

# Hosting nationalism

How the leaders of the Dutch Christian democrats (CDA), social democrats (PvdA) and liberals (VVD) hosted nationalism.



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Image on front page: Floris Sonneveld, ‘God’s own Holland’, (22 January 2015)

<http://florisotto.blogspot.com/2015/01/cartoons-roots-of-nationalism.html> (seen on 28 June 2018).

## Summary

*This research investigates the way nationalism is accommodated by the politics based on the ideologies of Christian democracy, social democracy and liberalism in the Netherlands. The examined political parties are the Christendemocratisch Appèl (CDA), Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA) and the Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD). The theory of Michael Freedon forms the starting point of this research. He claims that nationalism itself cannot exist without a host ideology. By testing various theories on how specific ideologies are related to the ideology of nationalism, a framework emerges that is used as guideline in the examination of the three Dutch people's parties. The parties' leaders confirm most of the framework, but not all of it. Also, the framework does not cover all nationalist statements of the leaders. This means that ideology itself cannot provide a full answer to the question of how nationalism is hosted in political ideologies. At least one other factor determines the way nationalism is related to a particular ideology: the political leader of a party. Every political leader brings its own plan to accommodate nationalism, even within one party. Therefore, it is certain that ideology itself cannot be the only determination that arranges the relationship between nationalism and a political party.*

## Introduction

“Last years it seemed like the Dutch became more and more nationalistic. But that is an errancy: the earlier denial of nationalism is in itself also a form of nationalism. Nationalism in the Netherlands has not really increased but its logics did surely change”.<sup>1</sup>

The observation mentioned above is from the Dutch sociologist Rogier van Reekum, made in 2011. He was concerned with the image of the Dutch nation in public debates since the 1980s, and he detected a certain transition of the nation's image: from some kind of superior moral feeling because of the ‘lack of nationalism,’ to a broad discussion about the national identity. While, at times, there seems to be a so-called “lack of nationalism” among the Dutch, and especially in Dutch political parties, Van Reekum argues they are not free from nationalist sentiments at all.’

In his inquiry Van Reekum looked at the changing role of nationalism in politics and public opinion in the Netherlands. An extra interesting group to look at how they coped with this transition are political parties, because they function as a bridge between the public opinion and the state. When the views on nationalism change in public debate, one can expect political parties to translate these changing views into a political version and bring them on the stage of the House of Parliament (*Tweede Kamer*). But the way they do this is a matter of debate itself.

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<sup>1</sup> Rogier van Reekum, ‘We waren altijd al nationalistisch’, *Sociale vraagstukken* (2011) <https://www.socialevraagstukken.nl/we-waren-altijd-al-nationalistisch/>. This quote was translated from Dutch by the author, just like all following Dutch quotes.

What is needed, therefore, is to add new empirical research to the historiography on the way nationalism is accommodated by political parties.

Michael Freedon, a leading theorist in the field of political ideologies, argues that scholars need to understand the underlying ideology of political parties in order to understand the nationalistic tendencies they might have. He claims that nationalism needs to be hosted by other political ideologies, because it is too poor to exist on itself.<sup>2</sup> The way an ideology accommodates nationalism is based on its common features with nationalism. Freedon's theory forms a key element of this research, but his theory is not enough to fully show the relationship between a political party and nationalism. What is also important here, next to ideology, is the individual leadership of the political parties. Therefore, within this research there is also a focus on the personal influence of the party leaders to examine how political parties coped with nationalism. In this research I claim that ideology form a solid base to the parties' national narratives, but the political leaders themselves have the major vote in it.

This research takes a closer look at the Dutch case in the period between 1990 and 2017, when at least two of the centre parties – the Christian-Democrats (CDA), Social-Democrats (PvdA) and Liberals (VVD) – governed the country together. These parties all are based on a solid, western and ideological tradition that makes them interesting to research in the light of Freedon's theory on the influence of ideology on political parties. The time period starts at 1990, because though the CDA emerged in 1980, not all political leaders since then provided a national narrative due to short political careers. This inquiry ends in 2017, with the Dutch elections for the House of Parliament. Summarised, it all comes down to the following question: how did the Dutch political parties represent nationalism between 1990 and 2017?

The first chapter is concerned with the methodology behind this research and provides a definition of nationalism. Chapter two digs deeper into the theory of Freedon about hosting nationalism and relates it to other theories on the relation between nationalism and the ideologies behind the CDA, PvdA and VVD. This provides a framework that will be used to match the publications of the parties' leaders and check whether the theories are right or they seriously lack essential features to demonstrate the hosting of nationalism. In the third, fourth and fifth chapter the political leaders' personal ideas on the nation are discussed, based on their publications and debates. This will ultimately lead to a conclusive answer on how nationalism is hosted by the discussed Dutch political parties.

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<sup>2</sup> Michael Freedon, 'Is nationalism a distinct ideology?', *Political studies* 46 (1998) 4, 762.

## Chapter 1 – On nationalism

The main question of this research is how nationalism is accommodated from 1990 until 2017 in the three people's parties of the Netherlands: the CDA, the PvdA and the VVD. The introduction already covered why this time period and these three parties are chosen. But a lot of clarifications still need to be made about how the research needs to be carried out. This chapter will, first or all, provide a definition of nationalism to make clear what exactly is researched in this thesis. It also covers a short historiographical overview of relevant studies on nationalism in the Netherlands. The second part of this chapter specifies issues on how this investigation can best be executed and which elements endangers such a rightful execution and are worth to keep in mind.

### The concept of nationalism

Before picking up the debates about democracy and nationalism, it is good to first make clear what the nation, as the core of nationalism, is. On itself that question can be debated endlessly, but here it will be limited to some relevant views and summarize them in order to give a useful definition. The applicable views on nationalism come from specialists interested in the fields of ideologies and nationalism in general. There are basically two ways of approaching nationalism. The first way of looking at nationalism dates from the early nineteenth century, in which thinkers like Giuseppe Mazzini, Johann Gottfried Herder and John Stuart Mill attached concepts like democracy, cosmopolitanism and liberalism to nationalism. Andrew Vincent, a political theorist, names the second way the 'Second World War' approach, in which nationalism is linked to totalitarianism, irrationality and tribalism. This line of thought was the leading approach to nationalism between 1945 and approximately 1989, at the end of the Cold War. After 1989, this first approach has slowly been reintroduced and combined with the outcomes of nationalism during the Cold War. A full embracement of nationalism is far from acceptable these days, but slowly scholars pay some more attention to non-aggressive parts of nationalism.<sup>3</sup> This study mainly focusses on the outcomes of these post-1989 scholars.

The idea of the nation, and thus nationalism itself, emerged in England during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century. The emergence was part of the rise of citizenship and came together with ideas of political participation, industrial capitalism, social mobility and technological improvements for mobilization. Slowly, these developments shaped the ideas of the nation and the necessity of having a nation. The nation was further promoted by education, public debate, urbanisation,

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<sup>3</sup> Andrew Vincent, *The nature of political theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 171-172.

new media (printed books, newspapers, television, radio, etc.), the emergence of citizenship and more or less by political ambitions.<sup>4</sup> In Western European countries, but also in other countries around the world, the nation and democracy adapted each other easily, because “democracy promotes a belief in the equality of the members of the nation and thereby contributes mightily to the sense of the nation as a community”.<sup>5</sup> Together with inventions in communication and transport techniques and urbanisation, this process resulted in the emergence of the modern nation states, where nationalism became a massively adapted ideology.<sup>6</sup> In this research, all mentioned theories and scholars are concerned with the modern nation states, as they were established in the nineteenth century. This means that the politicised nationalism as discussed in this thesis always aims to appeal to the Dutch people.

Steven Grosby, an American professor of religion and nationalism, gives a useful definition of nationalism that forms the starting point of this research. He gives the following definition of nationalism: ‘[it] repudiates civility and the differences that it tolerates by attempting to eliminate all differing views and interests for the sake of one vision of what the nation had been and should be.’<sup>7</sup> His definition contradicts two crucial elements of nationalism that need some extra clearance: to fully embrace a *vision about the nation* and to *stop every threat of the nation*. Starting with the latter, a much-referred definition by specialists of nationalism is Max Weber, who understood the nation as followed: the nation is ‘a status group united by common historical memory and fighting for the prestige of power and culture with other nations.’ Culture, in his view, is ‘politicized by striving to establish a territorial political framework for people with a shared higher culture’.<sup>8</sup> For some reason, this ‘higher culture’ is worth to prioritise above other cultures within a territory. And to prioritise the nation, it is best to politicise the national culture, according to Weber. Therefore, this definition perfectly fits within the topic of this thesis: it shows that the nation needs politics to prioritise, and in that case, secure the nation’s existence. To understand the relation between these elements better, one has to look at the concept of vision.

The role of vision in nationalism is crucial to understand how nationalism works. Vision in this context means an idea or plan of the future, which looks a lot like the concept of ideology.

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<sup>4</sup> Steven Grosby, *Nationalism; A very short introduction* (New York, 2005) 57-58.

<sup>5</sup> Grosby, *Nationalism*, 57.

<sup>6</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1991) 47; Grosby, *Nationalism*, 73-74.

<sup>7</sup> Grosby, *Nationalism*, 17.

<sup>8</sup> Zenonas Norkus, ‘Max Weber on Nations and Nationalism: Political Economy before Political Sociology’, *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, 29 (2004) 3, 389, 411.

This needs to be clarified, because a vision of nationalism can seem double when one considers nationalism as an ideology as well. The central question that therefore needs to be answered is whether nationalism can be considered an ideology. Freeden, who has done a lot of research on this question, concludes that nationalism can be considered an ideology, but it is not an independent ideology because it does not provide a total plan to tackle all issues of society.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, nationalism always stays at a host that gives further meaning to it.<sup>10</sup> The host of nationalism can be seen as another ideology, the *vision*, that does provide nationalism with a whole society covered plan. The host ideology of nationalism can be seen as the *vision* that Weber talks about while defining the nation. The three *visions* hosting nationalism in this thesis thus are Christian democracy, social democracy and liberalism.

For this research it is important to have one useful definition of nationalism. With the above-mentioned definitions in mind, we can define nationalism as a mass-appealing vision that includes a justification and a plan of action on prioritising one specific cultural potential entity above other nations. How this shared culture is used to prioritise a nation depends on the vision, which is the host ideology of the nation.<sup>11</sup>

#### Method and considerations

To understand the ideology of the Dutch political parties CDA, PvdA, and the VVD, it is necessary to start with an understanding of the historical context of the ideology, the party, and the party leaders. Also, to answer the question how the Dutch political parties CDA, PvdA, and VVD represented nationalism between 1990 and 2017, it is essential to find out what the party leaders thought about nationalism in general and in what particular historical context these remarks need to be placed. This way it is easier to examine the aspects of nationalism that belong to a specific party. By taking in account the historical contexts and the more general ideas about nationalism of the political leaders, it is possible to place a source in a right nationalistic frame. This method is called the contextual method. Quentin Skinner, who is the leading figure of this method, claims that while investigating political texts, looking for their convictions, ideas – and thus ideologies – one should be aware of the normative character of the texts and thus of the right interpretation of the texts. He argues that this is the essential and main task of historians: ‘[they] are concerned with the provision of interpretations, and thus

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<sup>9</sup> Freeden, ‘Is nationalism a distinct ideology?’, 751.

<sup>10</sup> Freeden, ‘Is nationalism a distinct ideology?’, 755-756.

<sup>11</sup> When other definitions are needed, they can be found in the footnotes and apply for the rest of the research.

with the process of placing texts and other such objects within the field of meaning [...] and are by no means always interested in explaining events [...] and their causal conditions'.<sup>12</sup> The historical comparative analyse that comes out of this, should be approached carefully because the comparison is built on three within-cases, namely the three Dutch political parties, and is therefore relatively micro levelled.<sup>13</sup> As already mentioned, the research will eventually lead to a comparison of patterns between the three parties, but also between political leaders of one party.

