] and cannot base its unity on the cultural homogeneity of its citizens' – instead, it could be a 'community of communities' that attach to the state in different ways (Parekh 2000b, p. 194).

Citizenship, then, is understood not as a uniform identity but as plural in form (cf. Parekh 2000b, p. 184): it 'is not a self-contained area of life with its own distinct values but one of several mediums in and through which human beings express and live out their deepest beliefs' (Parekh 2000b, p. 324). The state may need to be restructured: multicultural societies 'need to find ways of pluralising the state without undermining its unity and the ability to act decisively in the collective interest' (Parekh 2000b, p. 195). Unity, then, runs through a state that is not neutral or national but multicultural: it reflects the diversity of the population it governs. The polity is a state – although, as will become clear below, relationships between communities may evolve and grow thicker.

In Modood's (2007, pp. 126, 147) conception of unity, *what* is united is a national body of citizens, as national boundaries usually coincide with citizenship provisions. The polity is thus both nation and state, because the two are hard to separate, so the multicultural citizenship he proposes is accompanied by a national identity (Modood 2007, p. 146). Such citizenship is not simply a legal status but also an activity: it is embodied in the practices of civic interaction, which occur not only in official institutions but also extend to civil society. These interactions make citizenship concrete and they also shape it as they contribute to a dialogue about what it is to be a citizen (Modood 2007, pp. 122-126).

Moreover, citizens are 'not uniform and their citizenship contours itself around them' (Modood 2007, p. 126): citizenship is not a transcendental identity that is the same for all citizens, but is shaped by each individual. Hence, citizenship is plural in form, and 'each part of the plurality has a right to be a part of the whole and to speak up for itself and for its vision of the whole' (Modood 2007, p. 126). Clearly, the whole itself is plural

which may make it somewhat indeterminate, but in any case it does not need to be conceived in 'essentialist-perfectionist Platonic' (Modood 2007, p. 111) terms. Instead, it may be thought of in terms of family resemblance: like members of a family, citizens resemble each other in different ways (Modood 2007, pp. 95-98, 115; see also: Miller 1995, p. 27). The existence of different, overlapping interpretations of citizenship and belonging, then, does not jeopardise the possibility or coherence of unity (Modood 2007, p. 111).

In both these visions, it is citizens *who* belong to the whole that is united. These citizens do not transcend their differences upon entering the civic realm but remain characterised by their distinctive identities that often arise out of group membership. Such membership is important to individuals and therefore groups as well as individuals are politically significant and belong to the whole. Parekh (2000b, p. 120) explains that humans are 'culturally embedded': they are shaped by and can never totally leave behind the norms, values, expectations and so on of the cultures in which they are brought up. Cultural membership is not chosen but inherited and cultural groups are not associations, as Kukathas (above) suggested, but communities that generate obligations and command loyalty (Parekh 2000b, pp. 155-162). Consequently, 'the basic respect we owe to our fellow-humans extends to their culture and cultural community as well' (Parekh 2000b, p. 196). The whole comprises both groups and individuals: it can be understood as a 'community of citizens and a community of communities, and hence as a community of communally embedded and attached individuals' (Parekh 2000b, pp. 340-341).

Modood (2007, p. 37) emphasises how groups are important to people both as a source of meaning and identity and because they affect their life chances, because difference from majority norms is often represented as inferiority that 'makes difficult equal membership in the wider society or polity'. It is normally groups that are considered different and such difference potentially impedes equal membership, or unity: when thinking about unity, we cannot leave out groups. Moreover, these groups take different forms: they can be defined by their activities, relationships, particular characteristics and so on, and may expect different strengths and types of

commitments from their members, who may in turn relate to their groups in different ways (Modood 2007, pp. 37-44, 94-98). Citizens, then, belong to the polity as individuals with individual rights, participating in the practices of citizenship, but also as members of different types of groups, and 'different kinds of groups […] might choose to organize in different ways and to relate differently to key civic and political institutions. […] we should on this approach not require symmetry but be able to live with some degree of "variable geometry"' (Modood 2007, p. 83).[40]

Both Parekh (2000b) and Modood (2007) emphasise political membership captured in citizenship, but to understand *how* citizens belong to the whole we need to specify what equal citizenship means to them. That is, multiculturalists (Modood 2007, pp. 47-61; Parekh 2000b, pp. 239-263) do not subscribe to the notion that equality requires identical treatment and identical relationships of belonging for all individuals (as proposed in the political conception of unity above). Rather, they think equality should be sensitive to groups: where states inevitably reflect majority cultures, they need to make accomodations to minorities in order for these to enjoy equality with the majority, so that equality requires differential treatment. Such equality is not only legal but also symbolic: as the norms and values of the majority, but not those of minorities, are reflected in the state the latter may appear inferior or invisible, and recognition serves to normalise them and further their acceptance. And of course, these forms of inequality interact with material inequality as poverty often invites stigma.

As Modood (2013, p. 47) notes, this conception of equality draws on Taylor's (1994) influential argument for recognition. He (Taylor 1994, p. 25) holds that since our identities are constituted and maintained in dialogue with others and partly shaped by social recognition, 'nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression'. For example, if Muslim women are systematically portrayed in the media as meek and less able than both Muslim and other men, as well as other women, and this image is reinforced in their daily interactions with other persons, they may come to internalise it and lower their aspirations and expectations of themselves. A 'politics of

---

[40] Modood here discusses secularism, but I see no reason why this logic could not be extended to other (i.e. non-religious) groups in society.

equal dignity' that respects these women for what they have in common with others as human beings or citizens, while important, is not enough to overcome such misrecognition. It needs to be attenuated by a 'politics of equal respect' that would recognise these persons precisely in their particular identity as Muslim women, just as others would be recognised for their specific identities (Taylor 1994, pp. 51-61). Recognition, for Taylor, expresses how equality requires treating people differently and can help avoid harm. Here, it shapes equal citizenship and thereby enables unity, as equal citizenship in this conception of unity is mediated by group membership so that united citizens belong to the polity not in spite of (or by transcending) their now recognised group identities, but through them (and of course, citizens may choose not to associate with their citizenship in this way, but the point is that they can).

For Parekh (2000b, p. 207) such shared citizenship in first instance is limited to sharing a structure of authority that all can agree to: once in place, such a structure enables a multicultural society to hold 'itself together long enough to enable its different communities to become used to each other and build up common interests and mutual trust'. Over time, stronger ties may develop: through living together and sustained and equal dialogue, groups constitute and unite around a plural collective culture and way of life that respects their diversity (Parekh 2000b, pp. 219, 221, 341). In fact, 'there is no obvious reason why a culturally plural society should not develop a sense of community, solidarity, common loyalties and a broad moral and political consensus' (Parekh 2000b, p. 171) – but recall that it cannot be brought to: a consensus cannot be manufactured but needs to grow organically (Parekh 2000b, p. 194).

Clearly, the polity here moves towards a nation, as citizens are united not only through a shared legal status but also through a shared way of life and shared sensibilities, and this is cast in a positive light. But Parekh's (2000b, p. 341) insistence that citizens from different cultural groups are not connected to each other directly but through the mediation of their membership in the political community suggests that it is not quite a nation, as commonly understood, after all (and when he [Parekh 2008, pp. 56-70] discusses national identity more elaborately elsewhere he consistently avoids the concept of nation and refers to identification with the *political community* instead).

As seen above, Modood (2007) more readily characterises citizenship as national. Citizens belong through taking part in the practices of citizenship and through seeing themselves reflected in representations of national identity. The latter is necessary to counterbalance the emotional pull of cultural identities that might otherwise become divisive. National identity enables people to feel they belong, and should follow from a process of renegotiation where minorities and majority enter into constructive dialogue so that it is inclusive and reflects the present make-up of the population (Modood 2007, pp. 146-150). Likewise, citizenship is thought to involve 'ways of imagining and *remaking* ourselves as a country (Modood 2007, p. 128, emphasis added): national identity, citizenship, and hence unity, here are considered somewhat malleable and dynamic. In other words, the bonds that hold a community together can be re-imagined to become more inclusive.

This recalls Miller's (1995) position above, but there is a difference in the motivation for such re-imagination. Here, it is not the diversity of groups that potentially *impedes* unity but their exclusion, so that *fostering* unity requires not only the reshaping of representations of national identity but also more substantial inclusion. After all, as Parekh (2000b, p. 342) points out, only when minorities feel valued by and at home in the polity will they feel committed to it. The multicultural conception of equality pertains to such inclusion. Currently, minorities are often marginalised and occupy disadvantaged positions in society. Multicultural policies need to target such inequality and remove obstacles to equal participation and belonging (Parekh 2000b, pp. 239-263; see also: Modood 2007, pp. 47-61), and that includes the promotion of more inclusive conceptions of national identity (Uberoi and Modood 2013a, pp. 132-136). Thus, Parekh (2000b, p. 203) thinks a society's 'political symbols, […] collective self-understanding and view of national identity' will 'need to be suitably revised when shown to misrepresent or ignore the presence, experiences and contributions of marginalized groups': in states where culture and institutions are biased towards the majority, multicultural policies that publicly recognise diversity need to ensure minorities are equally recognised as valued and legitimate members of society and share in the common sense of belonging, so that they may have the security and self-confidence to interact in society (Parekh 2000b, pp. 203-204, 236-237).

This recalls Kymlicka's multicultural understanding of integration (although, as noted before, he doubts whether that could ever result in a shared identity and solidarity whereas here this outcome is deemed possible and desirable). Modood (2013, pp. 146-155) also qualifies multiculturalism as a form of integration and emphasises how multicultural policies challenge the prejudice and stereotypes that *impede* unity by excluding some groups from equal participation in the practices of citizenship. Such integration requires not only the promotion of inclusive national identities but also that multicultural policies are designed to engage with groups on terms appropriate to their specific needs (Modood 2007, pp. 83, 146-150).

Concerning Muslims, arguably the most significant minority group for multiculturalism in Europe today, this involves reconsidering secularism and developing a more sensitive understanding of it that appreciates that the separation of church and state is never absolute and pluralises existing institutional arrangements (Modood 2007, pp. 72-86; see also: Williams 2008). Clearly, in contrast to the political conceptions of unity, political structures here are not seen as a predetermined source of allegiance that all citizens can share, but as dynamic, plural and potentially in need of change where they exclude minorities. Only when they are inclusive of different individuals and their groups do they enable equal membership and consequently facilitate unity.

This chapter has offered a new perspective on unity that helps us to understand how political theorists conceive unity through reconstructing the visions of the ideally united society that underpin their positions, by asking: what is the whole that is united; who belongs to this whole; how do they belong to it; and how is such unity impeded and fostered? Together, the answers to these questions provide insight to how unity is conceived. While these questions more or less logically follow from understanding unity as an attribute of a united polity, they have thus far not been specified and connected in the way section 3.1 has done. This perspective on unity helped to distinguish and analyse four conceptions of unity that had hitherto remained implicit: one negative, one political, one national and one multicultural. The next two chapters

will now show that this perspective on unity also helps us recognise conceptions of unity in the – somewhat less reflective – positions put forward by political elites from the UK (chapter 4) and the Netherlands (chapter 5).

4 Case study I: Conceptualising unity in the UK

The previous chapter offered a perspective on unity that discerns conceptions of unity through reconstructing the visions of the ideally united society that underpin positions put forward by political theorists. These visions can be reconstructed by asking what the character of the whole that is united is; who belongs to this united whole; how do they belong to it; and how is such unity impeded and fostered? This chapter and the next will now show that these questions are also helpful to understand how unity is conceived by political elites participating in parliamentary debates. The ideas of these elites are the ones that political theorists who aim to be of practical use intend to shape and knowing them facilitates formulating proposals that are clearly applicable, acceptable and therefore plausible within these contexts. As some of the literature analysed in the previous chapter focuses more or less explicitly on the UK (Miller 1995; Modood 2007; Parekh 2000b) and hence might be of practical use here especially, this case study will be presented first, before the next chapter turns to the Netherlands. Subsequently, chapter 6 will specify the implications of the ideas presented in the case studies for political theorists. Finally, chapter 7 will explain why a multicultural conception is not only most defensible but also politically plausible.

This chapter will first give a brief outline of the context in which the debates from the British House of Lords that are analysed here were set. After all, as chapter 2 explained, frames are shaped by the context in which they appear, so that knowing this context facilitates the interpretation of their meaning. These debates cover issues related to unity such as fragmentation, segregation, alienation, inequality, exclusion and security. These are interpreted and represented in rather different ways by the different frames, which offer alternative versions of their nature and causes, as well as the best ways of resolving them.

As noted before, these frames can be understood as a form of political thought that is less reflective than political theory but not different in kind, so that it can similarly be analysed in terms of internal logic: political elites and political theorists draw on the same vocabulary to express their ideas and construct arguments in similar ways

(Freeden 1996, pp. 40-44; Miller 2013, p. 42; Parekh 2000c, p. x). Nonetheless, we cannot assume that the positions articulated by political elites are the same as those advanced by political theorists and the former will hence be presented in their own terms, following as much as possible the vocabulary and rationale used by these elites, and using quotes. When they debate unity, these elites tend to do so by addressing issues such as mentioned above that can be understood as epiphenomena that are approached from a more fundamental position on what a united society should look like. It takes careful interpretation to uncover these implicit positions and they are teased out by using the perspective on unity developed in section 3.1 and presented in subsections.

Chapter 1 already explained that multiculturalism as a policy programme in Britain developed as a response to the fact of multiculturalism. It evolved in a pragmatic manner and focused on race relations and the accommodation of difference (Favell 1998, pp. 98-134). Following a perceived crisis of multiculturalism that was sparked by the riots in Northern English cities in 2001, the UK government's strategy for dealing with diversity shifted to community cohesion, an approach that emphasises interaction between different groups and shared citizenship (Grillo 2007). This strategy has been interpreted alternatively as a move towards assimilation (Pilkington 2008), or as a 'civic rebalancing' of multiculturalism (Meer and Modood 2009, p. 374).

With the so-called crisis of multiculturalism, national identity or Britishness gained attention as a potential source of cohesion. This coincided with a renewed focus on national identity as part of debates on devolution.[41] This identity, however, is not clear-cut and uniform. McCrone (1997, pp. 594-595) explains that certain tensions arise from its traditional development as a 'supranational identity deriving from an imperial past'. It developed as a civic allegiance to the British state that was conceptualized as 'sitting on top' of the older ethno-national identities of the English, Welsh, Irish and Scots (McCrone 1997, p. 584). The success of this construction relied on the uniting force of war, welfare, and Empire. Since WWII therefore, it has come under increased

---

[41] During this time, there was debate about devolving powers to the Welsh and Scottish Governments and increasingly also talk about Scottish independence, which raised questions about the nature of Britishness and what keeps the United Kingdom united.

strain as war and Empire have ceased to provide integrative pressure; the re-conceptualization of Britishness to fit its newly reduced size after Empire faces increased competition with the national identities of its components, especially as British and English are often confused (McCrone 1997). Colley (1992) similarly notes war and Empire but also Protestantism as common causes that distracted from internal divisions because they provided an 'Other' that Britain could unite and define itself against. Parekh (2000a) moreover points to the different interpretations of Britishness in the New Right, which emphasises such characteristics as parliamentary sovereignty, individual liberty, Britain's island position and local loyalties; and New Labour, which emphasises features such as Britain's global and European connections, a 'sense of justice, fair play and ethic of sharing' (Parekh 2000a, p. 12), multiculturalism, tolerance and its class-ridden nature.

Although the analysis of the frames pertains to their internal rationale rather than their political support or origins, appreciating their shape and their position within the British political context requires a basic understanding of the political party system,[42] as these parties represent influential ideological traditions on which the frames draw. The UK's Westminster parliamentary tradition has long had a 'two-and-a-half party system' (Budge 1998, p. 116): the Labour party and the Conservative party compete for political power in government, with the Liberal Democrats also attracting significant support.[43] Government is normally made up of only one party, with the others remaining in opposition along with a number of smaller parties. Very rarely, a coalition government is formed. Since the Second World War, most governments have been led by the Conservatives (Ingle 2008, pp. 1-21).[44]

---

[42] It is worth noting that political parties are somewhat less important in the House of Lords (which forms the focus of the current analysis) than in the House of Commons.
[43] Which is effectively capped by the electoral system: territorial first-past-the-post voting is biased towards the larger parties and with a more proportional system the Lib Dems would achieve larger numbers in parliament.
[44] 1951-1964; 1970-1974; 1979-1997; and 2010 until present in coalition with the Liberal Democrats. Labour was in power between these periods: 1945-1951; 1964-1970; 1974-1979; and 1997-2010.

The Conservative party occupies the centre-right of the political spectrum and advocates a strong state to uphold social order. Thatcher combined this commitment to state authority with free market ideology, which proved difficult in relation to European integration (Budge 1998, pp. 123-124). The emphasis on sovereignty and conservatism sits uneasily with multiculturalism and an influential strand in the party supports a traditional vision of national identity that easily confuses British with English and is 'mostly white, anglo-centric, Anglo-American and anti-European' (Schnapper 2011, p. 4). This strand demands cultural adaptation to British values of minorities, whereas others in the party advocate benign neglect towards minorities within a framework of non-discrimination (Lynch 2000, pp. 59-67). The Labour party is a centre-left party that pursues equality in the broadest sense, including more significant material redistribution, but also in race issues (Budge 1998, pp. 124-125). Multiculturalism as a policy in the UK is mostly associated with Labour and the party advocates a pluralist conception of the nation. Its historical commitment to socialism was attenuated somewhat with Blair's vision of New Labour that emphasised The Third Way as a middle ground between neo-liberal and socialist policy (Buckler and Dolowitz 2000, pp. 102-109). The Liberal Democrat party is a social democratic party that prioritises individual freedom. To achieve this, they advocate progressive policies and redistribution, as well as environmentalism and democratic reform (Budge 1998, p. 125). They are non-nationalist in that they consistently defend devolution and European integration (Schnapper 2011, p. 5). As Schnapper (2011, pp. 5-9) points out, perspectives on multiculturalism and national identity increasingly cut across party lines.

The frames discussed below need to be understood within this intellectual and political context. Moreover, they respond to the sociological reality of multicultural Britain. Britain's history tells of many foreign invasions and the incorporation and fusion of different populations on the island. More recently, particularly relevant migration flows occurred around the end of Empire and the World Wars: in the 1950s large numbers of immigrants from the Commonwealth came to Britain following measures to extend equal subject-hood across the Empire and the need for cheap and unskilled labour (Park et al 2012, p. 27). These flows were increasingly restricted, but family

reunification remained an important driver of continued immigration. However, it is only since the 1980s that immigration outnumbers emigration, and it has continued to increase significantly (Hatton 2004).

Since 1991, the census[45] collects data on ethnicity. It shows that the non-White population in Britain grew from 3 million (7 percent of the population) in 1991 to almost 8 million (14 percent of the population) in 2011, and that 20 percent of the population in 2011 identifies as other than White British. The largest increases in size are found in the African, Chinese, Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic groups, as well as the 'mixed' category that counts persons with parents from different ethnic origins, and the 'Other White' category (Jivraj 2012).

Since 1983, the British Social Attitudes Survey collects data on perceptions of immigration. Although attitudes to immigration and multiculturalism do not necessarily coincide, they tend to be related as the former are measured here not only by economic factors (or the perceived benefits of immigration) but also by the perceived success of integration (Park et al 2012, p. viii). The surveys show that immigration is increasingly seen to have a negative impact on Britain in both economic and cultural terms, although a significant proportion of the population is positive about the impacts of immigration so far, while still desiring a restriction of further numbers. These attitudes vary between different types of immigrants: highly skilled migrants and well-performing students are viewed much more favourably, regardless of their country of origin (Park et al 2012, pp. 26-39). Migration from family reunification, on the other hand, is more consistently regarded as bad for Britain, and there exists an 'ethnic hierarchy' (Park et al 2012, p. 39), ranking from most positive for Western Europe, through Eastern Europe, to most negative for Africans and Muslims. These differences may be explained by concerns about integration, with some groups perceived as easier to integrate (Park et al 2012, p. 38).

The debates analysed respond to these contextual factors. Four frames were discerned that offer alternative conceptions of unity: the community cohesion frame; the

---

[45] The British census collects data on the general population every ten years.

multicultural frame; the conservative frame; and the liberal individual frame.[46] Recall that these frames are reconstructions of the arguments found in the debates that help to model the debate; in reality, their boundaries are fuzzy and some speakers may put forward positions that straddle several frames (so that the same name may appear in the discussion of different frames).

4.1   The community cohesion frame

This frame corresponds to the approach to unity in multicultural society that was developed under New Labour and is commonly referred to as the Community Cohesion strategy (e.g. Cantle 2005; Pilkington 2008). On this view, national identity can function to bind society together. The nation is understood as diverse but this diversity is seen as a potential threat to national cohesion; the relationship between cultural diversity and unity or cohesion is presented as a balance. Lord Taylor of Warwick (19-06-2008: Column 1141)[47] for example says that:

> "diversity and respect for difference are healthy, but over the years there has developed a regrettable imbalance between multiculture and integration. We must remain proud of our racial and cultural roots, but this must be balanced by encouragement and a willingness to become integrated within a common British identity."[48]

Diversity should be appreciated, but "this should not be at the expense of a feeling of belonging in the nation as a whole" (Baroness Verma, 19-06-2008: Column 1153). This balance between unity and diversity is perceived to have been shifted by the policy of multiculturalism that has allegedly supported diversity at the expense of cohesion:

---

[46] The labels used to capture the frames mostly refer to widely known ideational perspectives current in this context, but note that these perspectives are internally diverse.

[47] Citations such as this one refer to the location of quotes in the transcript of the debates (which can be freely downloaded, and further details of which are provided in Appendix 3): the first part denotes the date of the debate while the second part refers to the column in which the quote is located.

[48] Note that double quotation marks (") are used to cite parliamentarians, whereas single quotation marks (') are used to cite academic and other sources.

"the imbalance between multiculture and integration as a policy has led not to cohesion, national unity and a sense of community but to isolation, alienation and even hostile communities […] we must build bridges, not walls, between racial and cultural groups in Britain. It is vital that people from different communities feel a sense of being included in the British identity, alongside their other cultural identity. Treating them as monolithic blocks rather than as equal members of society has been both divisive and patronising. Either we learn to pull together or we learn to be pulled apart." (Lord Taylor of Warwick, 19-06-2008: Column 1141-2)

Multiculturalism as a policy that accommodates cultural differences is thus seen as divisive as it would emphasise differences over commonalities.

This perceived imbalance between diversity and unity is manifested most pertinently in the issue of segregation. This is the main problem according to this frame, and it is understood as a consequence of both majority and minority factors: government policies and discrimination in society together with the choices some minorities (as well as certain white communities) have made to live in close proximity – "self-segregation" – have resulted in segregated communities living side by side (Baroness Verma, 19-06-2008: Column 1153) as "clusters" that "are closed and inward-looking rather than open and permeable" (Baroness Ludford, 28-11-2005: Column GC43). The problem with such separation is that "minority communities may view themselves as identifying with one heritage and not the other" (Baroness Verma, 19-06-2008: Column 1153) – i.e. the British one – and multicultural policies would reinforce this problem by emphasising this heritage. Faith schools, for example, are perceived as "institutions of divisiveness" (Lord Morgan, 20-03-2002: Column 1412). What is needed instead is policy to target disadvantage across the population.

The solution to right the balance and overcome the divisions in society is twofold: government should promote interaction between separate groups in society – "to bridge differences between communities" (Baroness Verma, 19-06-2008: Column 1153) – and promote an inclusive, civic conception of national identity that will bind all members of the nation together in shared citizenship. Interaction and mixing is meant

to overcome cultural differences and challenge stereotypes; all citizens can come together in an inclusive public realm and increased interaction will serve to reduce prejudice and ultimately lead to a fusion of different cultures into a new hybrid British culture (cf. Cantle 2001, pp. 9-11, 29; Home Office 2002, p. 27). This is where the frame may privilege unity over diversity: interaction, trust and cohesion are emphasised over diversity, which is nonetheless reflected in this hybrid social unity.

The national identity that supplements the focus on interaction here has an integrative function and is not just an identity but an instrument to inspire a sense of community:

> "Britishness, instead of an identity that we all shared, had become a framework for uniting us in our differences. It was something to bring us together that was stronger than the things that were holding us apart. It was a kind of social contract, so that we could all live in the same space together." (Lord Haskel, 19-06-2008: Column 1155)

This identity has to appeal to all groups and nations within the UK: it is therefore conceptualised as a civic identity that sits on top of other cultural identities. It is limited to "economic, legal and political culture" (Lord Bew, 19-06-2008: Column 1167). Lord Harries of Pentregarth (19-06-2008: Column 1163) argues that "we need to separate civic identity clearly from these other kinds of identity." As such it consists of national democratic values and institutions that bind together the nation, such as: "the principles of liberty, democracy, tolerance, free speech, pluralism, fair play, […] politics and our democracy" (Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, 19-06-2008: Column 1172-3). This frame considers Britishness to be located "more in shared values than in narrow national origins" (Lord Goldsmith, 02-02-2006: Column 378). A shared national identity is nonetheless crucial because "when communities do not feel that they are bonded by common values and principles, we will see something of the segregation and distrust that contributed to the disturbances in some of our northern towns last year" (Lord Bassam of Brighton, 20-03-2002: Column 1438). This suggests segregation is caused by a lack of shared values and can hence be addressed through their promotion. These shared values that form the substance of national identity are defined in terms of citizenship and democracy: they are presented as liberal and a-cultural, such that all

can share them across their cultural differences. Unity, then, is based in a common identity that is inclusive because it is neutral.

Such a civic identity is moreover presented as voluntary and arising from free collective choice. This is expressed in the quote above referring to a social contract, and similarly in Lord Bew's (19-06-2008: Column 1167) portrayal of civic nationality as "a sophisticated modern doctrine of consent." Moreover, it returns in Lord Haskel's (19-06-2008: Column 1156) point that the 21st century is an era in which:

> "we can choose what we want to be and change what we are […] Many blogs and websites are all about choosing an identity that is attractive, modern, beneficial and cool. This, combined with mutuality and solidarity, […] and the acceptance of rights, duties and common beliefs, will bind us together in 21st century Britishness and citizenship."

The government has a role to play in promoting this national identity through its institutions and by encouraging "certain civic values [that] are integral to the civic identity" (Lord Harries of Pentregarth, 19-06-2008: Column 1163). There is a role for the state to "define in more explicit terms what is meant by the concept of Britishness" (Lord Prys-Davies, 19-06-2008: Column 1159). Lord Giddens (02-02-2006: Column 351) endorses Gordon Brown's (e.g. 2006) efforts to generate a "codified sense of purpose" for Britain to "sustain a renewed sense of purpose for the nation"; he favourably considers this progressive patriotism and states that "as individuals, we would find it hard to live without a sense of ambition. […] Why should nations be any different?" (Giddens, 02-02-2006: Column 353). This conception of national identity portrays it as voluntary and somewhat malleable, and considers it not as an essence but as a "political project" (Lord Harries of Pentregarth, 19-06-2008: Column 1164), which sets it apart from more traditional conceptions of national identity as a thick communal identity.

4.1.1 A vision of society, united

The above implies *what* is united into a whole in the conception of unity expressed in the vision of the united society underpinning this frame is best characterised as a

nation, defined in civic terms. Hence, the polity is associated both with the nation and the state. The former is both understood in political terms and elevated as a community that confers identity upon individuals and engenders cohesion. The nation and the state are also connected in a more intricate way because the state is seen as a legitimate actor in shaping society. This understanding of the state justifies its involvement in what might otherwise be considered an infringement of individual freedom: the promotion of more open identities in its citizens out of a concern for the common good – the stability and cohesion of the nation. The state in this frame thus is not really neutral but national: it promotes a national identity characterised by shared civic values.

It is individuals *who* belong to this nation-state. They need to be encouraged to interact with individuals from other groups, and to identify with the nation over and above their own social or cultural group: they need to balance their group membership with allegiance to the nation. Interaction occurs between individuals, not groups, which receive no public recognition as that would be divisive. Individual identities are considered to be plural – they may embrace both nation and group – and changeable through interaction and national identification: inward-looking identities can (and should) become more open. This also holds for groups, so that group identity is equally conceptualised as contingent and dynamic rather than traditional or conservative. Likewise, national identity is understood as a political project; it is not organic and natural but malleable and the result of political contingency.

Through interaction and a shared national identity is *how* these individuals belong. The latter is characterised by shared civic values and a common purpose so that membership in the nation is effectively a result of the political allegiance and belonging of the individual to the state and her political beliefs. Such unity is *impeded* where groups are inward-looking and do not identify with these values and this identity, which is why policy needs to promote Britishness and interaction between groups to foster it.

4.2 The multicultural frame

This frame recalls multiculturalism as it developed in the British policy tradition (cf. Favell 1998): it advocates the recognition and accommodation of diversity in society and national identity. Diversity is accepted as a permanent feature of society that is not a problem to be feared. Lord Bhatia (20-03-2002: Column 1409) describes Britain as "a mosaic society where each colour is a part of one whole nation". Segregation is downplayed: it is considered less prevalent than it is often portrayed and where minorities choose to build supportive communities that is not automatically a threat to society. As Baroness Afshar (19-06-2008: Column 1157) says: "It may not necessarily be negative that people are ghettoised, living in their own communities." Policy should not be about avoiding fragmentation at all cost, as that would challenge plural society, and these groups already exist – "'comfort zones' are already established. Rather than allowing them to go unnoticed and flourish either positively or negatively, they must be recognised" (Lord Ahmed, 20-03-2002: Column 1403). This extends to faith schools, the spread of which "will be a positive step towards a harmonious multi-cultural Britain" (Lord Ahmed, 20-03-2002: Column 1403).

The point is that the fragmentation that is associated with communities living side by side stems not from diversity but from inequality. As Lord Parekh (20-03-2002: Column 1395) explains:

> "Such inequalities generate anger and a sense of injustice, and they create a society in which different communities lead parallel lives with no shared experiences and aspirations to bind them together. Fairness and equality of opportunity are not enough, because they pre-suppose a level playing field and an equal ability to take advantage of opportunities – and, sadly, that is not the case. Rather, our concern should be to remove self-reproducing structural disadvantages, so that all our citizens acquire the ability and the resources to benefit from the opportunities available to them and compete as equals."

The real issue for policy to address for this frame hence is "inequality, discrimination and exclusion" (Baroness Uddin, 19-07-2001: Column 1645). To respond to these

problems in society, policies need to go beyond simply targeting poverty because "the stark facts of race discrimination in employment are race-specific. They are not poverty-specific" (Baroness Whitaker, 19-07-2001: Column 1650). In other words, pursuing substantive equality requires more than neutral rules; it requires multicultural policies that recognise diversity to challenge racism and discrimination, and to remove structural disadvantages. Thus, Lord Hunt of Chesterton (20-03-2002: Column 1407) argues that "it is essential for the UK to move further to introduce positive discrimination". For this frame, multicultural policies do not create or affirm divisions, but rather help to tackle inequality: they are a solution, not a problem. And rather than the failure that multiculturalism is often made out to be, in certain places "it has been a remarkable success" (Lord Parekh, 20-03-2002: Column 1394).

The government needs to go beyond fighting discrimination. It needs to instil acceptance of pluralism in society: it has "a duty to promote a strong and pluralistic society in which cultural differences are appreciated and seen as a benefit to communities" (Lord Bassam of Brighton, 20-03-2002: Column 1438). A pluralistic Britain "cannot be built just on a set of common values" (Lord Chan, 20-03-2002: Column 1423); it requires accepting diversity as a characteristic of British society. To further this acceptance, "it is essential that our leaders should acknowledge the enormous contribution to this country made by minority groups" (Lord Hunt of Chesterton, 19-07-2001: Column 1655), and indeed to "explain and appreciate how the UK population is made up of different social, ethnic and regional groups" (Lord Hunt of Chesterton, 20-03-2002: Column 1407). The frame positively regards the conclusions of the Parekh report that argued for a vision of Britain as a "community of citizens and as a community of communities" (Lord Chan, 20-03-2002: Column 1422).

The state, then, has a role to play in furthering the acceptance of multiculturalism as a social reality – and indeed its positive valuation, by "declaring the benefits of a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural Britain" (Lord Chan, 20-03-2002: Column 1423). In contrast to the previous frame, recognising the diversity that characterises the nation is considered more important than emphasising interaction, as captured in Lord Ahmed's (20-03-2002: Column 1401) metaphor of fusion cooking versus a banquet:

"Chicken tikka masala is a wonderful dish which is the product of eastern and western influences. Its interaction of flavours is perhaps the result of mutual appreciation and the interaction of the many cultures residing in Britain. However, […] should we not strive to instil acceptance in our pluralistic nation, as opposed to seeking the homogenization process summed up in the term 'melting pot'? Britain should be proud that our country is a rich banquet with culturally distinct and complex ingredients."

Metaphors presenting society as made up of distinct groups are common in this frame. Next to this banquet and the aforementioned mosaic, it is also represented as a jigsaw: "'multicultural' has never meant a fragmentation of society into myriad unconnected pieces. It is certainly a jigsaw, but one which can and must be assembled into a coherent whole" (Baroness Ludford, 28-11-2005: Column GC43). While the mosaic and the jigsaw metaphors in particular are meant to express a balance between unity and diversity, they do portray the pieces as separate and bounded,[49] implying an emphasis on diversity over unity (although the focus on equal opportunities and citizenship in Lord Parekh's quote does express a more integrated account of unity).

The frame displays slight suspicion of national identity, as its use may exclude Muslims who are already treated with suspicion in society:

"It is important not only to celebrate and be inclusive but to recognise that many British-born citizens suffer because they are labelled "Muslim". We live in a context where Islamophobia is encouraged […]. We need to think about why Muslims, specifically, are asked to choose between being British and being Muslim. As many of us who have spoken know, we have fluid identities." (Baroness Afshar, 19-06-2008: Column 1157)

Plainly, being British and being Muslim are not considered mutually exclusive here. But national identity may exclude ethnic minorities more generally:

---

[49] While it is probably the case that the speakers have not thought through the implications of their metaphors, these figures of speech are highly significant in political language and structure the way issues are perceived (see: Lakoff and Johnson 1980).

> "It seems that those who urge us to embrace Britishness have not grasped the extent to which many of the people of our parents' generation felt an absolute allegiance to Britain – to the mother country. […]. Despite all the support and contribution given to the National Health Service and our contribution to the sporting success and entertaining the nation, still our allegiance and Britishness is questioned". (Baroness Young of Hornsey, 02-02-06: Column 355)

This quote points to a discrepancy between how minorities (and their parents) see themselves as members of the polity and how others do: minorities already feel British, even as they are still considered outsiders by members of the majority who urge them to embrace Britishness. Political elites often allude to such experiences of membership, allegiance and exclusion to explain and justify their positions. Thus, Baroness Howells of St. David's (02-02-2006: Column 363) talks about her experience of moving to Britain in the 1905's: "The Union Jack, which I had cheered as a child and carried and waved on 24 May each year, was posted through my letter box smeared with excrement and a note, 'There is no black in the Union Jack'". She then questions the use of national identity to foster unity: "if we are to make citizens out of subjects and Brits out of blacks, […] do we not need to be less focused on old notions of British history and Britishness […]?"(Baroness Howells of St. David's, 02-02-2006: Column 363)

In the multicultural frame, national identity is thought to need to avoid a rigid definition to avoid the exclusion of members of the nation. Definition, in any case, misrepresents national identity as it "implies that what binds us together is a set of shared characteristics that each of us carries in our heads or our bodies. To belong to a country is a relationship; it is not a set of empirical characteristics" (Lord Parekh, 28-11-2005: Column GC37). Unity in the multicultural frame is understood as belonging. Given the diversity of British society, "Britishness is a sense of unity in diversity—of mutual respect and belonging, not uniformity" (Baroness Ludford, 28-11-2005: Column GC45). As Baroness Afshar (19-06-2008: Column 1158) puts it: "If Britishness is about being part of the community, it is wonderful, but let us not try to say who is not British, because the lines get narrower, tighter and harder to live with." National identity, hence, needs to be flexible and inclusive, as expressed in Lord Parekh's (28-11-

2005: Column GC38) metaphor of a shared freehold: rather than thinking of Britishness as a furnished apartment that can be occupied on predefined terms only,

> "I should like to think of being British and all British national identity as a shared freehold that we are all involved in shaping in a direction in which we can see a reflection of ourselves and that we can collectively own."

National identity is not about definition but about experience: what matters is belonging, which is an emotion that cannot be imposed but needs to emerge freely. Unity resides not in a set of values, but in feeling at home. For minorities to feel part of the nation, they need to feel welcome, valued and accepted. They need to feel they have equal chances and are treated fairly. As Lord Dholakia (20-03-2002: Column 1431) puts it:

> "it is not so much what the law or a declaration specifically says as our general underlying attitudes and values […] the emphasis in any policy determination should be the manner in which and the extent to which minorities' deepest feelings about their race, colour, national or ethnic origins are truly accepted within the community and by the policy makers."

That is unlikely to occur without multicultural recognition as Baroness Young of Hornsey (02-02-2006: Column 356), again appealing to the importance of experiences for belonging and unity, underlines:

> "If our role in the political, social and cultural development of Britain is omitted from the national curriculum, from higher education, erased from history books or left to gather dust as curiosities in museums and if we experience this continued rejection, it is not surprising that Britishness feels like a total illusion to some."

In other words, the role of ethnic minorities in Britain needs to be recognised in education and more widely so that minorities may feel part of the nation; multicultural policies not only challenge racism and discrimination but also serve to enhance a widely shared national feeling of belonging.

4.2.1 A vision of society, united

What is the whole that is united here? It can loosely be termed a nation: unity is not about shared features or rights but about shared belonging, embracing diversity in society. The nation, then, is an emotive experience rather than a political or civic association. Moreover, it is not simply made up of individuals but also embraces the groups they are part of: it is groups as well as individuals *who* belong to the polity. In contrast to the community cohesion frame that recognises the existence of groups but urges individuals to transcend them in order to be united, the multicultural frame accords greater political significance to the group. The individual is seen here as constrained by social pressures such as racism and exclusion. These pressures operate not solely on the individual level but interact with the group; individuals are part of groups and it is often as a group that they encounter discrimination. It is groups that experience structural obstacles to equality and policies hence need to target not just individuals but group difference. And the recognition of groups is recommended to enable individuals to experience belonging. These groups and individuals are seen as endowed with identities that the state should recognise and accommodate rather than seek to alter, as was implied in the previous frame. They do not impede, or have to be balanced with, national belonging. That suggests that these identities are more than simply chosen or malleable; they should (or perhaps can) not be remade to fit the desires of the nation or the state but may (within legitimate boundaries) exist and persist as they are.

Emotive attachments (of belonging) are *how* citizens belong to the polity, and these are facilitated by the recognition of the groups they belong to. Because the nation embraces groups, national and group loyalties do not conflict or have to be balanced. Such belonging might (but is not required to) help overcome the inward-looking identities the previous frame was concerned about, as it challenges the exclusion of groups, and equality should smooth interaction. In any case, diversity is seen here as a permanent feature of society that should not be feared.

Where belonging is lacking, unity is *impeded* and policies to foster it need to focus on the inclusion of minority groups through multicultural policies that should make

minorities feel valued and respected, rather than through interaction and shared values, as in the previous frame. The state in this perspective is charged with the accommodation of individual and group identities. It does so by attempting to change the nation: citizens are implored to be more accepting of diversity. While the state again is involved in shaping society, here its actions are targeted at the nation: as a whole, it must come to accept pluralism, challenge discrimination, and be more inclusive. The state pursues this by publicly recognising diversity, which makes it reflective of multicultural diversity rather than neutral. In that sense, the state simultaneously shapes the nation (changing attitudes to diversity) and reflects its diversity.

4.3   The conservative frame

This frame echoes the British conservative tradition (Budge 1998, pp. 123-124) and prioritises national unity, which is emphasised as an emotional experience and identity. Diversity is seen as something that is somewhat fleeting and beyond control. Multicultural inequalities are downplayed. Where the previous frame emphasises how racism continues to exclude minorities and seeks to promote shared belonging and the acceptance of diversity, here this goal is presented as already achieved:

> "We only have to look at dress, food, music, dance and sport. Everywhere there
> is diversity. There is richness. There is a shared belonging. It is something which
> actually fills me with a huge deal of hope for the future." (Baroness Flather, 19-07-
> 2001: Column 1652)

As society is already fair, the problem thus is not so much segregation or discrimination, but rather security. More specifically, the problem is Islamic terrorism, with "extremist groups using Islam as a basis or excuse for segregation, separation and terrorism against mainstream society" (Lord Chan, 28-11-2005: GC41). This form of terrorism is understood to be sustained by the distance between Islamic religious faith and the secular environment Muslims find themselves in;

> "[…] there is a particular challenge facing British Muslims. That concerns the
> tension between the demands of faith on the one hand and those of the secular

communities in which religious communities reside on the other. […] unlike Christianity, where the claims of faith and secular life are clearly separated, […] in Islam the concept of umma gives priority to religious duties over all other sources of authority. That is, Islamic jurisprudence does not recognise secular jurisdiction as a valid source of law." (Lord Carey of Clifton, 02-02-2006: Column 350)

Muslim and democratic, secular values are represented as incompatible. British Muslims find themselves in a situation which:

"produces young adults with multiple identities, with some torn between two versions of themselves. One identity is designed to fit in with modern British secular society, but the other feels called by a religious fervour, at odds with the modern world around it. This background of hostility culminated in the bombings and attempted bombings that we have experienced in Britain in recent years, so the issue is critical and must be addressed." (Lord Taylor of Warwick, 19-06-2008: Column 1142)

This quote challenges the notion of plural and fluid identities current in the previous two frames, at least where it concerns Muslims. The situation that creates these difficulties needs to be addressed not by the promotion of interaction or the acceptance of pluralism, as the previous frames offered, but by integration. Multicultural policies that accommodate minority cultural identities have helped to keep such tensions in place as they have impeded the integration of immigrant groups into wider society. Lord Howell of Guildford (02-02-2006: Column 373) explains that the rationale of multicultural policies:

"leads not to cohesion, national unity and a sense of community, but to isolation, alienation and even hostile communities. The prospect always seemed ridiculous that people welcomed into our country, […] should not adapt to the country. It was a simplistic proposition and bound not to bring cultures together but to set them on conflicting paths."

Where it concerns Muslims, multicultural policies are perceived as particularly misguided:

"We are fragmenting our society by paying so much attention to the few Muslims who are disaffected. […] [We] should not throw money at the disaffected. We should separate in our minds the disaffected from all the other Muslims who […] contribute and who can contribute more, as I hope to see. I do not want Sharia to be part of my system of law. I think it is negative. Faith schools are also negative and they fragment society. The fragmentation which comes from focusing on appeasing the Muslims who are difficult to appease will hurt the basic nature of society." (Baroness Flather, 19-06-2008: Column 1162)

The frame clearly opposes multicultural policies as their effect has been "to divide people into categories when the desire is to unite them" (Viscount Bridgeman, 19-07-2001: Column 1660). This resembles the rejection of multiculturalism as divisive in the community cohesion frame, but that frame called for a balance between diversity and unity in policy whereas here, diversity is more or less eliminated from policy altogether. Multicultural policies such as ethnic monitoring in particular professions are considered "restrictive and even punitive proposals" and although minorities enrich society, the concern should be with their integration, not their representation in key institutions that would then have to be "policed to ensure that ritual numbers of members of ethnic minority groups are to be found there" (Baroness Park of Monmouth, 19-07-2001: Column 1649). Representation will occur automatically on the basis of desert: individuals from minorities who excel will reach the top. Ethnic minorities should be judged on their merit and not their origin: positive discrimination is an insult to their capabilities and "special treatment" is something that "all those with spirit will resent" (Baroness Park of Monmouth, 19-07-2001: Column 1649).

To overcome the divisions in society it needs to be left to evolve naturally, so that a process of "assimilatory mixing" (Viscount Bridgeman, 19-07-2001: Column 1660) can take place. Given the organic development of cultures, "greater assimilation is inevitable" (Lord Rooker, 19-07-2001: Column 1663) as well as desirable. The metaphor of the "melting pot" (Lord Howell of Guildford, 02-02-2006: Column 373) expresses this perception of integration as a process in which different elements gradually blend into one; Britain is understood as the result of numerous previous "invasions" (Lord

Carey of Clifton, 02-02-2006: Column 350) that have assimilated to one culture. This suggests an attitude to diversity that is not so much characterised by direct opposition, but rather sees it as a transitory situation that with time will evolve to become part of the organic unity that is the nation.

Immigrants are implored to adapt to the national culture of Britain not only to facilitate smooth co-existence with the majority (as above) but also for the sake of their children:

> "Our children do not belong to their country of origin. If they are not going to belong to this country, where are they going to belong? We came here to improve our future. What right have we to ignore entirely the attitudes and opinions of the majority? We have no right. We have a duty also to acknowledge and change to fit in with what this society wants." (Baroness Flather, 19-07-2001: Column 1653)

The duty of immigrants to adapt follows from public order demands, but also, as this quote makes clear, from their choice to move. Note how, similar to what we saw in the previous frame, Baroness Flather here alludes to personal experience to illustrate her position. Individual choice and responsibility are important in this frame that considers that people are responsible for their own success. The differences in attainment between different ethnic minority groups present a case in point:

> "They indicate that minority communities should not be construed as passive victims of exclusion—racial, cultural, religious or economic—but rather as social actors who can draw on a range of resources within their communities to circumvent such exclusion. I should add that those resources would be the envy of many on our white council estates." (Lord Bishop of Bradford, 20-03-2002: Column 1400)

These differences in success arise because some groups show "better educational achievement and a better understanding of what is required of them [.] Is there no responsibility on the minorities to do something about their own situation?" (Baroness Flather, 19-07-2001: Column 1653). Apparently, "Some people think that it is not worth obtaining qualifications. They make a big mistake" (Lord Rooker, 19-07-2001: Column 1663). Likewise, segregation in this frame is perceived not as exclusion but as "failure

to integrate" (Viscount Bridgeman, 28-11-2005: Column GC47). Communities live separate lives because:

> "people within these communities see no need to integrate, to learn English or to make friends outside their communities, and they feel that there is no need to build ties for the sake of their children. Therefore, the next generation sees that as normal and the cycle continues." (Baroness Verma, 07-06-2007: 3.14-3.20 pm)

Where the previous frame explained inequality as mostly structural, here it is seen as resulting to a greater degree from individual choice, which implies that society itself is already fair. Even if it were not (and even when it was not in the past), there are numerous examples of immigrants who succeeded, as Lord Taylor of Warwick (19-06-2008: Column 1141), once again drawing on personal experience to underline his point, notes:

> "my father and other immigrants have shown that being British can allow you to be valued for your actions and not for your accents. Many descendants of the 'Windrush' generation also experienced racism, but they learnt the skills to bloom where they were planted."

In other words, even if they met with racism occasionally, hard work allowed them to prosper nonetheless.

The national identity that ethnic minorities are expected to adapt to is conceived here as organic and defined by the past, and consists of particular characteristics such as "our constitution, our culture and the ethical values which we have inherited", these being "the historic values of our Judaeo-Christian heritage" (Baroness Cox, 19-06-2008: Column 1147-9). History teaching is crucial to knowing Britishness:

> "There should be a proper teaching of our history, rooted in our institutions and how they came about, and understanding of the challenges that we have historically faced on identity and the ways in which we have overcome them. That is because we will truly move forward with depth of understanding only if

we have a depth of understanding of where we came from." (Baroness Warsi, 19-06-2008: Column 1172)

National identity should not be seen as a political project but rather as a legacy to be honoured by remembrance of the achievements of "our forebears" (Lord Carey of Clifton, 02-02-2006: Column 349). This heritage asks British nationals to "affirm the many precious, valid and valuable characteristics it enshrines and to consider how we may more worthily cherish and convey it, undiminished, to those who come after us, as their rightful legacy" (Baroness Cox, 19-06-2008: Column 1149). National identity is a heritage to be passed on; children need to "be taught in English because they are all citizens of this country, and they need to be taught an equal pride in its past and future" (Baroness Park of Monmouth, 19-07-2001: Column 1649). The nation hence is conceptualised here as an intergenerational community, a "national family" (Lord Carey of Clifton, 02-02-2006: Column 349). National identity is tied to a community with a past, and the state should not try to impose a definition: "Britishness is a current reality which is reinforced by our interpretation of the past reality. If we try to wrap it up as something we want it to be, we will make huge mistakes" (Lord Addington, 19-06-2008: Column 1169). In opposition to the somewhat instrumental conception of national identity in the community cohesion frame, here it is seen not as an empty canvas that can be modelled to fit the needs of a state or society but rather as the result of centuries of tradition.

Clearly, this is a more traditional conception of national identity than was subscribed to in the previous frames, recognisable also in the request "that we must take care not to lose the essential character that has made it worthwhile for people to come here in the first place" (Lord Dixon-Smith, 20-03-2002: Column 1433). National identity is about character and history. This historical focus implies a certain resistance to change that is expressed here by the rather reluctant acceptance of minority influences on national traditions:

> "the commonly recognised distinguishing characteristics of our country [...] partly emerged because of the long and distinguished emphases upon the spiritual basis of monarchy and Parliament alike—warm beer and ladies cycling

to evensong indeed, even if we do now have to add chicken tikka masala, whatever that is." (Lord Bishop of Chester, 20-03-2002: Column 1417)

It also returns in this designation of the Lords participating in the debate: "I can count only eight out of the 19 contributors to the debate who might be called 'English'" (Lord Dixon-Smith, 20-03-2002: Column 1432). Although the statement is supposedly meant in praise of multiculturalism, most Lords participating in these debates have been citizens for a while.

Nonetheless, national identity is not conceived as purely ethnic; its characteristics are often defined as a mix of culture and democratic features such as the Parliamentary tradition (Lord Howell of Guildford, 02-02-2006: Column 372). But it goes beyond a civic identity as it is more than freely chosen values:

> "Everyone has a need to have a country and to love it, however unfashionable it may have been to say so in recent years. People, like plants, need soil in which to send down their roots. Those who say we can all do nowadays without a country or content ourselves with trendy notions of the post-modern state, the international community or even some higher European loyalty, are just mistaken. Love of country is not a vague principle—it is an everyday necessity." (Lord Howell of Guildford, 02-02-2006: Column 374)

National identity is about pride and love: it is an emotional attachment. As such, it goes beyond the emotional experience of belonging that was advocated in the multicultural frame, for love and pride are stronger emotions than feeling welcome and valued.

4.3.1 A vision of society, united

The conception of unity expressed in the vision of the ideally united society underpinning this frame clearly suggests a nation best characterises *what* the whole that is united is. Unlike the previous two frames that calibrate a complex balance between individuals, groups, the nation and the state in their conceptions of unity, this frame privileges the nation. The state needs to protect the nation, and national security concerns are the main priorities in this frame. The nation, moreover, predates the state

and should not be interfered with. It is an organic entity that evolves naturally. This social unity is heavy with history, tradition and identity and it needs to be valued and respected. The nation is the natural social aggregate that directs state action, rather than vice versa, so that the state is the guardian of the nation and has no authority to interfere in it.

It is both individuals and groups *who* belong to the nation: they are part of it and embedded in it. Meanwhile, groups may exist within the nation but cannot challenge its primacy; individuals should to some extent adapt to the nation and will do so naturally, and this adaptation is particularly important for immigrants. It is not only an organic process, however, but also in their best interest, as it is their own future and that of their children that depends on them thus becoming full members of the nation. Adaptation and belonging largely fall under personal responsibility here, which is an important aspect of the understanding of the individual (who is both embedded in the nation with its traditions and history and responsible for her own success). Diversity hence may exist within the nation at individual as well as group level, but it is always secondary to national unity. Absorption in the nation and internalising its identity, then, is *how* individuals belong.

Clearly, where immigrants do not yet fit in that means unity may be *impeded*, but this situation should pass organically. Moreover, to avoid national fragmentation, the state needs to deploy neutral policies towards all its citizens. While the frame advocates history teaching to strengthen national consciousness, it understands this not so much as the promotion, design or shaping of national identity by the state, but rather as simply passing on and conveying what is already there: an inherited national identity.

4.4 The liberal individual frame

This frame presents a perspective that resembles the British liberal tradition (cf. Budge 1998, p. 125) and emphasises individual liberty. Identities, both multicultural and national, are considered personal and private and therefore beyond the scope of state action (as long as they do not breach any laws). National identity is understood as a deeply personal experience that differs for every citizen. It therefore evades definition

at the collective level; "it can only be personal. It cannot be an objective way of defining Britishness because, even if we feel totally British, we all see our Britishness in our personal ways" (Baroness Flather, 19-06-2008: Column 1159). As a personal identity, Britishness develops organically over the lifespan of its carrier; Baroness Falkner of Margravine (02-02-2006: Column 370-1) explains that "people evolve into their skin, in terms of character, in different ways and at different speeds. A lot of this is subliminal. […] Our identity evolves in subtle and complex ways." The identities that result from such organic growth are plural and multi-faceted. Accepting this nature of national identity means that it cannot be used to induce a sense of belonging:

> "The term Britishness is designed to promote a common identity and so cultivate a sense of belonging and commonality between citizens. Yet I question the relevance of the term in this context. Britishness for me is not an objectively definable concept, which can be applied as a label. I understand Britishness as an identity that one feels and interprets in one's own way.[…] Defining Britishness, then, seems to be an irrelevant consideration in promoting a sense of belonging." (Baroness Verma, 19-06-2008: Column 1152)

Because national identity is personal and variable, "it does not necessarily have definable characteristics that politicians should agree on and roll out as a construct that we as citizens need to sign up to" (Baroness Falkner of Margravine, 02-02-2006: Column 370). In other words, the government should stay out of national identity. Lord Desai (02-02-2006: Column 360) states that:

> "The Government should play a minimal role in providing a simple framework and not start writing a curriculum and ask us to meet 37 conditions for being British. I would rather that we evolved Britishness in our daily lives by ourselves, rather than have an official proclamation of what it is to be British."

This reticence towards state involvement in personal identities is expressed also in the injunction that "we might too often try to impose our own values on people" (Lord Addington, 19-06-2008: Column 1169). In a similar vein, the frame advocates:

"… the value of tolerance in the first instance, rather than the exertion of more pressure on trying to have common moral values. Winning over hearts and minds cannot be dictated from on high […]. Perhaps we need less policy and greater trust in people themselves." (Baroness Falkner of Margravine, 07-06-2007: 4.12-4.25 pm)

Diversity in national identity, at the collective level, thus is a permanent feature as every member of the nation defines it personally. People should have the freedom to negotiate their national identity as they see fit: "it is nothing we should seek to mould into a more uniform cultural construct" (Baroness Falkner of Margravine, 02-02-2006: Column 371). As national identity is a personal matter, the topic is considered "quite a shallow business" (Lord Howell of Guildford, 02-02-2006: Column 372). A concern for national identity is seen as irrelevant: "An historical fact about Britain is that although the notion of nationhood was born in the late 18th or early 19th centuries […] this was a united polity before the notion of nationalism was invented" (Lord Desai, 02-02-2006: Column 360). Lord Desai (02-02-2006: Column 359) draws on personal experience to underline this point:

"My Lords, I was born in India. I went to America for study, then I came here. What struck me when I came to Britain was how relaxed the country was about whether or not it was a nation. Glory to the country that is relaxed about its nationhood. Countries that are not relaxed about nationhood have to go to war to prove that they are a nation. Ever since I arrived—perhaps partly because I am middle-class; I have a middle-class job; and I live in a middle-class area—I have never been made to feel not a part of this country. […] the question of whether we are a nation or not is an anxiety that is not strictly necessary.[…] the whole point is that we all have multiple identities".

This conception of national identity as personal effectively eliminates the substantive content of its collective dimension. As a collective identity, it remains undefined and it is simply the aggregate of individual identities that are shaped in full freedom. That obviously contrasts with the conservative conception of national identity that sees it as shaped by the characteristics of the nation as reflected in its historical legacy and

passed on over generations. It also differs from the community cohesion frame's conception of national identity as a political project based in shared values. Like the conservative and the multicultural frame, the liberal individual frame emphasises the personal quality of national identity. For the latter, however, this personal quality is left open and is not necessarily linked to emotions such as love and pride or belonging. In contrast to the multicultural frame, policy is not assumed to inspire belonging, which implies a difference in emphasis: the liberal individual frame stresses the personal and free (open) nature of national identity, whereas the multicultural frame emphasises the inclusion of minorities.

Policy, then, should not focus on national identity but rather on equality. Lord Desai (02-02-2006: Column 360) argues that what is important is not to establish whether someone is British but "to be quite sure that one does not face discrimination, whatever one chooses to be. It is much more important to have a culture of equal rights and not to give people a single label." This means that the state's response to cultural diversity should be focused on anti-discrimination, fairness and equal treatment. Equality of opportunity is proposed as the main solution to the real problem, namely persistent inequality in society. Policy should be aimed at making "our society better and more accessible to those in it" (Lord Addington, 19-06-2008: Column 1169). Multicultural policies have inadvertently reinforced inequality:

> "People from ethnic minorities, […] find themselves trapped by certain labels which inhibit their mobility out of where they are starting from. This leads to the perpetuation of poverty in certain groups. […] We labelled people, from the best possible motives, and insisted that their passport to certain public goods depended upon their producing that identity […]. But once we have done that, we do not allow them to escape that labelling and become ordinary citizens." (Lord Desai, 20-03-2002: Column 1415)

Instead, the "equality of opportunity agenda" is "about treating members of British minority-ethnic communities as individuals rather than as monolithic blocs, robustly tackling racism and other barriers to equality" (Baroness Warsi, 19-06-2008: Column 1171-2). This follows from "the most important value of the British: fairness. You treat

people fairly: you do not treat some this way and other another way" (Baroness Flather, 19-06-2008: Column 1161). Fairness for this frame hence equals identical treatment. The rejection of multiculturalism as a policy draws on a similar register of objections to that used in the other frames, but receives a different emphasis, reflecting the overall priorities of the frames. Where the policy is supposed to engender division in all three, for the community cohesion frame that is a problem because it shifts the balance between diversity and unity and threatens cohesion; for the conservative frame it is a problem because it raises security concerns as it fosters hostile communities; and for the liberal individual frame it is a problem because it forms an obstacle to equality.

The rejection of multiculturalism as a policy programme, however, is not a rejection of pluralism, but rather follows from a commitment to diversity as individual and private:

> "I want to argue that creating a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society is not necessarily the great thing that it is said to be. I am not saying that we should not be tolerant or that we should not recognise the value of different languages, cultures, practices and cuisines. I am saying that we ought to distinguish between the public space and the private space. One great difficulty created by many of the policies followed over the last 50 years is that we have confused that distinction." (Lord Desai, 20-03-2002: Column 1415)

The frame hence accepts and values diversity but restricts it to the private sphere. The public space alluded to in this quote is the same for all and consists of a shared experience of and commitment to citizenship, rights and political institutions: this is where unity resides. As Lord Greaves (19-07-2001: Column 1659) explains, diversity has no impact on rights because cultural "communities as such do not possess rights; any rights that they do possess, they possess because of the rights possessed by the sum of their members":

> "The diversity of individuals, which many of us welcome – the more the better – may follow from their membership of communities, or it may be that some of us are a bit eccentric. […] But fundamental human rights are not different for

different people. What we do with our human rights may well be very different –
and that may lead us to have very different lives – but fundamental human rights
are not different for different people."

It is important also that there exists a "sense of trust in common institutions that are to
serve the interests of all sections of society" (Baroness Falkner of Margravine, 28-11-
2005, column GC35) – hence the need for general rather than multicultural policies.
Lord Dahrendorf (20-03-2002: Column 1413-1414) explains that this is because cultural
pluralism can only work under two conditions: first, "all must have equal
opportunities to take part in economic, social and political life. Citizenship must be
real", and second "all must accept certain fundamentals of the society in which they
live", that being the "principles of its liberal order" for Britain. It must be accepted that
"the law is common to all and that it is made here in Parliament by the institutions
designed to provide it." The shared public sphere, thus, provides a common
framework within which individual and private diversity is allowed to flourish.

4.4.1   A vision of society, united

What is the whole that is united in the vision of the united society underpinning this
frame? The state captures it more closely than the nation. However, this whole is rather
'thin' as it remains secondary to the individuals *who* belong to it. The emphasis on the
individual follows from the privileging of the individual in this frames' vision of what
a united society should look like. In contrast to the community cohesion and
multicultural frames, the four social elements are not presented in a complex balance,
but like in the conservative frame, one is foregrounded. The polity is made up of
individuals that define their relationship to it themselves, and choose how to relate to
other individuals and groups. The individual that takes centre stage here is conceived
as responsible, autonomous and independent. Groups are seen as a potential source of
inequality where they may inhibit social mobility, although that would mainly be the
result of multicultural policies affirming these groups. The relationship between the
individual and the state needs to be direct and expressed in citizenship, rather than run
through groups. *How* should we characterise this relationship, or how do these
individuals belong to the polity? They do so both through their legal status as citizens

and through their own commitments, beliefs and orientations towards it. The frame presents unity as located in liberal, individual commitments to liberty, equality and fairness; the state only needs to uphold the latter to *foster* it.

Both cultural and national identities are considered private, individual matters: they are beyond the scope of the neutral state. In contrast to some of the other frames discussed above, the state in this frame exists to guarantee maximal individual freedom as well as pursue equality between individuals: it does not shape society apart from minimally, by providing individual rights and opportunities. Although it is not allowed to exert pressure on or interfere in individual preferences, values and (plural) identities, as that would constitute an infringement of individual integrity, its liberal, neutral political framework does restrict the legitimate expression of diversity. Diversity is valued as the result of individuality and a hallmark of individual liberty, but it should not extend beyond the confines of the private sphere. A shared political framework is a condition precisely for its private expression. There is a sense in which this political limit on diversity parallels the social (national) limit on diversity imposed in the conservative frame: at this level, unity comes first, either in political or national terms.

Although national identity here is not a source or feature of unity, it is interesting to note that this frame presents it in rather different terms to the other ones above. Because national identity here is strictly personal, it is focused on the present: it is not oriented towards the future as the community cohesion frame and the multicultural frame are, as it does not see Britishness as a project meant to induce belonging or transform society or individuals and groups over time. And it is not orientated to the past as the conservative frame is, as its definition resides in the individuals that make up society now (although, of course, these may choose to draw on history for their conception of their national identity). When they discuss national identity, then, the political elites participating in these debates seem to have rather different things in mind.

This chapter has shown how unity is conceived in different ways by British political elites. The outline of what conceptions of unity pertain to introduced in the previous chapter proved helpful to interpret the visions of the ideally united society that underpin the different frames that offer alternative understandings of issues and concepts related to unity in multicultural society. Clearly, these frames offer significantly different views not only of what problems should be addressed but also about how to address them and who is responsible for such interventions. Clarifying these different starting positions helps us to see where they overlap and conflict and thereby facilitates greater understanding of the disagreement between them. Explicating the conceptions of unity that underpin them, moreover, helps to go beyond the contentions about epiphenomena such as segregation and veiling to capture more fundamental fault lines in the debate. As the next chapter will now show, political elites in the Netherlands similarly have rather different ideas about what unity is.

5   Case study II: Conceptualising unity in the Netherlands

The previous chapter showed that British political elites have rather different ideas about what unity is. The perspective on unity developed in section 3.1 proved useful to interpret these ideas as it helped to reconstruct the vision of the ideally united society that underpins the different frames offering alternative representations of issues to address. This chapter will now show that Dutch political elites also conceive of unity in different ways, again presenting the different frames they advance and uncovering the implicit vision of the ideally united society that underpins them. The next chapter will then explain the implications of the conceptions of unity discerned in British and Dutch parliamentary debates for political theorists, before chapter 7 concludes the thesis by showing that a multicultural conception of unity is most defensible and also politically plausible in these two countries.

As the Netherlands is the country most strongly associated with a 'crisis' of multiculturalism (e.g. Entzinger 2006, p. 121; Kymlicka 2010, p. 105; Modood 2013, p. 12) – even more so than the UK, where its reality is more forcefully contested in the literature (e.g. Meer and Modood 2009; Uberoi and Modood 2013b) – we might expect to see conceptions of unity slightly less hospitable to diversity here. It will be become clear, however, that this is not necessarily the case. There are significant similarities between the conceptions of unity identified in the two case studies and to highlight these, this chapter is structured so as to discuss the Dutch frames that are most like their British counterparts in the same sequence as the latter.