To determine the way nationalism is hosted by a party one needs to ask three questions that can be derived from the definition of nationalism. As previously concluded, nationalism is a vision that also includes a justification and a plan of action on prioritising one specific cultural potential entity above others. To show the differences between political parties this research focusses on the visions every political party and leader had in mind. As mentioned above, every nationalist thinker should create its own politicized culture.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the first question to ask considers ascertaining the culture a political leader had in mind while talking about the nation. What is part of that nation and what is not? A logical next question would be how the elements of the national culture became part of the nation? And what do people need to do to become a member of that nation? These questions give some further body to the nationalist ideas of the specific leader. The third, and last topic, deals with the way leaders wanted to prioritise their own nation above other nations, and thus how they wanted to secure the nation. In the second chapter these three questions will be matched with the various theories about how particular ideologies accommodate nationalism. The outcomes of this process will be used as guidelines in every next chapter concerned with specific political parties.

The Dutch political parties CDA, PvdA, and the VVD published a lot of material in the period between 1990 and 2017. It is impossible to include all these publications in this research. I will, therefore, only look at the publications of the party leaders. These sources contain books, lectures, and debates. For this research, it is important to look at the party leaders, their contexts, and their understanding of nationalism. It will give lots of insights in the nationalism discourse within the parties, since party leaders are the major players in public opinion and general attitudes, and because it is their job to detect public opinions. Therefore, their message will be framed to appeal to the people. Party leaders also have an important role as bringers of new

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<sup>12</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics I; Regarding Method* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 10.

<sup>13</sup> Matthew Lange, *Comparative historical methods* (London, 2013) 50-52.

<sup>14</sup> Norkus, 'Max Weber on Nations and Nationalism', 410-411.

ideas and topics to the public debate, because they can relatively easy introduce new topics or arguments. So, both in detecting and shaping public opinion party leaders have a major social function.<sup>15</sup> Of course the things party leaders write and say are not just personal opinions, but are well-thought, strategic party opinions and ideologies. That is another reason why investigating party leaders' publications and debates will be a sufficient contribution to this research, because their words are not just personal ideas, but show the social issues of their times and their parties answers to them inspired by their main ideology. But before checking these materials, it is first necessary to build a framework on what specific ways nationalism can be hosted by an ideology. That is what the next chapter focusses on.

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<sup>15</sup> Christopher J. Anderson, 'When in doubt, use proxies', *Comparative Political Studies* 3 (1998) 5, 569-601; Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, 'The Political Basis of Support for European Integration', *European Union Politics* 1 (2000) 2, 147; Matthew Gabel and Kenneth Scheve, 'Estimating the Effect of Elite Communications on Public Opinion Using Instrumental Variables', *American Journal of Political Science* 5 (2007) 4, 1013-1028; Robert R. Rohrschneider, 'The Democracy Deficit and Mass Support for an EU-wide Government', *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (2002) 2, 463; all in: Borbála Göncz en György Lengyel, 'Changing Attitudes of Hungarian Political Elites Towards the EU (2007-2014)', *Historical Social Research* 41 (2016) 4, there 106-128, 108.

## Chapter 2 – On hosting

Previous chapter already mentioned the theory of Michael Freeden. Freeden sees nationalism as a semi-ideology, because it does not provide a plan for all social issues. Therefore, nationalism always needs a host.<sup>16</sup> This chapter digs into Freeden's theory more thoroughly by looking at the ideologies of Christian democracy, social democracy and liberalism and how they particularly host nationalism. The three questions from the previous chapter will be taken as guideline to approach scholars and their views on the relation between the particular ideology and nationalism. To shortly summarize, these questions deal with which elements are considered part of the national culture, the assimilation process of how to become part of the national culture and the plans to prioritise and secure that culture. This eventually leads to some tools that can help finding nationalistic elements in the publications and debates of the leaders of the three Dutch political parties. But first it is needed to take a closer look of what is meant with hosting.

Freeden says: "When nationalist ideas are found in host ideologies, they reflect the features of the host". Nationalism thus projects a feature of another ideology to emphasise the national interest. In the end of his article Freeden concludes: "When understood as an ideational phenomenon that displays variegated conceptual configurations, nationalism appears as a plastic structure, reflecting the even greater complexities of its broader containers".<sup>17</sup> Next thing to do is to determine the ideological features of every ideology mixed with nationalism so they can be used as guides to find nationalist elements in the publications of the political leaders of the CDA, PvdA and VVD in chapters three till five.

Before discussing the theories one question needs to be answered. why would leaders of an ideologic political party host nationalism? And when they use it, does it automatically imply that a party or leader is nationalistic? First of all, the goal of this study is to show that nationalism can be found in every political ideology. Therefore, it inquires the many ways to host nationalism. Whether one form is better or worse than the other will not be debated in here. This will simply be too hard to argue, because especially politicians have multiple reasons why they would use nationalistic elements. Their reason can be very functional: to prove that a policy in one country turns out better than in another. But also, political reasons can be found: when looking for a connection with the people, one has to adapt the people's ideas of the nation. Further personal reasons can be found why politicians use nationalism. All together one can

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Freeden, 'Is nationalism a distinct ideology?', 748-765, 751.

<sup>17</sup> Ibidem, 765.

maybe claim that a party is leader is nationalistic, but the reasons, outcomes and risks can still differ immensely per situation, so when nationalist accusations are only based on this research they would be an empty claim.

### Christian democrats and nationalism

The ideology of Christian democracy is characterised by the role of the individual in society. Christian democrats believe community is a necessity to individuals to fully develop themselves. Participating in this community is therefore essential for every society. Furthermore, Christian democracy is very pragmatic, anti-statist and is inspired by Catholicism and Protestantism. Within Christian democracy various movements are active, such as conservatism, which has an influential role.<sup>18</sup> Christian democracy also is called conventionalism, because one of the major features of the ideology is the strong focus on conventions, like traditions, and their origins.<sup>19</sup> In the Netherlands the CDA is considered to be a Christian democratic political party.

To return to the earlier mentioned questions. The first one was which features of Christian democracy nationalism might be of use in determining the national culture? One of the scholars that reflects on this is Andrew Vincent. Vincent is a professor in political theory and wrote *The nature of political theory* in which he describes and summarizes numerous ideologies, including nationalism and conventionalism.<sup>20</sup> Vincent strongly connects nationalism with conventionalism, because nationalism is one big convention itself. The whole idea of the nation is indeed based upon multiple inventions of traditions, as also Eric Hobsbawn shows in his book *the invention of tradition*: “[...] one specific interest of ‘invented traditions’ for at all events, modern and contemporary historians out to be singled out. They are highly relevant to that comparatively recent historical innovation, the ‘nation’, with its associated phenomena: nationalism, the nation-state, national symbols, histories and the rest”.<sup>21</sup> Both conventionalism and nationalism share the feature of emphasising traditions. So, the first question about what Christian democracy makes a good host for nationalism can be their shared emphasis on traditions.

But where do these traditions come from? Freedon thought this out and gives the following feature where Christian democracy and nationalism come together. For both

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<sup>18</sup> Ernst Hirsch Ballin, *Christianity and the future of Christian democracy* (Tilburg, 2013) 14, 23, 30, 32, 37.

<sup>19</sup> Steve van Hecke, ‘Christian democracy and conservatism on demography: some explorations’, *European View* (2008) 7, there 303-307.

<sup>20</sup> Vincent, *The nature of political theory*, 143.

<sup>21</sup> Eric Hobsbawn and Terrence Ranger (eds.), *The invention of tradition* (Cambridge, 1983) 13.

ideologies political action is rooted in conventions that developed through time. Christian democracy “refers to diachronic historical continuity” and nationalism “incorporates the possession of a rich heritage of memories”.<sup>22</sup> The similarities Freeden sees between conservatism and nationalism is that both see communities as something organic that grows historically. This implicitly means that time is the main drive behind communities and whatever threatens this natural order of development should be made harmless. While looking for answers on where Christian democratic nationalism thinks the nation originates from, the key of this puzzle lies in the past.

The last question that needs to be answered covers the way Christian democratic nationalism secures the nation. One of the founders of conservatism, as one of the major movement within Christian democracy, is Edmund Burke. In 1790 he already wrote down his ideas as a critique on the French Revolution, that he saw as something against the naturally given social order.<sup>23</sup> This social order is the second connection Freeden mentions between nationalism and conservatism: both believe there is a historical based hierarchy of ‘stations and duties’.<sup>24</sup> In these arguments there is another feature hidden that can be used by both Christian democracy and nationalism: social order and communal hierarchy. Especially, maintaining the social status quo can be seen as a typical Christian democratic nationalistic measurement to secure the nation.

In sum, three characteristics of Christian democratic nationalism are mentioned. The culture that this Christian democratic nationalism opts for is built on traditions that are formed in the past. And the national culture can be protected by maintaining the traditional social order.

### Social democracy and nationalism

The second ideology to host nationalism that this research discusses is social democracy. The ideas of social democracy derive from socialism, which emerged during the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a result of industrialization, population growth and a rise of public awareness of social and political inequality. Touched by the injustice of 19<sup>th</sup> century society, intelligentsia like Robert Owen, Friedrich Engels, Karl Marx decided to fight for general social rights. Their ideology was called socialism.<sup>25</sup> When modern democracy was created, socialists united themselves in

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<sup>22</sup> Freeden, ‘Is nationalism a distinct ideology?’, 762.

<sup>23</sup> Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (London, 1969) 120.

<sup>24</sup> Freeden, ‘Is nationalism a distinct ideology?’, 762.

<sup>25</sup> Gregory Claeys, ‘Introduction’, in: Gregory Claeys, *Encyclopaedia of nineteenth century thought* (Abingdon, Oxon, 2006) III.

social-democratic parties. In the Netherlands the *Sociaal-Democratische ArbeidersPartij*, the predecessor of the nowadays *Partij van de Arbeid*, was created in 1894.

Social democracy sees society as a community, just as Christian democracy does. They keep in mind the welfare of the entire community. However, they both take different approaches. Where Christian democracy looks at the community as a whole, Social democracy takes an individual approach and looks therefore more like liberalism, which will be introduced in the next section. Social democracy has another similarity with liberalism, namely the focus on equality as a key concept of its ideology. But both ideologies mean different things when they talk about equality. Liberals see political equality, and thus equality of rights, as the only precondition for individuals to have equal chances. Where social democrats go further: not only political equality is necessary for personal development, but also an equal social base, which includes economics, education and health. The state is responsible for acquiring this social equality. This uncovers another difference with liberalism and Christian democracy: Christian democracy and liberalism both like to see a state that operates in a limited number of domains so it will not interfere too much with the freedom of individuals or communities.<sup>26</sup>

To see how social democracy can host nationalism, the three questions deprived in chapter one about the (national) culture, the origins from that culture and the ways to endure that culture again serve as guidelines. To answer the first question, one should take a look at Engels and Marx, two key figures in the development of socialism. They radicalized the early socialist ideas, like a redistribution of resources, regulation of capitalism by the state and giving rights to labourers and other lower-class people.<sup>27</sup> Engels and Marx further developed these ideas and came up with theories of ‘class struggles’ between the proletariat and the capitalists. Engels and Marx materialised socialism enormously by emphasising how the unequal distribution of property was the cause of all social injustice. Though later socialists and social democrats rejected Marx’ radical ideas about class struggles and revolutions, the emphasis on material distribution remained a strong factor.<sup>28</sup> The strong emphasis on economics and inequality in society can easily be translated to a nationalist shape. This was already seen in 1907 by the Austrian social democrat Otto Bauer, who wrote in his book *Questions of nationalities and Social Democracy* the following about the relation between nations and social democracy:

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<sup>26</sup> Claeys, ‘Introduction’, in: Claeys, *Encyclopaedia of nineteenth century thought*, IV.