Like the previous chapter, this chapter presents the four frames distinguished in the debates in their own terms first. Again, these debates cover a range of issues such as cultural conflict and divisions, the fragmentation or disintegration of society, dual nationality, inequality, and a lack of communal attitudes among citizens. The frames approach these epiphenomena in different ways that indicate how they implicitly start from more fundamental positions on what society should look like united that are rather different. Subsections present these positions that are uncovered through careful interpretation using the perspective on unity developed in section 3.1 and asking: what

is the united whole; who belongs to this united whole; how do they belong to it; and how can such unity be impeded and fostered?

First, however, the context in which the frames appear, and that shapes them, will be briefly introduced. Section 1.3 already outlined the political context in which the Dutch parliamentary debates analysed here were held. Recall that multiculturalism in the Netherlands developed out of the earlier pillarisation structure that created separate institutions for the four main social/religious groups in society (pillarisation and other specific Dutch terms used in the debate on multiculturalism are discussed in more detail in the glossary of Dutch terms in Appendix 4). The Ethnic Minorities Policy of the 1980s intended to extend that structure to immigrants and ethnic minorities. The integration policy of the 1990s that focused on universal citizenship and economic participation relegated cultural identities to the private sphere (Duyvendak and Scholten 2012). In the 2000s, policy increasingly emphasised cultural adaptation in what has been termed a 'retreat from multiculturalism' (Joppke 2004, p. 238) or a move to 'assimilation' (Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007, p. 3). It was considered that national identity should be more explicitly defined and explained to facilitate such adaptation (Seegers 2007, p. 45).

According to Duyvendak (2008, p. 172), these values and Dutch national identity more generally are widely shared and rather 'thick': the dominant majority in the Netherlands is strongly mono-cultural. This image of Dutch national identity as singular is challenged by more historical approaches that emphasise the importance of rifts such as that between Holland and other provinces (centre/periphery) and between the cosmopolitan nobility and the more nationalist bourgeoisie and people (Frijhoff 1992, p. 631); between the Protestant North and the Catholic South (Krol 2007, pp. 143-144); but also between supporters of the Monarchy and the State, and of the secular State and religion. With the development of pillarisation in response to this latter division, dual loyalties (to one's pillar and the nation) were considered natural. Nevertheless, a shared national consciousness developed in the 19th century, both through conscious state policy and through bottom-up processes (Van Sas 2004, pp. 523-534). Krol (2007, pp. 142-144) argues that important elements in this national

identity include the 16th century revolt against the Catholic oppressor Spain and the heroic role of William of Orange therein. It inspired a view of the nation as freedom-loving, civic and opposed to tyranny. The Netherlands is portrayed (from the inside and the outside) as a country that emphasises cleanliness, is somewhat unnatural as evidenced in its reclaimed land, and as imbued with a 'peace-loving, homelike and sensible disposition' (Krol 2007, p. 143).

Although the focus here is on the meaning of the frames, and not their political support or origins, a basic grasp of the political orientations that exist in the Netherlands helps to appreciate their distinct shape and locate them in the debate. The Netherlands has a proportional representation voting system with multiple political parties, so that governments are always coalitions between different parties. These parties are thus both ideologically distinct, and geared towards consensus or compromise in government (Irwin and Thomassen 1975, pp. 389-391). Since the Second World War, the most important parties[50] in successive governments[51] have been the Christian-Democratic CDA, the Social Democratic Labour party (PVDA), and the Liberal party (VVD).[52]

With its many parties, the Dutch political domain is somewhat fragmented. Pellikaan (2002, pp. 206-220) identifies three dominant political orientations in Dutch politics: religious, socialist and liberal that all prioritise one of three dimensions that can roughly be described as economics (state intervention vs. market economy); ethics (moral government vs. neutral state); and community (emphasising individuals vs. groups). The religious parties, among which the CDA, prioritise ethics and emphasise the role of the state as a moral guardian. They also favour a market economy and the autonomy of social groups. The latter position chimes with multiculturalism, which the CDA traditionally supported, although it increasingly emphasises the duty of

---

[50] The labels used here refer to the current names these parties go by; in most cases, they are the result of fusions between smaller parties.

[51] For an overview of Governments please see: http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/regering/kabinetten-sinds-1945.

[52] Smaller parties that have joined coalition governments are the Progressive Left GroenLinks, the Democrats (D'66), the populist LPF and the Protestant CU. Significant opposition parties furthermore are the Socialist SP and more recently the populist Freedom Party led by Wilders.

immigrants to adopt Dutch values and norms, as a shared core is considered essential in a plural society (Seegers 2007, pp. 41-43). The socialist parties, including the PVDA, prioritise the reduction of socio-economic inequality and see a role for the state in attenuating the effects of free markets. They advocate a neutral state and a corporatist organisation of society.[53] The PVDA is open to cultural diversity but acknowledges that conflicts may occur and advocates stricter entry conditions for new immigrants (Seegers 2007, pp. 43-44). Liberal parties, including the VVD, stress individual liberty and oppose the delegation of authority to groups of any kind. They prefer a neutral state and a market economy. The VVD accepts cultural diversity as long as it does not conflict with the law, but also advocates pride in the national character and emphasises its importance for cohesion (Seegers 2007, pp. 44-45).

Pellikaan (2002, pp. 208-214) notes that since the 2002 elections, the ethical dimension has retreated to the background and the community dimension has shifted its focus from micro-communities to the national community; it now splits between a defence of multicultural society and a plea for a mono-cultural society. Van der Brug et al (2009, pp. 200-201), moreover, point out how questions about multiculturalism cut across party lines.

The frames discussed below need to be understood within this intellectual and political context. Moreover, they respond to the sociological reality of the Netherlands as a multicultural society. Since the Second World War, the Netherlands have seen post-colonial immigration, recruited labour migration, an influx of refugees, and a continuing flow of family migration. Consequently, there has been a sharp rise in the proportion of *allochtonen* in the population (especially where it concerns persons with non-Western origins), or persons who have at least one parent of foreign origin, as opposed to *autochtonen* who have native origins (Ribbens 2004, p. 501). The largest minority groups in this category are Turks, Moroccans, Antilleans and Surinamese and these are also the groups that have increased in size most. In 2012, 21 percent of the Dutch population is of foreign origin. Meanwhile, immigration and emigration show

---

[53] Society then is characterised not simply by individuals but by organisations that reflect and defend shared interests.

variation over the years but both remain significant (CBS 2012, pp. 36-42), and immigration in particular has been rising since the 1980s (Entzinger 2006, pp. 122-123).

Coenders et al (2008) explain attitudes towards these minorities and immigration by two factors: (perceived) competition over resources such as jobs and housing, and concerns about national identity. They find that support for discrimination against minorities (in housing and jobs) fluctuates, from almost 50% of the population in 1979 to 25% in 1986, and roughly stabilises at 40% throughout the 1990s and up to 2002 (Coenders et al 2008, pp. 275-276). Concerns over identity are expected to weigh more heavily in these attitudes and here the authors find that ideological and symbolic context is crucial in understanding ethnic attitudes: with the negative portrayal of Muslims in the media and public debate since 2001, attitudes towards Muslim minorities (Turks and Moroccans) in particular become more negative, whereas attitudes towards the other two large minorities (Surinamese and Antilleans) remain stable (Coenders et al 2008, pp. 279-283). This effect is challenged by Breugelmans et al (2009) who argue that attitudes towards multiculturalism in the Netherlands are mostly indifferent, with a slight preference for assimilation, and have been stable over time despite a temporary dip in 2005.[54]

Four frames can be distinguished in Dutch parliamentary debates that respond to these contextual factors while offering alternative visions of what issues need to be addressed and how: the emancipation frame; the multicultural frame; the national frame; and the liberal individual frame.[55] As was the case in the previous chapter, these frames are reconstructions that help to model the debate so that speakers may

---

[54] Following a number of events that involved Muslims and heightened concerns around their presence, including the murder of Theo van Gogh (who had recently released a provocative film showing texts from the Koran projected unto naked female flesh) by a Dutch-Moroccan (2004), and the terrorist attacks in Madrid (2004) and London (2005).

[55] Dutch parliamentary debates are held in Dutch, not English. The translations are my own. As in the previous chapter, each citation refers to the position in the original text it was retrieved from. For example, (Halsema, 31-08-2004: 92-5938) first specifies the speaker; then specifies the debate, further details of which can be found in Appendix 3, and which can be freely downloaded; and then specifies the location of the citation within this debate by referring to the column in which it is located.

express arguments that straddle them (and consequently, the same name may appear in the discussion of different frames).

5.1 The emancipation frame

The perspective developed here overlaps with what other scholars have called the empowerment genre (Prins 2002, p. 372) or emancipation frame (Roggeband and Vliegenthart 2007, pp. 530-531). The frame argues for individualist integration through socio-economic participation enabled through state policy, into a pluralist national community that is conceptualised in terms of free and autonomous citizens. In contrast to the notion that cultural diversity itself causes problems in society, the frame argues that the "cultural conflict" (Halsema, 31-08-2004: 92-5938) between different groups in society mostly produces tensions because of its interaction with socio-economic factors. This has been overlooked and policy needs to focus on these class differences: "reducing socio-economic differences is the key to a good integration policy" (Halsema, 31-08-200: 92-5939). Moreover, "not only allochtonen suffer from disadvantage. Disadvantaged autochtonen are equally affected" (Halsema, 06-04-2004: 63-4121); cultural factors alone do not explain the problems in society. The frame also draws attention to discrimination, racism, Islamophobia and stigmatisation as problems (Bos, 14-04-2005: 73-4485-6) that further reinforce economic inequality and impede emancipation.

It is not cultural difference itself, in other words, that causes tensions and polarisation in society but the way it interacts with material inequality and the way it is dealt with. The frame believes that the way the sensitive issues around multiculturalism and national identity are debated by politicians has real repercussions on society: "the tone in which the integration debate is held is not the last among all factors to determine whether we can achieve that peace in society together or end up in an atmosphere of animosity and escalation" (Huizinga-Heringa, 06-04-2004: 63-4132). The harsh tone some take in debate might alienate minorities, and particularly those who are successful. The frame emphasises that integration has not been a complete failure, and many immigrants have done very well. These people both deserve recognition and could play a role in further integration processes (Bos, 31-08-2004: 92-5951). Debates

about Islam in particular are too often of a "generalising and stigmatising character" (Halsema, 31-08-2004: 92-5941) and this may result in the exclusion and isolation of Muslims in society. The frame thus calls for an end to polarisation in the debate on integration; it urges "conciliation" (Halsema, 14-04-2005: 73-4464).

This concern with the effects of political debate connects to the role of government in this frame:

> "There is a large governmental and political responsibility to shape society, enhance politeness and give people the opportunity to be citizens in the fullest sense of the word. That will not happen by […] restating behavioural rules, but by facilitating citizenship through moral and political leadership." (Halsema, 18-12-2005: 35-2630)

Politics has a special responsibility in shaping society – a notion sometimes referred to as a belief in "the mouldable society" (Dijsselbloem, 06-04-2004: 63-4145); "Only just political decisions will help people to take their own responsibility and participate as fully-fledged citizens in our fast and irreversibly changing society" (Halsema, 01-04-2008: 70-4891). State policy, by providing opportunities and skills, needs to facilitate and enable people to grow into the emancipated and empowered individuals that this frame envisages society to be made up of. This is not "a narrow economical view of man or citizenship ideal […], the homo calculus, the calculating citizen, the consumer, the employee, the tax payer" as it was promoted by previous governments, but rather the citizen "who cares for others, volunteers, wants to participate and have a say, enjoys his free time, etcetera" (Halsema, 18-12-2002: 35-2630).

Government should provide the conditions for such citizenship: "you have to enable people to be connected to each other" (Halsema, 18-12-2002: 35-2630). Solidarity only flourishes under certain conditions, and the neglect of the enabling role of the state in emancipation has produced certain "negative consequences of hurtling individualisation" (Kant, 18-12-2002: 35-2615-6): citizens have become self-regarding and solidarity has waned. Individualisation needs to be channelled so that its benefits in the form of emancipation are not overshadowed. In a metaphor:

"I see the government as a beacon for society. If the beacon points to everyone-for-themselves, society will follow. If the beacon indicates that human dignity and solidarity really mean something in our society, then that realisation will trickle down into society as well." (Marijnissen, 14-04-2005: 73-4483)

Recognition of minorities, however, is limited to a positive appreciation of their contributions in debate: multicultural policies that publicly affirm group identities are rejected. They are seen to fix dynamic cultural identities (Halsema, 31-08-2004: 92-5938) and to pose a risk to individual emancipation, which "may never be supressed by emancipation in the own circle"[56]; if religion or "a traditional migrant-culture" contests the equal position of women and gays this needs to be challenged – "cultural tolerance is not a reason to accept oppression" (Dijsselbloem, 06-04-2004: 63-4145). Patently then,

> "No matter how important the free development of minority religious and cultural identity is, policy that unilaterally aims for the support of cultural and often group identities hinders the emancipation of individuals." (Halsema, 06-04-2004: 63-4118)

As indicated above, what is needed instead is a focus on socio-economic factors and hence on education and labour policy: "Where work is the royal way to furthering integration and fighting disadvantage, emancipation is only possible if people have been able to enjoy a good education" (Halsema, 06-04-2004: 63-4121).

This opposition to multiculturalism as a policy programme stems from a concern with individual liberty rather than a rejection of diversity. In fact, the frame celebrates pluralism. Leerdam (27-06-2006: 95-5883) talks about the "wonderful diversity of our country", and Halsema (14-04-2005: 73-4463) explains how value pluralism is crucial for democracy:

> "We honour the ideal of a plural society, in which value differences and value conflicts are seen as valuable and even necessary. Not only because we think it is impossible to bridge all the differences between people, but mainly because

---

[56] See Appendix 4.

ethical pluralism, the recognition and appreciation of conflicting values, is a condition for critical and free citizenship. Because the moment that citizens would be expected to be bound to one morality, to one specific cultural identity, that would always mean the exclusion of others."

Cultural diversity is accepted in public, also where it concerns social norms and practices; different cultural groups have different perspectives on appropriate social behaviour and this needs to be accepted as a manifestation of "ethical pluralism" (Halsema, 14-04-2005: 73-4462). Cultural diversity, or value conflict, does not need to be eclipsed or solved but rather engaged in dialogue: "he who knows how to listen to disagreements and to deal with them can bind a modern community more effectively than he who strives for shared opinions about what should and should not be" (Bos, 14-04-2005: 73-4511).

Nevertheless, there is a limit to acceptable diversity: the values embodied in the constitution, which are non-negotiable (Halsema, 14-04-2005: 73-4462) and which immigrants are expected to "understand and respect" (Bos, 31-08-2004: 92-5952) – rather than interpret in different ways or contest. These are "the values that bind us, values that are central to the democratic Rechtsstaat" (Bos, 31-08-2004: 92-5955). The Rechtsstaat[57] here is the focal point of national unity, and reflects "a minimal common morality" (Halsema, 14-04-2005: 73-4462), with the constitution guaranteeing both freedom from government interference in personal life and equal treatment for all citizens. In this sense, "the constitution is not an order for assimilation or a straitjacket for uniformity, but a guarantee for diversity and plurality" (Bos, 31-08-2004: 92-5952). Citizenship first and foremost is about "constitutionally enshrined and protected freedoms and rights" (Halsema, 30-01-2008: 47-3514). For integration, that means the emancipation frame is open to cultural identities but requires an amount of adaptation where it concerns the rule of law. It is an individual endeavour that centres on socio-economic mobility, participation, interaction and emancipation. Cultural differences

---

[57] The concept of the Rechtsstaat in Dutch expresses liberal democracy and the rule of law and embraces such concepts as justice, rights, the constitution and jurisprudence.

are allowed to persist and "integration is a means, for us the emancipation of people is the end" (Halsema, 31-08-2004: 92-5941).

The national community that integration refers to is conceived in plural terms:

"The Dutch culture we aim for and exemplify is a plural society of emancipated, free and socially and economically independent people. That is, people who make autonomous decisions in their relationships, in their sexuality, religion, place of residence, dress etc. People who take their responsibility, develop their own social relations and participate actively in society and politics. […] We want a society in which the right to be different, to have a different cultural identity and to have a different religion is completely self-evident and accepted." (Halsema, 06-04-2004: 63-4123-4)

This plural society belongs to a country in flux:

"The Netherlands will never again be as it used to be. The Netherlands will never remain what it is now. The mixing of ethnicity and culture will continue […] The wider our identity, the better. I think that our identity, our origin, the blood that flows through our veins will become increasingly less unequivocal, increasingly more hybrid." (Bos, 31-08-2004: 92-5949-55)

National identity is dynamic and cannot simply be derived from history. History always requires interpretation, which leads to different conclusions and therefore "is not an instrument to shape any national consciousness whatsoever" (Halsema, 27-06-2006: 95-5885). This, for want of a better term, 'open-ended' national identity also includes Islam. The frame considers that:

"[…] it is crucial that all of us acknowledge that Islam has now become one of the large religions in the Netherlands and will remain so, and that Islam belongs here, like Protestantism and Catholicism and other religions." (Halsema, 31-08-2004: 92-5941)

The need that people feel to belong to the nation – in "a time where people are trying to get an idea of the distinctiveness of the national identity, a time where people seem

to long for national pride as a counterweight to strange influences" (Azough, 04-10-2006: 8-480) – does not have to lead to a conception of national identity that is uniform:

> "We all want people to feel they belong to the Netherlands. The Dutch nationality is an important tool. I still don't understand, however, why that should not go hand in hand with internationalism; why that could not go hand in hand with various loyalties; why Dutch nationality means that you cannot have another nationality as well." (Halsema, 02-09-2004: 94-6080)

Indeed, dual nationality is permitted, as restricting it would result in fewer requests for citizenship as people might want to (or sometimes are obliged to) hold on to their original nationality, yet "naturalisation normally leads to better integration" (Azough, 04-10-2006: 8-481). Moreover:

> "nationality is a part of individual identity. The nationality of the country of origin may equally be part of that identity. Why does the Cabinet want to intervene in it? Are people in this modern society and these modern times not free to have an identity that is based in different nationalities?" (Azough, 04-10-2006: 8-482)

This reflects the emphasis on individual, rather than collective, national identities: "my party also doubts whether there is something tangible like national identity and if so, whether we can reach a uniform definition of what that identity is" (Halsema, 27-06-2006: 95-5885). People relate to the nation and its history in different ways, which results in different conceptions of unity. As an instance of personal identity, national identity should be free from government infringement: "no state, no government can impose what you are and what you should feel" (Azough, 04-10-2006: 8-480).

5.1.1 A vision of society, united

What is the whole that is united in the conception of unity expressed in the vision of the united society underpinning this frame? It is best characterised as a state. Actually, this state receives significant weight in the vision of united society constructed here. It is not neutral but actively involved in shaping society and pursuing unity: it needs to enable the connections between individual citizens and the state that constitute unity,

based in adherence to the constitution and solidarity. This sociology privileges the state as the driving force behind society, reflecting a progressive belief in the possibility of designing a better future.

It is individuals *who* belong to the polity, which can be understood as a political project that follows from state policy. These individuals should be free to choose their course of life, including their social groups. These groups are chosen relationships more than communities, and potential sources of oppression. Multicultural policies, therefore, are opposed as they could threaten individual freedom, so that diversity is limited to the private sphere and the state remains neutral between different groups. Such policies would moreover fix cultural identities that are dynamic. The state should stay out of identities, and that holds also for national identity, which is conceived in individual terms.

However, given the priority of the state and its role in shaping a nation made up of emancipated individuals, there is some influence on personal identity nonetheless. After all, it seems that it is only through state policies that individuals become the autonomous citizens that form the nation. There is a tension here in the relationship between the individual and the state: on the one hand, the frame treats the individual as already an autonomous citizen that should be free from group and state interference in personal identities. On the other hand, the individual is considered somewhat secondary to the state: she needs to be embedded in the right conditions to flourish and requires political leadership to grow into a free and social citizen. Individual identities may be plural, and they are personal – but their appropriate development occurs within the parameters created by the state. This means that the question of *how* individuals belong to the polity is somewhat complicated: they do so by shared allegiance to the constitution, which presents a locus of uniform commitments, and solidarity with each other, but these commitments are not completely autonomously developed but encouraged by the state.

The frame suggests that society is not yet plural, free and based in solidarity, so that the state needs to develop appropriate policies to pursue these goals. The vision of this better future both embraces pluralism and requires uniform adherence; the society

strived for is plural but the quest itself assumes agreement on an understanding of what state policy should achieve, namely a society made up of autonomous individuals that attain socio-economic equality and adhere to progressive social values and the constitution. As long as individuals are not autonomous, equal and progressive, unity is *lacking* and policies to *foster* it should focus on education and labour, which are believed to facilitate emancipation.

5.2   The multicultural frame

This frame approaches unity in multicultural society in a way that resembles the Dutch pillarisation approach to multiculturalism (cf. Entzinger 2006) and echoes the religious political orientation discussed above (Pellikaan 2002, p. 209). Although it argues for a strong sense of national identity that might at first seem nationalistic, it does so while advocating multicultural policies towards groups. The frame points to a perceived "clash of cultures and religions" (Huizinga-Heringa, 06-04-2004: 63-4132), the escalation of which needs to be prevented both by a greater acceptance of diversity and a stronger sense of unity.

Such unity is defended in rather traditional terms of community and history. It is first of all associated with the Rechtsstaat. But in contrast to the previous frame, the Rechtsstaat here is not conceived in civic or legal terms, but as a cultural legacy:

> "For our Rechtsstaat is more than a set of rules; it is also a community of law with many aspects. Our Rechtsstaat has a cultural foundation; it is stamped by Christianity, by Jewish thought, by the Enlightenment, and by humanism." (Rietkerk, 18-12-2002: 35-2624)

History plays an important role for a unity based in "the language, the culture, the identity that we search for and find in the history of our fatherland" (Verhagen, 27-06-2006: 95-5876). But national identity equally comprises "shared values and norms and connectedness to Dutch society" (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5971). A strictly procedural or political national identity would not suffice:

"If there are no common experiences hiding behind those rules, no common convictions, no generally recognisable historical moments that moved us forward in developing an understanding of what is good and evil in society, such rules tend to lack substance." (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5971)

The need for a strong sense of national community is not just fuelled by a concern with diversity: it also stems from a rejection of individualism. The frame opposes individualist conceptions of national identity and argues that these pose a problem as they erode the "we-feeling" (Verhagen, 14-04-2005: 73-4475). Apparently, the recent emphases in policy and society on individualisation, freedom from constraints, and tolerance have led to a situation in which people take care only of their own interests and not of the community, and to avoid further fragmentation:

"We need to start to realise that our identity is not derived from extreme openness, permissiveness and individuality. I think we need to instead move towards a club feeling, where we are proud of what the Netherlands is; that which binds us and that which we share with each other. […] Where other parties emphasise freedom and the individual, Christian-Democrats instead want to reclaim the sense of community and security that people need in these confusing times of globalisation, economic unrest and terrorist threat." (Verhagen, 14-04-2005: 73-4475-6)

This is in marked contrast to the previous frame that saw national identity first as a matter of individual freedom rather than community. National identity here is thick and comprehensive, and it is simultaneously historical-cultural, emotional and civic. Integration and a renewed emphasis on community are required to achieve it. An engagement with national identity has been neglected in the past, and a clearer stance could help the integration of immigrants (Verhagen, 27-06-2006: 95-5876). Such integration here is understood to be "more than participation through a job or education" (Sterk, 06-04-2004: 63-4094); it extends to "loyalty" to the Netherlands (Huizinga-Heringa, 06-04-2004: 63-4133) and for immigrants to "identify with our country […]. It is important to know which fundamental values and norms and which social codes there are" (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5970-1). These social codes are

accepted ways of behaving and interacting in public; when in public, all must act in accordance with the same norms. In contrast to the previous frame, integration hence is not just about legal and socio-economic but also about "socio-cultural" adaptation (Sterk, 06-04-2004: 63-4094).

Government has an important role to play in the integration process: the problem of fragmentation in all its manifestations "screamed for moral leadership that could strengthen social cohesion and bridge divisions in society" (Rouvoet, 18-12-2002: 35-2610). It needs to design education and integration policies that pay attention to "our culture, our history and our values and norms" (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5971). It is important for the government to engage with values and morality because these are reflected in the policies and legislation they develop, but also because "society expects moral leadership from politics" (Rouvoet, 14-04-2005: 73-4459) – morality should not be relegated to the private sphere:

> "The public authorities have an important task where it concerns the formulation, the codification, and the protection of essential norms for the coexistence of people who differ in many ways. And that can only be done from within fundamental, underlying values" […] "I have said several times in this room that politics is not just about the right, but in essence always also about morality. It is also about moral choices." (Rouvoet, 18-12-2002: 35-2609-10)

Government involvement does not stop at furthering a sense of unity; it also extends to an engagement with diversity. In fact, there is significant scope for diversity within the unity embodied in the Rechtsstaat, which functions as a framework for diversity that does not expect identical attachment from all its citizens. It does not result from citizens transcending their differences in a shared allegiance to the state but needs to be felt *from within* each cultural group: "The point is to make sure that all groups in our country connect their deepest intentions – and that includes religion – to the Rechtsstaat and democracy" (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5975). It is through their group identity that people are part of the nation. This "plurality of our public sphere" (Sterk, 06-04-2004: 63-4099) is an important historical legacy and is to be upheld and defended; it is enshrined in the constitution, to guarantee freedom, and it is a fundamental value

of Dutch society (Rietkerk, 18-12-2002: 35-2623). The values that are embodied in the Rechtsstaat include "cultural pluralism" (Verhagen, 14-04-2005: 73-4475).

The public sphere thus is not neutral but host to a democratic search for "consensus and compromise" (Rouvoet, 14-04-2005: 73-4459) between different groups:

> "There exists a persistent misunderstanding that the separation of church and state necessarily leads to the separation of religion and politics. […] our political discussions about the ordering of society would have to be 'neutral', without connections to religion, faith or morality […] That is not only downright nonsense, it is also factually impossible […] For it is the essence of democracy that people strive to order society in a particular way, based on their deepest convictions, through debate and persuasion. […] Tolerance in essence means accepting that others might have different perspectives on truth, good and evil or the good life and act in accordance with those. We should not be concerned with constructing a new truth – albeit through democratic procedures – as a sort of highest common denominator, but with ensuring that plural society, the 'we agree to disagree', does not get in the way of a peaceful society." (Rouvoet, 14-04-2005: 73-4460-1)

Immigrants equally need to be included into the Rechtsstaat *with* their identities: "the slogan of 'integration with retention of identity'[58] remains relevant" (Rouvoet, 31-08-2004: 92-5945). There is a potentially positive relationship between cultural or religious identities and integration: "People can be inspired by religion precisely to make a bridging contribution to society" (Sterk, 06-04-2004: 63-4099). Clearly, the frame opposes "assimilation into a secularised culture and/or the privatisation of religion" (Van der Vlies, 31-08-2004: 92-5968).

Group organisations are implored to ensure such democratic inclusion (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5976). The constitutional right of religious groups to establish their own schools, reflecting their religious identity, is equally defended in this frame:

[58] This was the slogan of multiculturalism (originating in the Ethnic Minorities Policy) in the Netherlands.

"As far as I'm concerned, integration does not mean the loss of one's personal identity, nor the loss of the distinctive group identity. In such a school this identity can be affirmed. The confidence that gives helps integration into society." (Huizinga-Heringa, 06-04-2004: 93-4135)

Minority cultural identities, then, are protected by state-funded separate schools. It is important to recognise such identities in order to foster their acceptance, so that groups can treat each other with respect:

"I am willing to put an effort into ensuring that we accept each other in our society, also in our being different. But I am actually not willing to deny that differences between people exist and that different ways of life happen to exist. Sweeping that under the carpet will not aid integration." (Huizinga-Heringa, 06-04-2004: 93-4134)

Strong group identities apparently can aid integration: Rietkerk (18-12-2002: 35-2623) in this vein states that the Dutch culture of pluralism, tolerance and freedom supports "sovereignty in the own circle, emancipation from within the own circle, social ties and social cohesion". These were the slogans of pillarisation, expressing the concept of subsidiarity that holds that matters should be decided at the most decentralised level possible (Entzinger 2006, p. 124).

The frame indeed refers to pillars, such as in its discussion of integrating Islam:

"We need to prevent the creation of an Islamic pillar in the Netherlands that turns its back to society rather than facing that society. To prevent that, we need precisely to keep engaging with the Islamic pillar. […] through debate and dialogue we can try to make sure that Islam connects itself with all the values that we know in the Netherlands." (Sterk, 06-04-2004: 63-4101)

There is a particular difficulty in integrating Islam because "as a non-Christian religion [it] is essentially alien to the Judeo-Christian tradition that gave rise to European culture" (Huizinga-Heringa, 06-04-2004: 63-4136). This is further reinforced by certain scepticism about the compatibility of Islam and democracy: "Islam is not always

inclined to connect itself to a democratic Rechtsstaat" (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5975).
Nevertheless, such a connection is possible if Islam is publicly recognised:

> "We have to realise that eliminating Islam from public life, as is advocated by
> some, will have perverse effects. It will mean that the necessary bridges will never
> be built and radical movements that oppose our society can develop all too easily.
> Precisely for the advancement of our democratic values and norms it is important
> to keep the dialogue going." (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5975)

Out of a concern for democracy and unity, Muslims need to be included in the
Rechtsstaat through debate and dialogue. They must have the space to be full and
equal citizens:

> "We must make sure not to exclude them, not to unnecessarily remove them
> from us, but rather to include them. We must show them that within the
> framework of our democratic Rechtsstaat – and that is non-negotiable – there is
> space for them too to live their life in the way they want, including their religion."
> (Slob, 01-04-2008: 70-4888)

The repetitive use of 'us' and 'them' in this latest quote highlights how inclusion is still
a future aim, to be achieved through multicultural dialogue. Here it is clear that
national identity is defined by history as much as it is defined by diversity. As Islam is
not traditionally part of the Netherlands, such a historical definition of collective
identity might only include Muslims once they have been part of the nation for some
time – i.e. in the future.

5.2.1   A vision of society, united

What is the united whole here, how can we characterise it? Clearly, it is a nation, and
this nation is understood as a historical community. It is also plural, so that diversity is
included in unity. This is because it is not just individuals *who* belong to this nation,
but also groups. These are not simply chosen associations and have identities that are
traditional and valuable. Group identities, therefore, need to be respected and
accommodated within the framework of the Rechtsstaat through multicultural policies
that will give minorities the confidence to be full citizens. The individual, then, is

effectively seen as doubly embedded: in the group and in the nation. This is not a source of conflict because these groups are equally embedded in the nation, which thereby reflects the diversity of society.

National identification is *how* citizens belong to the nation and the national identity proposed here is rather 'thick' as it specifies cultural characteristics. It is not conceived as an identity that sits on top of other cultural identities but rather as simultaneously made up of them and reflected in them, but group identities do remain secondary to national identity in public (not in the official or political public sphere, but in the interaction between citizens): here, all should uphold common norms and shared social codes. Meanwhile, it centres on the Rechtsstaat, understood not as a neutral and procedural state but as a cultural tradition. It reflects the shared history of the nation, the overarching community made up of different groups; it is something all can share and take part in and forms the focal point of national identity. Effectively, that means that nation and state are very closely bound up. But the nation-state is not only a source of unity: it also provides the framework for diversity. It embodies the norms and structures necessary to guarantee peaceful coexistence. And it engages with groups, encouraging them to express their identities and connect to it from within. Government has a responsibility to ensure that this role of the Rechtsstaat as a source of unity and a provision for diversity is successful: they need to show moral leadership. In that sense, the state is involved in shaping society as it facilitates smooth coexistence as well as cohesion.

Unity here is *impeded* if a sense of community is lacking. As communities, both groups and the nation form a source of identity and belonging for the individual, and hence multiculturalism and national identity are complementary as instruments to strengthen a sense of community and thereby *foster* unity. Moreover, history teaching is important: the central value of community needs to be realised not only through the inclusion of groups into the national community, but also through the inclusion of individuals that might otherwise emphasise their individual freedom over their ties to the community.

5.3 The national frame

The national frame approaches unity in multicultural society in a way that has received much attention in literature on integration policy in the Netherlands; this is the perspective associated with the 'retreat from multiculturalism' and the 'move towards assimilation' (cf. Bruquetas-Callejo et al 2007; Duyvendak and Scholten 2012; Joppke 2004). The frame emphasises national identity at the expense of diversity, which is seen as a potential problem:

> "Diversity is a reality: that I agree with, of course! Diversity should not be fought. Wait a minute, this is really too fast for me. Didn't we agree that diversity can also have a dark side, that not everything that comes from elsewhere is good, beautiful and interesting just for that reason and that an excess of diversity can destroy a society." (Verdonk, 02-09-2004: 94-6058)

This concern for the negative side of diversity is particularly relevant in relation to Islam. Herben (18-12-2002: 35-2632) states that: "The thesis that Islam hinders the integration of new migrants was perhaps a taboo a year ago, but is now a fait accompli". Islam is seen as an obstacle to the integration necessary for strong national unity. Wilders (01-04-2008: 70-4896) goes as far as arguing that if the number of Muslims in the Netherlands grows, "then the Dutch identity will perish". He states:

> "I do indeed think a million Muslims is enough for the Netherlands. […] No, too much even. I am not ashamed of that at all. Lots of people also think this. In our opinion, it does not fit into our culture." (Wilders, 01-04-2008: 70-4895)

Islam is presented as incompatible with Dutch culture. Rutte (01-04-2008: 70-4890) thus berates Vogelaar (Minister for Integration 2007-2008), "who sees Islam become part of our traditions. In so doing she increases the feelings of insecurity in our society". Apparently, "new immigrants from Islamic countries […] view Western society as a decadent society that lost its ties to God and order" (Herben, 14-04-2005: 73-4471). Islamic diversity is also connected to security concerns: a "demanding policy to work towards cohesion" is needed to "prevent growing differences from evolving into radicalism and religious fundamentalism" (Sterk, 06-04-2004: 63-4094). Criminality

among immigrants too is a concern here. Rutte (01-04-2008: 60-4889) rhetorically runs the two together when he discusses the changes people have witnessed in their neighbourhoods; "[…] the terrible development of much too large a group of criminal and intimidating, largely allochtonous, youths who terrorise a complete neighbourhood."

Diversity, and particularly Islam, then, poses a public order problem as well as a threat to unity. Apparently, in Dutch society there is "a cultural chasm… This distance needs to be decreased! I am convinced that this is only possible if policy aims to strengthen the common" (Verdonk, 02-09-2004: 94-6059). Multiculturalism is rejected:

> "The Netherlands are a multicultural country […]. The mistake that has long been made is to think that multiculturality is a good concept for the integration of new immigrants into the existing and dominant culture. That turned out to be false. […] For those who decide to take permanent residence here there is only one way to success and that is to take part." (Marijnissen, 31-08-2004: 92-5936)

Policy should focus on shared values and norms: "I advocate the abolition of the whole ethnic minority policy, [taking instead] the pursuit of Dutch culture and identity as a guide" (Nawijn, 31-08-2004: 92-5978). Policy specifically targeted at minorities "is not good for the minorities and on my view also discriminating. It is also not good for the autochtonen, because it leads to jealous responses" (Nawijn, 06-04-2004: 63-4147). Instead, "a lot of attention should be paid to the Dutch language, identity, history, culture, our royal family, national anthem, and so on" (Van der Vlies, 31-08-2004: 92-5969). The objection to multicultural policies here is justified in different terms than those raised in the emancipation frame: there, they were opposed out of a concern for the potential oppression of individuals by groups, whereas here, they are opposed because they would affirm diversity when what is needed instead is an emphasis on unity.

Unity resides in shared values and norms that "belong to our collective consciousness and are the pillars underneath our civilisation and thereby further stability, trust, the prevention of fear, alienation and embitterment and even extreme egoism and

violence" (Kant, 18-12-2002: 35-2615). They need to be explicated, because integration requires that "we need to first be absolutely clear about what it is new and old immigrants should integrate into"(Herben, 18-12-2002: 35-2632). These values are "the core values of modernity" (Herben, 18-12-2002: 35-2632) and they are "our democratic achievements" (Herben, 14-04-2005: 73-4471). They are part of "what constitutes our common frame of reference, our national identity, and the character of the Dutch nation" (Nijs, 27-06-2006: 95-5883). To this identity belong characteristics such as "provincialism and courage, Calvinism and Catholicism, William of Orange and Phillips II, Thorbecke and Drees" (Nijs, 27-06-2006: 95-5883). These characteristics arise from history: "The current confusion about our moral, cultural and political identity partly finds its explanation in the lack of historical awareness in broad swathes of the population" (Marijnissen, 27-06-2006: 95-5877).

To overcome such confusion, the state needs to explicate and define the moral character of the national community. Morality cannot be reduced to "common decency" to be left to the individual (Kant, 18-12-2002, 25-2615):

> "The concept of the minimal state conflicts with people's expectations. They want a government that leads, […] a government that keeps things together, and a government that itself sets a good example." (Marijnissen, 14-04-2005: 73-4481)

The need to make explicit what is at stake also holds for the debate on the issues surrounding multiculturalism and national identity. The national frame opposes the emancipation frame's call for conciliation; it argues against those who portray open and honest debate using "terms like 'provocative', 'Islamophobia' and 'stigmatisation'" (Van Aartsen, 31-08-2004: 92-5960) as they invite political correctness. In fact:

> "clarity is an absolute requirement to solve problems. Clarity can of course sometimes be painful, but that cannot be a reason to gloss over or sidestep real difficulties. Respect is often mentioned in this regard. I would firstly like to remark that respect needs to be earned. […] In my thinking respect is inextricably linked to clarity. Respect for others means first of all that I do not obfuscate

> matters, but clearly say what I think about something or someone." (Verdonk, 02-09-2004: 94-6059)

Unity, then, is based in shared values and directed by government. At the level of community, it is expressed in terms of citizenship, here understood to go beyond rights and duties: it "stands for the identity of the Dutch citizen. Everybody who comes to live in the Netherlands should be proud to have Dutch citizenship" (Verdonk, 04-10-2006: 8-486). Citizenship here is a source of pride and not purely civic and procedural: "Culture and tradition are also linked to State and citizenship" (Visser, 04-10-2006: 8-483). The entry into citizenship for immigrants equals "the accession to a new community" (Visser, 04-10-2004: 8-482) that is not to be taken lightly: "so begins a unique tie between the naturalisandus [he who obtains nationality] and his new fatherland. […] Naturalisation […] is much more than simply obtaining a passport. It is the finishing touch to the internalisation of citizenship" (De Krom, 14-01-2010: 42-4131). That is, "integration is a means, a condition to naturalise. Integration is a means and a condition to obtain that Dutch citizenship. That is the first prize" (Verdonk, 02-09-2004: 94-6096).

Dutch citizenship is about identity, pride and exclusivity, and "immigrants need to make a conscious choice for Dutchness" (Nawijn, 31-08-2004: 92-5978). That means the frame opposes dual nationality, which is considered "an obstacle to integration" (Verdonk, 02-09-2004: 94-6074) and characterised as opportunistic; it is "buttering one's bread on both sides" (Fritsma, 14-01-2010: 42-4137). This directly contrasts with the emancipation frame that portrayed naturalisation as the first step rather than the final point of integration and argued for dual nationality as an expression of personal identity. And despite the similar stress on community and history, this conception of national identity differs from that of the multicultural frame in that it is singular: the public sphere here does not reflect and engage groups but rather unifies individual citizens.

The integration that leads up to citizenship is understood as cultural adaptation, which has been neglected in previous policy so that "the integration of large groups of

allochtonen has not succeeded and hence has failed" (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5971). It is time for a change in approach:

"[…] we have […] a lot of allochtonen who, even after living in our country for a decade, still cannot even speak Dutch. In addition, many immigrants show little willingness to adapt to our society. […] still nothing is done to make clear to immigrants that they are expected to adapt to Dutch society […][We propose] an assimilation-contract […] The migrant thereby indicates that he will come to share the Dutch dominant values and norms. The Dutch identity and the Dutch freedoms can no longer be under pressure from immigration." (Fritsma, 30-01-2008: 47-3516)

Adaptation is important not only to overcome the dangerous implications of diversity discussed above but also because "a culture or a religion can keep people in a disadvantaged position" (Hirsi Ali, 06-04-2004: 63-4107). Indeed, it is "the migrants that have largely or totally been assimilated" in Dutch society that are most successful (Hirsi Ali, 06-04-2004: 63-4107).

Cultural adaptation should not be limited to the public sphere but also extends to the private. Sterk (06-04-2004: 63-4097) proposes measures to ensure that families speak Dutch at home: "it cannot be the case that children aged four start school not knowing a word of Dutch. Parents fail to invest in their child. This results in high costs for the tax payer." In the interest of integration, children should go to school together because segregation hinders interaction, and "integration indeed means that you do things together" (Marijnissen, 02-09-2004: 94-6068). Here, "the greater societal goal, which is a society in which we truly live together" (Kant, 06-04-2004: 63-4122) means that the freedom of parents to choose a school for their children can be constrained, as they "have a duty towards the community" (Marijnissen, 02-09-2004: 94-6068). Likewise, the frame advocates a "moratorium on Islamic and Orthodox schools" (Kant, 06-04-2004: 63-4128) as these would impede mixing.

Integration is mainly the responsibility of the migrant: "it is ultimately up to them to determine whether the Netherlands will also be their country" (Kant, 06-04-2004: 63-

4131-2). This responsibility or "duty" to integrate stems from the choice to migrate: "after all, they are the ones leaving their own country. They must therefore care about attaining a good position here" (Verhagen, 31-08-2004: 92-5971). People integrate themselves; this is not something the government can do for them. However, there is a crucial role for government to facilitate integration, and one of the most important factors is anti-discrimination: "we cannot on the one hand make appropriate and high demands of people from elsewhere who want to participate in our society and then exclude them because they come from elsewhere. We can't!" (Verdonk, 02-09-2004: 94-6061).

5.3.1   A vision of society, united

In the conception of unity expressed in the vision of the ideally united society underpinning this frame, the nation best characterises *what* the united whole is. The nation is a community defined by a shared national identity that leaves little scope for diversity. It is individuals *who* belong to this nation and national identification is *how* they do so. National membership is thick and provides identity and belonging, such that the nation sometimes takes precedence over individuals and the groups they may be part of; individuals are nationals first and should be proud of that. The strong sense of national identity that is advocated here is portrayed as natural and self-evident, and as based in history.

The focus on national identity resembles that in the multicultural frame, but differs from it in its rationale. Here, the emphasis on national identity stems not so much from a commitment to the value of community but rather expresses a direct concern with unity. That is, the defence of a strong national identity is justified by an appeal to the need for unity in sameness to avoid fragmentation. Patently, that differs from the appeal to the need for what was labelled a 'club feeling' in the multicultural frame: here what is emphasised are characteristics rather than emotions. Where the multicultural frame pursues unity as a means to community, here it is pursued as an end in itself – an end that is threatened by diversity. National identity is not balanced with group identity but rather subsumes it; it is pictured as a singular rather than a plural identity. This difference reflects slightly different outlooks on the individual in

these frames: the multicultural frame opposed individualisation whereas here individual responsibility is emphasised. The nation here is made up of individuals that must share national characteristics.

This already indicates that diversity potentially *impedes* unity. Indeed cultural diversity itself is considered a potential threat, both as detrimental to unity and as a feeding ground for Islamic radicalism. Consequently, to *foster* unity, diversity should be downplayed and national identity emphasised instead. This suggests a trade-off between diversity and unity, or the idea that multiculturalism and national identity are incompatible; too much diversity would harm the nation. Multicultural policies that would emphasise diversity are therefore rejected. Rather, minorities need to adapt so as to attenuate excess diversity and ensure an appropriate degree of unity based in sameness. National unity overrides individual freedom, such that individual identities may be sacrificed (in calls for assimilation) and individual liberty restricted (in the case of schools). Clearly, such sacrifices and restrictions fall especially on immigrants and minorities, or those who are the bearers of perceived excesses of diversity. Only by becoming more like the rest of the nation will they become part of it, and only with such inclusion will they fully enjoy the rights and liberties that come with citizenship. In that sense, national citizenship is an identity first and a set of legal provisions second.

5.4   The liberal individual frame

This frame echoes the Dutch liberal political orientation (cf. Pellikaan 2002, p. 209) and focuses on the individual. Questions of unity, diversity, multiculturalism and national identity here are considered individual concerns: what matters is citizenship, the individual relationship to the state that leaves space for diversity in private. In opposition to the emancipation frame that advocated state involvement in shaping society, here it is argued that

> "The mouldable society was a concept that was very current in the '70s. I however assume that all of us here can conclude that we cannot completely

design the entire world or even the Netherlands from The Hague. People also
have their own responsibility." (Dittrich, 06-04-2004: 63-4112)

This is not only based in scepticism about the effectiveness of policy, but also in a normative commitment to state neutrality where it concerns values. In contrast to the multicultural and national frames, the liberal individual frame argues that the state should not be involved in promoting shared values, because "it is not the state that governs public morality, but society itself" (De Graaf, 18-12-2002: 35-2612). Although states can never be fully value-neutral, "the government is not in charge of the moral convictions of citizens, whether we like it or not" (De Graaf, 18-12-2002: 35-2611). Therefore, Van Aartsen (14-04-2005: 73-4489) considers the political discussion about shared values somewhat irrelevant: "we have, I think, little use for a special debate about norms and values."

Shared values are no solution to the problem of "the disintegration of society" and the fear, divisions and "collective lack of self-confidence" (Dittrich, 14-04-2005: 73-4465) it engenders. Rather, what is needed is an emphasis on individual freedom and responsibility. Indeed, "emphasising individual opportunities is the only way to create social cohesion in a depillarised[59] society" (De Graaf, 18-12-2002: 35-2613), and "the consistent defence of individual freedom is […] the strongest weapon to fight excesses in multicultural society" (Dittrich, 06-04-2004: 63-4113). The frame wholeheartedly embraces the development of individualisation that saw the decrease of the power of the old pillars over individual choice. The multicultural frame was uneasy with this development and the emancipation framed noted the danger that particular policies would allow it to produce self-regarding citizens; here it is defended, for it "has led to more rights to self-determination and to the emancipation of women, gays and minorities" (De Graaf, 18-12-2002: 35-2612). That nonetheless does not mean the total abolition of communities, because "a truly free individual only flourishes in relation to its environment" (Dittrich, 14-04-2005: 73-4465). Individuals are social and they will choose their own groups.

[59] See Appendix 4.

The increased autonomy of the individual too often is "cast in strongly negative terms, as if the liberation from collective ties would also relegate to the background any sense of responsibility" (Dittrich, 14-04-2005: 73-4465). In fact, individual liberty and responsibility are closely bound up. Individual freedom has limits and "they seem to have been lost out of sight. Those limits are the freedom of others and individual responsibility. […] We need to appeal to people on the basis of that individual responsibility, not just the collective, the government, the cultural group, the firm or the school" (De Graaf, 18-12-2002: 35-2612). There is a responsibility on the part of individual citizens, then, to make society function smoothly: policy can only do so much.

This position on individual autonomy also characterises the response to diversity this frame advocates. Diversity is celebrated as a consequence of individual liberty; it arises as values and convictions fall in the "individual choice-domain" (Zalm, 18-12-2002: 35-2621). The "pillarised norms" (De Graaf, 18-12-2002: 35-2612) of the past no longer have much purchase as individuals negotiate their own identities; cultural identity is a private and individual matter. The Netherlands is understood and valued as a diverse society where "different groups of people live with different cultural backgrounds and value-and-norm-systems. […] I see diversity as something powerful" (Dittrich, 14-04-2005: 73-4466). Diversity is also recognised as a feature of democracy: the frame views "political pluralism as the expression of societal differences and of course of disagreements about the ordering of a society" (Van Aartsen, 14-04-2004: 73-4488).

But this celebration of diversity does not lead to support for multicultural policies. These would affirm groups that may be sources of "pressure and oppression" such as was the case in pillarised society when "people belonging to a pillar were enjoined from above, as a matter of course, to take certain decisions or design their lives in a particular way" (Dittrich, 06-04-2004: 63-4113). This suspicion of groups also extends to their discussion: when talking about immigrants and ethnic minorities there is a risk of essentialism. Thus Dittrich (31-08-2004: 92-5962) says that "Although it is inevitable to talk about groups, we realise that *the* allochtoon does not exist"; and Rutte (01-04-2008: 70-4890) states that "Every individual in this country has a right to be judged for his or

her actions as an individual and never because he or she happens to be part of a group".

Nevertheless, sometimes it is necessary to talk about groups because even if "a Moroccan boy from the Rif-area can have a completely different background from a Moroccan woman from Casablanca […]. Still they can sometimes encounter similar problems in Dutch society" (Dittrich, 31-08-2004: 92-5962). Such problems then clearly originate with a lack of openness in the host society. Although minorities are responsible for their own success because "every person creates their own happiness", the fact that they encounter these problems "creates duties for government" (Dittrich, 06-04-2004: 63-4113): to fight discrimination, to offer language courses and to make space for people from other countries in culture policies. Equally, integration policy should focus on education and labour to ensure migrants have the necessary skills to participate, as "arrears in integration often coincide with socio-economic disadvantage" (Dittrich, 31-08-2004: 92-5966). The appropriate balance between state policy and immigrant responsibility is expressed thus:

> "We give you the best education possible, we break open the rigid labour market for you, and also the long-neglected housing market and thereby create a foundation to build your future upon, but afterwards, after that it is up to you, to your ambition, to your vision for the future, to your strength." (Pechtold, 01-04-2008: 70-4891)

Integration here is not about cultural adaptation; "it should be possible that somebody integrates into society while retaining his identity if he speaks Dutch well and does well in society" (Dittrich, 06-04-2004: 63-4109). This is "integration in the sense of participation, not assimilation" (Pechtold, 01-04-2008: 70-4890); it is "a matter of rights and duties and integration is a matter of individuals" (Van Aartsen, 31-08-2004: 92-5956).

The frame hence relegates diversity to the private sphere and emphasises legal equality and socio-economic participation as enabling unity. Such unity is captured in citizenship, which is understood in procedural terms: "being a citizen is to belong to

the jurisdiction of democracy and Rechtsstaat. That is what matters" (Hirsch Ballin, 30-01-2008: 47-3535). Contra the national frame, citizenship here is about norms of interaction and respect for the rule of law, rather than shared values, culture or identity. Citizenship centres on a commitment to the constitution, which:

> "in the first place offers freedoms of citizens against the state, amongst others the freedom of opinion, freedom of religion and the freedom of association. An important article is article one that contains the ban on discrimination. We see that as the expression of the principle of equality of people: of man and woman, coloured and white, religious and non-religious, heterosexual and homosexual. We cannot retract from these essential achievements. When exercising the freedoms of the constitution, everyone must also respect article one." (Zalm, 18-12-2002: 35-2617)

Although unity is mostly legal in nature, that does not make it trivial and the values of freedom, equality and non-discrimination are non-negotiable. They should be upheld in the case of a "clash of cultures in our society" in which there may be appeals to "cultural or religious motives to preach or practice inequality" (De Graaf, 18-12-2002: 35-2613). And they – "Dutch values, such as equal treatment of men and women, of gays and straight people" – need to be taught in schools from a young age (Dittrich, 31-08-2004: 92-5963). It should be remembered that "democracy as we know it in the Netherlands and the rest of the western world seems a self-evident achievement but it is not" (Pecthold, 27-06-2006: 95-5889); it needs maintenance in the form of democratic education to continue to function.

This civic conception of unity as based in the constitution leaves space for plural identities: people are allowed to hold dual nationality because "the hypothesis that loyalty and nationality are inextricably linked is untenable" (De Krom, 14-01-2010: 42-4131) – there is no necessary correlation between the two concepts. In fact, "everyone in the Europe of 25 should get the same European nationality, next to the original nationality of each specific country" (Dittrich, 31-08-2004: 92-5965). National identity is approached in an individual, cosmopolitan and internationalist manner. "Nationality is part of somebody's identity", De Krom (14-01-2010: 41-4131) states, and it is not this

identity that makes nationality unique (as people can have plural identities) but "what does make nationality unique – and for us that is the core of the nationality concept – is citizenship."

5.4.1   A vision of society, united

Here, a state best characterises *what* the whole united in the vision of the ideally united society underpinning this frame is. In contrast to the other Dutch frames, the state here is considered to be neutral. It follows from society and has no role in shaping it or its values. The polity is conceived in terms of citizenship, which is understood as a direct relationship between the individual and the state. That means that it is a purely political association of individuals. State neutrality notwithstanding, the unity that this frame advocates is promoted actively through policies that affirm the values of the constitution that stands at its basis. Where it concerns these civic fundamentals, targeted state action is justified to ensure the continued allegiance of the population to liberal democracy. In that sense, shared citizenship is prior to cultural diversity.

The individual is given priority in this conception of unity and it is clear that it is individuals *who* belong to the polity. The individual here is free and has more direct responsibility for matters such as identity and values, but also national cohesion. Individual identities need to be free from group as well as state interference. National identity is part of such personal identities and the state is only concerned with the provision and guarantee of free and equal citizenship as its basis. Such citizenship is portrayed as a limited identity that pertains mainly to the legal dimension of national membership – and this is *how* citizens belong to the polity, as well as through a shared allegiance to the constitution encouraged by the state. As such, citizenship identity sits on top of other identities and all can share it across their differences because it reflects the values of the constitution: it is inclusive because it is neutral.

Groups are seen as potential sources of oppression and the individual here is seen as already autonomous: in that sense, this frame can be seen as an extension into the future of the emancipation frame. Likewise, it can be seen as located in the future vis-à-vis the multicultural frame as it considers pillarisation purely as a thing of the past. At

the same time, the frame itself still looks to a future where there are no longer any structural obstacles to equal participation: these *impede* unity and to remove such obstacles and *foster* unity, policies need to fight discrimination and promote equal opportunities. Clearly, central concepts such as national identity, citizenship, multiculturalism and diversity are approached from different angles (not only in the obvious ideological sense but also, as noted here, in a temporal sense) in these frames, and this has implications for the responses that are proposed.

As was the case in the previous chapter, the frames represent the issues to be addressed and the preferred responses to these in rather different terms, offering alternative understandings of causes and responsibility. It should also be clear that there are important similarities between the different perspectives on issues relating to unity advanced in the UK and the Netherlands. Moreover, a tendency that was noted in the previous chapter can be recognised here as well: political elites often allude to personal experiences to illustrate, underline, explain and justify their positions. To give but a few examples, consider, first, how Marijnissen (13-08-2004: 92-5931) recounts how he used to work with Turkish immigrants in a sausage factory, and witnessed how they were all but exploited, to arrive at his point that government has failed to be proactive on integration and create the conditions in which these immigrants could become part of the nation. Likewise, Azough (04-10-2006: 8-272) defends dual nationality by pointing out how she herself has both a Moroccan and a Dutch passport and this does not prevent her from feeling she belongs in – or has a "real tie" to – the Netherlands. And Herben (14-04-2005: 73-771) alludes to growing up in "the era of the Hare Krishnas in orange dresses" to explain and illustrate his openness to private forms of expressions of diversity, as distinguished from the strict separation of church and state he advocates.

This chapter has shown that Dutch political elites, like their British counterparts, construct different visions of the ideally united society as they debate matters relating to unity and diversity. As in the previous chapter, the perspective on unity developed in chapter 3 helped to interpret and reconstruct the different conceptions of unity

underpinning the frames (that is, this perspective has proved helpful to discern different conceptions of unity both in theory and in practice). Clarifying the differences between the frames helps us to gain a clearer view of the disagreements and overlaps in these debates, which could facilitate more fruitful dialogue. Moreover, reconstructing the different conceptions of unity that underpin the frames helps to unpick some of this disagreement as we can now begin to see how these frames actually pursue rather different visions of what a united society should look like ideally. They not only disagree about what issues need to be addressed and how, but also about what goals political intervention should aim to achieve in the long run. The next chapter will now consider the implications of the ideas of British and Dutch political elites for political theorists who aim to be of practical use and to suggest a conception of unity that may guide political action within these contexts.

6 British and Dutch political elites on unity: implications for political theorists

The previous two chapters have shown that rather like political theorists, British (chapter 4) and Dutch (chapter 5) political elites have different ideas about what unity is. These ideas are the ones that practical political theorists intend to shape when they clarify what unity is and suggest ways to foster it. As chapter 2 explained, knowing these ideas helps political theorists to enhance and demonstrate the *political plausibility* of the conceptions of unity they propose: recall that this involves that such proposals are clearly recognisable as applicable and acceptable within the context they address. This chapter will now explain the implications of the ideas presented in the previous two chapters for political theorists who aim to be of practical use, before the next chapter uses them to show that a multicultural conception of unity is not only most defensible but also politically plausible.

Ascertaining political plausibility is not a straightforward task: the ideas articulated by political elites are contingent and may be false, inconsistent, morally dubious, unrealistic and so on, so they should not simply be taken as a limit on the types of responses political theorists who aim to be of practical use may advance, or a checklist against which political theories can be assessed. In other words, the case studies do not compel a normative response: there is no 'relationship of logical entailment' (Miller 2013, p. 21) between them and the next chapter. That means that the implications of the previous chapters for political theorists cannot be captured in a straightforward list of issues or concepts they need to address. But as suggested before, practical political theory does take the ideas presented there to represent positions in the political debate it contributes to: it responds to them, showing how it builds on, develops, challenges or subverts them. The implications of the case studies pertain to this response. Of course, practical political theorists cannot (and need not) respond to all and every idea floated in the debates analysed. This chapter will therefore indicate how to approach the analyses presented in chapter 4 and 5.

First, section 6.1 specifies the significance of the information presented in the previous two chapters. With that in mind, section 6.2 then reassesses the frames to distil the broad patterns of thought that practical political theorists should bear in mind and respond to when devising conceptions of unity that are politically plausible. It shows that the different conceptions of unity underpinning the frames expressed by British and Dutch political elites can all be classified in terms of the rough typology of conceptions of unity suggested in chapter 3. This not only helps to highlight the existing ideas of the political elites these political theorists need to convince, but also underlines the fault lines in the debates analysed: unity is conceived in a plurality of ways as the debates comprise different patterns of thinking about it. Section 6.3 argues that this pluralism is a feature of these debates political theorists who aim to be of practical use need to heed when devising conceptions of unity in order for the latter to be politically plausible.

6.1 Specifying the significance of the case studies

This section explains how to approach the ideas presented in the case studies so that the next sections can subsequently explain how practical political theorists who aim to devise a politically plausible conception of unity need to respond to them. First, we need to know what exactly the case studies tell us. We know they present the different ways in which political elites conceive unity, but as yet, we do not know what can be inferred from these case studies. Their significance is affected by the method that was taken to the empirical analysis, which inevitably has limitations. This analysis has focused on one dimension of the phenomenon of unity in multicultural societies: the internal logic of how it is conceived in competing frames advanced by political elites. Undoubtedly, it has thereby neglected other interesting aspects. This section will clarify the significance of the case studies by discussing four important limitations.

First of all, the empirical analysis was not designed to generate generalisations. Yet the similarities between the British and Dutch frames raise the question if they might prove relevant in other countries dealing with similar issues. Further research in other countries would be needed to see whether these frames have some wider validity; or are embedded in specifically Western or European intellectual traditions; or,

alternatively, if they are particular to a certain way of accommodating difference that has been relatively similar in the UK and the Netherlands.

Secondly, the causal importance of the frames cannot be established. The approach has focused on the content of the frames: it was concerned with the ideas that were presented, rather than with who presented them, or how frequently they were presented. While we know how political elites conceive of unity in different ways, we do not know the levels of support the different conceptions of unity enjoy and we do not know which ones might be supported by more powerful groups of actors – be they advocacy coalitions (Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith 1993), discourse coalitions (Hajer 1995) or epistemic communities (Haas 1992). As we do not know the support for the different conceptions of unity, we cannot know which ones are more or less likely to influence policy developments (because after all, such influence depends on support as it is not always simply the best arguments that win in politics). Further research could develop this avenue and ascertain the support for the frames, both in these two political contexts and in wider society.

The third limitation concerns representativeness. Because the sample selection was based on the relevance and quality of the parliamentary debates, the samples cannot be assumed to be representative of wider political debates. This is the case in the British case study, because of the peculiar status and the particularly reflective character of the House of Lords, in which several academics participate, including most importantly for this thesis Lord Parekh, given his importance in the debate on multiculturalism in political theory. In the Dutch case study, parliamentary debates from 2004, a year of intense public interest in multiculturalism, are overrepresented in the sample. Nevertheless, the samples do represent parliamentary debates on these topics that are particularly sophisticated and reflective so they give a good impression of the different positions that are being defended.

Furthermore, the limited focus on political elites means that the frames cannot be shown to be important more widely in society. Nonetheless, such importance is probable, because of the nature of frames as ideational constructs that are produced and consumed by groups made up of a variety of actors in society, rather than

individuals (Freeden 1996, p. 105): their meaning is not simply reducible to the intent of the political elites participating in the debates but derives from the wider cultural context in which they are shaped. These elites draw on wider societal notions of the political concepts they use and this can be explained both from a logical or linguistic, and from a political point of view. First, these elites share a conceptual language with the wider population: the concepts they use are imbued with particular meanings that are embedded in wider patterns of shared understanding in society. They cannot construct arguments without making reference to ideas that resonate in society (cf. Miller 2013, p. 42; Parekh 2000c, p. x). Secondly, these elites consciously frame the issues they address to match the expectations of the citizens whose votes they seek, so that they likely advance conceptions of unity that appeal to citizens (e.g. Béland 2005, 2009; Campbell 1998).[60]

Of course, they may fail to achieve the latter: political elites are often said to be disconnected from society, removed from how most citizens think about issues like multiculturalism and national identity. But even if they fail to capture exactly how citizens conceive unity, these elites probably still advance conceptions of unity that are at least similar to the ones held by other citizens, because they still use the same language, refer to the same events, construct their positions in line with expectations of what is 'permissible and knowable' (Freeden 2008, p. 206) in their society, and so on. It is expected, therefore, that the conceptions of unity that further research might identify in wider society (for example by looking at media representations of unity, multiculturalism and national identity, or through exploring public opinion) will be similar to the ones identified in the previous two chapters, even if they may not be exactly the same. Hence, the conceptions of unity analysed in chapters 4 and 5 will be treated below as if they are pertinent in wider society too.

Finally, the focus on competition between the frames has approached them as more or less stable, thereby neglecting changes over time. This is in line with theories of knowledge and learning in policy that emphasise how more fundamental levels of ideas are resistant to change. The normative outlook and vision of social reality that

---

[60] Although, of course, this latter consideration does not apply to the Lords.

characterise the frames, and the priorities of values that they pursue, constitute such deeper levels of policy ideas. These theories argue that at this level, change tends to come from external shocks: only when new events cannot be explained in terms of the basic axioms of the paradigm will the paradigm itself change (Campbell 2002; Hall 1993; Sabatier 1993). Indeed, Fermin (1997, p. 155) finds that in the Netherlands, these most basic starting positions for approaching issues of unity and diversity have remained stable over a long period of time, even though problem definitions and proposed strategies have changed.

It seems intuitively likely that it is hard to change someone's ideas about what individuals are and how they relate to their environment: such ideas are based not only in scientific information that can be proved flawed, but also in her experience of her own identity (or self-conception [Miller 1995, p. 17]) and her interactions with others over the course of her lifetime, which are not so amenable to simple ideas of right and wrong. These beliefs and experiences may feed into the differential construction of the meaning of difference and unity, and also impact on the preferred political response to it. In that sense, the different conceptions of unity identified in the case studies are tightly linked to different 'modes of being' (Modood 2007, pp. 37-38).[61] The case studies indeed suggest this might be the case as they pointed out how political elites often draw on their own experiences to explain, illustrate and justify their ideas about unity.