<sup>27</sup> Claeys, ‘Early socialism’, in: Claeys, *Encyclopaedia of nineteenth century thought*, 184-189.

<sup>28</sup> Claeys, ‘Marx and Marxism’, in: *Encyclopaedia of nineteenth century thought*, 443, 445.

“An investigation of the evolution of social democratic policy on nationalities requires that we locate the forces that are acting on millions of workers and thousands of trade unionists and, in the process, are shaping the consciousness of the working masses and determining their resolutions in all questions of national life.”<sup>29</sup>

To answer the question about what is considered to be the national culture, social democracy and nationalism both use the ideas of social injustice, like material inequality, as a way to define the nation. But in this negative message also lies the ideal of social equality and the drive to strive for that. The common feature here is therefore the value of equality. This can turn out to be a useful tool in the fourth chapter.

To answer the question about how a cultural value can become a national culture, one can take a look at Professor of Politics James G. Kellas and his work *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*. He claims that social nationalism is only based on adapting social and cultural norms. This makes social democratic nationalism inclusive because ‘outsiders can join the nation if they identify with it [the national culture] and adopt its social characteristics.’ And in case of immigration restrictions proposed by a social democratic nationalist, ‘these will be officially justified on non-ethnic grounds.’<sup>30</sup> Thus to attain the national culture, one should simply adapt the norms and values that belong to equality.

The only question that remains unanswered is the issue of how social democratic nationalism wants to secure the nation. The already named work of Kellas describes a theory of the Czech historian Miroslav Hroch who implicitly claims that culture forms an essential part of social democratic nationalism. Nationalism has socialist origins and was characterised by a strong support of artists, teachers, writers and other creative arts.<sup>31</sup> By promoting the national culture the nation can spread and strengthen its position. Though Hroch’s theory is based upon nineteenth century examples, Kellas thinks it can still be a useful feature that social democracy and nationalism have in common. Therefore, promoting cultural expressions that belong to the national culture can be seen as a social democratic nationalist answer to secure the nation.

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<sup>29</sup> Otto Bauer, *Questions of nationalities and Social Democracy* (Minneapolis, 1995) 3.

<sup>30</sup> James G. Kellas, *The politics of nationalism and ethnicity* (London, 1998) 66.

<sup>31</sup> Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge, 1985) in: Kellas, *The politics of nationalism and ethnicity*, 98.

At the end of this paragraph the features of social democratic nationalism are presented. Social democratic nationalism can be characterised by the ideal of social equality, the adaption of the norms and values that belong to this equality and a promotion of expressions of the national culture as protecting measure. In chapter four the politics of de PvdA will be brought in to verify the found theoretical features.

### Liberalism and nationalism

The last ideology to discuss is liberalism. The liberal ideology was shaped for a big part by three Johns: John Locke (1632), John Stuart-Mill (1806) and John Rawls (1921) and were boosted by Enlightenment thinking. Liberalism, unlike/in contrast to Christian democracy and social democracy, is an ideology primarily focused on the individual. Freedom is one of its core principles and forms the basis of many of its thoughts: from the economic laissez-faire philosophy to minimalizing state's businesses. Liberalism is different from Christian democracy in the way it looks at the individual. First of all, the individual's self-determination is part of one's right to freedom; one needs to be able to fully develop oneself. Secondly, liberalism sees the individual as something essentially equal and good, capable of self-determination and self-development without naming society as an essential influence on that development. The differences between liberalism and socialism have to do with the way they look at inequality, individuals and the state. Social democracy claims that social inequality is a problem that the state should partly solve, whether liberalism believes that every individual is capable of solving this problem without much state interference.

To find the features of liberal nationalism the three questions about what is part of the national culture, the origins of that culture and the way to protect the national culture, need to be answered. An alliance between nationalism and liberalism is not just a coincidence, according to David Miller. Nationalism is like a 'compass showing individuals their place in the world'.<sup>32</sup> It helps them to give meaning to their lives. Individuals gain their identity through their social context, claims Neil MacCormick. This sounds somewhat like the Christian democrats, but MacCormick sees in this a way how nationalism can help people to become self-dependent and to develop their individual identity.<sup>33</sup> Margaret Canovan and many others even believed that nationalism helps promoting liberal values like social justice, solidarity and individual rights, because its focus on the responsibility of the self would let people care more

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<sup>32</sup> David Miller, *On nationality* (Oxford, 1995) 11, 193.

<sup>33</sup> Neil MacCormick, *Legal rights and Social Democracy: essays in legal and political philosophy* (Oxford, 1982) 253, 256,-261 in: Christian Wicke, *Helmut Kohl's quest for normality. His representation of the German nation and himself* (Oxford, 2015) 32.

about one another.<sup>34</sup> So, liberal values that promote individual development can be considered as one of the characteristics of how liberalism and nationalism might work together.

To understand the liberal nationalist ideas about how to become part of the national culture one should take a look at the theories of Yael Tamir. First of all, she names the freedom to choose a culture as a liberal nationalist value. One can still wonder how free someone's choice is when one is born in one culture to choose another one, but Tamir dismisses that by saying that every choice has its limits, but it is still a choice.<sup>35</sup> Still, there needs to be a plurality of cultures within a society to choose from. This is why liberal nationalism should protect other cultures within its society, because this increases the options and enriches the whole country, says political philosopher Joseph Raz. Also, within a society one culture should not compete with another culture because this would absorb one culture and decrease the options to choose from. Only when an illiberal culture tries to set place in a liberal society liberal cultures are allowed to compete with it, otherwise the illiberal one would absorb the liberal ones.<sup>36</sup> So, according to Tamir, liberal nationalism gives individuals the option to walk in line with the communal restrictions and make free, though limited, individual choices to adapt another liberal culture.<sup>37</sup>

The only question yet unanswered deals with how liberal nationalism would prioritise the national culture. The previously mentioned scholar Michael Freedon has some ideas on this. As already seen in the answer about the determination of culture by liberal nationalism, an emphasis lays on values that promote the self-determination of the individual and the community. The protection of these values is assured in the written laws that deal with individual rights. Any conflict that could damage the nation should therefore be 'tackled by law', according to Freedon. The individual rights that deprive from Enlightenment thinking and later development nowadays function as a shield for liberalism.<sup>38</sup> But there is a slight difference between Tamir and Freedon in the way they characterise these rights. Where Tamir claims that liberal nationalism is both about communal and individual rights, Freedon says that liberal nationalism cannot be about communal rights but could only be about individual rights.<sup>39</sup> This

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<sup>34</sup> Wicke, *Helmut Kohl's quest for normality*, 32.

<sup>35</sup> Yael Tamir, *Liberal nationalism* (Princeton, 1995) 26-27, 29.

<sup>36</sup> Joseph Raz, *The morality of freedom* (Oxford, 1986) 203, 423-424.

<sup>37</sup> Tamir, *Liberal nationalism*, 33.

<sup>38</sup> Freedon, 'Is nationalism a distinct ideology?', 760-761.

<sup>39</sup> Tamir, *Liberal nationalism*, 30.

dispute will be taking into account when the primary sources of the liberal political leaders are discussed in chapter five.

Another way to secure the nation is given by the already mentioned David Miller. He claims that common characteristics like language, religion and national history are binding aspects that help securing the nation.<sup>40</sup> This seems a bit odd, because these elements also suit the way Christian Democratic nationalism identifies the nation and its origins, but not specifically to secure the nation. With this, Miller brings in a new, but slightly different, function to these Christian democratic nationalist characteristics. But it is the question whether the VVD-leaders also use these aspects as national security measures.

For now, it is known that, according to a number of political theorists, liberal nationalists see the nation as united by values that promote the self-determination of the individual. These values date back from Enlightenment values but can be adapted by a freedom of choice. To guarantee this freedom, no competition between cultures should take place within a society, except when one culture is illiberal. When an illiberal culture has to be made inferior a liberal nation will use individual and/or communal rights to do so. Further, liberal nationalism uses the Christian democratic nationalist cultural criteria as security rules for the nation. This set of theories will be tested in chapter five, when documents of VVD-leaders will be compared with this paragraph.

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<sup>40</sup> Miller, *On nationality*, 184, 189.

### Chapter 3 – Christian democratic nationalism

In chapter two the theoretical part of Christian democracy has been discussed. In short, Christian democratic nationalism is characterised by a strong focus on traditions and conventions when defining the national culture. What's more, the origins of the national culture are linked with the past. Also, threats that endanger the nation are characterised by a priority on protecting the community. This chapter tests the previous finding by matching them with the CDA, the Dutch Christian democratic party.

The CDA originates from 1980, when three Christian political parties, two protestant parties and one catholic, merged into one. At that time, Christians were a majority group in the Netherlands and the CDA delivered the Prime Minister until 1994. The decline of the Christian democrats was set in motion due to secularisation and individualisation that undermined traditional social structures. The CDA couldn't count on a vast number of voters anymore and was forced to the opposition. For the first time there was no Christian party involved in a Dutch cabinet. The liberals and social democrats ruled the country during the 'eight purple years', as Pim Fortuyn, a critical professor of sociology, called it. The same Fortuyn founded a new political party, the *Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF)*, and launched a campaign against the 'purple cabinet'. Central themes in this campaign were the quality and durability of the welfare state, the lack of community and problems about immigration and integration.<sup>41</sup> The CDA, with Jan Peter Balkenende as their leader, took over most of the critiques of Fortuyn and added 'norms and values' as an overarching theme. Nine days before the election day in 2002, Fortuyn was murdered. Though the LPF still existed until 2006, the CDA won the elections in 2002, 2003 and 2006. Balkenende became Prime Minister of the Netherlands and had to face structural deficits and international problems like terrorist's attacks and the beginning of the financial crisis. Until 2010 Balkenende was the political leader of the CDA.

With the elections of 2010 the CDA lost half of its seats, but still entered a coalition with the liberals and the populist party of Geert Wilders, the *Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV)*. The cabinet fell in 2012 and the CDA shrank even more during the next elections. Sybrand Buma became the new leader of the party and during his leadership the CDA was part of the opposition during the last years of the financial crisis. In 2017 the CDA gained some extra seats during the election and joined a coalition with the liberals. Major events during the leadership of Buma

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<sup>41</sup> Immigration: the movement of people that *do not* possess a Dutch passport, used to live in another country than the Netherlands and want to live in the Netherlands.

Integration: the process of incorporating individuals that immigrated to the Netherlands as equals into the Dutch society. Both definitions apply for the rest of this research.

were the fight against Islamic State, massive migration from the Middle East, shifting attitudes against the European Union and growing threats from autocratic regimes at the Eastern borders of Europe. Both Balkenende and Buma had to deal with the rise of right wing populism, but also international threats like terrorism and financial crises.<sup>42</sup> These tendencies, both during Balkenende and Buma's leadership of the party, are crucial to understand their comments about the Netherlands. This chapter is concerned with the comparison of how both Balkenende and Buma hosted nationalism within the CDA.