Nevertheless, even if these ideas are hard to change that does not mean that change is impossible. There are numerous historical examples of ideational change over time. Deliberation might impact on the ontological presuppositions as well as the policy preferences of the frames (cf. Dryzek 1993; Fischer 1998; Rein and Schön 1993; Schmidt 2008, 2010). The fact that most of the frames discussed accept diversity (in some form or other) as a permanent feature of society is a case in point: at times in history this may not have been so obvious, as nationalist ideas were much more dominant. However, the approach taken to the analysis does not allow discerning such changes, and further research would be needed to track them. Here, it is important not to confuse changes in the dominant policy discourse, such as identified for example by

---

[61] For an interesting application of this idea to multicultural policies, see Verkuyten (2009).

Scholten (2011) and McGhee (2003), with changes within a frame: the former may refer to changes in levels of support or political power, whereas the latter more directly involves learning processes.

The case studies, hence, provide a particular type of information: they shed light on how unity is conceived in a plurality of ways within parliamentary debates in the UK and the Netherlands. These conceptions of unity cannot be proved to have wider validity but are nonetheless assumed to resemble how citizens in these countries conceive unity. They are also assumed to be rather stable, because they relate to how people conceive of themselves and their place in society, which is partly based on life experiences. Despite the limitations to what we can infer from the case studies, they offer important insights into the ideas about unity of the political elites who political theorists who aim to be of practical use and guide political action intend to convince.

6.2 Applicability and acceptability: responding to the frames

As we saw, British and Dutch political elites already have ideas about what unity is and how it should be fostered. Political theorists who aim to be of practical use try to shape these ideas. Knowing these ideas helps them to do so, as it enables political theorists to propose suggestions and clarifications that are not only morally defensible but also politically plausible, or clearly recognisable as applicable and acceptable within the context they address. The frames analysed in the previous two chapters, therefore, indicate which types of responses may be politically plausible. But as was noted above, they do not condition such responses for they may be flawed. Moreover, political theorists who aim to propose a politically plausible conception of unity do not have to respond to all ideas political elites may have. The implications of the case studies for such political theorists, hence, are not immediately apparent, and this section will clarify them by specifying which ideas they have reason to be attentive to.

It would be unrealistic to expect practical political theorists to address all the events, issues, policy developments and so on discussed in the parliamentary debates analysed. Such topics, it was suggested before, are often epiphenomena that are addressed from a more fundamental position on unity. The case studies already

explicated these positions underpinning the frames. Now, this section will distil or crystallise the most fundamental differences between these positions to show that they fall under three broad patterns of thought about unity. These patterns can be classified in terms of the rough typology of conceptions of unity proposed in chapter 3.

Classifying the frames in terms of this rough typology that distinguished between a negative conception of unity as well as political, national and multicultural conceptions of unity helps to organise and understand them and interpret their meaning by highlighting differences and similarities between them and bringing out their distinctive rationale. Note, however, that the negative conception of unity was refuted already as it fails to specify a convincing account of unity. Indeed, its rejection of unity now proves too remote from the way political elites think about issues of unity and diversity in society to be politically plausible, as all the frames suggest some form of unity. As will be shown below, the other three broad patterns of thinking about unity can be understood as somewhat more abstract versions of the conceptions of unity that underpin the different frames that were identified in chapters 4 and 5. By responding to these three broad conceptions of unity, practical political theorist can thus address the central ideas about unity in these frames.

This classification is not a case of imposing the ideas of political theorists on political elites. We cannot simply assume that political elites understand and depict things the same way as political theorists do, so the previous chapters have approached the ideas advanced by political elites in their own terms and illustrated this using quotes. But now that we have a clear view of how they do actually understand unity and related issues, we can see how the typology outlined in chapter 3 captures something about how unity is conceived not only by political theorists but also by political elites. This makes sense because both the debates in Parliament and in political theory were conceptualised as part of the wider political debate in society to which practical political theory contributes, and as sharing a conceptual language in which ideas are expressed (cf. Freeden 1996, pp. 40-44; Miller 2013, p. 42; Parekh 2000c, p. x).

The case studies, thus, imply that political theorists who aim to propose conceptions of unity that are politically plausible respond to the three broad patterns of thought about

unity discussed below in order to facilitate and show that their proposals are applicable and acceptable within the context they address.

6.2.1   Political conceptions of unity

Recall that we can understand political conceptions of unity roughly as specifying that a state best captures *what* the united whole is; that it is individual citizens *who* belong to this polity; that rational and/or reasonable commitments to political values and/or the institutions that embody them is *how* they belong to it; and that such unity is *impeded* where these values are not widely held and will be *fostered* more or less automatically by the existence of the liberal democratic state that embodies them, as citizens will come to endorse them of their own accord because it is rational and reasonable to do so. The integration of different groups in society is limited to the political dimension of the shared life of the polity and does not extend to cultural values. The rationale of this conception of unity can be recognised most readily in the liberal individual frames in each case study; and in a somewhat more complicated sense in the Dutch emancipation frame.

The liberal individual frames give a liberal and individual portrayal of what a united society should look like that locates diversity but also national identity in the private sphere, thus conceptualising the public sphere as neutral. Both the British and the Dutch liberal individual frames point out that a political concern with shared national values or national identity is somewhat irrelevant, because this identity is personal, which means the latter can be plural and internationalist and avoids uniform definition. In any case, the state should stay out of such private beliefs and identities. Unity is not found in national identity but rather in shared democratic traditions and a shared allegiance to the political structure of the state and the liberal values it embodies. In other words, it is characterised as political beliefs and commitments that all citizens are supposed to share. These commitments function as a non-negotiable set of rules, rights and duties. They find expression in the direct relationship between the individual and the state. The liberal framework that embodies the political values that citizens share also forms a boundary on the legitimate expression of diversity, which does not receive public recognition as that would hamper individual freedom, and for

the British liberal individual frame, also impede social mobility and therefore socio-economic equality. Policy should instead focus on this latter form of equality and facilitate participation while upholding equal treatment. Individuals themselves are responsible for their own moral outlook but also for the success of national cohesion.

In a somewhat more complex way, the Dutch emancipation frame can also be understood as expressive of a political conception of unity. It emphasises how unity is an effect of a relationship between individual citizens and the state that runs through a shared allegiance to the constitution and the values it embodies. Diversity is celebrated within the context of this shared allegiance, and national identity (like other identities) is thought to be private. However, the emancipation frame differs from the political conceptions of unity advanced by political theorists we saw in chapter 3 because it presupposes a widespread support for the state as an emancipatory force in society. The state is seen as enabling the self-realisation of its citizens into autonomous persons that show solidarity (hence, citizens are not only connected to the state but also to each other, through these emotive bonds). The frame operates on the assumption that citizens need certain incentives to behave in a way that is not simply self-regarding, such that the state needs to create the right conditions for them to behave morally. In the emancipation frame, the state seems concerned not just with the construction of virtuous citizens, but of virtuous persons. This is not a state that is neutral between different conceptions of the good life but one that quite explicitly pursues a particular – liberal – vision of the good person and society.

Actually, this conceptualisation of the state as an important player in shaping society can be recognised in all but the liberal individual frame in the Dutch case study. The language used to express this role sets these frames apart from their British counterparts that more readily uphold a vision of the state as neutral, even if they allow it to play a role in shaping society: it is quite common to see the state referred to as a 'moral leader' in the Dutch debates, a concept that would seem very outlandish in the British debates. In effect, these Dutch frames more readily conceive of democracy in paternalistic terms, reflecting the belief that the state has a responsibility to define the parameters of society.

Of course, states cannot completely avoid paternalism as they regulate harmful behaviour; policy and legislation always express a view of what society should behave like. They tend to support particular life styles over others through the conditions they attach to the allocation of benefits and burdens (e.g. tax cuts for married couples). But paternalism exists in degrees. While a form of 'soft paternalism'[62] has been distinguished in the UK since the New Labour Government (1997-2010), here it is used as a mechanism for reducing the size of the state by increasing individual choice (Jones et al 2011, p. 61), rather than as an expression of moral leadership. This stands in marked contrast to the Netherlands, which has a tradition of strong paternalism, with the 'caring state' (Becker 2000, p. 223) at the top of a hierarchically ordered society. The influence of this tradition has reduced in a now more individualist society, but the state remains the paternalist locus of social security – as Becker (2000, p. 226) points out, the notion of individual responsibility is not as strong here as in the 'Anglo-Saxon world'. It would appear that this paternalist conception of the state in welfare policy carries over into the field of integration policy.

While the emancipation frame can still be interpreted as a version of the political conception of unity advanced in political theory, as unity runs through shared allegiance to the constitution and the political values it embodies rather than cultural or national traits or identities, its understanding of the role of the state means it represents a somewhat more elaborate permutation than the liberal individual frames.

6.2.2 National conceptions of unity

National conceptions of unity can roughly be said to suppose that a nation best characterises *what* the whole that is united is; that *who* belongs to this nation is in first instance individuals; that *how* they belong is through being embedded in the national community and through national identification; and that such unity is potentially *impeded* when not all members of the polity identify with the nation so that it can be *fostered* through facilitating their assimilation or, in more liberal versions, integration into a suitably revised conception of national identity that reflects the diversity of

---

[62] A form of paternalism that aims to create choice situations for citizens that will lead to better decisions.

society. Integration here requires more than in the previous frames: it entails identification with certain features that are deemed national and with the community that harbours them. The rationale of this conception of unity can be recognised in the ideas put forward by some of the political elites participating in the debates that were analysed, namely those advancing the British community cohesion and conservative frames, and the Dutch national frame.

Recall that national conceptions of unity may differ in how they conceive the nation and its members: as an inherited cultural community united by strong moral ties or as a community that comprises individuals who are shaped by their membership but nonetheless hold it in critical regard and are united by a shared public life that centres on civic values and institutions. The British community cohesion frame can be read as a calibration of this latter, liberal form of a national conception of unity. It locates unity in a civic national identity that centres on shared democratic values. These values are civic rather than cultural, and thought to therefore be neutral and thus inclusive of all groups in society. Note that while it is national identity that unites individual citizens, it is portrayed in terms that seem to stretch what we commonly understand as identity and comes closer to a rational and voluntary commitment to political values, and this frame thus somewhat approaches political conceptions of unity. In the community cohesion frame, this national identity also facilitates meaningful interaction between different groups that retain their cultural (and other) identities in private. Diversity is thereby balanced with unity; where it is not, promotion of the shared national identity needs to ensure it will be, so as to ensure that diversity will not threaten cohesion.

Meanwhile, the British conservative frame and the Dutch national frame can be read as versions of 'thicker' and more cultural accounts of national unity. They privilege the nation in their sociology and emphasise national unity. These frames conceptualise unity in terms of a national identity defined by particular characteristics and traditions, arising from history and linked to the national community that is understood in 'thick' terms. National identity is a source of pride, love and loyalty; membership is emotional, and individual as it overrides other (group) identities. These two frames are inclined to think of diversity as potentially threatening, both as a source of division in

society that detracts from unity, and as facilitating Islamic terrorism. Hence, assimilation or cultural adaptation is prescribed (in opposition to multicultural policies, because those are thought to emphasise the divisive potential of cultural diversity). As unity is based in the historical characteristics of the nation, those who do not share these already need to adapt so as to become full members.

These frames, however, do conceive of such adaptation in rather different terms. The British conservative frame argues for assimilation as a process that is part of the natural evolution of the nation, so that diversity tends to be fleeting in any case. Although the state should convey a sense of the national character through history teaching, it should not otherwise be involved in personal identities so that unity and belonging become the responsibility of the individual. For the Dutch national frame, on the other hand, assimilation should be the focus of integration policy. It accords the state a greater role in shaping society: again, the state is seen here as a moral leader that defines, explicates and promotes shared values and national identity. This identity is tightly linked to the state and citizenship, which are defined in legal as well as cultural and traditional terms. The political values embodied in the Dutch Rechtsstaat here are cherished in first instance because they represent the evolution of national history, not because of their universal validity. In this sense, this frame presents a blend of cultural and civic forms of nationalism, as it explicitly presents the civic as a cultural tradition.

6.2.3   Multicultural conceptions of unity

Finally, chapter 3 also outlined a multicultural conception of unity that can roughly be understood to characterise *what* the united whole is as both nation and state; considers that it is not only individuals but also groups *who* belong to this united whole; that *how* they belong is through equal membership in society which is mediated by group membership; and that such unity is *impeded* where minorities are marginalised so that it can be *fostered* through their inclusion through multicultural policies which involves challenging the dominance of majority norms. Integration here is understood as the inclusion and accommodation of minorities. This vision of what a united society should look like can be recognised in the British and Dutch multicultural frames advanced in the parliamentary debates that were analysed.

The British multicultural frame readily accepts society's cultural diversity as a permanent fact that should be celebrated. It conceives unity as the open-ended, subjective and inclusive emotional experience of belonging to the polity that individuals feel not simply as citizens but as members of their social (cultural, religious etc.) groups. The frame eschews national identity as an instrument for generating unity as it would risk exclusion by emphasising certain characteristics such as norms, values and behaviours that are not universally shared. The state should facilitate widespread belonging, which depends on relationships in society, not through the promotion of national identity but through publicly recognising and accommodating pluralism and thereby furthering its acceptance in society, enabling minorities as well as the majority to feel welcome and valued. That means the state challenges the social structures that exclude and marginalise minorities. In this frame, the state has an active role in improving society: it needs to pursue equality beyond its strict legal and economic sense, and target social and symbolic inequalities too.

The Dutch multicultural frame more comfortably embraces 'thicker' notions of the united community, as expressed in its emphasis on a shared national identity. This identity is the 'thick', defined and traditional identity of the national community, as it arises from history. While national identity is open to diversity, its historical focus restricts this openness to older forms of diversity so that it expresses a slight unease with Islam, as a newer form of diversity. This national identity and the norms and values it comprises characterise public life and interaction so that minorities who do not already share it need to adapt to it, at least in public. Like in the Dutch national frame, this national identity is linked to the Rechtsstaat, presented as a historical and cultural tradition. This state is a moral leader that defines and promotes the national identity that binds the nation together, upholds the social norms that guarantee peaceful coexistence between groups, and engages these different groups in democratic deliberation aiming for compromise. In other words, it enables diversity to flourish and actively engages it in the public sphere as is through public recognition that diverse groups are tied to it and belong to the unity of the nation-state.

Although this frame can thus be classified as expressing a multicultural conception of unity, for it suggests unity requires the equal inclusion of diverse groups in the nation-state through public recognition, this emphasis on a rather defined historical cultural-civic national identity means the frame is a calibration of the multicultural conception of unity that moves towards the national conception of unity discussed above. Effectively, it assumes that diversity is restricted to features such as religion that do not conflict with, and therefore can exist within, a shared national identity that nonetheless includes moral values and practices that have developed over the course of history. There is an apparent tension between diversity and history: the values and practices of new minorities fall outside of this scope of historically determined acceptable diversity.

This section has shown that the rough typology of three broad ways of thinking about unity suggested in chapter 3 is helpful to classify and thus interpret the meaning of the conceptions of unity expressed in the visions of the ideally united society underpinning the frames advanced by British and Dutch political elites. These three ways of thinking about unity seem pertinent both in political theory and in Parliament – so that the notion of an extended debate between political theorists and parliamentarians, such as practical political theory presupposes, seems plausible as they operate with roughly similar starting positions which facilitates meaningful dialogue between them. Political theorists who aim to be of practical use and suggest what unity is and how it can be fostered in ways that are politically plausible, hence, can take these three broad patterns of thought about unity as the ideational background they target, showing how they build on, develop, reject or transform them.

But the case studies have further implications for practical political theorists. Both British and Dutch frames could relatively easily be classified accordingly and this underlines the overlaps between them that are readily apparent following their discussion in the previous chapters (and as the previous section noted, this raises the question whether these ways of thinking about unity are also salient in other countries). This implies that a conception of unity can be politically plausible in both countries. Such similarities may seem surprising given that it is often suggested that the alleged crisis of multiculturalism was more intense in the Netherlands than it was

in the UK (cf. Entzinger 2006, p. 121; Kymlicka 2010, p. 105; Modood 2013, p. 12). Actually, the case studies indicate that ideas compatible with or supportive of multiculturalism are still being defended in both these countries, at least by some.

Of course, there are also differences between the British and the Dutch frames and the latter often seem more elaborate permutations of the different conceptions of unity as they were outlined in chapter 3. This makes sense once considered that the political theories analysed there were often devised in and targeted at the British context[63] and written in English[64], which means they inevitably reflect certain contextually specific understandings. National variations may be expected, moreover, because frames are social products grounded in and responding to the national context in which they are articulated (Freeden 1996, p. 34): the frames address different national audiences (cf. Finlayson 2012; Parekh 2000b, p. 308).

These differences, therefore, seem less significant than those captured in the typology of different conceptions of unity. While this typology facilitates a clearer view of the meaning of the different frames identified in the parliamentary debates analysed, it also points to how these debates are complex and multi-stranded. Another implication of the case studies is that we cannot easily derive a consensus on key terms or a shared 'public philosophy' (Favell 1998, p. 2); the debates analysed seem more readily characterised by the recurrent disagreements that structure them (Laborde 2002, p. 609). There is not *a* national tradition, in other words, but national *traditions* of thinking about unity (although, of course, such ideational pluralism is not necessarily always recognisable in policy) (cf. Parekh 1995, p. 179). This reinforces how political plausibility is not straightforwardly derivable from these debates – that is, not only

---

[63] The literature analysed in chapter 3 was predominantly Anglo-American. However, Dutch political theory on multiculturalism is scarce, and the English literature is widely known in the Dutch context. Moreover, most of the literature discussed in chapter 3 specifically does not aim to apply only within the context in which it was written so that it can be taken to hold insights useful in the Dutch case study as well.

[64] As noted before, political theorists share a language with the wider population so the concepts they use are imbued with certain meanings. But these concepts always carry more than one meaning even within a single context and the meanings that attach to concepts such as integration often overlap in English and in Dutch so that translation and comparison is possible. In any case, both case studies have taken great care to clarify these variations in meaning.

because the ideas they contain are contingent, but also because these ideas are plural and reflect different and overlapping patterns of thought (even if these patterns fall within a certain range captured by the typology presented above). Political theorists who aim to be of practical use may hence propose conceptions of unity that can be politically plausible in different ways, responding to different strands in the debates in different ways: plausibility is somewhat dynamic and more than one response to unity may be plausible. But as the next section will explain, this pluralism itself becomes a condition for plausibility.

6.3   Unity and pluralism

A political theorist who aims to be of practical use may draw on the above analysis of the ideas of British and Dutch political elites in different ways to enhance and demonstrate the applicability, acceptability and therefore political plausibility of the conception of unity she proposes. The previous section, in other words, highlights the ideas that such a political theorist is attentive to and responds to without placing conditions on the shape of that response. But this section does suggest such a condition: it will argue that a conception of unity needs to be open to plural interpretations if it is to offer a plausible account of unity among diverse citizens.

The above shows that currently, a plurality of conceptions of unity exists in the debates analysed; these debates are characterised by pluralism. In order to see why that indicates that a conception of unity should be open to plural interpretations, it is necessary to first outline the nature of this current pluralism. Consider how these plural conceptions of unity shape or are part of the phenomenon of unity itself. Political theorists are sensitive to the intuition that language and ideas are important as they express and shape the social world (e.g. Freeden 2008, p. 199; Skinner 2002, pp. 117-118), and section 2.2 explained that unity depends on how it is conceived, so that the fact that it is conceived in plural ways in these two countries gives the phenomenon itself a plural quality. Of course, following the case studies, we only know how political elites conceive unity in a plurality of ways, but as noted above, we can assume that variations of their conceptions of unity are pertinent in wider society. A political theory that aims to capture and address the phenomenon of unity in these societies in a

realistic and credible way hence needs to factor in such pluralism: it is a characteristic of this phenomenon that makes a particular type of response – that is open to pluralism – more defensible than other types (Miller 2013, pp. 21-31).[65]

This might seem too ready a surrender to the contingencies of context. After all, the fact that unity *is* now conceptualised in plural ways in these case studies does not automatically mean that it *should be* conceived in plural form. If there is one singular but demonstrably best way of uniting the polity, then surely all citizens (and elites) should be encouraged to develop these attachments and not others. Why would a normative response to the problem of uniting diverse citizens be conditioned by the highly changeable circumstances of unity as it is conceived and therefore exists now in these two countries? The answer to this question has two parts. The first part of the answer is contained in the aforementioned notion that a conception of unity that is politically plausible can be recognised as both applicable and acceptable within a given context by the other participants to the political debate to which practical political theory contributes. Given that these participants adhere to different views of how the polity is united and how they belong to it, a conception of unity that is to convince (or even enlighten in some small way) all of them benefits from being open to plural interpretations that accord with their different starting positions. However, this insight is somewhat superficial, because a conception of unity can be singular or uniform in shape while making it clear how it addresses existing ideas in different ways, so that it would still be clearly applicable and acceptable. This is because, as chapter 2 explained, such acceptability is a weak consideration as ideas can change following debate, so that such debate in this case might just take a little while longer.

Here we reach the second part of the answer, which somewhat qualifies the latter statement by clarifying the particular nature of the frames. That is, these frames are not simply ideas that can be altered by a sustained effort of flawless logic and rational persuasion. The frames offer different conceptions of unity, as expressed in the visions of the united society that underpin them: they present alternative pictures of both

---

[65] In Miller's (2013, pp. 21-31) terms, the fact of pluralism functions as a presupposition that grounds a particular principled response: if the fact of pluralism would no longer obtain, that response might no longer be appropriate, relevant or necessary.

social reality and political priorities and preferences in their responses to multicultural diversity and unity in society and alternative interpretations of how individuals and groups belong to the nation and the state. As noted above, such interpretations are likely influenced by life experiences of membership, difference, inclusion and exclusion, and so on as much as, if not more than, factual evidence. The way people think about individuals in relation to their environment is likely influenced by the way they experience their own existing identities – in this case, the way they experience their personal, group, national and political identities and the interaction between these (and these experiences, like personalities more generally, are typically plural in form).

Effectively, the frames capture different ways in which people belong to the nation-state (and other such ways may exist, as the samples were not representative). Note that Kymlicka (1995, pp. 189-191) argued that different minority groups belong to the country in different ways; the preceding analysis suggests that it is not only minority groups that have different experiences of belonging, but also the political elites whose arguments expressed these frames in the parliamentary debates analysed – and, likely, citizens more generally too. The link to existing identities makes the frames hard to change: one is not easily persuaded that the way one has experienced life, membership, belonging and so on, are false (although as noted above, change is not impossible). And it means that a conception of unity that aims to offer a plausible account of unity among *existing* citizens within these two countries, who come with their own understandings of how they belong to the polity, needs to accommodate pluralism, at least to some extent: a singular form of unity would appeal only to some of these citizens, which means it only represents part of the polity as united, which makes it self-defeating.

This point becomes clearer once we consider that a conception of unity is always to some extent about motivations and attachments experienced by citizens (cf. Uberoi 2007, p. 144): it falls under what Markell (2000, p. 38, emphasis in the original) refers to as the '*affective* dimensions of political life', which basically means that unity depends on processes internal to citizens. That gives the above notion of applicability and

acceptability a new dimension: a conception of unity can only unite citizens with different understandings of what unity is if these citizens can recognise it as including them and their ideas, for only then does it motivate them from within, and only then is unity – extending to all citizens – actualised. That does not mean (to reiterate a point made before) that a conception of unity needs to simply copy existing ideas and somehow piece them together, but it does mean that such a conception needs to recognisably include the citizens it pretends to unite, for otherwise it cannot apply to them. This recalls the point that even if national identities may need to change to become more inclusive of minorities, they need to remain recognisable as a version of older notions (cf. Uberoi and Modood 2013a, pp. 132-133) as radically altering existing self-definitions would likely lead to alienation (Parekh 2000b, p. 235). And as seen above, a plurality of existing notions of unity exists.

To offer a plausible account of unity among existing British and Dutch citizens, therefore, a conception of unity needs to be open to plural interpretations so that all these citizens can recognise it as applicable and acceptable – in line with their existing identities – and hence be motivated by it. This point seems to logically follow from accepting the plurality of the frames (and more generally, most people would accept that we cannot ignore how citizens have different ideas and identities – indeed Freeden [2005, p. 132] considers 'ontological social pluralism' to be a standard feature of politics); and the fact that simply refuting some of the frames would lead to disunity rather than unity, as it would alienate certain groups of citizens. But there is also a moral point: after all, in a society of free and equal citizens, the imposition of a singular conception of unity – that matches the conception of some citizens but not others – would create hierarchies between supposedly equal citizens that are often considered unfair (cf. Kymlicka 2010, pp. 101-103).

In fact, the nature of the frames, expressing different modes of belonging, has another implication. It not only influences how a conception of unity may motivate different citizens, but also makes such pluralism of ways of belonging appear not so much as a contingent characteristic of debates on unity but as a structural feature of them, which further strengthens the case for taking it seriously when devising conceptions of unity.

As seen above, such modes of belonging are hard to change, and even if they would change, it is unlikely that such transformation would result in a unanimous endorsement of a singular conception of unity: after all, the citizens who appeal to these different conceptions begin from different starting positions that normally influence the course of change so that it is unlikely for them to end up in exactly the same position (cf. Bohman 1995). Pluralism, then, is not just a current feature of political debate on unity but likely to remain significant, at least in the foreseeable future (and practical political theory precisely contributes to contemporary debates).

This point is underlined once considered that on-going deliberation in the British House of Lords and the Dutch Second Chamber has not (yet) resulted in a shared understanding of what unity is. Yet such debates would be a prime location for the generation of such a shared understanding: political theorists (e.g. Calhoun 2002; Miller 1995, p. 127; Modood 2007, pp. 18, 152-153; Parekh 2000b, pp. 219-224, 2008, pp. 64-65) often think that political debates (of which the parliamentary debates analysed form a subspecies) should shape the content of unity and national identity. Meaningful dialogue between members of the polity needs to continuously reproduce collective self-understandings and reshape or re-imagine them where necessary to become more reflective of the community they represent. Political debate shapes unity by deliberating what it means, what it requires, which collective features of the polity are significant, how different members of the polity belong to it, etc. As such, the outcomes of these debates reflect a collective interpretation of the character of the polity, and shape self-conceptions of citizens about what it means to be a member (Miller 1995, p. 127; Modood 2007, pp. 127, 152-153; cf. Parekh 2000b, pp. 185-193) – and as Miller (1995, p. 100) notes, in principle, anything could come to be seen as a marker of collective identity. The outcome of such debates has been plural in form: these markers appear to be understood in different ways (recall, for example, how the Rechtsstaat is understood in the Dutch frames as either an expression or embodiment of universal political values, or as a cultural tradition), which makes sense as political elites conceive of the polity and the nature of its unity and belonging to it in a plurality of ways.

But if people with such different visions of what a united society looks like and should look like are to be united under a single conception of unity that hence needs to be plural in form, that conception effectively means different things to different people so it might be difficult to see how it can still be meaningful enough to unite them. Note that the specific content of such a conception of unity that is plural in form is left open here because it cannot simply be derived from the case studies, for reasons outlined above (this content will be specified and justified in the next chapter). The implications of the case studies rather pertain to the form of such a conception of unity. To conceptualise this plural form, it may be helpful to think of it in terms of family resemblance (Miller 1995, p. 27; Modood 2007, pp. 95-98, 115): different members of a family are not identical but resemble each other in different ways. Likewise, the different frames offer visions of the united society that are significantly different but nonetheless overlap at different points: to use the example above, even if the Dutch frames use different understandings of what the Rechtsstaat is, they resemble each other in highlighting its importance (and the next chapter will illustrate this point further).

To further clarify this idea of a plural form of unity, consider how the loose overlap between the different modes of belonging represented by the frames can also be grasped by reference to the idea of a consensus, albeit loosely understood (for want of a better term), so that it not only involves or depends on rational commitments but is also open to other forms of allegiance and identification. To clarify how people with different ideas about how they belong, and to what form of a united polity, can be united, we can draw on Rawls' (1987, 1989) conception of the overlapping consensus, presented in chapter 3. This consensus represents how different positions intersect on a political conception of justice which all parties can therefore support from conviction but from different premises (Rawls 1987, p. 9). A conception of unity – the content of which remains open here but which does not need to be conceived in terms of Rawls' conception of justice, or be justified in terms of his conception of public reason – may similarly unite citizens for a variety of different but overlapping reasons, be they rational, emotional, identity related, prudential, and so on.

As noted above, we can conceive of such a plural conception of unity as arising from political debate that continuously reproduces and modifies it. Bohman (1995) argues that such deliberation should be plural and dynamic in nature, because in diverse societies reason itself might be contested – conflict can be epistemic as well as moral (cf. Dryzek and Niemeyer 2006) so that there is no single impartial public standpoint from which to judge public reasons. Abstraction does not simply shed all differences, and 'agents can come to an agreement with each other for different publicly accessible reasons' (Bohman 1995, p. 263) – i.e. without recourse to justification based in a set of shared ideas (cf. Parekh 2000b, pp. 325-327). In other words, people may endorse (again, this should not be understood in strictly rational terms; they may also adhere to, have a vague conception of, affinity with or allegiance to) a conception of unity that represents an overlap between different visions of what a united society looks like for different reasons. It was noted above that unity needs to motivate citizens from within (by appearing applicable and acceptable to them) and thinking about it in the terms suggested here helps to see how it can motivate different citizens in different ways: such motivation may take the form of political beliefs for those who have affinities with the political conception of unity; it may be captured in terms of national identity by those with affinities with the national conception of unity; or it may be explained in terms of experiences of equal membership and belonging across differences by those who adhere to a multicultural conception of unity.

Achieving such a consensus may be helped by the fact that the concepts it arranges always to some extent remain open to different interpretations (their meaning is never ultimately fixed) – even if the agreement specifies them in a particular way (Freeden 2005, pp. 117-119). Freeden (2005, pp. 122-123) argues that this is not only a normal feature of language but also a political strategy: 'ambiguity is […] also a form of handling political language that is vital to the central political aim of mobilizing support […] elusiveness of meaning is the key to generating consent'. It is precisely such ambiguity that enables cooperation in politics (Freeden 2005, pp. 123-124).

This points to a paradox for practical political theory. It is naturally inclined to precision and clarity and these doubtlessly help to challenge and persuade individual

positions. Yet it may benefit from allowing a certain degree of ambiguity to garner support for its interpretations and suggestions so that they may form the basis of political agreement. In Freeden's (2005, pp. 129-130, emphasis added) words:

> 'If conceptual flexibility allows for a sustainable overlapping area to elide ideological differences and to reach a policy-decision, then negotiation over the content of political concepts is possible and may result in a compromise—each side can go back to its supporters and claim reasonable success. *Political consensus, to repeat, is predicated on ambiguity, not precision, and as political theorists we must understand both how the construction of ambiguity works, and how to produce it when necessary'*.

Effectively, that means there is a place and time for both clarity and ambiguity. The former is needed to know the positions of opponents and also to understand when, how and why to use ambiguity in an attempt to propose a conception of unity that can appeal to and motivate adherents of different conceptions of unity. Hence, the previous chapters have presented the frames as reconstructions of the arguments made by political elites, reducing ambiguity by drawing out their internal logic; in reality, arguments may straddle these positions and their boundaries are fuzzy.[66] Thus inserting greater clarity into muddled political debates about unity and diversity brings out the nature of disagreements and helps to model and understand them. With these positions now clearly specified, the next chapter will suggest how they may become conjoined in a consensus that is plural, challengeable, and may exhibit ambiguity.

Note that pluralism characterises unity both in the UK and in the Netherlands, and as the previous section noted, the conceptions of unity that make up this pluralism are similar as well. This means that political theorists who aim to be of practical use can offer a conception of unity that is politically plausible in both these countries, if they take care to respond to the three broad patterns of thought about unity that exist here, and allow their conception of unity to be plural in form. The contextual orientation of

---

[66] And, as indicated before, individual speakers may refer to different frames within a brief time period (Jacobs 1998, p. 358).

practical political theory does not need to be conceived as strictly coinciding with national boundaries. Indeed, even though the response to unity the next chapter offers builds on these case studies, its insights may prove useful more widely, to other contexts that have similar empirical features (i.e. modern, liberal democratic nation-states with historical self-conceptions and multicultural populations, where different conceptions of unity with roughly similar dimensions to those presented above exist) (Miller 2013, p. 44).

Hence, the case studies suggest that a response to the problem of uniting diverse citizens in the multicultural societies of the UK and the Netherlands needs to be open to pluralism to be political plausible, as this is a feature of the phenomenon it addresses. A conception of unity open to plural interpretations can be seen as applicable and acceptable by different citizens and therefore plausibly motivate and unite them. Nevertheless, this still leaves open to the discretion of the practical political theorist a variety of ways in which pluralism may be addressed (cf. Floyd 2011, pp. 44-50).

This chapter has explained the implications of the case studies for political theorists who aim to be of practical use. It specified the significance and limitations of the case studies; it distilled three broad patterns of thinking about unity (political, national and multicultural) from the analyses in the two previous chapters, to which such theorists respond in order to propose a conception of unity that can be recognised as applicable, acceptable and therefore politically plausible by the other participants in the debate to which practical political theory contributes; and it has explained the importance of pluralism. The next chapter will now conclude this thesis by showing that a multicultural conception of unity is not only most defensible but also politically plausible in the UK and the Netherlands.

7 Conclusion: Multicultural unity

As we enter the final chapter to this thesis, it should now be clear how unity is conceived by political theorists and the political elites they aim to influence when they aim to be of practical use. Conceptions of unity roughly fall into three broad patterns of thinking that can be classified as political, national and multicultural. It should also be clear that political theorists may aim to be of practical use by proposing a conception of unity that is not only morally defensible but also responds to the ideas political elites already have so that it is politically plausible too. This chapter will now show that one such conception of unity, the multicultural one, is both most defensible and politically plausible within the context of the UK and the Netherlands. Recall that in this conception of unity, the whole that is united is both a nation and a state, to which both individuals and groups belong through equal membership that respects their differences. The marginalisation of minorities impedes such unity so that multicultural policies to further their inclusion help to foster it.

Chapter 2 explained that practical political theory needs to be morally defensible first to avoid complacency. This is reinforced by the fact that, as the previous chapter explained, political plausibility cannot straightforwardly be derived from the case studies but is somewhat dynamic: more than one conception of unity can be politically plausible. Hence, this chapter begins by showing that a multicultural conception of unity is most defensible; and subsequently shows that it is also politically plausible. Section 7.1 shows why the political and the national conceptions of unity are inadequate (recall that chapter 3 already rejected the negative conception of unity) and how a multicultural conception of unity can meet the problems they raise. Having rejected the other two conceptions of unity, section 7.2 then shows that a multicultural conception of unity does not create new problems, while offering a convincing and desirable way of conceptualising unity among diverse citizens. Section 7.3 shows that, paradoxically in these two countries where multiculturalism has met vehement opposition, a multicultural conception of unity is also politically plausible as it heeds the implications of the case studies in the way that the previous chapter suggested: it responds to the three broad ways of thinking about unity discerned in the British and

Dutch parliamentary debates analysed in a way that is open to plural interpretations, so that it can motivate citizens with different existing identities. Section 7.4 shows that this concern for pluralism, which follows from the empirical analysis presented in this thesis, is compatible with, but somewhat nuances statements of multicultural conceptions of unity by political theorists (Modood 2007; Parekh 2000b) without creating new problems. Finally, section 7.5 concludes this thesis by providing a brief summary of its overall argument.

7.1   Unity: not political, not national, but multicultural

Earlier chapters presented ways of thinking about unity simply as patterns of thought that appear salient in political theory as well as in parliamentary debates. But now that we understand how unity *is* being understood by political theorists as well as political elites, we can begin to think about how it should be understood by them. Such judgment involves assessing the credibility, consistency, coherence, moral appeal and so on of the reasons given for each conception. This section begins this process by showing that the political and the national conceptions of unity are inadequate to conceptualise unity in multicultural societies, because they run into difficulties, and these can be avoided by the multicultural conception of unity. Moreover, as the next section will show, the multicultural conception of unity can do so without creating new problems; and it meets the criterion for moral defensibility outlined in section 2.3.

The political conception of unity raises two main problems.[67] First, it suggests that citizens are united through shared rational commitments to political values and the institutions that embody these. These values and institutions are presented as neutral so that they can unite citizens who have different ideas about the good life, the ordering of society, and so on: their neutrality means that they do not favour any of these orientations so that they can be embraced by all. But these values and institutions are supposed to unite citizens and motivate them to make the sacrifices necessary for the smooth functioning of democracy, and it is not clear how they can do so if they are this neutral. Citizens tend to be motivated by values because they have a particular

---

[67] These problems were already indicated in section 1.1.

meaning and this meaning derives from the shared understandings of the cultural community the values are embedded in – values gain motivational force when they are grounded in a community (Calhoun 2002, pp. 151-158; Laborde 2002, pp. 591-597; Markell 2000, pp. 41-53). That is, political principles normally inspire loyalty, belonging and unity because they make sense to a pre-existent community: the state needs to be 'ours' first (Canovan 2000, p. 422). Citizenship, and hence civic identity, follows from (political) unity, and therefore cannot be the source of it (Uberoi 2007, p. 147). But if political values motivate and unite citizens because they are grounded in a community with shared understandings, it is not clear that it is these values that unite them or the pre-existent ties of community. Purely rational value commitments are probably too abstract or ethereal to unite most citizens, who nonetheless recognise the existence of ties to the community they grew up in (cf. Modood 2007, pp. 148-149; Phillips 2007, pp. 67-72).

Political conceptions of unity, hence, apparently implicitly rely on the existence of a community that supposedly inhabits a state and such a community tends to be a nation, given the historical predominance of nation-states, or more specifically, of the notion that one state should house one nation (cf. Nimni 2009, pp. 320-325). As we saw, Habermas (1998, p. 107) acknowledges the importance of the nation to explain unity but thinks that it can be superseded; but as suggested above, it will then be difficult to tell whether it is the persistence of national ties or a shared commitment to political values that unites citizens. Rawls (1993) is silent about the nation but he relies on the existence of a shared political culture that comprises ideas about the ordering of society – and in the real world such political cultures tend to be national – and his position hence implies a pre-existing shared political (O'Neill 1997, pp. 419-420) or national (Miller 1995, p. 93) identity. Indeed, as noted before, his (Rawls 1993, p. 12) 'closed' society is effectively an intergenerational community that resembles a nation; thus, he (Rawls 1993, p. 222) thinks 'leaving one's country is a grave step' because 'it involves leaving the society and culture in which we have been raised' and through which we make sense of ourselves and the world.

If political conceptions of unity tacitly rely on pre-existent national unity, that also points to a second problem with them. This is because they can then no longer claim to be neutral and therefore inclusive of different groups in society. Indeed, the political values and institutions that supposedly unite citizens are embedded in concrete democratic traditions that are historical and infused with the sensibilities, values, expectations, norms and so on that characterise the culture in which they arose. Hence, they do not automatically include, and thus may exclude, groups in society that do not share this history (Brubaker 1999, pp. 61-63; Canovan 2000, pp. 420-421; Markell 2000, pp. 51-53; Uberoi 2007, p. 148). In fact, it is impossible for states to be neutral with regards to morality as they cannot avoid making decisions on a range of issues that require moral judgment, and these decisions are always coercive towards those with different values (Parekh 2000b, p. 202).

Political conceptions of unity underestimate the degree of disagreement in society about political values and their interpretation as they presuppose that all citizens can agree when in fact they often may not, and unity hinges on such agreement. As Parekh (2000b, pp. 200-205) notes, this emphasis on political values and institutions also often implies that minorities who do not share the political values embodied in public institutions need to assimilate politically and are asked to uncritically accept the liberal institutions and principles that are already in place and that will inevitably reflect the norms and practices of the majority; and the relegation of diversity to the private sphere works against marginalised minorities because they need to adopt the 'neutral' norms of the majority when participating in the public sphere.

This point is reinforced once considered that Rawls' aforementioned insistence on closed borders not only makes his account more national than it concedes but also makes it seem somewhat irrelevant to the dilemmas of multiculturalism in Europe: these mostly pertain to diversity associated with immigrants and their children (cf. Modood 2007, pp. 1-5; Triandafyllidou et al 2006). It is likely precisely these newer minorities in society that do not already share the political values of the majority. Effectively, Rawls' theory precludes the very questions this thesis is concerned with. Indeed, it is not clear if an overlapping consensus on his political conception of justice

is actually probable, likely or possible in a given society, as he does not examine how citizens actually think about justice and if their ideas could (be brought to) overlap on the specific points that he indicates (see: Klosko 2005). As section 1.2 noted, this is a drawback of ideal theory and it suggests we need to be careful about applying its insights to the real world.

Nonetheless, as we saw in the previous chapter, the notion of an overlapping consensus itself is helpful to understand how people can agree on something for different reasons – although, as noted there, it needs to be understood loosely so that it does not only pertain to rational agreement but is also open to other types of reasons and people can endorse, identify with, feel loyalty, allegiance or affinity towards it in more passive, emotional, habitual ways and so on too. And as section 7.3 will show, a multicultural conception of unity could be supported by such consensus as it is compatible with different existing ideas about unity in the UK and the Netherlands.

A multicultural conception of unity manages to avoid these two problems (political values are not neutral but reflect a tacitly presupposed nation; and therefore they are not automatically inclusive but may exclude minorities) because it does not locate unity in agreement on neutral political values but in shared and equal membership in society. Such membership itself unites and motivates diverse citizens, and citizenship is presented as national rather than neutral (Modood 2007, pp. 126, 147). Consider how Modood (2007, p. 128) defines citizenship:

> 'Citizenship, then, consists of a framework of rights and practices of participation but also discourses and symbols of belonging, ways of imagining and remaking ourselves as a country and expressing our sense of commonalities and differences, and ways in which these identities qualify each other and create – should create – inclusive public spaces'.

That is, citizenship is not simply about agreement on political values. What we should take from this quote is that membership is three-dimensional: it is simultaneously legal or formal (as it comprises rights), practical or active (as it involves practices of civic interaction) and symbolic (as it is expressed and signified in collective representations).

As such, it shapes itself around the persons (and their existing identities) that share it so that it is plural in form (Modood 2007, p. 126). Unity does not depend on the possibility of civic values that are neutral and therefore inclusive of different cultural groups: citizenship in all its dimensions includes these groups because it reflects the cultural diversity of society.

Multicultural conceptions of unity can also overcome the main problem associated with national conceptions of unity. The latter do not ground unity in agreement on political values but in a nation with its history, shared understandings, culture, practices and so on. Individual citizens are united through shared identification with and membership in the nation. The main problem with national conceptions of unity lies in the conceptualisation of unity as an attribute of a historical community with a shared culture, language and so on, which suggests the idea that newer minorities need to adapt in order to become part of national unity.

This tendency is more readily visible in the traditional than in the liberal form of a national conception of unity. And that makes the former quite obviously inappropriate in multicultural societies where minorities who are equal citizens may not share the dominant identity and morality. Because such unity requires a high degree of internal homogeneity, it demands that minorities that are culturally different adapt to this identity and morality so as to become part of the nation. While minorities may of course freely choose to become more like the majority, policies to enforce this would require 'an unacceptable degree of internal repression' (Parekh 2000b, p. 171) of minorities, and such coerced changes of identity and value systems are painful and disorientating; moreover, it can be questioned whether such radical transformation is really achievable, as the semblance of difference often remains, continuing to mark out assimilated minorities (Parekh 2000b, p. 198). Moreover, where minorities are equal citizens, the expectation that some citizens adapt to the norms of others creates a hierarchy between them that challenges the idea of equal citizenship (cf. Young 1990, pp. 112-116). Meanwhile, this is not to say that assimilationist policies are always unjust: they may at times serve to protect human rights and pursue equality where these are threatened by specific minority practices (Mason 2010, pp. 861-862).

The undesirable alternative to full assimilation in the traditional national conception of unity would be permanent marginalisation (Parekh 2000b, p. 197-198), which would effectively place minorities outside of the whole (the nation) that is united and restrict unity to the majority. But if democracy requires citizens to be united enough 'to take and enforce collectively binding decisions and regulate and resolve conflicts' (Parekh 2000b, p. 196), such that all citizens can be involved in these decisions, it is unclear how the latter would be legitimate if part of the polity was structurally excluded from such involvement. Unity needs to extend to all citizens if it is to be a source of legitimate political authority (cf. Miller 1995, p. 92); a democratic deficit might exist when unity is partial and a specific group of citizens is structurally disenfranchised. A conception of unity that requires too high a degree of shared values, characteristics, orientations and so on may thus end up excluding certain groups of citizens which means it becomes self-defeating as it then represents division rather than unity and connects only part of the population to the state (cf. Parekh 2000b, p. 232).

As we saw before, liberal forms of the national conception of unity are more open to internal diversity and they may therefore offer a more realistic account of uniting the entire population. But the emphasis on the nation as a historical community, again, easily slips into the creation of a hierarchy between citizens that are supposedly equal: those who are already (and have always been) part of that nation, and those who (or whose parents) are not because they are newer minorities. The former then naturally belong to the whole that is united, whereas the latter do not so that it might appear as if their differences impede unity – such that one might attribute a greater burden of adaptation (necessary to preserve national unity located in a shared national identity) to them.

Miller (1995, p. 87) suggests that the national cultures that form part of the national identities that unite citizens 'very often have an essentially public dimension' as their existence depends on political interventions. Landscapes, films, and so on only 'express and reproduce a common culture' (Miller 1995, p. 87) rather than reflect individual self-interest and market considerations if they are to some extent regulated by states – not in the sense that they need to express a pre-determined conception of what the

nation is but in the sense that they 'provide an environment in which the culture can develop spontaneously' (Miller 1995, p. 88). Nationals share (or, more specifically, believe they share) characteristics (political, cultural and social) of this national public culture in different ways (Miller 1995, pp. 25-27): Miller (1995, p. 27) rejects the idea that 'for any given nation there is a set of necessary and sufficient conditions for belonging to that nation'. But the state institutions that encourage this public culture cannot recognise group identities, Miller (1995, pp. 152-154) thinks, as there is no authentic way of representing these identities and bringing identity claims into political debate unnecessarily raises the stakes and makes compromise more difficult to reach. In any case, such identities are not more 'authentic' than national identity so they do not deserve protection from assimilatory pressures (Miller 1995, p. 133).

Yet as noted above, public institutions are never truly neutral and may end up reflecting the historical majority only, which may make it hard for minorities to identify with them and the culture they reproduce. Minorities are included not through the adaptation of these institutions, but through stripping 'existing national identities […] of elements that are repugnant to the self-understanding of one or more component groups' (Miller 1995, p. 142) and emphasising those features that minorities and the majority share (Miller 1995, p. 92). But that does not accord minorities an equal position in such collective self-conceptions: the majority would still see features that are not shared with minorities (but do not offend them) represented, whereas minorities do not (Uberoi 2007, p. 149). The emphasis on a shared history, however mythical, that creates moral obligations (that may appeal to sacrifices made in the past and are grounded in shared customs, practices and understandings) as a fundamental part of national identity (Miller 1995, pp. 35-42) places newer minorities that do not already share in it at a disadvantage, which does not chime with their supposedly equal position as members of the political community.

Meanwhile, a similar tendency can be recognised in Kymlicka's position. The first attribute of a nation he (Kymlicka 1995, p. 11) mentions in his definition of the concept is that it is a 'historical community' that also shares a language, culture, institutions and a homeland. He uses this conception to distinguish between two types of cultural

diversity: that presented by national minorities within a single state, and that presented by ethnic groups that result from immigration. The latter do not have the historical, institutional and geographical attributes of the former which means they can claim fewer 'group-specific rights' (Kymlicka 1995, p. 27). Effectively, immigrants have to integrate into the majority culture (while receiving appropriate accommodation to ease this process), while national minorities do not – even though Kymlicka (1995, p. 86) recognises the importance of cultural membership and thinks that 'the choice to leave one's culture can be seen as analogous to the choice to take a vow of perpetual poverty'. Yet immigrants voluntarily give up their right to 'live and work in their own culture' by choosing to migrate (Kymlicka 1995, p. 96).

But as Parekh (2000b, p. 103) notes, if cultural membership is as important as Kymlicka thinks, it cannot easily be given up, and it is not at all clear that this is what people have in mind when they decide to migrate. Moreover, if multicultural accommodation is justified by pointing to the importance of a societal culture and immigrants have given up their right to their own societal culture, it becomes hard to justify why they would receive any accommodation at all (Joppke 2001, p. 436; Modood 2013, pp. 30-33). Kymlicka's emphasis on *historical* over other cultural communities does not sit easily with his notion that all individuals need access to their own culture to live a good life. That said, as we saw before, his (Kymlicka 1995, pp. 96-98) conception of integration is more open to accommodating diversity than Miller's so that it requires less in terms of adaptation. But he (Kymlicka 1995, p. 191) also thinks that the positive attitudes to diversity and the different groups that exist within the country necessary to unite diverse citizens through a shared identity cannot be created politically: they follow from pre-existent solidarity and identification based in a shared history that newer minorities, inevitably, do not share.

Miller's liberal nationalism, furthermore, raises another problem. He (Miller 1995, p. 127) thinks that conceptions of national identity should arise from conversations, debates and interactions in society – and as the previous chapter noted, this is a relatively uncontroversial point (e.g. Calhoun 2002; Modood 2007, pp. 18, 152-153; Parekh 2000b, pp. 219-224, 2008, pp. 64-65). Indeed, Miller (1995, p. 40) argues that

national identities are defensible precisely when debate is open and inclusive: all citizens need to have a chance of participating on the basis of equality, so that it reflects 'inputs from all sections of the community, with groups openly competing to imprint the common identity with their own particular image'. This gives citizens a stake in the resulting form of unity so that it is truly *theirs*.

But as it stands, different groups in society precisely do *not* participate in such debates on the basis of equality for some of them are marginalised, and as the above suggests, national conceptions of unity risk a slide into casting newer minorities as somewhat secondary actors in shaping national identity. Such 'participatory parity' (Fraser 2001, p. 25) for different citizens is not furthered by insisting on the neutrality of a public realm that will inevitably be coloured by the majority's values, practices and history: the 'benign neglect' (Kymlicka 1995, pp. 3-6, 108) of minorities in the name of neutrality is not in fact very benign (or even-handed) in societies where these groups occupy marginal positions, but favours the majority and rationalises the status quo. Marginalised groups cannot engage in social interaction on the basis of equality, because the norms and patterns that structure interaction do so according to majority cultural values and thereby 'constitute some actors as inferior, excluded, wholly other or simply invisible, hence as less than full partners' (Fraser 2001, p. 24; see also: Young 1990, p. 116). The case studies indeed show that the status of certain groups as legitimate partners in these debates is questioned. For example, some of the frames presented in the case studies explicitly portrayed Muslims as outsiders, thereby effectively precluding them from participating as equals in debates about what unity and membership mean.

Multicultural conceptions of unity do not run into the difficulties raised by national conceptions of unity. Clearly, assimilation is opposed and it is argued that diversity should be publicly recognised rather than overcome or marginalised. Moreover, advocates of multicultural conceptions of unity do not emphasise a shared national history to the same extent when they talk about the polity. The polity is understood as a political community that obviously has a past, but this past is not so much more important than how the polity is currently structured: whether its members enjoy

equal membership or meet obstacles to it. This somewhat more contemporary focus might explain why advocates of a multicultural conception of unity are more optimistic about generating new forms of unity between citizens. Thus, Parekh (2000b, p. 221) suggests that the experience of living together and on-going interaction between groups in society will lead to the creation of a 'multiculturally constituted common culture' that unites different groups because it reflects their input and their diversity.

Unlike in the national conceptions of unity above, then, this common culture is not simply a modified version of the culture of the historical majority but reflects equal interaction between different groups in society that hence have a more equal role in shaping it. Multiculturalists do not deny the importance of history and continuity (cf. Parekh 2000b, pp. 235, 257-260; Uberoi and Modood 2013a, pp. 132-133), but think it needs to be balanced with a concern for equality (understood as outlined in section 3.5) – multiculturalism 'seeks to extend the same respect to the [existing identities of] new minorities' (Modood 2013, p. 155). In some ways, this also suggests a more dynamic view of unity: where liberal nationalists approach it as a seemingly pre-existent attribute of the nation that needs to be somehow extended to include minorities, multiculturalists think it is more like a process in which society becomes increasingly more united through increasingly equal membership (cf. Parekh 2008, p. 47).

This process involves equal participation in the practices, interactions and debates that were suggested above to shape unity. As noted there, state neutrality is not a convincing way of furthering such participation. Multiculturalists think that to challenge the current marginalisation of certain groups that prevents them from equal participation (and equal membership), states need to publicly recognise diversity in order to normalise norms other than those of the majority (Fraser 2001, p. 25; Modood 2007, pp. 54-56) and recognise minorities as 'equally valued and legitimate members of the community' (Parekh 2000b, p. 233). Multicultural policies also tackle other inequalities often suffered by minorities that can attract stigma and may compound their disadvantaged position in civic debates (cf. Modood 2013, pp. 53-57), so that they facilitate inclusion both directly, through recognising the presence and contributions of

minorities as full members of the polity, and indirectly, by enhancing their position in society.

Multicultural conceptions of unity, then, can withstand the objections that can be raised against political and national conceptions of unity. They do not rely on an agreement on political values, which seems unlikely in most real societies, and nor are they open to the risk of creating hierarchies between citizens who are part of what was historically the nation and those who are not. But while this conception of unity may avoid these problems, perhaps it does so at the cost of creating new ones. The next section will now show that this is not the case.

7.2 Multicultural unity: most defensible

As noted before, the multicultural conception of unity forms part of more elaborate multicultural political theories. Multiculturalism has received sustained criticism over the past years, but only some of the charges raised against it apply to the conception of unity that underpins it. These form the focus of this section that refutes the three main objections that can be raised against this conception of unity to show that it avoids the problems associated with the other conceptions of unity without creating new ones. It then shows how the multicultural conception of unity is also morally defensible in terms of the criterion outlined in section 2.3, to conclude this first part of the chapter that demonstrates that multicultural unity is most defensible.

Recall that advocates of a multicultural conception of unity (e.g. Modood 2007; Parekh 2000b) think citizens, that is, individuals and groups, are united through equal membership in the nation-state, and such unity can be fostered by making the latter and its representations and symbols more inclusive. Because such representations tend to be biased towards the historical majority, this requires the recognition of features of minorities that they do not share with the majority on top of those that are shared (Uberoi and Modood 2013b, pp. 30-31). As noted above, unity here is approached as a process that involves change and adaptation not just in minorities but throughout society. Thus, as Parekh (2000b, pp. 203-204, emphasis added) acutely explains:

'Such recognition confers public legitimacy on their [minorities] presence, recognizes them as valued members of the community, and facilitates their integration. *"We" cannot integrate "them" so long as "we" remain "we": "we" must be loosened up to create a new common space in which "they" can be accommodated and become part of a newly reconstituted "we"'*.

This new 'we', then, is aware of its internal diversity and at ease with it. This is not incoherent: diversity is the antonym of uniformity, not of unity, whose antonym is division.

Indeed, some critics of multiculturalism seem to have missed this point as they suppose that it neglects and undermines national unity and identity and leads to fragmentation. Allegedly, multicultural recognition would lead to the proliferation of ever smaller communities and an affirmation of diversity would lead to the ghettoization of groups retreating behind their boundaries and avoiding interaction (Joppke and Lukes 1999, pp. 3-23), the inhibition of trust between groups (Miller 1995, p. 140), and the erosion of common citizenship and solidarity (Barry 2001, p. 325). Ultimately, that might threaten the viability of the welfare state: Kymlicka and Banting (2006, p. 298) note that such critics argue that 'multiculturalism policies emphasize diversity; emphasizing diversity undermines the sense of common national identity; feelings of national solidarity are necessary for a robust welfare state'.

But there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that multicultural policies lead to segregation or the erosion of trust or welfare state spending: such developments might be caused by other factors (see: Hooghe et al 2009; Letki 2008; Kymlicka and Banting 2006; Phillips 2006). It is also not clear that trust requires sameness (after all, to stretch this point, a thief does not necessarily trust another thief), and the same goes for solidarity: 'there is no obvious reason why a culturally plural society should not develop a sense of community, solidarity, common loyalties and a broad moral and political consensus' (Parekh 2000b, p. 171). Moreover, the above seems to presuppose that redistribution follows from unity and cohesion, whereas in fact that link is more complex. Parekh (2008, p. 47) illustrates this with three examples: the US are a relatively cohesive society where redistribution is limited; more generous European

welfare states arose for a variety of reasons that are not all related to unity; and in India, 'social cohesion was the intended product rather than the driving force of redistribution'.

There is no reason to think that multicultural policies of necessity threaten unity or redistribution, then, and in fact such policies may instead give minorities the confidence to take part in society as full members (cf. Parekh 2000b, pp. 219-224; see also: Lenard 2012, p. 191). They would foster rather than impede unity as they enable individuals and groups to belong to the united polity through equal membership that respects their diversity. Archbishop of Canterbury Williams (2008, pp. 266-267) makes a similar point about the law when he considers that when legal practice disallows persons to explain their behaviour in their own terms (often shaped by group memberships), instead appealing only to what is 'generally acceptable', there is a risk that it imposes majority norms such that 'the law of the land' would fail to 'communicate with someone involved in the legal process' and effectively marginalises them. Yet such marginalisation would contravene the law's purpose which, according to Williams (2008, p. 272), is to safeguard human dignity by enabling all citizens, with their affiliations, to be involved in shaping the future of their polity. Therefore, legal systems must recognise the existence of different patterns of understanding of legal issues in multicultural societies. Hence, multicultural conceptions of unity (arguably unlike the negative conception of unity) do not advocate the recognition of diversity as an alternative to unity but rather as a way of modifying the latter so that it may become more inclusive. National identity, then, is not undermined but simply becomes more inclusive and acknowledges diversity as one of its features (Uberoi 2008, pp. 408-410).

Another criticism raised against multiculturalism is that it (tacitly) relies on essentialism. It allegedly operates with an unrealistic sociology as its insistence on including not only individuals but also groups in a conception of unity supposedly presupposes that members of these groups share an essential similarity. Meanwhile, in reality, cultures are dynamic, fluid and hybrid and several interpretations of them coexist and compete so that group rights and representation serve to unduly fix and prioritise one of these over the others, which in turn feeds into internal power relations

(see: Barry 2001, pp. 253-279; Benhabib 1999, pp. 44-60; Shachar 1999, pp. 87-111). Nonetheless, essentialism is not necessary to the arguments made by multiculturalists and most of them indeed take great care to avoid it (Mason 2007, pp. 232-243; for elegant rejections of essentialism see: Modood 2007; Phillips 2007).

For example, it is difficult to read essentialism into Parekh's (2000b, p. 148) conception of culture: he thinks that 'since a culture's system of beliefs and practices, the locus of its identity, is constantly contested, subject to change, and does not form a coherent whole, its identity is never settled, static and free of ambiguity'. Likewise, Kymlicka (1989, pp. 167-171) emphasises that what matters is that cultural groups function as stable structures of choice. The characteristics that make groups distinct do not constitute a fixed essence but can be radically transformed without threatening cultural membership, and cultures always contain several options and are internally diverse and dynamic. But groups do not need to have an essential core to be important to people in the way multiculturalists think: they can be understood as displaying overlapping patterns of similarities while providing individuals with a source of identity and belonging and also affecting their life chances (Modood 2013, pp. 80-95).

Multiculturalists do not need to be essentialists and usually are not; a multicultural conception of unity does not unite bounded groups with essential cores. But anti-essentialism taken too far results in a refusal to acknowledge any unity or similarities between people (Modood 1998, pp. 378-382); as Parekh (1999, p. 106) points out, even if groups are not internally homogeneous, they can be individuated, much like languages. It is also important to note that existing groups may think of themselves in essentialist terms, and that such self-definitions deserve respect (Modood 2007, pp. 93-98, 2008, pp. 552-553). Meanwhile, multiculturalist arguments themselves can be considered as challenging pre-existing essentialist notions of the culturally homogeneous nation-state (Modood 1998, p. 378).

The third objection that might be raised against the multicultural conception of unity is that it may represent conflict rather than cooperation. That is, the public interaction that shapes it may not facilitate unity and peace, but instead fuel hostility and division. However, it is important to note that conflict (understood in a civic or political rather

than violent sense) is an inevitable part of any democracy (cf. Mouffe 2005). Although ideal citizens might be able to come to unanimous agreements, real citizens tend to disagree. Such disagreement is not necessarily a problem: dialogue is not only about finding agreement, but also an activity that connects citizens to each other – it has a 'community-building role' (Parekh 2000b, p. 307). The activity of participating in civic interactions itself enables members of the community to develop ties to each other and share a commitment to continued cooperation (Bohman 1996, p. 33). Indeed, according to Calhoun (2002, pp. 152-162; see also: Laborde 2002), citizens can develop solidarity and civic motivation precisely through participating in public debate, as this allows them to jointly produce a common culture and shared identities. Unity then depends on shared and equal interaction rather than agreement.

Modood (2007, p. 127) thus explains that debates about what it means to be a citizen will be characterised by overlapping disagreements but what matters is that 'there is enough agreement and above all enough interest in the discussion for dialogues to be sustained'. Realistically, 'conflict and its management, recurring conflict and recurring reconciliation are built into these societies and so into the citizenship possible in these societies' (Modood 2007, p. 128). As noted earlier, national debates might be better characterised by recurring fault lines (Laborde 2002, p. 609) than by a shared 'public philosophy' (Favell 1998, p. 2). The point is that such disagreements can nonetheless be seen as 'national', in the same way that political divides such as those between Labour and the Conservatives in the UK or Republicans and Democrats in the US are accepted as characteristically 'national' divides.

The multicultural conception of unity, then, avoids the problems associated with the political and national conceptions of unity without creating new ones: it presents the most convincing and defensible conception of unity in multicultural societies. Meanwhile, recall that section 2.3 explained that practical political theory needs to be both morally defensible and politically plausible, to avoid the risk of unquestioningly affirming existing moral beliefs associated with realistic theory as well as the risk of being or appearing irrelevant associated with ideal theory. Moral defensibility was described there as part of wider defensibility and entails a concern for balancing

considerations of reciprocity, consequences and special relationships. The remainder of this section will clarify how the multicultural conception of unity heeds these considerations, before the next section will show that it is also politically plausible in the context of the UK and the Netherlands.

Nation and state are tightly linked in the multicultural conception of unity and citizens (individuals and groups) belong to them through equal membership that respects their diversity. As seen above, such membership involves a concern for equal (*reciprocal*) citizenship rights. Such equal citizenship also entails equal (reciprocal) participation in the practices and debates that make unity meaningful and collective representations. As will be further elaborated below, this conception of unity is plural, which means it hinges on reciprocity and respect between adherents of different visions of what society should look like united. The multicultural conception of unity is also sensitive to *outcomes*: in the multicultural societies of the UK and the Netherlands, equal treatment is not enough to achieve equal membership in the three-dimensional sense suggested above. That means that minorities that may often occupy disadvantaged positions need to be publicly recognised to enjoy equal representation with the majority that sees its norms and values represented automatically in the key institutions of society, in order to achieve equal participation in civic debates. Moreover, the multicultural conception of unity gains persuasive force in part because of its potential to be effective: the previous chapter explained that only a conception of unity open to plural interpretation offers a plausible account of unity among existing citizens with their diverse identities, and as will be explained below, a multicultural conception of unity is plural in this sense. Finally, this conception of unity aims to be open to the different ways in which people are tied into *special relationships*: citizens give shape to their citizenship precisely in line with such existing relationships and identities, so that their citizenship 'contours itself around them' (Modood 2007, p. 126).

Having shown that a multicultural conception of unity is most defensible, the next section will now show that is also applicable, acceptable and therefore politically plausible within the context of the UK and the Netherlands.

7.3   Multicultural unity: politically plausible

It may appear paradoxical that out of all conceptions of unity discerned in chapter 3, it is the multicultural one that is most defensible and politically plausible in the UK and the Netherlands. After all, this conception forms part of wider theories of multiculturalism, and these two countries have allegedly witnessed a crisis of multiculturalism during which the latter has often been portrayed as divisive. Nonetheless, this section will show that the multicultural conception of unity is compatible with the ideas about unity British and Dutch political elites already have, so that it is indeed politically plausible.