### Thoughts on nationalism

Before discussing the ways Balkenende and Buma hosted nationalism, there is a need to look first at some general observations on how they see nationalism. Buma gives a perfect example of how a Dutch politician can generalise the Dutch nation positively by rejecting nationalism. In his book *Samen kunnen we meer*, published in 2012, he mentions an observation of the historian Johan Huizinga, saying that 'a disgust of nationalism belongs to the Dutch national character and that this 'self-will' is part of the Dutch identity.'<sup>43</sup> This in itself is a form of nationalism, as Van Reerkum already showed in the introduction. Further, Buma provides numerous quotes saying the Netherlands are 'the best'. To illustrate Buma's perception of the excellence of the Netherlands it to take a quick look at one of Buma's title in his book 'The most beautiful country on earth'.<sup>44</sup> The rest of the chapter is filled with remarks that have the same tone. It might be clear that Buma has visions that can be qualified as nationalistic. He even comes close to admitting it by saying that "love for the Netherlands as common fatherland and living through the fundamental values of our society are walking hand in hand. The combination of both also prevents that love for the country will not be confused with scary nationalism."<sup>45</sup> Absolutely striking is a footnote he added to the sentence here above, which leads to an opinion article about how dangerous patriotism can be for the Netherlands.<sup>46</sup> One can see Buma's comments implicitly as a way to introduce patriotism as a 'not scary form of nationalism'.

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<sup>42</sup> Right wing populism is a political right ideology that claim that 'the people' should have the political power, but 'the elite' had taken the power of the people. It presents itself as the party that will bring back this power to 'the people'. See: Margaret Canovan, *Populism* (Boston 1981) 202; 229; 269-273.

<sup>43</sup> Sybrand Buma, *Samen kunnen we meer* (Stroe, 2012) 85.

<sup>44</sup> Buma, *Samen kunnen we meer*, 37.

<sup>45</sup> Sybrand Buma, *Tegen het cynisme* (Amsterdam, 2016) 209.

<sup>46</sup> Hans Goslinga, 'Nieuw bindmiddel patriottisme is een gevaarlijke weg', (December 2015) <https://www.trouw.nl/home/nieuw-bindmiddel-patriottisme-is-een-gevaarlijke-weg~a170c0cc/>.

Balkenende's notions on the Dutch nation are less obvious. Though he certainly made claims that the Dutch culture is something special, he also made various remarks about how the Dutch culture is embedded within the European or western culture, like he wrote in his book *Anders en beter* in 2002 and which he mentioned as Prime Minister during several debates.<sup>47</sup> He also acknowledged that cultures are continually transforming and admitted that other cultures could enrich the Dutch culture.<sup>48</sup> But on the other hand, Balkenende said that there are certain basic elements that form the roots of Dutch culture and therefore shape the Dutch identity and thus society. Moreover, he warned for the relativizing of the national culture, as the 'Purple cabinet' did from 1994 till 2002.<sup>49</sup> So, Balkenende certainly saw some Dutch cultural elements, but the national culture seems more fluid and connected with other cultures than the culture Buma had in mind.

### Being Dutch

Answering the question of what belongs to the Dutch culture, Andrew Vincent claims that Christian democrats might point at traditions and conventions as carriers of the national culture and as guidelines of 'how things should be done' in social life.<sup>50</sup> One can easily translate Vincent's theory to the CDA-leaders covered by this chapter. Both Balkenende and Buma focussed on the category of values and norms that belong to the Netherlands. For example, Balkenende wrote: "From these traditions (Jewish-Christian traditions) arose values as [...] an emphasis on personal responsibility, respect for life, [...] self-fulfilment and self-actualization."<sup>51</sup> Also during his years as PM of the Netherlands he mentioned several typically 'Dutch values' that "made the Netherlands strong: looking after each other, being respectful and act in solidarity; dynamics and diligence; solid Public Finances; transparency and a constructive cooperation with other countries."<sup>52</sup> Balkenende often used norms and values as a plea to the people. The most iconic example of this, are his words during a debate in 2006, when the opposition was, in his eyes, looking too pessimistic at the country. Therefore, Balkenende said: "I do not understand why you are so negative and nasty about this. [...] Let us be happy with each other! Let us be optimistic! Let us say: The Netherlands can do it again! That VOC

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<sup>47</sup> Jan-Peter Balkenende, *Verslag der handelingen van de Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal* (after this: *HTK*), 2002-2003, 28600, 120-121 and Jan-Peter Balkenende, *Anders en beter* (Soesterberg, 2002) 143.

<sup>48</sup> Balkenende, *Anders en Beter*, 53 and 62.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, 58.

The 'purple cabinet' is the name of the Cabinets of Kok I and Kok II, which was a coalition of the VVD, PvdA and D66. The name results from mixing the colours of the three parties involved: purple. This definition applies for the rest of this research.

<sup>50</sup> Vincent, *The nature of political theory*, 144, 149-150, 174.

<sup>51</sup> Balkenende, *Anders en Beter*, 53.

<sup>52</sup> Balkenende, *HTK*, 2008-2009, 31700, 89.

mentality, looking behind borders, dynamic!”<sup>53</sup> Though this line was received with laughter and shock by fellow politicians, it symbolizes how Balkenende tried to let ‘old, traditional values’ revive in a modern society.

As mentioned earlier, Balkenende’s focus on values and norms formed a primary part of the election campaign for the CDA in 2002. Therefore, they became Balkenende’s trademark and even the trademark of the CDA. Buma too named these concepts multiple times in his speeches and publications. But, instead of Balkenende, Buma did not always clarify himself when he talked about norms and values. Buma’s notions became clearer during a debate in 2014, when he gave definition of values as: “looking after one another, to act respectful [...] and not to just take, but also to give.” This was followed by a list of (international) threats to the Dutch culture and a conclusion that ‘therefore we should defend the values that belong to Holland’ and a plan to invest in the military.<sup>54</sup> When Buma became part of the coalition in 2017, his style of bringing in norms and values had not changed. For example, he named norms and values as crucial elements of a successful integration in Dutch society.<sup>55</sup> Though there are some exceptions, it is generally said that despite Balkenende and Buma refer to the same norms and values as typically Dutch, Buma have put them in a more functional perspective while Balkenende used them in a more ideal way. In sum, the common denominator of both politicians is that the Dutch culture can be mostly found in norms and values. These findings support the assumptions of Andrew Vincent.

### Becoming Dutch

Christian democratic nationalists see norms and values as the main characteristics of the Dutch nation. The next step is how these norms and values have become Dutch in the first place and what it takes to enhance them. In the second chapter a theory of Michael Freeden was introduced that covered this question: traditions and conventions find their foundation in the past. In his eyes, Christian democrats refer to earlier days as drivers of nowadays customs.<sup>56</sup> Because acquiring the status of ‘Dutch’ can be dealing with both cultural and human units, the answer to this question is divided in two parts. The first part looks at the origins of ‘Dutch culture’, while the other part takes a look at the ways to become a Dutchmen.

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<sup>53</sup> Jan-Peter Balkenende during the Algemene politieke beschouwingen 2006, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mBN8xJby2b8>.

VOC: stands for *Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, which was the Dutch East Indian Company. It was operative from 1602 till 1800.

<sup>54</sup> Sybrand Buma, *HTK*, 2014-2015, 34000, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Sybrand Buma, *HTK*, 2017-2018, 34775, 24.

<sup>56</sup> Freeden, ‘Is nationalism a distinct ideology?’, 762.

One of the given quotes of Balkenende referred to the ‘VOC mentality’ of the old days. Even though the VOC example is not the wisest chosen illustration of norms and values due to its colonial context, it shows that Balkenende looked for traces in history for the values he had in mind. This also turns out of his book, where he claimed that ‘the people and countries in Europe have the same [historical] roots’.<sup>57</sup> Also Buma came with arguments based on Dutch history to prove that the norms and values he mentioned are rooted in old traditions, thoughts and events. In his book *Samen kunnen we meer* he explicitly claimed that ‘Dutch values [...] are historically grown [...]. Tolerance, freedom of conscience and freedom of religion root in the combat against occupation from outside and resistance against cleric tyranny.’<sup>58</sup> Both CDA-leaders searched in the past to give meaning to norms and values in the future. But there is something very remarkable about the sources both politicians refer. Buma made clear that the Dutch culture is, in his view, rooted in Jewish-Christian and humanistic traditions.<sup>59</sup> In this, he permanently denied all other possible influences, especially Islamic. But Balkenende was less strict in this. Though he admitted that the Greek, Roman, Christian, Jewish and Humanistic traditions played ‘important and determining’ roles in the current day Dutch culture, he also left a door open to influences from other cultures. Cultures, also the Dutch one, are constantly moving; both from within and from outside.<sup>60</sup> “Cultures are not static [...]”.<sup>61</sup> So, according to Balkenende, the Dutch culture is less narrowly shaped in the past than Buma thinks. But both politicians prove the theory of Freedom is right in case of the Dutch culture. The next paragraph examines if this is also the case when immigrants want to become Dutch.

Both Balkenende and Buma said it is important that immigrants learn about Dutch norms and values when they want to integrate in the Netherlands, but they vary in focus. Balkenende’s ideas about integration of immigrants in the Dutch culture had a lot to do with mutual efforts from both immigrants and natives.<sup>62</sup> Immigrants should learn about the norms and values in the Netherlands. And natives should gain more understanding of other cultures.<sup>63</sup> The goal of this vision was that ‘immigrant and native live together with respect for each other and especially without hate and threat’.<sup>64</sup> In general, one can say that Buma was much more a

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<sup>57</sup> Balkenende, *Anders en beter*, 143.

<sup>58</sup> Buma, *Samen kunnen we meer*, 88.

<sup>59</sup> Buma, *HTK*, 2014-2015, 34000, 1. Buma, *Samen kunnen we meer*, 88.

<sup>60</sup> Balkenende, *Anders en beter*, 53.

<sup>61</sup> Balkenende, *Anders en beter*, 62.

<sup>62</sup> Immigrants: people that *do not* possess a Dutch passport, used to live in another country than the Netherlands and moved to the Netherlands to start living there. This definition applies for the rest of this research.

<sup>63</sup> Balkenende, *HTK*, 2003-2004, 29200, 71.

<sup>64</sup> Balkenende, *HTK*, 2002-2003, 28600, 89.

fan of a one-way integration approach. The emphasis lied on the immigrants and much less on the natives. Buma gave several examples that indicate his views on integration, and thus how to become Dutch. For instance, Buma talked about the “western society and values that ‘we’ built up are not naturally. They need to be defended”. Further, he stated that one of the consequences of these western values is that “you think about others as well” and give others the chance to seek asylum.<sup>65</sup> However, the immigrants that want to stay in the Netherlands have the commitment to “learn about our tradition, learn our history, learn our anthem, learn our values, learn our norms, participate!”<sup>66</sup> Freeden’s ideas about the importance of history in becoming Dutch can thus only be true in the case of Buma. Especially when the traditions, norms, values and national anthem Buma mentioned are also shaped by the national past, as Buma previously declared.

The major difference between Balkenende and Buma is that Buma gave most responsibility to the immigrants and excluded natives from a role in the integration process. This can be partly explained by the years in which they were party leader. In 2006, after Balkenende did his quoted remarks, Geert Wilders entered the political arena and began to shape a public momentum on immigration and integration. Especially after a major victory of Wilders in 2010, other parties, including the CDA, were forced to reconsider their views on these issues. Also, the increasing amount of Middle Eastern immigrants from 2011 onwards changed the political culture in the Western world. Buma’s remarks can therefore be seen as a political translation of the social tendencies of his time. This also explains how within ten years Christian Democracy became much stricter on immigration and integration and saw immigrants as ‘national threats’.

### Securing the nation

The next question that needs extra clarification is how the nation can best be protected from ‘national threats’ like immigration and integration. And are there more threats that endanger the nation? In chapter two Michael Freeden, inspired by Edmund Burke, came up with the theory that Christian democratic nationalists might try to protect the nation by measurements that maintain the hierarchical social order within the community.<sup>67</sup> This section inquires whether this suggestion is correct and whether there are other ways Christian democratic nationalism tries to prioritise the nation above other nations.

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<sup>65</sup> Buma, *Algemene politieke beschouwingen 2015*, part 1, 3,15.