The previous chapter explained that political plausibility is not a straightforward test but involves responding to existing ideas to ensure that a proposal is clearly recognisable as applicable and acceptable within a given context. A conception of unity may do so in different ways, but it should be open to pluralism in order to be able to motivate citizens who already have different conceptions of unity. This section shows how the multicultural conception of unity responds to the plurality of existing ideas about unity identified in the UK and the Netherlands, and the next section will subsequently note how this emphasis on pluralism nuances existing theoretical statements of a multicultural conception of unity (Modood 2007; Parekh 2000b).

In the current climate, the political plausibility of a multicultural conception of unity may not be readily apparent, with political leaders such as British Prime Minister David Cameron (2011) suggesting that multiculturalism has failed and may undermine national identity. The case studies, however, present a more nuanced picture. The argument that multiculturalism undermines national identity suggests that these two concepts are incompatible, which implies that an emphasis on national identity means an argument against multiculturalism, i.e. for assimilation. But the case studies show that both multiculturalism and national identity are taken to mean different things and are not unanimously understood to be mutually exclusive: they are combined in different ways, and they are related to unity in different ways, with national identity being a source or symbol of unity in some frames but not others.

Multiculturalism in these debates refers to a policy strategy that recognises and accommodates cultural diversity in society, and as such it is only defended in both countries by the multicultural frames; it is opposed by all the other frames, and these objections are formulated in either or both of two registers, one of threat to national unity, in which multiculturalism is taken to detract from national cohesion by emphasising diversity and reinforcing divisions; and one of threat to the principles of individual liberty and equality, in which multiculturalism is taken to inhibit social mobility and/or delegate too much authority over individuals and their choices and identities to groups. But in these debates, multiculturalism also has other meanings (see also: Uberoi and Modood 2013a, pp. 129-132). It may refer to the fact that society is now multicultural, and this fact is accepted by almost all frames (except the Dutch national frame and in a more complicated sense the British conservative frame). Moreover, it also sometimes refers to an open attitude to diversity, or a vision of society in which diversity is valued and engaged in interaction, and again, most frames (again, except for the national and the conservative frames) do support such an open attitude – albeit with varying degrees of enthusiasm. Overall, opposition to multiculturalism therefore focuses on specific policies and does not necessarily entail a rejection of diversity or openness to difference: it does not automatically equal an endorsement of assimilation.

Likewise, calls for an emphasis on national identity do not always entail demands for assimilation. That only holds if national identity is conceptualised in terms of fixed characteristics that minorities would have to take on, in a process that simultaneously sheds and replaces their previous cultural identity. In fact, only the Dutch national frame can be classified in such terms, and to a lesser extent the British conservative frame. When other frames discuss national identity, they are more sensitive to minority cultural identities – although they may hinge on a strategy of privatisation of diversity that might be said to disadvantage minorities. Civic conceptions of unity, at least in principle, do not constitute appeals for full-blown assimilation, even if they could be understood as appeals for public or political assimilation (Parekh 2000b, pp. 196-206). And calls for national identity understood in terms of belonging certainly do not. In both case studies, there are those who are more comfortable with an understanding of

national identity as defined by certain collective characteristics than others, who emphasise that what matters is not some collective self-conception but that individuals freely shape and experience their personal national identities. The latter more readily leave more space for diversity. National identity, hence, is not necessarily conceived in terms of uniformity: should further research identify a recent surge in appeals to national identity that would not automatically equate an increase in opposition to or unease with diversity.

Ideas that are compatible with, support, or point to a multicultural conception of unity can thus be recognised in these debates: its political plausibility is not as improbable as it might appear at first glance. The previous chapter explained that a conception of unity that is politically plausible can be recognised as applicable and acceptable by the other participants to the political debate to which practical political theory contributes. It was noted there that the conceptions of unity these participants operate with can be classified roughly as political, national and multicultural. But while the former two were shown above to be inadequate models for unity in actual societies for a variety of reasons, the versions expressed in the frames cannot be so easily discarded. This is because, as the previous chapter explained, they tend to be linked to the existing identities and experiences of the participants to the debate that often shape how they understand the polity and their membership to it. A multicultural conception of unity is open to such different interpretations of unity and belonging so that it can plausibly motivate diverse citizens. In other words, a multicultural conception of unity can accommodate recognisable versions of the political and the national conception of unity – in ways that, as will become clear below, its alternatives do not.

To understand how it can do so, recall that the previous chapter suggested that a plural conception of unity, such as the multicultural one proposed here, can be conceptualised in terms of overlapping and recurring similarities and differences and may use ambiguity as a strategy to garner widespread support, allowing some conceptual flexibility so different persons can present it in their own terms (cf. Freeden 2005, pp. 122-130). Rather than imposing a strict contextual definition on the meaning of central concepts that shape or relate to unity, such as diversity, multiculturalism,

national identity and citizenship, a multicultural conception of unity allows citizens to demarcate and define these in their own terms so that they can interpret it as applicable and acceptable from their existing perspective, and for different reasons. To illustrate this idea, consider how a multicultural conception of unity captures an overlap between the three conceptions of unity while also representing the most elaborate or extensive articulation (Modood [2013, p. 166] makes this point in a similar way and this will be further discussed in the next section).

These three conceptions of unity can be seen to overlap most clearly on a vague notion of equal citizenship that is captured in the political institutions, experiences and rights that citizens share, but interpret in different ways (note that equal citizenship is approached in the British frames mostly by reference to political values and institutions, and in the Dutch frames, which are somewhat more statist, equal citizenship is captured in references to the Rechtsstaat and the constitution). For the frames expressing a political conception of unity, the rights associated with equal citizenship embody the shared political beliefs that unite citizens. The frames expressing national and multicultural conceptions of unity also acknowledge the importance of equal citizenship for unity, while interpreting it in slightly different ways. Effectively, they consider formal equal citizenship to be only part of what enables unity: they offer more capacious understandings of what unites citizens. The frames expressing national conceptions of unity interpret liberal democracy and citizenship as national historical traditions that are embedded in a wider web of national customs, practices, beliefs and values; they interpret citizenship in a national way and identify additional features that are considered important to unite citizens. The frames expressing multicultural conceptions of unity accept that citizenship rights are inclusive and may unite diverse citizens, but hold that they can only do so if accompanied by multicultural policies that recognise differences in society so as to make equal membership real. Meanwhile, they may also appeal to the national characteristics emphasised in national conceptions of unity, while interpreting these in

more plural terms.[68] Hence, they can be seen to add further ingredients to the overall mix of features that can motivate and unite citizens as it now includes certain features of minorities.

While the multicultural conception of unity captures political, national and multicultural attributes of unity, it does not require citizens to identify with all these dimensions – it does not require all citizens to have a multiculturalist view of what society is and their place in it. Unlike the other two conceptions of unity that expect all citizens to think of their place in society in pre-determined (political or national) terms, it leaves these terms open. For if it did require all citizens to adopt a multiculturalist perspective on society, it would likely end up motivating and uniting only those citizens who already have affinities with this particular way of thinking about unity and alienating others: it would conceptualise the unity of only part of society, which would make it self-defeating as it would then represent division rather than unity. The point is rather that it captures the above overlap, which means that it is open to different views of society and membership: it is compatible with different conceptions of unity in different ways and offers the widest range of possibilities for citizens to be motivated and united by different but overlapping features.

That said, it cannot be open to all the ways in which citizens may conceive of unity: it accommodates *versions* of other conceptions of unity that signify elements present in the multicultural conception of unity in particular ways. That means these versions do have to fall within this conception that, albeit capacious, is not unlimited: it cannot accommodate, for example, a hypothetical nationalist-racist conception of unity that excludes minorities from belonging and restricts unity to white people. Here, it is important to recall that the multicultural conception of unity is most defensible first, but can also be shown to be politically plausible, even in a context where such plausibility might be questioned. That is, while it is plural in form to accommodate

---

[68] This overlap recalls Laborde's (2002, p. 598) conception of national identity as a multi-layered phenomenon. National identity, for her, comprises four layers that explain what binds people together: ethnic links; a community's broad culture and ways of life; political culture; and abstract general principles as laid down in the Constitution. She argues that the second and third layers are most significant for unity, and that states should focus on the third and fourth layer.

pluralism, its content is not simply conditioned by existing ideas. While it may not appear acceptable to hypothetical citizens with such nationalist-racist conceptions of unity now, these ideas can be challenged (using some of the arguments outlined in this chapter) and changed over time and versions of the national conception of unity can be accommodated so they may come to see it as acceptable.

The multicultural conception of unity, then, is not only most defensible but also politically plausible in the context of the UK and the Netherlands. It responds to the plurality of existing ideas about unity here and allows people to give meaning and content to their membership in their own, rather than pre-specified terms, so that it means different things to the people who share it in different ways. Now, one might perhaps argue that while the pluralism illustrated above allows a multicultural conception of unity to plausibly respond to different existing conceptions of unity, such pluralism itself is implausible. But that argument ignores how pluralism has in fact long been a feature of thinking about unity both in the UK and the Netherlands: in the UK, the existence of different nations (English, Welsh, Scottish and Irish) meant that British citizenship was always open to plural ways of being British (Modood 2013, p. 117); and in the Netherlands, national membership was mediated by the existence of different pillars in society, so that here too citizenship was open to plural interpretations (cf. Van Sas 2004, pp. 523-534).

The emphasis on pluralism in this section follows from a concern with political plausibility and developed in response to the case studies, as the previous chapter explained. That means it does not stem directly from the analysis of multicultural conceptions of unity advocated by political theorists (Modood 2007; Parekh 2000b) in chapter 3. Nonetheless, as the next section will show, it is compatible with the work of these multiculturalists while nuancing it slightly.

7.4 Pluralism and the multicultural conception of unity

The pluralism intended above differs slightly from the cultural pluralism or diversity that is often central to multiculturalist arguments. It does not concern membership in cultural groups but pertains to how citizens have different ideas about the society they

belong to and their place in it. Multiculturalism can be open to such pluralism as well as cultural diversity, but its advocates have only dedicated limited attention to the former. This section will show that such pluralism is nonetheless already implicitly inherent in the positions of the two most prominent advocates of the multicultural conception of unity, Parekh and Modood, so that the previous section can be seen to make it explicit and thereby provide a nuance in emphasis to their work. Effectively, this concern for pluralism further extends a 'basic rationale for multiculturalism', namely that of 'allowing people to be what they already are, showing respect for them as they are in themselves, rather than regarding them as objects of transformative criticism' (Modood 2013, p. 155). As this pluralism has remained somewhat implicit, these scholars may not have anticipated objections to it yet, and the section will conclude by showing that while these may arise, they can be refuted.

Parekh's (2000b, pp. 50-79) work pays due attention to pluralism, but it is mostly conceived in terms of cultural and moral diversity, rather than in the sense intended here. The idea of different modes of belonging to the polity does not receive much attention. That said, Parekh (2000b, p. 148) does emphasise how cultures are internally diverse and even notes how

> 'belonging to a cultural community, then, admits of much variation and is not homogeneous in nature. Some members might share all its beliefs and others only a few, and the former might differ in their interpretation of or degrees of allegiance to these'.

Yet this line of thought is not explicitly extended to the political community, even as Parekh (2000b, p. 184) seems aware of its relevance given his view that the modern state too readily expects citizens to 'subscribe to an identical way of defining themselves and relating to each other and the state'. This implies he would prefer to see a political structure more open to different modes of belonging but he seems to equate these with cultural diversity. That is, he seems to implicitly assume that different modes of belonging neatly coincide with different group memberships. Thus, he (Parekh 2000b, p. 195, emphasis added) notes that modern states are less suitable for multicultural societies 'whose constituent *communities* entertain different views on its

nature'. This suggests, for example, that within the UK all Pakistani Muslims share a conception of how they belong to the polity; all Jamaicans share a different conception of their membership to the polity; all Scots share a different mode of belonging to the polity again; and so on.

But the case studies challenge such a seamless overlap between pluralism, as intended here, and cultural diversity. The participants to the parliamentary debates analysed were not representing cultural groups when they advanced different conceptions of unity, and often belonged to the same group. That suggests that we cannot assume that members of the same cultural group all share a specific way of relating to society and the state. Plural modes of belonging cannot be assumed to arise out of or be conditioned by cultural membership: pluralism cross-cuts rather than maps onto cultural diversity, and would probably exist even if societies were not multicultural.

The notion of pluralism, as intended here, is not developed much further in Parekh's work, although it is hinted at. For example, when he discusses national identity he (Parekh 2000b, p. 231, emphasis added) emphasises how it 'unites its members around a *common* self-understanding and gives focus and energy to their sense of *common* belonging' by articulating a 'collective self-image', and he does so without mentioning pluralism. But he does recognise how national identity 'is highly complex, multilayered, composed of different and sometimes conflicting strands of thought' so that it is 'amenable to different interpretations' (Parekh 2008, p. 60), and notes that people interpret their citizenship in different ways (Parekh 2008, p. 19). Pluralism can be seen to be inherent in Parekh's position even if it is not elaborated and distinguished sufficiently from cultural diversity. Yet while it is doubtlessly important that a national identity is inclusive of different cultural groups in society, as Parekh (2000b, pp. 230-236) rightly emphasises, it also needs to be able to motivate and unite liberals, communitarians, nationalists, multiculturalists and so on, who have their own views of what society is and how they belong to it. And again, we cannot simply assume that such distinctions directly map onto cultural diversity. But obviously, this point extends or nuances rather than undercuts Parekh's position.

Modood also sometimes seems to equate pluralism, as intended here, with cultural diversity. Thus, Modood and Dobbernack (2011, p. 55) point out how multiculturalism needs to enable respectful interaction between 'two modes of "difference"', as *non-white Britons* might conceive of themselves and their place in society in different ways that can roughly be divided into 'the fluidly hybridic and the communally conserving', where the first emphasises cultural exchange and mixing, and the second rootedness. But these different modes of difference cannot be assumed to be restricted to minorities and nor can they be assumed to coincide with these groups: majority citizens may equally evaluate difference in alternative ways, with some more open to interaction and transformation and others more predisposed to stability and conformity; and members of the same minority group may conceive their membership to the polity in different ways.

At other times, however, Modood (2007, p. 126) does recognise how unity itself is plural: when he discusses citizenship he emphasises it is plural as it is shaped by the existing (group) identities citizens have and stresses how 'each part of the plurality has a right to be a part of the whole and to speak up for itself and for its vision of the whole'. Different visions of unity, in other words, are accommodated in the overarching whole. While this idea does not receive much more attention here, in later work Modood (2013, pp. 160-168) does develop it a little further through a discussion of pluralist integration that is somewhat reminiscent of the discussion in the previous section – but again, notably, is restricted to minorities.

There, Modood (2013, p. 165) emphasises how national self-conceptions need to be inclusive of minorities, but also how different 'modes of integration' that pursue different visions of the whole can be seen as attractive in different ways and as complementary. Indeed, similar to what was suggested above, Modood (2013, p. 165) thinks they can be seen as additive: 'each successive position attempts to include what is thought to be missing from its predecessor'. Again, recalling what was suggested above, he (Modood 2013, p. 166) thinks 'perhaps the ultimate meaning of multiculturalism is not as one mode of integration but as the perspective which allows all four modes of integration their due'. This is important because no one model is

likely to capture all minorities and to 'have a reasonable chance of integrating the maximum number of members of *minorities*, none of the political responses [to diversity] should be dismissed' (Modood 2013, p. 166, emphasis added). And this is because the value of these different approaches to equal citizenship 'can only be realized if it is not imposed but is the preferred choice of *minority* individuals and groups' (Modood 2013, p. 166, emphasis added) who inevitably make different choices. This recalls the discussion above: unity needs to be plural to motivate and unite all citizens, who come with their existing identities. However, it is not clear that this insight only applies to minority citizens: all citizens may have different ideas about how they belong to the polity, and these ideas may not automatically map onto their cultural membership.

Insights that point in the direction of a concern for pluralism, as developed in the previous chapter and the previous section, then, can already be recognised in the work of Parekh (2000b, 2008) and Modood (2007, 2013). But pluralism only receives marginal amounts of attention and is often conceived as applying only to minorities. This thesis suggests a nuance in their positions that effectively extends further a sensitivity to pluralism, to capture how not only minority but also majority citizens (and political elites) can belong to the polity in different ways. As these scholars have only paid limited attention to such pluralism, they also have not dedicated much time refuting potential objections to it and the remainder of this section will now show that while a concern for pluralism leaves the multicultural conception of unity somewhat more indeterminate and this may be seen to have both internal and external consequences, these objections can be rebutted.

This increased sensitivity to how all citizens belong to the polity in their own way further highlights how, as noted before, the multicultural conception of unity sees the whole that is united as plural and somewhat indeterminate, better captured in terms of family resemblance (Modood 2007, pp. 95-98, 115; see also: Miller 1995, p. 27) than in 'essentialist-perfectionist Platonic' (Modood 2007, p. 111) terms. This does not contradict the possibility of unity because family members can recognise each other as belonging to the same family without being exactly the same: mutual identification

does not rest upon both parties being identical (Turner et al 1994, pp. 455-456). But one might think that increased indeterminacy could further reduce the overlapping similarities between citizens so that such mutual recognition and identification is no longer possible. By avoiding an exact specification of how citizens belong, this form of unity could be said to leave too much open to the individual, so that their interpretations of what is shared can be so different they may no longer be recognisably referring to the same thing. And it may be 'difficult to be attached to something that is unclear' (Uberoi and Modood 2013b, p. 28). Such an unspecific conception of unity, therefore, might be too insubstantial to provide a plausible account of unity among citizens.

However, even if it lacks determinate character, the multicultural unity discussed above does have a recognisable shape. The different conceptions of unity that it accommodates are based in shared civic experiences: they are shaped within a shared way of life and connected to a shared set of legal citizenship provisions, so that they will inevitably overlap (cf. Modood 2007, p. 128; see also: Miller 1995, pp. 42-46, 68-69). Any country has a public culture that includes political institutions, social norms and expectations, a language, etc. that is known to all, even if it is contested and evaluated in different ways (Miller 1995, pp. 25-27, 41; Parekh 2000b, pp. 268-270). That is not to deny that such a shared way of life and public culture are internally diverse and that citizens may share them and take part in them in different ways. The point is that these citizens conduct their lives within roughly shared parameters.

Indeed, for example, the Netherlands knows a tradition of a strong, somewhat paternalistic Rechtsstaat; is characterised by Dutch as its official language[69] that is also the medium of Dutch film, music and media; and also by the vast numbers of bicycles in the street. Likewise, in the UK, shared ways of life are conducted within the framework of the Constitutional monarchy and find expression through popular media that is largely English-spoken; and stereotypical street views include double-decker buses and red telephone boxes. Conceptions of unity are developed within this public culture it and refer to it, even if they seek to transgress it, so that there is some

---

[69] In the province of Friesland, the Frisian language is recognised as a second official language.

limit to the forms they will take and these forms will overlap (Miller 1995, pp. 42-46, 68-69). As Miller (1995, p. 69) notes, it is precisely because this shared culture is a public phenomenon that it can be interpreted in better and worse ways, which limits credible interpretations (which, again, is not to deny that this common culture is plural and diverse [Parekh 2000b, pp. 219-224]). The plural nature of multicultural unity hence does not leave it completely open-ended.

Certainly, this presupposes that unity in some sense already exists: citizens already belong to a country with institutions, shared ways of life, opportunities for civic interaction, and so on. This is the case in most societies, and also in the UK and the Netherlands. Whether such unity originally arose out of national identities that predated the state or whether it is simply an effect of the existence of states or a variety of other factors is difficult to tell (cf. Anderson 2010; Gellner 2010; Parekh 2008, p. 47). This thesis was interested in how to unite diverse citizens in these actual societies, so that the question of the origin or initial creation of unity is less relevant: what matters is understanding how to conceptualise these existing ties and how to ensure that they extend to all of society so that all citizens are united.

The inevitable vagueness of the united whole in this conception of unity, furthermore, might lead some to object that it fails to be externally distinctive: it fails to explain why it would unite *this* body of citizens and not *that* body of citizens. Again, the shared ways of life that colour the different conceptions of unity help to make it externally distinctive. But even if the features themselves are not distinctive – indeed, equal citizenship is not typically British or Dutch but characterises many different states – their concrete manifestation and substantive interpretation may be (Uberoi and Modood 2013b, p. 30). What is distinctive tends to be determined in interaction (cf. Stets and Burke 2000, pp. 229-231): people become aware of their differences and of which ones are significant and which ones are not only through engaging in interaction and tapping into shared patterns of meaning that make sense of them. That is, even if objectively speaking two groups of citizens are not very easily distinguished, they may still experience distinctiveness. What matters is not so much whether the boundaries of unity are obvious, but whether they are experienced as such, so that they may be

meaningful to and unite citizens (Parekh 2008, pp. 61-65; Uberoi and Modood 2013b, pp. 29-30).

The plural quality of the multicultural conception of unity, then, may induce further indeterminacy but that does not stop it from providing a credible account of unity among diverse citizens that is most defensible and politically plausible, as it motivates them from within by leaving them to conceptualise society and their place in it in their own terms and for their own reasons.

7.5   Concluding summary

This thesis has analysed how political theorists and British and Dutch political elites conceive unity, and concluded by arguing that the multicultural conception of unity is most defensible and politically plausible in these two countries. This final section will briefly recap how the thesis has developed its argument and how it has made the three contributions that it set out to make.

Chapter 1 noted how political theorists think unity is important but neglect to specify what they mean by it. It also noted that these political theorists often aim to be of practical use and guide political action, but largely neglect to examine the ideas of the political elites they intend to influence. The remainder of this thesis has responded to these two gaps by making three contributions.

First, chapter 2 explained what practical political theory is and why practical political theorists might benefit from studying existing ideas. That is because they offer clarifications about unity and suggestions as to how to foster it that are intended to shape the ideas of political elites and guide their actions: their proposals are not only morally defensible but also applicable, acceptable and therefore politically plausible within the context they address. The latter presupposes knowing how unity and related issues are already conceived, so that studying ideas helps to enhance and demonstrate the political plausibility of practical political theory. This chapter also offered a method for studying such ideas.

Second, chapters 3 to 5 clarify how unity is conceived by political theorists and political elites. Chapter 3 first outlines a perspective on unity that approaches it as an attribute of something that is united and asks four questions to reconstruct how political orientations imply visions of the ideally united society: what is the whole that is united; who belongs to this whole; how do they belong to it; and how is such unity impeded and fostered? This perspective proved helpful to distinguish between four different conceptions of unity advanced by political theorists that were subsequently analysed in terms of their internal logic. Moreover, it also helped to discern the conceptions of unity that underpin the different perspectives expressed by British (chapter 4) and Dutch (chapter 5) political elites in the parliamentary debates analysed. Chapter 6 showed that these perspectives can be read as versions of three broad patterns of thought about unity (political, national and multicultural) that political theorists who aim to be 'practical' respond to, and argued that the case studies imply that such a response needs to heed pluralism.

Third, this final chapter has concluded the thesis by arguing for the multicultural conception of unity proposed by certain political theorists. It has shown that this conception of unity is most defensible, as it avoids the problems associated with the political and national conceptions of unity without creating new ones. It has also shown that this conception is politically plausible within the context of the UK and the Netherlands as it is compatible with existing ideas about unity for it accommodates the three broad patterns of thought about unity discerned here by being open to plural interpretations. Paradoxically then, while multiculturalism is often rejected in these societies, the multicultural conception of unity is nonetheless most suitable to conceptualise unity here.

By providing a clearer view of how unity *is* conceived in different ways by political elites in these countries this thesis may contribute to more fruitful political dialogue between them. It also indicates how unity *should be* conceived by these elites, and suggests that this is already compatible with their ideas. But it has not suggested strategies to foster such unity in practice, and further work is necessary to clarify what mechanisms would facilitate such multicultural unity in the UK and the Netherlands.

Political theorists, political elites, public intellectuals, activists, concerned citizens, and so on, who are interested in thinking about such strategies to foster unity benefit from a clear view of what is being aimed for and this thesis has thus provided a necessary first step by specifying how unity should be conceived.

Appendix 1: list of sensitising questions for frame analysis

- How is multiculturalism understood?

- How is national identity understood?

- How are multiculturalism and national identity related?

- How is the state positioned in relation to multiculturalism and national identity?

- References made to concepts, actors, documents, events, etc. (topoi)

- Form of discourse (e.g. argument, persuasion techniques, metaphors)

- What is the problem and why, and what are the causes?

- Who is responsible for the problem and who is the victim?

- Normative principles and legitimisation strategies

- What is the preferred solution to the problem and why?

- How are goals prioritised, and how can they best be achieved? Who plays what role?

- Calls for action or non-action; who is addressed?

Appendix 2: keywords

Combinations used to select British debates:

- Multiculturalism national identity
- Multiculturalism Britishness
- Integration national identity
- Integration Britishness
- Cohesion national identity
- Cohesion Britishness

Combinations used to select Dutch debates:

- integratie allochto* nationale identiteit;
- multicultur* nationale identiteit;
- nationale identiteit inburgering;
- sociale cohesie etnische minderheden;
- sociale cohesie allochto* identiteit;
- sociale cohesie inburgering identiteit;
- burgerschap multicult* identiteit

Appendix 3: data sample

Case study I: the UK.

- 02-02-2006 House of Lords: British Identity and Citizenship
- 07-06-2007 House of Lords: Multi-cultural Britain
- 19-07-2001 House of Lords: Multi-ethnic Britain
- 19-06-2008 House of Lords: Britishness
- 20-03-2002 House of Lords: Multi-ethnicity and Multi-culturalism
- 28-02-2008 House of Lords: Families, community cohesion and social action
- 28-11-2005 House of Lords: Community relations

Case study II: the Netherlands.

- Behandeling van de brief van de minister-president over waarden en normen(28600, nr. 42); 18-12-2002, TK35.
- Behandeling van het eindrapport "Bruggen bouwen" van de tijdelijke commissie Onderzoek integratiebeleid (28689); 06-04-2004, TK63.
- Debat met de regering over het eindrapport "Bruggen bouwen" van de tijdelijke commissie Onderzoek integratiebeleid (28689); 31-08-2004, TK92.
- Voortzetting debat met de regering over het eindrapport "Bruggen bouwen" van de tijdelijke commissie Onderzoek integratiebeleid (1) (28689); 02-09-2004, TK94.
- Voortzetting debat met de regering over het eindrapport "Bruggen bouwen" van de tijdelijke commissie Onderzoek integratiebeleid (2) (28689); 02-09-2004, TK94.
- Debat over waarden en normen (29454); 14-04-2005, TK73.
- Voortzetting debat over waarden en normen (29454); 14-04-2004, TK73.
- Debat over de oprichting van een museum voor de Nederlandse geschiedenis; 27-06-2006, TK95.
- Behandeling van wetsvoorstel Wijziging van de Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap tot beperking van meervoudige nationaliteit en tot invoering van het verlies van het Nederlanderschap wegens het toebrengen van ernstige

schade aan de essentiele belangen van het Koninkrijk of van een of meer van zijn landen (30166, R1795); 04-19-2006, TK8.

- Behandeling van wetsvoorstel Wijziging van de Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap ter invoering van een verklaring van verbondenheid, en tot aanpassing van de regeling van de verkrijging van het Nederlanderschap na erkenning (30584, R1811); 30-01-2008, TK47.

- Debat over de verklaring van de minister-president, de minister van Algemene Zaken, over de internetfilm Fitna; 01-04-2008, TK70.

- Behandeling van wetsvoorstel Wijziging van de Rijkswet op het Nederlanderschap met betrekking tot meervoudige nationaliteit en andere nationaliteitsrechtelijke kwesties (31813, R1873); 14-01-2010, TK42.

Appendix 4: glossary of Dutch concepts

A brief list of concepts that are often used in the Dutch context:

- Allochtoon: person with (at least) one parent (sometimes grandparent) of foreign origin.
- Autochtoon: 'native' Dutch (antonym of allochtoon).
- Rechtsstaat: Dutch term to denote liberal democracy and the rule of law, embraces such concepts as rights, the constitution, jurisprudence, and justice.
- Pillarisation: a Dutch tradition originating in the 19th century that effectively divided society in several pillars organised around a religious or social identity. The four pillars (Socialist, Liberal/Secular, Catholic, and Protestant) had their own schools, hospital, sports clubs, broadcast channels, etc. so that group members would not have to interact. The elites of these pillars joined together in a consensual government; the pillars were held together by a shared and overarching structure.
- Depillarised society: from the 1960s onwards, the old 'pillars' decreased in social importance and society became more individualist.
- Sovereignty in the own circle (also: emancipation from within the own circle): the philosophy behind pillarisation, emphasising group autonomy and the idea that groups should be able to live (and raise and treat their group members) in accordance with their distinctive worldview, without state interference. Members of these pillars were expected to live their lives following the worldview of their pillar.
- Integration with retention of identity: the slogan of the Ethnic Minorities Policy. Denotes the idea that immigrants can become part of society (i.e. integrate) by cultivating and retaining their cultural identity and community.

Bibliography

Agger, B. 1991. Critical Theory, Poststructuralism, Postmodernism: Their Sociological Relevance. *Annual Review of Sociology* 17(1), pp. 105-131.

Anderson, B. 2010. The nation and the origins of national consciousness. In: Guibernau, M. and Rex, J. eds. *The Ethnicity reader: nationalism, multiculturalism & migration.* Cambridge: Polity, pp. 56-63.

Bacchi, C. 2000. Policy as Discourse: what does it mean? where does it get us? *Discourse* 21(1), pp. 45-57.

Baier, K. 1989. Justice and the aims of political philosophy. *Ethics* 99(4), pp. 771-790.

Barry, B. 2001. *Culture & Equality: an egalitarian critique of multiculturalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauböck, R. 2008. Beyond culturalism and statism. Liberal responses to diversity. *Eurosphere Working Paper Series* [Online] Online working paper no. 06. [Accessed: 28-11-2012].

Becker, U. 2000. Welfare state development and employment in the Netherlands in comparative perspective. *Journal of European Social Policy* 10(3), pp. 219-239.

Beiner, R. 1995. Introduction: Why citizenship constitutes a theoretical problem in the last decade of the century. In: Beiner, R. ed. *Theorizing citizenship.* Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 1-28.

Béland, D. 2005. Ideas and Social Policy: an Institutionalist Perspective. *Social Policy and Administration* 39(1), pp. 1-18.

Béland, D. 2009. Ideas, institutions, and policy change. *Journal of European Public Policy* 16(5), pp. 701-718.

Bellamy, R. 1999. *Pluralism and Liberalism: towards a politics of compromise*. London: Routledge.

Benford, R. and Snow, D. 2000. Framing processes and social movements: an overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology* 26, pp. 611-639.

Benhabib, S. 1999. 'Nous' et 'les Autres': The Politics of Complex Cultural Dialogue in a Global Civilization. In: Joppke, C. and Lukes, S. eds. *Multicultural Questions.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 44-62.

Bertossi, C. 2011. National Models of Integration in Europe: A Comparative and Critical Analysis. *American Behavioral Scientist* 55(12), pp. 1561-1580.

Bleich, E. 2011. Social research and 'race' policy frarming in Britain and France. *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 13(1), pp. 59-74.

Blyth, M. 2003. Structures Do Not Come with an Instruction Sheet: Interests, Ideas, and Progress in Political Science. *Perspective on Politics* 1(4), pp. 695-706.

Bohman, J. 1995. Public reason and cultural pluralism: political liberalism and the problem of moral conflict. *Political Theory* 23(2), pp. 253-279.

Bohman, J. 1996. *Public deliberation*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Breugelmans, S. et al. 2009. Stability of Majority Attitudes toward Multiculturalism in the Netherlands between 1999 and 2007. *Applied psychology: an international review* 58(4), pp. 653-671.

Brown, G. 2006. The future of Britishness. In: *Fabian New Year Conference 2006: Who do we want to be? The future of Britishness.* Imperial College, London, 14 January 2006.

Brubaker, R. 1999. The Manichean Myth: rethinking the distinction between 'civic' and 'ethnic' nationalism. In: Kriesi, H. et al. eds. *Nation and National Identity: the European experience in perspective.* Zurich: Verlag Ruegger, pp. 55-72.

Brubaker, W. 1990. Immigration, citizenship and the nation-state in France and Germany: a comparative historical analysis. *International Sociology* 5(4), pp. 379-407.

Bruquetas-Callejo, M. et al. 2007. *Policymaking related to immigration and integration. The Dutch Case.* Amsterdam: IMISCOE.

Buckler, S. and Dolowitz, D. 2000. New Labour's ideology: a reply to Michael Freeden. *The Political Quarterly* 71(1), pp. 102-109.

Budge, I. 1998. Great Britain: a stable, but fragile, party system? In: Pennings, P. and Lane, J.-E. eds. *Comparing party system change.* London: Routledge, pp. 116-126.

Calhoun, C. 1993. Nationalism and ethnicity. *Annual Review of Sociology* 19, pp. 211-239.

Calhoun, C. 2002. Imagining Solidarity: Cosmopolitanism, Constitutional Patriotism, and the Public Sphere. *Public Culture* 14(1), pp. 147-171.

Cameron, D. 2011. PM's speech at Munich Security Conference. [Online]. Available at: http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference/ [Accessed: 28-11-2012].

Campbell, J. 1998. Institutional Analysis and the Role of Ideas in Political Economy. *Theory and Society* 27(3), pp. 377-409.

Campbell, J. 2002. Ideas, Politics, and Public Policy. *Annual Review of Sociology* 28(1), pp. 21-38.

Canovan, M. 1996. *Nationhood and political theory*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Canovan, M. 2000. Patriotism is not enough. *British Journal of Political Science* 30(3), pp. 413-432.

Cantle, T. 2001. Community Cohesion: a report of the independent review team. London: Home Office.

Cantle, T. 2005. *Community cohesion: a new framework for race and diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Carens, J. 1987. Aliens and citizens: the case for open borders. *The Review of Politics* 49(2), pp. 251-273.

Carens, J. 1996. Realistic and idealistic approaches to the ethics of migration. *International Migration Review* 30(1), pp. 156-170.

Carens, J. 2004. A contextual approach to political theory. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 7(2), pp. 117-132.

Carens, J. 2013. *The ethics of immigration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carrera, S. 2006. *A Comparison of Integration Programmes in the EU: Trends and Weaknesses*. Brussels: CEPS.

Cheong, P. et al. 2007. Immigration, social cohesion and social capital: A critical review. *Critical Social Policy* 27(1), pp. 24-49.

Coenders, M. et al. 2008. More than Two Decades of Changing Ethnic Attitudes in the Netherlands. *Journal of Social Issues* 64(2), pp. 269-285.

Cohen, G. 2003. Facts and principles. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 31(3), pp. 211-245.

Colley, L. 1992. Britishness and Otherness: an argument *The Journal of British Studies* 31(4), pp. 309-329.

Dryzek, J. 1993. Policy Analysis and Planning: from Science to Argument. In: Fischer, F. and Forester, J. eds. *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, pp. 213-232.

Dryzek, J. and Niemeyer, S. 2006. Reconciling pluralism and consensus as political ideals. *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3), pp. 643-649.

Duyvendak, J. W. 2008. Een land dat zich niet laat kennen? *Migrantenstudies* 24(3), pp. 170-173.

Duyvendak, J. W. and Scholten, P. 2009. Questioning the Dutch multicultural model of immigant integration. *Migrations Societe* (122), pp. 1-24.

Duyvendak, J. W. and Scholten, P. 2011. Beyond the Dutch 'multicultural model': the coproduction of integration frames. *Journal of International Migration & Integration* 12(3), pp. 331-348.

Duyvendak, J. W. and Scholten, P. 2012. Deconstructing the Dutch multicultural model: a frame perspective on Dutch immigrant integration policy. *Comparative European Politics* 10(3), pp. 266-282.

Eisenberg, A. and Spinner-Halev, J. 2005a. Introduction. In: Eisenberg, A. and Spinner-Halev, J. eds. *Minorities within Minorities: Equality, Rights, and Diversity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-15.

Eisenberg, A. and Spinner-Halev, J. eds. 2005b. *Minorities within Minorities.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Entzinger, H. 2006. Changing the rules while the game is on; From multiculturalism to assimilation in the Netherlands. In: Bodemann, M. and Yurdakul, G. eds. *Migration, Citizenship, Ethnos: Incorporation Regimes in Germany, Western Europe, and North America.* New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 121-144.

Farrelly, C. 2007. Justice in ideal theory: a refutation. *Political Studies* 55(4), pp. 844-864.

Favell, A. 1998. *Philosophies of Integration*. Houndmills: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Favell, A. and Modood, T. 2003. Multiculturalism and the Theory and Practice of Normative Political Theory. In: Finlayson, A. ed. *Contemporary Political Thought: a Reader and Guide.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 484-495.

Fermin, A. 1997. *Nederlandse politieke partijen over minderhedenbeleid, 1977-1995.* Utrecht: Utrecht University.

Finlayson, A. 2012. Rhetorical and the political theory of ideologies. *Political Studies* 60(4), pp. 751-767.

Finlayson, A. 2013. Critique and political argumentation. *Political Studies Review* 11, pp. 313-320.

Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. 2001. Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science* 4(1), pp. 391-416.

Fischer, F. 1998. Beyond Empiricism: Policy Inquiry in Postpositivist Perspective. *Policy Studies Journal* 26(1), pp. 129-146.

Fischer, F. 2003. *Reframing Public Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Floyd, J. 2011. From historical contextualism, to mentalism, to behaviouralism. In: Floyd, J. and Stears, M. eds. *Political philosophy versus history? Contextualism and real politics in contemporary political thought.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 38-64.

Floyd, J. and Stears, M. eds. 2011. *Political philosophy versus history? Contextualism and real politics in contemporary political thought.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Frankfurt, H. 2004. *The reasons of love*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Fraser, N. 2001. Recognition without ethics? *Theory, Culture & Society* 18(2-3), pp. 21-42.

Freeden, M. 1996. *Ideologies and Political Theory: a conceptual analysis*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Freeden, M. 1998. Is nationalism a distinct ideology? *Political Studies* 46(4), pp. 748-765.

Freeden, M. 2005. What should the 'political' in political theory explore? *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 13(2), pp. 113-134.

Freeden, M. 2008. Thinking politically and thinking about politics: language, interpretation and ideology. In: Leopold, D. and Stears, M. eds. *Political theory: methods and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 196-215.

Frijhoff, W. 1992. Identiteit en identiteitsbesef. De historicus en de spanning tussen verbeelding, benoeming en herkenning. *BMGN - Low countries historical review* 107(4), pp. 614-634.

Gellner, E. 2010. Nationalism as a product of industrial society. In: Guibernau, M. and Rex, J. eds. *The Ethnicity Reader: nationalism, multiculturalism & migration*. 2d ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 64-78.

Gilroy, P. 2004. *After Empire: melancholia or convivial culture?* Abingdon: Routledge.

Goldstein, J. and Keohane, R. 1993. Ideas and Foreign Policy: an Analytical Framework. In: Goldstein, J. and Keohane, R. eds. *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 3-30.

Goodhart, D. 2004. *Too diverse?* Prospect. pp. 30-37.

Goodman, S. 2010. Integration requirements for integration's sake? Identifying, categorising and comparing civic integration policies. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36(5), pp. 753-772.

Grillo, R. 2007. An excess of alterity? Debating difference in a multicultural society. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(6), pp. 979-998.

Grillo, R. 2010. British and others: from 'race' to 'faith'. In: Vertovec, S. and Wessendorf, S. eds. *The Multiculturalism Backlash: European discourses, policies and practices.* Oxon: Routledge, pp. 50-71.

Guibernau, M. 2004. Anthony D. Smith on nations and national identity: a critical assessment. *Nations and Nationalism* 10(1/2), pp. 125-141.

Guiraudon, V. et al. 2005. Monitoring ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. *International Social Science Journal* 57(183), pp. 75-87.

Gutmann, A. and Thompson, D. 1990. Moral conflict and political consensus. *Ethics* 101(1), pp. 64-88.

Haas, P. 1992. Introduction: epistemic communities and international policy coordination. *International Organization* 46(1), pp. 1-35.

Habermas, J. 1995. Citizenship and national identity: some reflections on the future of Europe. In: Beiner, R. ed. *Theorizing citizenship.* Albany: State University of New York Press, pp. 255-281.

Habermas, J. 1998. *The inclusion of the other*. Ed.: Cronin, C. and De Greiff, P. Cambridge: Polity.

Habermas, J. 2003. *Truth and Justification*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Haddock, B. 2011. Contingency and judgment in history of political philosophy: a phenomenological approach. In: Floyd, J. and Stears, M. eds. *Political philosophy versus history? Contextualism and real politics in contemporary political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 65-83.

Hajer, M. 1995. *The Politics of Environmental Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hall, P. 1993. Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain. *Comparative Politics* 25(3), pp. 275-296.

Hatton, T. 2004. Explaining trends in UK immigration. In: *Annual Migration Meeting of the Institute for the Study of Labour (IZA).* Bonn.

HomeOffice. 2002. Secure borders, safe haven: integration with diversity in modern Britain. London: Home Office.

Honig, B. and Stears, M. 2011. The new realism: from modus vivendi to justice. In: Floyd, J. and Stears, M. eds. *Political philosophy versus history? Contextualism and real politics in contemporary political thought.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 177-205.

Hooghe, M. et al. 2009. Ethnic diversity and generalized trust in Europe: a cross-national multilevel study. *Comparative Political Studies* 42(2), pp. 198-223.

Huysmans, J. and Buonfino, A. 2008. Politics of exception and unease: Immigration, asylum and terrorism in parliamentary debates in the UK. *Political Studies* 56(4), pp. 766-788.

Ingle, S. 2008. *The British party system: an introduction.* 4th ed. London: Routledge.

Irwin, G. and Thomassen, J. 1975. Issue consensus in a multi-party system: voters and leaders in the Netherlands. *Acta Politica* 10(4), pp. 389-420

Jacobs, D. 1998. Discourse, Politics and Policy: the Dutch parliamentary debate about voting rights for foreign residents. *International Migration Review* 32(2), pp. 350-373.

Jivraj, S. 2012. *Dynamics of Diversity: evidence from the 2011 census.* Manchester: Centre on Dynamics of Ethnicity (CoDE), University of Manchester.

John, P. 2003. Is There Life After Policy Streams, Advocacy Coalitions, and Punctuations: Using Evolutionary Theory to Explain Policy Change? *Policy Studies Journal* 31(4), pp. 481-498.

Jones, R. et al. 2011. The geographies of soft paternalism in the UK: the rise of the avuncular state and changing behaviour after neoliberalism. *Geography Compass* 5(1), pp. 50-62.

Joppke, C. 2001. Multicultural Citizenship: a critique. *European Journal of Sociology* 42(2), pp. 431-447.

Joppke, C. 2004. The retreat of multiculturalism in the liberal state: theory and policy. *The British Journal of Sociology* 55(2), pp. 237-257.

Joppke, C. 2007. Beyond national models: civic integration policies for immigrants in Western Europe. *West European Politics* 30(1), pp. 1-22.

Joppke, C. 2009. Limits of Integration Policy: Britain and her Muslims. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35(3), pp. 453-472.

Joppke, C. and Lukes, S. 1999. Introduction: Multicultural Questions. In: Joppke, C. and Lukes, S. eds. *Multicultural Questions*. Oxford Oxford University Press, pp. 1-24.

Kalra, V. and Kapoor, N. 2008. *Interrogating Segregation, Integration and the Community Cohesion Agenda*. Manchester: Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research.

Kedourie, E. 1966. *Nationalism*. London: Hutchinson.

Klosko, G. 2005. *Political Obligations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Koenig, T. 2006. Compounding mixed-methods problems in frame analysis through comparative research. *Qualitative Research* 6(1), pp. 61-76.

Koopmans, R. 2008. *Tradeoffs between equality and difference: immigration integration, multiculturalism and the welfare state in cross-national perspective*. Berlin: Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin for Sozialforschung (WZB).

Koopmans, R. and Statham, P. 1999. Challenging the Liberal Nation-State? Postnationalism, Multiculturalism, and the Collective Claims Making of Migrants and Ethnic Minorities in Britain and Germany. *American Journal of Sociology* 105(3), pp. 652-696.

Krol, E. 2007. Dutch. In: Beller, M. and Leerssen, J. eds. *Imagology: the cultural construction and literary representation of national characters. A critical survey*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, pp. 142-144.

Kukathas, C. 1992. Are there any cultural rights? *Political Theory* 20(1), pp. 105-139.

Kukathas, C. 2003. *The Liberal Archipelago*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kundnani, A. 2007. Integrationism: the politics of anti-Muslim racism. *Race & Class* 48(4), pp. 24-44.

Kymlicka, W. 1989. *Liberalism, Community and Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship: a liberal theory of minority rights*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. 2001. Western political theory and ethnic relations in Eastern Europe. In: Kymlicka, W. and Opalski, M. eds. *Can liberal pluralism be exported? Western political theory and ethnic relations in Eastern Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 13-105.

Kymlicka, W. 2002. *Contemporary Political Philosophy: an introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. 2007. The new debate on minority rights (and postscript). In: Laden, A. and Owen, D. eds. *Multiculturalism and Political Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 25-59.

Kymlicka, W. 2008. Review of Paul Sniderman and Louk Hagendoorn's When Ways of Life Collide: Multiculturalism and its Discontents. *Perspectives on Politics* 6(4), pp. 804-807.

Kymlicka, W. 2010. The rise and fall of multiculturalism? New debates on inclusion and accommodation in diverse societies. *International Social Science Journal* 61(199), pp. 97-112.

Kymlicka, W. and Banting, K. 2006. Immigration, Multiculturalism, and the Welfare State. *Ethics & International Affairs* 20(3), pp. 281-304.

Laborde, C. 2002. From constitutional to civic patriotism. *British Journal of Political Science* 32(4), pp. 591-612.

Laborde, C. 2008. *Critical republicanism: the Hijab controversy and political philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. 1980. *Metaphors we live by*. London: University of Chicago Press.

Lane, M. 2011. Constraint, freedom and exemplar: history and theory without teleology. In: Floyd, J. and Stears, M. eds. *Political philosophy versus history? Contextualism and real politics in contemporary political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 128-150.

Lee, S. 2006. Gordon Brown and the 'British Way'. *The Political Quarterly* 77(3), pp. 369-378.

Leerssen, J. 1999. *Nationaal denken in Europa*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Lenard, P. 2012. The reports of multiculturalim's death are greatly exaggerated. *Politics* 32(3), pp. 186-196.

Leopold, D. and Stears, M. eds. 2008. *Political Theory: methods and approaches.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Letki, N. 2008. Does diversity erode social cohesion? Social capital and race in British neighbourhoods. *Political Studies* 56, pp. 99-126.

Levy, J. 2007. Contextualism, constitutionalism, and *modus vivendi* approaches. In: Laden, A. and Owen, D. eds. *Multiculturalism and Political Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 173-197.

Lincoln, A. 1863. *The Gettysburg Address* [Online]. Abraham Lincoln Online; speeches and writing. Available at: http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm [Accessed: 23-09-2013]

Lukes, S. 1974. *Power: A Radical View*. London: Macmillan Press.

Lynch, P. 2000. The Conservative party and nationhood. *The Political Quarterly* 71(1), pp. 59-67.

MacIntyre, A. 2003. Is patriotism a virtue? In: Matravers, D. and Pike, J. eds. *Debates in contemporary political philosophy: an anthology*. London: Routlegde, pp. 286-300.

Margolis, E. and Laurence, S. 2011. *Concepts* [Online]. Stanford University. Available at: http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/concepts/ [Accessed: 09-08-2012].

Markell, P. 2000. Making affect safe for democracy? On 'Constitutional Patriotism'. *Political Theory* 28(1), pp. 38-63.

Martineau, W. and Squires, J. 2012. Addressing the 'dismal disconnection': normative theory, empirical inquiry and dialogical research. *Political Studies* 60(3), pp. 523-538.

Mason, A. 2007. Multiculturalism and the critique of essentialism. In: Laden, A. and Owen, D. eds. *Multiculturalism and Political Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 221-243.

Mason, A. 2010. Integration, Cohesion and National Identity: theoretical reflections on recent British policy. *British Journal of Political Science* 40(4), pp. 857-874.

McCrone, D. 1997. Unmasking Britannia: the rise and fall of British national identity. *Nations and Nationalism* 3(4), pp. 579-596.

McGhee, D. 2003. Moving to 'our' common ground - a critical examination of community cohesion discourse in twenty-first century Britain. *The Sociological Review* 51(3), pp. 376-404.

Meer, N. and Modood, T. 2009. The multicultural state we're in: Muslims, 'multiculture' and the 'civic Re-balancing' of british multiculturalism. *Political Studies* 57(3), pp. 473-497.

Miller, D. 1995. *On Nationality*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Miller, D. 2008. Political philosophy for Earthlings. In: Leopold, D. and Stears, M. eds. *Political theory: methods and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 29-48.

Miller, D. 2013. *Justice for Earthlings: essays in political philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Miller, D. and Siedentop, L. 1983. Introduction. In: Miller, D. and Siedentop, L. eds. *The nature of political theory*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 1-15.

Miscevic, N. 2010. *Nationalism* [Online]. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University. [Accessed: 09/01/2012].

Müller, J.-W. 2008. A general theory of constitutional patriotism. *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 9(1), pp. 72-95.

Modood, T. 1998. Anti-Essentialism, Multiculturalism and the 'Recognition' of Religious Groups. *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 6(4), pp. 378-399.

Modood, T. 2006. British Muslims and the politics of multiculturalism. In: Modood, T. et al. eds. *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: A European Approach*. London: Routledge, pp. 37-56.

Modood, T. 2007. *Multiculturalism: a civic idea*. Cambridge: Polity.

Modood, T. 2008. Multiculturalism and Groups. *Social & legal studies* 17(4), pp. 549-553.

Modood, T. 2012. *Post-immigration 'difference' and integration: the case of Muslims in Western Europe*. London: The British Academy.

Modood, T. 2013. *Multiculturalism*. 2d ed. Cambridge: Polity.

Modood, T. and Dobbernack, J. 2011. A left communitarianism? What about multiculturalism? *Soundings* 48, pp. 54-64.

Modood, T. and Meer, N. 2011. Framing contemporary citizenship and diversity in Europe. In: Triandafyllidou, A. et al. eds. *European multiculturalisms: cultural, religious and ethnic challenges*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp. 33-60.

Modood, T. et al. eds. 2006. *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship: a European Approach*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Mouffe, C. 2005. The limits of John Rawls' pluralism. *Politics, Philosophy & Economics* 4(2), pp. 221-231.

Mouritsen, P. 2012. The resilience of citizenship traditions: Civic integration in Germany, Great Britain and Denmark. *Ethnicities* 0(0), pp. 1-24.

Nimni, E. 1999. Nationalist multiculturalism in late imperial Austria as a critique of contemporary liberalism: the case of Bauer and Renner. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 4(3), pp. 289-314.

Nimni, E. 2009. Nationalism, ethnicity and self-determination: a paradigm shift? *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 9(2), pp. 319-332.

O'Neill, O. 1997. Political liberalism and public reason: a critical notice of John Rawls' Political Liberalism. *Philosophical Review* 106(3), pp. 411-428.

Okin, S. 1998. Feminism and Multiculturalism: Some Tensions. *Ethics* 108(4), pp. 661-684.

Okin, S. 1999. Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women? In: Cohen, J. et al. eds. *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 7-24.

Parekh, B. 1990. *The Rushdie Affair and the British Press*. London: CRE.

Parekh, B. 1995. Oakeshott's theory of civil assocation (review essay). *Ethics* 106(1), pp. 158-186.

Parekh, B. 1999. Balancing unity and diversity in multicultural societies. In: Avnon, D. and de-Shalit, A. eds. *Liberalism and its practice*. London: Routledge, pp. 106-124.

Parekh, B. 2000a. Defining British National Identity. *The Political Quarterly* 71(1), pp. 4-14.

Parekh, B. 2000b. *Rethinking Multiculturalism: Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Parekh, B. ed. 2000c. *The future of multi-ethnic Britain: report of the Commission on the future of multi-ethnic Britain [The Parekh Report]*. London: Profile Books.

Parekh, B. 2000d. Theorizing Political Theory. In: O'Sullivan, N. ed. *Political Theory in Transition*. London: Routledge, pp. 242-259.

Parekh, B. 2001. The future of multi-ethnic Britain: reporting on a report. *The Round Table: the Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs* 90(362), pp. 691-700.

Parekh, B. 2008. *A new politics of identity: political principles for an interdependent world*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Parekh, B. 2011. *Talking politics: Bikhu Parekh in conversation with Ramin Jahanbegloo*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Park, A. et al. eds. 2012. *British Social Attitudes: the 29th report.* London: NatCen Social Research.

Pellikaan, H. 2002. Partijen in een politieke ruimte. In: Voerman, G. ed. *DNPP Jaarboek: 206-220.* Groningen: DNPP, pp. 206-229.

Penninx, R. et al. 2005. *Policymaking related to immigration and integration: a review of the literature of the Dutch case (Country report on the Netherlands).* Amsterdam: IMISCOE.

Phillips, A. 2007. *Multiculturalism without Culture.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Phillips, A. and Saharso, S. 2008. Guest editorial: the rights of women and the crisis of multiculturalism. *Ethnicities* 8(3), pp. 291-301.

Phillips, D. 2006. Parallel lives? Challenging discourses of British Muslim self-segregation. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 24(1), pp. 25-40.

Phillips, L. and Jorgensen, M. 2002. *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method.* London: Sage.

Pilkington, A. 2008. From Institutional Racism to Community Cohesion: the Changing Nature of Racial Discourse in Britain. *Sociological Research Online* 13(3).

Powell, E. 1968. *Rivers of Blood Speech* [Online]. Available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powells-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html [Accessed: 26-06-2013].

Prins, B. 2002. The nerve to break taboos: New realism in the Dutch discourse on multiculturalism. *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 3(3-4), pp. 363-379.

Prins, B. and Saharso, S. 2010. From toleration to repression: the Dutch backlash against multiculturalism. In: Vertovec, S. and Wessendorf, S. eds. *The multiculturalism backlash: European discourses, policies and practices.* Oxon: Routledge, pp. 72-91.

Putnam, R. D. 2007. E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century. The 2006 Johan Skytte Prize Lecture. *Scandinavian political studies* 30(2), pp. 137-174.

Rawls, J. 1971. *A Theory of Justice.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rawls, J. 1987. The idea of an overlapping consensus. *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies* 7(1), pp. 1-25.

Rawls, J. 1989. The domain of the political and overlapping consensus. *The New York University Law Review* 64, pp. 233-255.

Rawls, J. 1993. *Political Liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Rawls, J. 1999. *A Theory of Justice*. Revised edition. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Reich, R. 2005. Minors within Minorities: a problem for liberal multiculturalists. In: Eisenberg, A. and Spinner-Halev, J. eds. *Minorities within Minorities: Equality, Rights and Diversity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 209-226.

Rein, M. and Schön, D. 1993. Reframing Policy Discourse. In: Fischer, F. and Forester, J. eds. *The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis and Planning*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, pp. 145-166.

Rein, M. and Schön, D. 1994. *Frame Reflection: Toward the Resolution of Intractable Policy Controversies*. New York: Basic Books.

Reitman, O. 2005. On Exit. In: Eisenberg, A. and Spinner-Halev, J. eds. *Minorities within Minorities: Equality, Rights and Diversity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 189-208.

Ribbens, K. 2004. De vaderlandse canon voorbij? Een multiculturele historische cultuur in wording. *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 117(4), pp. 500-521.

Roberts, P. 2007. *Political constructivism*. London: Routledge.

Roggeband, C. and Vliegenthart, R. 2007. Divergent framing: The public debate on migration in the Dutch parliament and media, 1995-2004. *West European Politics* 30(3), pp. 524-548.

Sabatier, P. 1993. Policy Change over a Decade or More. In: Sabatier, P. and Jenkins-Smith, H. eds. *Policy Change and Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Approach*. Boulder: Westview Press, pp. 13-39.

Sabatier, P. and Jenkins-Smith, H. eds. 1993. *Policy Change and Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Approach.* Boulder: Westview Press.

Sabl, A. 2011. History and reality: idealist pathologies and 'Harvard School' remedies. In: Floyd, J. and Stears, M. eds. *Political philosophy versus history? Contextualism and real politics in contemporary political thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 151-176.

Sandel, M. 2005. *Public Philosophy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sartori, G. 2009. Concept misformation in comparative politics. In: Collier, D. and Gerring, J. eds. *Concepts and Method in Social Science*. Oxon: Routledge, pp. 13-43.

Scanlon, T. 1999. *What we owe to each other*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Scheffer, P. 2000. Het multiculturele drama. *NRC*. 29-01-2000.

Schmidt, V. 2008. Discursive Institutionalism: The Explanatory Power of Ideas and Discourse. *Annual Review of Political Science* 11(1), pp. 303-326.

Schmidt, V. and Radaelli, C. 2004. Policy Change and Discourse in Europe: Conceptual and Methodological Issues. *West European Politics* 27(2), p. 28.

Schnapper, P. 2011. *British political parties and national identity: a changing discourse, 1997-2010*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Scholten, P. 2011. Constructing Dutch Immigrant Policy: Research–Policy Relations and Immigrant Integration Policy-Making in the Netherlands *British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 13(1), pp. 75-92.

Scruton, R. 2003. In defence of the nation. In: Matravers, D. and Pike, J. eds. *Debates in contemporary political philosophy: an anthology*. London: Routledge, pp. 271-285.

Seegers, F. 2007. *In debat over Nederland: veranderingen in het discours over de multiculturele samenleving en nationale identiteit*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Sen, A. 2006. What do we want from a theory of justice? *Journal of Philosophy* 103(5), pp. 215-238.

Shachar, A. 1999. The Paradox of Multicultural Vulnerability. In: Joppke, C. and Lukes, S. eds. *Multicultural Questions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 87-111.

Shklar, J. 1989. Giving injustice its due. *The Yale Law Journal* 98(6), pp. 1135-1151.

Simmons, A. 2010. Ideal and nonideal theory. *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 38(1), pp. 5-36.

Skinner, Q. 2002. *Visions of politics: regarding method (Volume 1)*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, A. 2001. *Nationalism: theory, ideology, history*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Smith, A. 2004. *The antiquity of nations*. Cambridge Polity Press.

Spinner-Halev, J. 2005. Autonomy, association and pluralism. In: Eisenberg, A. and Spinner-Halev, J. eds. *Minorities within Minorities: Equality, Rights and Diversity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 157-171.

Statistiek, Centraal Bureau voor de. 2012. *Jaarrapport Integratie 2012*. Hardinxveld-Giesendam: Drukkerij Tuijtel BV.

Stears, M. 2005. The vocation of political theory: principles, empirical enquiry and the politics of opportunity. *European Journal of Political Theory* 4(4), pp. 325-350.

Stets, J. and Burke, P. 2000. Identity theory and social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 63(3), pp. 224-237.

Stone, D. 2002. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. Revised Edition ed. London: W.W. Norton & Company.

Swift, A. and White, S. 2008. Political theory, social science, and real politics. In: Leopold, D. and Stears, M. eds. *Political theory: methods and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 49-69.

Taylor, C. 1994. The politics of recognition. In: Gutmann, A. ed. *Multiculturalism: examining the politics of recognition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 24-74.

Taylor, C. 2007. Democratic exclusion (and its remedies)? In: Bhargava, R., Bagchi, A. and Sudarshan, R. eds. *Multiculturalism, Liberalism and Democracy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 138-163.

Timmermans, A. and Scholten, P. 2006. The political flow of wisdom: science institutions as policy venues in The Netherlands. *Journal of European Public Policy* 13(7), pp. 1104-1118.

Triadafilopoulos, T. 2011. Illiberal means to liberal ends? Understanding recent immigrant integration policies in Europe. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37(6), pp. 861-880.

Triandafyllidou, A. 2006. Religious diversity and multiculturalism in Southern Europe: the Italian mosque debate. In: Modood, T. et al. eds. *Multiculturalism, Muslims and Citizenship*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 117-142.

Triandafyllidou, A. et al. 2006. European challenges to multicultural citizenship: muslims, secularism and beyond. In: Modood, T. et al. eds. *Multiculturalism, Muslims and citizenship: A European approach*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-22.

Turner, J. et al. 1994. Self and Collective: cognition and social context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 20(5), pp. 454-463.

Uberoi, V. 2007. Social unity in Britain. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33(1), pp. 141-157.

Uberoi, V. 2008. Do policies of multiculturalism change national identities? *The Political Quarterly* 79(3), pp. 404-417.

Uberoi, V. and Modood, T. 2010. Who doesn't feel British? Divisions over Muslims. *Parliamentary Affairs* 63(2), pp. 302-320.

Uberoi, V. and Modood, T. 2013a. Has multiculturalism in Britain retreated? *Soundings* 53, pp. 129-142.

Uberoi, V. and Modood, T. 2013b. Inclusive Britishness: A multiculturalist advance. *Political Studies* 61(1), pp. 23-41.

Van der Brug, W. et al. 2009. Hoe heeft het integratiedebat zich in Nederland ontwikkeld? *Migrantenstudies* 25(3), pp. 198-220.

Van Dijk, T. 2000. Ideologies, racism, discourse: debates on immigration and ethnic issues. In: Ter Wal, J. and Verkuyten, M. eds. *Comparative Perspectives on Racism*. Aldershot: Aldgate, pp. 91-115.

Van Sas, N. 2004. *De metamorfose van Nederland. Van oude orde naar moderniteit, 1750-1900*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Vasta, E. 2007. From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: Multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(5), pp. 713-740.

Verkuyten, M. 2009. Self-esteem and multiculturalism: an examination among ethnic minority and majority groups in the Netherlands. *Journal of Research in Personality* 43(3), pp. 419-427.

Vertovec, S. and Wessendorf, S. 2010a. Introduction: assessing the backlash against multiculturalism in Europe. In: Vertovec, S. and Wessendorf, S. eds. *The multiculturalism backlash: European discourses, policies and practices*. Oxon: Routledge, pp. 1-31.

Vertovec, S. and Wessendorf, S. eds. 2010b. *The multiculturalism backlash: European discourses, policies and practices.* Oxon: Routledge.

Vink, M. 2007. Dutch 'Multiculturalism' Beyond the Pillarisation Myth. *Political Studies* 5, pp. 337-350.

Waldron, J. 1992. Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative. *University of Michigan Journal of Law Reform* 25(3&4), pp. 751-793.

Waldron, J. 2013. *Political* political theory: an inaugural lecture. *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 21(1), pp. 1-23.

Walzer, M. 1983. *Spheres of Justice: A Defence of Pluralism and Equality*. New York: Basic Books.

Walzer, M. 1985. Interpretation and social criticism. In: *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values.* Harvard University, 13-14 November.

Walzer, M. 1989. Nation and universe. In: *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values.* Brasenose College, Oxford University, 1 & 8 May.

Walzer, M. 1997. *On Toleration*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Weinstock, D. 2005. Beyond exit rights: reframing the debate. In: Eisenberg, A. and Spinner-Halev, J. eds. *Minorities within Minorities: Equality, Rights and Diversity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 227-246.

Winter, E. 2010. Trajectories of Multiculturalism in Germany, the Netherlands and Canada: In Search of Common Patterns. *Government and Opposition* 45(2), pp. 166-186.

Williams, R. 2008. Civil and Religious Law in England: A Religious Perspective. *Ecclesiastical Law Journal* 10(3), pp. 262-282.

Worley, C. 2005. 'It's not about race. It's about the community': New Labour and 'community cohesion' *Critical Social Policy* 25(4), pp. 483-496.

Yanow, D. and Van der Haar, M. 2010. "Race" by another name? Categories, counting, and the state - the case of Netherlands integration policy discourse. In: *IGIS Research Seminar Series.* Elliot School of International Affairs, George Washington University, 18-02-2010.

Yee, A. 1996. The causal effects of ideas on policies. *International Organization* 50(1), pp. 69-108.

Young, I. M. 1990. *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Young, I. M. 2007. Structural injustice and the politics of difference. In: Laden, A. and Owen, D. eds. *Multiculturalism and Political Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 60-88.