<sup>66</sup> Buma, *Algemene politieke beschouwingen 2017*, part 3, 24.

<sup>67</sup> Freeden, ‘Is nationalism a distinct ideology?’, 762.

According to both Balkenende and Buma integration policy could be used as a security measure to save the Dutch culture. Though the ones responsible for this integration process differ per politician, the cure stays the same. On top of that, Buma wanted to “control immigration flows”, because the Dutch society cannot bear the amounts of changes in their social environment.<sup>68</sup> This perfectly states how Buma ought to protect social order of the Dutch community by limiting immigration flows. In contrast to that, Balkenende suggested that both the native community and immigrants have a responsibility in the integration of new coming people. Several times he mentioned during debates that “communal unity has to be found in that what [...] people have in common”, “one should treat each other respectfully [despite differences in religion, culture and convictions]” and “the whole Dutch society should carry the burden of integrating further generations”.<sup>69</sup> The way he saw integration is still from a communal perspective, but immigrants are already part of the community he had in mind, because this ‘inclusive society’ is part of Christian norms and values, as he stated.<sup>70</sup> By again emphasising norms and values, Balkenende showed that there are different ways for Christian democratic nationalists to protect the nation.

But there are more national threats next to immigration. First of all, both Balkenende and Buma brought the national economy to the stage. Two topics are relevant in this: international cooperation and competition. Both men proposed an interesting mix of these factors. Buma, for example, proposed to cooperate within the European Union to tackle the financial crisis (2012), the Dutch (and European) dependence on insecure Russian and Arabian energy sources (2014 and 2017) and the food determination of Europe (and thus the Netherlands) from non-European producers (2014).<sup>71</sup> But at the same time he condemned international cooperation when it damages the national economy. For example the competition with Germany about the tariffs on petrol (Buma wanted to stay one cent below the German tariff rate, thus not at the same rate; 2013), the policy of the European Central Bank, that damaged the ‘Dutch innovation economy’ (2015) and attracting foreign companies to the Netherlands by offering low costs for companies (2012, 2017).<sup>72</sup> The same ambiguous attitude towards internationalisation and the economy can be found at Balkenende, for example when

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<sup>68</sup> Buma, *Samen kunnen we meer*, 81.

<sup>69</sup> Balkenende, *HTK*, 2003- 2004, 29200, 101; Balkenende, *HTK*, 2005-2006, 30300, 74; Balkenende, *HTK*, 2009-2010, 32123, 149.

<sup>70</sup> Balkenende, *Anders en beter*, 54-55; Balkenende, *HTK*, 2005-2006, 30300, 103.

<sup>71</sup> Buma, *HTK*, 2012-2013, 33000, 43; Buma, *HTK*, 2014-2015, 34000, 2,6; Buma, *HTK*, 2017-2018, 22.

<sup>72</sup> Buma, *HTK*, 2013-2014, 33750, 42; Buma, *HTK*, 2015-2016, 34300, 3; Buma, *HTK*, 2017-2018, 34775, 10; Buma, *Samen kunnen we meer*, 18.

he shared his ideas about the bad competitiveness of the Netherlands compared to other European countries (2002 and 2003) or his plans to attract foreign companies to the Netherlands by hiring professional acquisitionists (2009).<sup>73</sup> It depends per case whether the European Union and the international market are considered as a threat or as a solution. But in the end, both international cooperation and competition should at first protect the interests of the Dutch economy against economic threats. The protection of national economic interests can surely be seen as protecting the national community, because the hierarchy and order within the community is interwoven with the nation's prosperity. From this perspective, Freeden seems to be right.

A last national threat that both Balkenende and Buma introduced is the threat of individualisation. Humans are relational creatures; they need each other to function, according to the two Christian democrats. But individualisation undermines this social order easily, because it prioritizes personal development and individual qualitative aspects of life above communal interests.<sup>74</sup> This has caused a national lack of community, Buma wrote: "Nowadays society is not characterised by liberated and rational individuals, but by people who are looking for bonding and identity."<sup>75</sup> In answer to this lack both CDA-leaders emphasised the role of the family as the principle traditional source of community. Families can provide bonding and identity, because they teach children 'the universal and family stories, traditions and values'. They let us see that 'we are standing on the shoulders of giants' and that 'we are connected with the past and the future'.<sup>76</sup> All these elements help securing the community and therefore the national social order by keeping traditions, stories and values alive. In short, individualization, immigration and the national economy support Freeden's theory on securing the nation.

### Summary: hosting nationalism?

This chapter shows how former CDA prime minister Balkenende and current CDA leader Buma combine nationalism with their Christian democratic ideology. After analysing various debates and publications of both men, it turned out that the CDA under their wings referred strongly to Jewish-Christian and humanistic traditions that formed a solid fundament for Dutch values and norms. Even though Balkenende used values in a more idealistic way and Buma in a more functional way. Another similarity is that CDA leaders thought values get increasingly more

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<sup>73</sup> Balkenende, *HTK*, 2002-2003, 28600, 90; Balkenende, *HTK*, 2003-2004, 29200, 69; Balkenende, *HTK*, 2009-2010, 32123, 133.

<sup>74</sup> Balkenende, *Anders en beter*, 67; Buma, *HTK*, 2016-2017, 34550, 29.

<sup>75</sup> Buma, *Samen kunnen we meer*, 74.

<sup>76</sup> Buma, *Tegen het cynisme*, 67.

meaning when they are part of a longer tradition. Also, they saw threats to national values in immigration, international markets and individualisation. To tackle these threats, changing integration policies, national market protection and international cooperation and a focus on families as carriers of national traditions are named. The main difference between Balkenende and Buma is that Balkenende brought in norms and values as a pro-active answer to the threat of integration, while Buma plead for protective countermeasures for immigration restrictions.

The similarities between the various theories discussed in chapter two and the ideas of the two Christian democratic leaders are remarkable. For example, Andrew Vincent, who thought conventions and traditions were typical characteristics of for the national culture that Christian democratic nationalism proclaims. Michael Freeden mentioned that traditions from the past can function as a connection between Christian democracy and nationalism. We see he is right when Balkenende and Buma again and again talked about the Jewish-Christian and humanistic roots of the Dutch civilization and the norms and values that comes out of these roots. Freeden further mentioned the characteristic central role of communities in Christian democratic nationalism. This theory is confirmed as well, when the CDA-leaders shared their ideas about families as carriers of national traditions, and more in general when Balkenende and Buma spoke about the potential dangers of individualism for society. Until this far, the theories about Christian democracy and nationalism discussed in chapter two are proven.

One last remark about Christian democracy. Though Balkenende's and Buma's way to accommodate nationalism had a lot in common, they also had some serious differences. They clearly contrasted in their opinions about the status of the Dutch culture and how people from other cultures can become Dutch. Buma is in both stricter than Balkenende. This might have to do with the different times they led the party. Balkenende did not have to deal with massive immigration flows and the focus from Geert Wilders on immigration and integration, like Buma had to.

## Chapter 4 – Social democratic nationalism

The history of social democracy as a people's party in the Netherlands starts in 1946, when three social democratic parties merged into the *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA). Since then, the party has influenced the Dutch political landscape and joined or led several coalitions. Until 1994, when the PvdA was in a coalition, it always cooperated with the Catholics. But in 1994, for the first time in Dutch political history, the social democrats and the liberals formed a coalition. Because the colours of the socialists and liberals together become purple, the coalition was called 'the purple cabinet'. The leader of the PvdA at that time, Wim Kok led the cabinet, which lasted from 1994 till 2002. During these years, the threats of a third world war with the Soviet Union were gone and it seemed that liberal democracy would eventually rule world.<sup>77</sup> Within Europe liberal democracy expanded rapidly by integrating Eastern European states into the European Union. But disillusion of liberal victory soon appeared, as in 1995 a Dutch peace mission in Yugoslavia resulted in a massive massacre in Srebrenica and showed the limits of liberal democracy's global influence. The '90s were a prosperous time for the Netherlands and the purple cabinets could invest in all kind of projects, like infrastructure and education. But at the same time the cabinets could not ignore the international tendencies; they had to face immigration flows from Yugoslavia, a fast-growing world market and the integration of the Netherlands into the EU. During the election campaign after Kok's cabinet fell in 2002 because of the disaster in Srebrenica, the PvdA was blamed for ignoring the trends of immigration, globalisation and integration of migrants. The party lost the elections and the party of Pim Fortuyn and the CDA succeeded the 'purple coalition'.

2002 was the end of Kok's political career. His successor as political leader of the PvdA became Wouter Bos. Bos choose another path by publicly regretting the lack of action on issues of immigration, integration and globalisation. Under his leadership, the party slowly regained its lost seats and formed a coalition in 2007 together with the CDA and the *ChristenUnie* (CU), a small Christian party. This coalition still had to deal with the issues of immigration and integration of non-Dutch and the significance of the Netherlands in a globalised world, so Bos needed a clear vision on this. Another problem entered the stage in 2008: an international financial crisis. Unemployment rates went up and the government had to cut back its expenditures. At the same time several big organisations and private savings had to be secured, like the banks of ABN-AMRO, SNS and the DSB. In 2010 the coalition fell caused on different

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<sup>77</sup> This thought is illustrated by, among others, Francis Fukuyama, who wrote an article titled 'The end of History and the Last Man' (1992), that claimed that liberal democracy victoried all other political systems. Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (Washington, 1992).

views between the parties about investments in the defence department. This marked the end of the political career of Bos.

### Thoughts on nationalism

To compare both Kok and Bos in their views on nationalism, one has to be aware of the rapid change of times between 1994 and 2002. At the start of the first Cabinet Kok, the world seemed to become one liberal democracy and a globalized market. Especially within the EU, there was an optimistic tendency towards the extensions of the Western world in a unipolar world order. Kok himself saw a safe haven for the Netherlands within the EU and promoted further expansion of it. At the end of his second cabinet, the euro, as a form of further economic integration, was introduced. But the political integration was still one of Kok's concerns. In a debate in 2000 he gave away that he saw a threat in the upcoming nationalistic sentiments in European countries that are focussed against the European project itself. Kok thought that dialogue with citizens could take away these nationalistic sentiments.<sup>78</sup>

Bos started to distance himself from Kok's views. In his book from 2006, *Wat Wouter wil*, Bos plead for the 'Dutch' own sake'. To believe in the 'power of the Dutch country', both in home and foreign affairs. Further, Bos confessed he 'was not a fan of Europe'.<sup>79</sup> The citations of Kok and Bos illustrate the changes of the Dutch social democracy within a period of 15 years from a Europhile to a Eurocritical party. Most interesting are the arguments that both Kok and Bos used to substantiate their views. Kok believed that a common and integrated Europe would be best for the Netherlands, while Bos thought that an integrated and strong Europe would be a threat for the Low Countries. The different views of Kok and Bos about the EU are discussed more thoroughly soon hereafter.

### Being Dutch

As deprived in chapter one, the first question to ask in finding the hosting ways of nationalism concerns the definition of the national culture. In chapter two a theory was introduced based on Marx, Engels and Bauer about the focus on material redistribution resulted in the values that contain the striving to equality as a potential social democratic nationalist characteristic.<sup>80</sup> Social democratic nationalism should therefore pay attention to the values that concern issues of equality.

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<sup>78</sup> Wim Kok, *HTK*, 2000-2001, 27400, 106.

<sup>79</sup> Wouter Bos, *Wat Wouter wil* (Amsterdam, 2006) 11, 48.

<sup>80</sup> Claeys, *Encyclopaedia of Nineteenth-Century Thought*, 445; Bauer, *Questions of nationalities and Social Democracy*, 3.

Both Kok and Bos had similar idea about the characteristics of the Dutch nation. Questions about what make the Dutch ‘Dutch’, were often answered in line with one another: norms and values. This emphasis seems familiar to the previous chapter, which discussed the Christian democrats. But in general, Kok and Bos mentioned other norms and values as Balkenende and Buma. Kok, for example, named social values as ‘securing the livelihood and living environment’ and ‘respect for other ideas and each other’s personal sphere’.<sup>81</sup> Other characteristics of Dutch society were, according to Kok, the *polder model*, cultural plurality, self-development and solidarity’.<sup>82</sup> Bos also mentioned solidarity and focused on the ‘freedom for people to develop and maintain social relations’ as a basic principle of norms and values.<sup>83</sup> These are, most of all, social values that perfectly fit social democracy and are used to define the Dutch nation. It seems that the theory deprived from Marx, Engels and Bauer is correct and that social democratic nationalism does define the nation by using values that deal with equality.

Another remarkable observation of both Kok was that the Dutch identity is a bit ‘lost’. Kok mentioned that, due to individualism and personal freedoms, social cohesion could be in danger and that “we need to look for new preconditions for a durable solidarity and community”.<sup>84</sup> With other words: the national commitment is in danger because everyone can choose its own identity. Though Kok praised this freedom of choosing your own network, he was also worried about a society where people are left behind because no one wants or can connect with them. In a different context Bos showed he observed the same as Kok: “the Netherlands and the Dutch [...] do not have a very strong developed national identity compared to other countries”.<sup>85</sup> Bos did not blame individualism but acknowledged that solidarity is a basic principle for a functioning society and that this solidarity ‘could be improved’ in the Netherlands. By saying this, Bos brought back the previously discussed national norms and values. But Bos also gave some other keys that can develop a national identity: reputation. This national reputation is mostly shaped by international opinions and actions, like sports games, Olympic medals, the royal family, artists and other national icons that can cause feelings of

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<sup>81</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1996-1997, 25500, 124.

<sup>82</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1997-1998, 25600, 103-104; Kok, *HTK*, 2000-2001, 27400, 78.

Polder model: looking for consensus between the government, labour union and employer associations.

Cultural plurality: the presence and acceptance of multiple cultures within one society. This definition applies for the rest of this research.

<sup>83</sup> Wouter Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter* (Amsterdam, 2006) 84, 92-93,

<sup>84</sup> Wim Kok, *Bewogen beweging. Sociaaldemocratie als program en methode* (Amsterdam, 1988) 31.

<sup>85</sup> Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter*, 96.

proudfness. Both norms and values and (inter)national reputation of the country influence the national identity, according to Bos.<sup>86</sup>

### Becoming Dutch

Previously, these social and cultural norms were further defined by Kok and Bos. But where do these norms come from and how can one become part of the national culture? To acquire the just determined Dutch culture, social democratic nationalism would make use of ‘adapting social and cultural norms that belong to the value of equality’, according to Kellas.<sup>87</sup> No ethnicity, economic or cultural background, just the adaption of the social and cultural norms that belong to the new nation. But Kellas does not provide a theory of how the national culture became the national culture. That does not mean Kok and Bos did not have any ideas about the origins of the national norms and values. Though Kok seemed like he did not want to burn himself on questions concerning the sources of the Dutch cultural values. Whenever he was asked for the roots of the norms and values he considered as Dutch, he referred to the constitution: “For our nation certain norms are determined. In specifics, this is a matter of law and decision making, but also more general we have a framework that you can call normative. I point at the classical and social basic rights of our constitution”.<sup>88</sup> One year later, in 1997, he repeated himself and added another source in which the Dutch norms and values are incorporated: The universal declaration of Human Rights.<sup>89</sup> Another year later, when Kok responded to a speech about Christian norms and values, he claimed that norms and values change all the time and can never be universal.<sup>90</sup> This might explain why he seemed so cautious to refer to specific examples, whether in the past or the present. Kok did not explain where norms and values come from, except from the judicial institutions. But how the institutions were shaped, he never discussed.

One thing is certain: Bos had totally different ideas about the origins of the Dutch culture. First of all, this is shown by his words about a national identity and the constitution: “Often one refers to the constitution as the document where all these values are written down. This reference does barely suffice. Only because the constitution is written in incomprehensible and often also outdated language. [...] Next to that, the constitution is filled with technical ‘rules of the game’, like the royal family, government and parliament. That is

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<sup>86</sup> Bos, *Wat Wouter wil*, 8; Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter*, 97.

<sup>87</sup> Kellas, *The politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 66.

<sup>88</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1996-1997, 25500, 124.

<sup>89</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1997-1998, 25600, 104.

<sup>90</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1998-1999, 26200, 160.

very important, but it does not have much to do with common values”.<sup>91</sup> This was a remarkable contrast with Kok, who time after time referred to the constitution as source of norms and values. According to Bos, these norms and values resulted from public debate: what actually happens in society shows the values of a country. Social action is the source of values. Bos did not imply anything about ideology, religion or the past in any sense. Only that what happened nowadays count as a cultural value. Therefore, values are constantly changing.<sup>92</sup> This is a very practical, field work approach of determining the origins of national values, instead of the judicial approach of Kok.

Another form is becoming Dutch is by integrating into the Dutch culture. Based on previous observations of where norms and values come from, for Kok integration cannot be that much of a problem, because values are written down in laws and therefore hard to change and easy to maintain. Laws can even facilitate the adaption of the national culture by immigrants. Bos was much more explicit than Kok. First of all, Bos provided some practical examples of how to behave as integrated immigrant in Dutch society. Therefore, Bos relied on his personal experiences with other members of the PvdA that are more into the topic of integration. He pleaded for a tough approach of integration: it is all about respect. “And respect is not soft, or something that one can demand. No, it is diehard and something that you give or what you deserve”.<sup>93</sup> In his other book Bos brought in solidarity when he talks about integration: “[...] solidarity is seriously tested when the idea emerges that the inconceivable behaviour of ‘the others’ conjoint the basis of the fact that they are unemployed or low classified. But no matter how you look at it, facts and images about concerning the question why we see too many Moroccan youth in the criminal circuit, why too many Muslim girls stay in women’s shelters and why too many Antillean youth are unemployed, slowly undermine the willingness of others to take (financial) responsibility for their fate”.<sup>94</sup> Bos concluded this sentence by saying that integration and immigration can undermine solidarity, one of the core national values according to him and Kok. Therefore, integration should be seen as a “problem that puts pressure on the climate of the whole country”.<sup>95</sup>

Coming back to Kellas’ theory about becoming part of the national culture by simply adapting it, one can conclude that his theory does not provide a full picture of how to gain

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<sup>91</sup> Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter*, 93.

<sup>92</sup> Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter*, 94.

<sup>93</sup> Bos, *Wat Wouter wil*, 20.

<sup>94</sup> Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter*, 104-105.

<sup>95</sup> Bos, *Wat Wouter wil*, 28.

national membership. It is unclear how he thinks norms and values become national. Kok and Bos did have an answer to that. But by pointing at the various laws and the constitution, Kok's views seemed more inspired by liberal nationalism than by social democratic nationalism. Bos' answer better fitted in the terminology of social democratic nationalism. He also turned out to be more social democratic nationalistic than Kok in his ideas about integration, when he mentioned that the national value of solidarity could get in danger by letting in too many chanceless immigrants. Here, Bos proved Kellas' theory, but it is weak because Kok did not walk in line with it.

### Securing the nation

In the previous section it was discussed how norms and values, but also people and culture, become Dutch. Closely related to this topic is the way the national characteristics are defended. Miroslav Hroch thought that social democratic nationalists would emphasise the role of culture by promoting expressions of the national culture. According to him, this can be done by various cultural professions, like artists, but also teachers.<sup>96</sup> This section further examines the various measures both Kok and Bos proposed and how the two of them differ in opinions.

First of all, culture, played an important part in the plans of Kok, and especially Bos. Under the command of Kok, lots of investments were done in education, and especially cultural education.<sup>97</sup> Though Kok never mentioned these investments were in favour of the national culture, Bos did mention this several times. In 2003 Bos pleaded for investments in education, because these investments would be in the interest of the whole society.<sup>98</sup> And in 2006 Bos mentioned to be proud on the national "winning sportsmen, exceling entrepreneurs and fable artists because we have something in common, because they are ours. When they excel, we feel we are part of it and that we all excel".<sup>99</sup> These cultural expressions, or icons, provide the people a national identity; a 'feeling of solidarity'. "That is the better Orange feeling", said Bos.<sup>100</sup> These citations perfectly fit within the theory of Hroch. One can conclude that his assumption is validated, but far from complete.

But Kok, and especially Bos, said more about prioritising the nation. On the issue of integration of migrants into the Netherlands, Bos already spent some words in the previous

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<sup>96</sup> Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, in Kellas, *The Politics of Nationalism and Ethnicity*, 98.

<sup>97</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1996-1997, 25500, 121; Kok, *HTK*, 1998-1999, 26200, 132; Kok, *HTK*, 1999-2000, 27400, 104.

<sup>98</sup> Wouter Bos, *HTK*, 2003-2004, 29200, 3.

<sup>99</sup> Bos, *HTK*, 2006-2007, 30800, 10.

<sup>100</sup> Bos, *Wat Wouter wil*, 8.

section. He saw integration of chanceless migrants as a national threat. To tackle the threat, Bos pleaded for a stricter immigration because “every society has its absorption limits”. Only people that have “a great chance of success in the Netherlands” should be accepted. On this way, these new immigrants can “contribute to [...] the Dutch society and strengthen and enrich the national economy. Also, by only letting in potential successful immigrants, the integration process and social foundation for immigrants might improve.<sup>101</sup> During a debate in 2005, Bos referred to an Angolan professional football player, Nando Rafael, who eventually started playing for the German national team because he could not get a Dutch passport. Bos said he was jealous on Germany because they did give Rafael a passport.<sup>102</sup> And Bos gave more examples of missed chances that could have enriched the Dutch economy or culture.

Bos also pleaded for changing the integration of immigrants in Dutch society. The whole society should be involved in the integration processes. Because only by social practice one can truly learn about the Dutch norms and values like respect and responsibility. But above all, about solidarity. One has the responsibility to address someone on his or her behaviour, both on the street and at school. And authorities need to punish a-social behaviour. Parents, teachers, policemen and strict social workers fulfil essential roles in effective integration politics, according to Bos.<sup>103</sup> This could also help in preventing social segregation between immigrants and natives from getting worse. Bos thought that, together with a selective immigration policy, the ‘problem of integration’ could be tackled.<sup>104</sup>

To exemplify the way Kok thought about the relation of the Dutch with other cultures, his views on the European Union need to be discussed. It was already made clear that Kok was a ‘Europhile’ who saw especially good things in European cooperation. His attitude can be explained partly by the time he lived in. His book *Bewogen beweging*, written in 1988, can be seen as a call to stay strong and united as Western-European community. He was even willing to take some financial risks as long as the community would progress its integration, because he believed that ‘on the long term [...] Europe would benefit the most if it could strengthen her position, because she is in a big extent dependent of external factors like trade, energy prices and thus exchange rates’.<sup>105</sup> The integration of European states into the European Union seemed to be a big dream of Kok. Even if that integration and extension of the European project would

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<sup>101</sup> Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter*, 144-145.

<sup>102</sup> Bos, *HTK*, 2005-2006, 30300, 8.

<sup>103</sup> Bos, *Wat Wouter wil*, 23-27.

<sup>104</sup> Bos, *Dit land kan zoveel beter*, 144.

<sup>105</sup> Kok, *Bewogen beweging*, 79.

harm the economy of the nation.<sup>106</sup> Though various fractions in the Dutch parliament were critical on these European expansion plans, Kok presented himself during his whole political career as an enthusiastic supporter of European enlargement. Kok even risked national economic interests for the European project when in 1995 he answered the following on a question about postponing European economic integration because of the bad economic performances of non-North-Western members of the European Economic Community: “I think it would be a pity (to postpone), because I think the monetary integration will also be a source of power for a further political development of the European Economic Community”.<sup>107</sup>

The whole reason behind Kok’s focus on European integration can be detracted from his book *Bewogen beweging*. He wrote: “multinationals and banks are already internationally active. That is why one should soon start organising an international social democratic sound”.<sup>108</sup> With other words, Kok was determined that national borders were in extinct and that it would be wise to look for a powerful international organisation degree in which social democratic ideals could tremendously influence the European continent. In the end, a united Europe would be best for the whole community, including the Netherlands, because it would magnificently increase the competition strength of Europe in general.<sup>109</sup> During debates in parliament Kok was a bit more paradoxical on these topics. Several times he pleaded for a European approach of taxes, immigration and agriculture.<sup>110</sup> But on the other hand, he agitated Europe for the relatively high contribution of the Netherlands and he defended the good Dutch position within Europe in the aviation sector and monetary competition with the Dutch guilders compared to other European currencies.<sup>111</sup> This proved that his Europhilic attitude did not mean that he could not protect Dutch interests within the Union, but Kok really saw the nation best protected within a strong international union.

### Summary: hosting nationalism?

Till now, the two leaders of the social democrats seemed to focus a lot on the equality value of solidarity. In this, they both acknowledged that the assumptions based on socialist thinkers Marx, Engels and Bauer are right about social democratic nationalists and their emphasis on equality values. Kellas’ theory turned out to be less clear. First of all, because it did not cover

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<sup>106</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1995-1996, 24400, 110.

<sup>107</sup> Wim Kok, *HTK*, 1995-1996, 24400, 110.

<sup>108</sup> Kok, *Bewogen beweging*, 97.

<sup>109</sup> Kok, *Bewogen beweging*, 79-81.

<sup>110</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1997-1998, 25600, 146; Kok, *HTK*, 1998-1999, 26200, 101, 114.

<sup>111</sup> Kok, *HTK*, 1997-1998, 25600, 145-146; Kok, *HTK*, 1998-1999, 26200, 120; Kok, *HTK*, 2000-2001, 27400, 87.

all sorts of processes to become Dutch. And the limited argument that was made by Kellas was only validated by Bos and his thoughts about how migrants should adapt the Dutch culture. Also, the ideas of Hroch about the focus on promoting social and cultural expressions in a way to prioritise the nation seemed insufficient to cover all remarks of Kok and Bos. Though Hroch was right with his thesis, it was simply too limited. Bos came up with topics about immigration and the integration of these immigrants and Kok brought in the issue of integration of European states into the European Union. When looking for the way how social democracy can host nationalism it is therefore good to be aware of these huge deviations of the party leaders with the theories and each other.

At the end of this chapter one can conclude that social democratic nationalism has several features. First of all, the national culture is based on values about equality. Secondly, the nation is prioritised by a promotion of cultural expressions, including sports and arts. Further similarities between the PvdA-leaders themselves and the discussed theories are missing. This might say something about the broad range in which social democratic nationalism can be filled in. It could also make clear the role political leaders play in determining the way nationalism is hosted.

## Chapter 5 – Liberal nationalism

To end the trilogy of people's parties, this chapter is concerned with the Dutch practical outcomes of liberal nationalism. Since the year 1948 two liberal parties merged into the liberal party: the 'Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie' (VVD). Since its merge, the party was willing to join a coalition multiple times but was also part of the opposition for several years. Until the 70s the VVD was a stable political power of around 17 of the 150 seats in Parliament. The party slowly gained some extra seats at costs of the Christian parties due to the secularisation that started in the 70s, which promoted individual freedoms and led to decreasing clerical influences in society. In 1982 the VVD received 36 seats. However, due to internal conflicts, the party fell in decline in 1986. In 1990, as an answer to these internal struggles and fallen popularity, Frits Bolkestein was assigned as the new party leader to rebuild the party. Under his command, the VVD entered the first and second 'purple coalition' from 1994 until 2002. During these days, because of the fall of the Soviet Union, a new world order led by the west seemed to set place. The European Community became the European Union and welcomed various (potential) new members and sought more and more economic and monetary integration within its borders. Further, in 1995 the Netherlands joined a UN peace mission in Yugoslavia that turned out dramatically when, under Dutch supervision, a genocide could take place on the male Muslim inhabitants of Srebrenica. The aftermath of this failed mission formed a huge concern for the Dutch government and eventually led to the fall of the second 'purple cabinet' in 2002. But Bolkestein had already abandoned his post of VVD-leader in 1998; he thought it was time for a new leader.

After the fall of the cabinet in 2002, the VVD again entered two coalitions in a row. But soon internal party struggles became public when MP's like Geert Wilders and Ayaan Hirsi Ali left the fraction. Eventually this led to an internal election of a new party leader in 2006. Mark Rutte got the most votes and was chosen as the new liberal leader, but his opponent, Rita Verdonk, got more votes during the parliamentary elections a couple of months later and started to publicly dispute Rutte's leadership. These further internal conflicts brought more damage to the party. Eventually, Verdonk was expelled from the VVD and Rutte could slowly rebuild his party. In 2010 the VVD got the highest number of votes for the first time in history and Rutte became PM of the country. He decided to govern together with the CDA and with support of the right-populistic party of Geert Wilders (PVV), but that coalition soon ended when the PVV stopped its support. During the elections of 2012 and 2017 Rutte won again. During Rutte's leadership, the VVD had to face the financial crisis of 2008, an intense changing of world

politics (Arab spring, Brexit, tensions with Russia and Turkey) and a rise of right wing populism in the Western world.

### Thoughts on nationalism

In this section both Bolkestein and Rutte are the key figures that show how within the liberal ideology of the VVD nationalism finds a place. The two political leaders rarely give away directly what they think of nationalism in a Dutch context. It even seems that Bolkestein did not expect nationalism to exist in the Netherlands at all, because “the Dutch national identity is much more unclear [than the French]”.<sup>112</sup> Of course, there is a Dutch national culture, but it is weakly developed and the Netherlands have an international focus instead of national. The nationalism Bolkestein had in mind when he talked about nationalism, is the ethnic nationalism in Easter Europe.<sup>113</sup> He saw this kind of nationalism as a serious threat to the liberal democracy in the Western world.<sup>114</sup> But though he suggested that the Dutch are not that much into nationalism, that remark itself can be seen as an example of the national image Bolkestein had of the Netherlands, as Van Reerkum already showed in the introduction of this study.<sup>115</sup>

Rutte was a less outspoken person in public debate. He did not say much on topics like nationalism. However, both during his years of leading the opposition and leading the coalition Rutte pleaded to “dream big again about the Netherlands”.<sup>116</sup> And in 2013 during the *H.J. Schoolezing*, a 34-minute lecture organised by the weekly Dutch magazine *Elsevier*, Rutte talked for eight minutes about how great the Netherlands were comparing to international comparisons and standards.<sup>117</sup> So, Rutte did have a vision of the Netherlands, which was a very positive one based on international comparisons that show the Dutch ‘successful position in the world’. The undertone Rutte always touched is that keeping or improving this position had to be a national priority. It may be clear that both Bolkestein and Rutte had a developed vision of what the Dutch nation is. What they think the Dutch nation is exactly, why it has become what it is and how the Dutch nation can be secured are the next questions this research will answer.

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<sup>112</sup> Frits Bolkestein, ‘De multiculturele samenleving’, during the *Universiteitsdag 1992*, (Utrecht, 1992) 1.

<sup>113</sup> Ethnic nationalism is a form of nationalism defined in terms of ethnicity rather than culture.

<sup>114</sup> Frits Bolkestein, *De engel en het beest. Opstellen over politiek* (Amsterdam, 1990) 139, 159-160.

<sup>115</sup> Van Reerkum, ‘We waren altijd al nationalistisch’.

<sup>116</sup> Mark Rutte, *HTK*, 2008-2009, 31700, 38.

<sup>117</sup> Mark Rutte, *H.J. Schoolezing* (Amsterdam, 2013).

## Being Dutch

According to Neil MacCormick, liberal nationalists see the nation as a concept that helps individuals to become self-dependent.<sup>118</sup> So, the individual is the central unit in Bolkestein's and Rutte's national story. Though they did not talk specifically about Dutch nationalism, they did talk about Dutch culture. During a lecture about the Dutch culture in 1992 Bolkestein mentioned four "fundamental norms that should always be respected in the Netherlands: freedom of expression, tolerance, non-discrimination and the separation of church and state".<sup>119</sup> These four norms all protect the freedom of an individual by securing one's freedom of speech without being expelled from the community, prosecuted by any religious authority or being damaged by one's exceptional actions. These norms are the basics of Dutch, and also western, culture. Rutte also shows MacCormick's theory is right, but in a lesser extent than Bolkestein did. He too mentioned several times that the individual freedoms, like the freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of demonstration, and tolerance form the fundamentals of Dutch society.<sup>120</sup>

Bolkestein often had odd descriptions of typical Dutch cultural characteristics. He often said that the Dutch culture in itself is rather weak because of the 'Dutch inferiority complex'.<sup>121</sup> Though this is a style of profiling the nation that was more common before 1980, this still is a way to show the Dutch moral superiority above other nations, like Van Reerkum shows.<sup>122</sup> The other virtues Bolkestein mentioned are 'sober competence, temperate acuity, [...] simplicity and non-pretentiousness, [...] commercialism [...], a lack of style, a cultural inferiority complex and a lack of civil courage that finds an expression in a provincial conformism and a devious hypocrisy".<sup>123</sup> Especially these last observations are not very typical in nationalism rhetoric because they criticise the national culture and at the same time prove Bolkestein's point that the Dutch do have a cultural inferiority complex. It is interesting to see that the list of negative characteristics Bolkestein provided is full with items that can limit the individual in becoming self-dependent. The lack of civil courage, provincial conformism and hypocrisy are typical virtues that are focused on the community as a whole and therefore slow down every individual that tries develop a path that differs from the rest. The 'naming and shaming' of these communal

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<sup>118</sup> MacCormick, *Legal rights and Social Democracy*, 253, 256,-261 in: Wicke, *Helmut Kohl's quest for normality*, 32.

<sup>119</sup> Bolkestein, 'De multiculturele samenleving', 1-2.

<sup>120</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2007-2008, 31200, 34; Rutte, *HTK*, 2016-2017, 34550, 11.

<sup>121</sup> Bolkestein, *De engel en het beest*, 237.

<sup>122</sup> Van Reekum, 'We waren altijd al nationalistisch'.

<sup>123</sup> Bolkestein, *De engel en het beest*, 240.

cultural characteristics do thus perfectly fit in profiling the Dutch national culture from a liberal perspective, because from a liberal point of view they hold back everyone that alternatively wants to develop oneself. Thus, the condemnation of these values by Bolkestein show that becoming self-dependent can indeed be seen as the goal of a national culture from a liberal nationalist perception.

### Becoming Dutch

The second question that needs to be answered is: How have national characteristics become Dutch? Yael Tamir claims that liberal nationalism would say that adapting a national culture is a matter of choice. One can choose for oneself whether to become part of the national culture or not.<sup>124</sup> As a consequence, a nation should not limit any cultural expression of other national cultures, because one needs to have options to choose from. Also, competition between national cultures limits the freedom of choice and should therefore be prevented. The only reason to allow cultural competition is to compete and absorb illiberal cultures before they absorb liberal cultures.<sup>125</sup> In case of individuals gaining a national identity this theory is easy to implement. But how did national values like tolerance, freedom of expression, etc. became part of the Dutch national culture? Tamir does not really provide an answer. But Bolkestein and Rutte did have an idea about it. For example, Rutte looked at the national past when he is searching for the fundamentals of immaterial national culture. In a debate in 2009 Rutte mentioned the VOC-culture as an example of by which values the Netherlands nowadays should be governed.<sup>126</sup> In 2013 Rutte again referred to the past when he talked about Dutch virtues that “brought the Netherlands where it is right now”.<sup>127</sup> Bolkestein also pointed at historical events as sources to Dutch current day fundamental norms. Especially the French Revolution and the Enlightenment were his favourite cultural foundations for liberal values, because values like tolerance and the separation of church and state eventually derived from there.<sup>128</sup> These references to the past better fit in the theories of Vincent and Freedman about how Christian democratic nationalism explains the origins of current day national values than they fit in liberalism theories. In this case, the theory of Tamir is not valid.

But when talking about individuals and how they can become part of a nation, Tamir might still be right. For example, Bolkestein was looking for a policy to let people integrate in

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<sup>124</sup> Tamir, *Liberal nationalism*, 26-27, 29.

<sup>125</sup> Raz, *The morality of freedom*, 203, 423-424

<sup>126</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2009-2010, 32123, 40.

<sup>127</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2013-2014, 33750, 1.

<sup>128</sup> Bolkestein, ‘De multiculturele samenleving’, 2.

the national culture while at the same time keep their own cultural and religious identity. This remark seems to come from the idea that assimilating in a new culture would not have to mean that you are forced to give up another one. This is a clear example of multiculturalist thinking. His plea for promoting a western variant of the Islamic religion can be seen as an example of this.<sup>129</sup> In his eyes there does not have to be a forced character in integration, but at the same time he gave some basic criteria for a successful integration of immigrants in another national environment: one should at least learn the language and should have contact with natives.<sup>130</sup> Also having a job could be of great contribution in the process of integration.<sup>131</sup> It is clear that Bolkestein on one hand tried to accept multiculturalism, but on the other hand demanded other cultures to at least accept some parts of the Dutch liberal culture. This sounds contrary, but it perfectly fits in the previously mentioned theory: multiple cultures are welcome within the nation, but the liberal character of the national culture ought to be protected.

Rutte seemed to think that every individual has the option to choose to adapt a culture as well. This is most visible when he talked about criteria on ‘declining people’. He said that he will “always say to people, whatever social orientation, Muslim, Reformed or Catholic, liberal or socialist: this is a country where you will always be approached, not based on your [cultural, ideological or religious] membership, but based on the question of what you contribute to the Dutch society”.<sup>132</sup> By saying this, Rutte gave individuals full responsibility to the way they are approached. This implicitly means that all individuals are responsible for their own integration in the Dutch culture. In 2006 he already made this clear when he discussed the problem of poor language skills of non-natives and blamed the immigrants for choosing to keep on using their mother tongue at home.<sup>133</sup> For this moment it is enough to determine that Bolkestein and Rutte indeed thought one can choose to adapt a culture. But the amount of individual freedom in making this choice is disputable. Therefore, it is hard to say whether they fully go with the theory of Tamir, because the amount of freedom in making the choice to adapt the Dutch national culture is limited by both Bolkestein and Rutte. The theory of Tamir only mentions a protection clause in case of illiberal cultures that possibly absorb liberal cultures, but it does not mention anything about economic or social protection.

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<sup>129</sup> Frits Bolkestein, *HTK*, 1995-1996, 24400, 44.

<sup>130</sup> Bolkestein, ‘De multiculturele samenleving’, 7.

<sup>131</sup> Bolkestein, *HTK*, 1995-1996, 24400, 43.

<sup>132</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2010-2011, 32500, 45.

<sup>133</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2006-2007, 30800, 327.

## Securing the nation

The last topic that shows how the VVD leaders hosted nationalism are their views on protecting the nation from threats. In chapter two a theory of Michael Freeden was introduced that already gave some direction of where to look when searching for typical liberal nationalist forms of national security. The main type of protection liberal nationalists focus on would be individual rights, Freeden thought. These rights should provide individuals possibilities to become self-determined and to express the culture they prefer.<sup>134</sup> It is worth to mention that Tamir claims that liberal nationalist would focus on both individual and communal rights. These individual rights are relatively easy transformed into communal rights, because communities are groups of individuals that can have a common interest and therefore a common right. When considering the nation as a big group of individuals, liberal ideology can provide national rights as well.<sup>135</sup> This theoretical dispute between Freeden and Tamir makes it extra interesting to see how Bolkestein and Rutte focussed on rights. Another security measurement is given by Miller, who claims that a common religion, language and national history can be used by liberal nationalism can help to secure the nation.

Looking at Bolkestein, it seems that Freeden is right about the use of individual rights to defend the nation against possible threats. The main threat Bolkestein talked about is the integration of non-western immigrants into the Dutch culture. This, because other cultures can promote “Apartheid, [...] burning of living widows [...] and circumcision of women”. They are a threat because “these practices can be defended by religious or cultural considerations. [...] and are opposing fundamental liberal norms: non-discrimination and the intangibility of the human body”.<sup>136</sup> Bolkestein mostly named the ‘Islamic culture’ as a threat for the western, and thus for Dutch, culture because it does not regulate the separation of church and state.<sup>137</sup> For Bolkestein all these cultural characteristics proved that the liberal *Western* cultures are superior above others because of their liberal norms.

According to Bolkestein, that does not mean that people of other cultures cannot adapt liberal norms. As a matter of fact, Bolkestein demanded the acceptance of liberal features like the distinction between state and church and non-discrimination.<sup>138</sup> He even developed a plan to adjust the culture of Muslims that want to live in the Netherlands so that it would fit in the

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<sup>134</sup> Freeden, ‘Is nationalism a distinct ideology?’ 760-761.

<sup>135</sup> Tamir, *Liberal nationalism*, 30.

<sup>136</sup> Bolkestein, ‘De multiculturele samenleving’, 5.

<sup>137</sup> Bolkestein, *Islam en democratie. Een ontmoeting* (Amsterdam, 1994) 65.

<sup>138</sup> Bolkestein, ‘De multiculturele samenleving’, 7.

Dutch culture. “First of all, a faculty of Islamic theology should be given place, so that the Islam will get the same opportunity to become criticised as Christianity is criticised, this to make sure that those who are struggling with theological issues are not dependent on universities in the Middle East”.<sup>139</sup> Bolkestein showed that indeed, every cultural group has the right to exist, also in the Netherlands, but the cultural rights should not displace the prioritised national liberal individual rights. In case of Bolkestein, Freedén’s theory seems a better fit than Tamir’s.

For Rutte, focusing on prioritising western, and thus Dutch, liberal values above other cultures, was too one of the main measures to secure the nation. In his views on integration he made this point explicitly: “we have our laws, we have our constitution, those also relate to the position of men and women, of gays, on issues considering the freedom of religion and defection. On all these points, my fraction does not want to make any concession to the Islamic culture”.<sup>140</sup> At the same time Rutte claimed he would never judge people based on the religion they enhance.<sup>141</sup> Again, communal rights are accepted as long as they do not conflict with individual rights. Until now it seems that also Rutte proved Freedén’s theory is accurate: there is space for other liberal cultures, but illiberal cultures need to be banned.

There is more to say about Rutte and his ways to defend the nation. In contrast to Bolkestein, Rutte also brought in immigration policies as possible protection measures. Since 2008 Rutte called for a ban on letting ‘chanceless immigrants’ into the Netherlands, because “the quarters in Dutch cities cannot cope with all the immigrants anymore”.<sup>142</sup> Immigrants are chanceless when they are not able to ‘contribute to the Dutch society immediately’ when arriving in the Netherlands, said Rutte.<sup>143</sup> They need to be banned, because chanceless immigrants easily become a new kind of underclass that can cause all kind of tensions within society. Therefore, “all measures have the goal to prevent that”.<sup>144</sup> Rutte’s focus on immigration policy most of all came forth out of economic and social motives. The ideas about individual and communal rights were not that much part of his considerations anymore when he talks about immigration restrictions. In fact, they better suit with theories about how Christian democratic nationalism tries to secure the nation by focussing on the communal interest. The theory of David Miller partly provides an excuse for this ideological overlap but considering earlier comments of Rutte and Bolkestein about a plurality of religion and a lack of focus on

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<sup>139</sup> Bolkestein, *HTK*, 1995-1996, 24400, 44.

<sup>140</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2007-2008, 31200, 34.

<sup>141</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2010-2010, 32500, 47.

<sup>142</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2008-2009, 31700, 37.

<sup>143</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2009-2010, 32123, 49.

<sup>144</sup> Rutte, *HTK*, 2010-2011, 32500, 39-41.

the national history, Miller's theory could best be disqualified. Therefore, this mix of ideology in Rutte's views can better be seen as something personal that Rutte brought into the VVD than something that is part of the fundamentals on how liberalism implements nationalism.

#### [Summary: hosting nationalism?](#)

Considering liberal nationalism, it has now been shown that it describes the national culture with terms that are related to individual freedom and the process of becoming self-determined. Just like Neil MacCormick claimed in his theory. But Bolkestein also showed that national characteristics exist that are not in favour of self-determination. These characteristics should be ignored to reach the perfect national climate to gain self-determination. This further contradicts that liberal nationalists use the national culture as a tool for individuals to gain control over their own life.

Yael Tamir's theory is much harder to prove with the publications and debates of Bolkestein and Rutte. First of all, Tamir does not provide a clear answer on how national cultural features can become national. The liberals discussed in this chapter choose to look at historical roots as justification of current-day's norms and values. Therefore, Bolkestein and Rutte both seem to fit better in the theory of Andrew Vincent and Michael Freedon about how Christian democracy deals with questions of cultural origin. Another conflict with Tamir occurs when Bolkestein and Rutte explain how they think non-Dutch people can adapt the national culture. Firstly, it seems that they offered people the choice to become part of the nation, as Tamir said. But both Bolkestein and Rutte put some restrictions on this choice. Bolkestein's condition was that illiberal cultures should not be given any chance in the Dutch liberal culture. This is still in rhyme with Tamir, who gave the same exception on his rule. But Rutte gave some further restrictions based on economic and social criteria that are not covered in Tamir's assumptions. This might prove a gap in Tamir's theory or a lack of liberalism in both Bolkestein's and Rutte's visions.

The last theory about liberal nationalism came from Michael Freedon and handles about individual and communal rights as core resource of how to protect the nation. Both Bolkestein and Rutte showed that indeed, individual and communal rights form a central part of the liberal way of protecting the Dutch nation, but they also illustrated that these two kinds of rights are often in conflict with each other. In the end, both VVD-leaders choose to prioritise the individual rights, that belong to the Dutch nation, above rights of other cultural groups as soon as communal rights conflict with individual rights. Freedon is therefore only partly validated by the two liberal leaders, because his theory did not mention the conflict between individual

and communal rights. Next to that, for Rutte individual rights were not the only answer: he also saw a solution in stopping the immigration of chanceless immigrants, because they form a threat for both the national economy and society. This kind of argument would fit better in Christian democratic nationalism, that wants to protect the community as a whole.

In this chapter showed that the theories of MacCormick and Freeden do apply on the cases of Bolkestein and Rutte. But Tamir's theory has some struggles in matching the reality of the VVD-leaders. Further, the discussed theories do not provide a total cover of all liberal visions of the nation. Especially Rutte seemed to be hard to get into a frame, as his plans for immigration restrictions exemplify. In the end Bolkestein and Rutte demonstrated that there is a certain general liberal way of hosting nationalism, but ideology on itself does not explain all aspects of the nation as seen through the eyes of the VVD-leaders.

## Conclusion

Coming at the end of this research it is time to bring all outcomes together and answer the question on how political parties host nationalism. The definition of nationalism used during this inquiry is a mass-appealing vision that includes a justification and a plan of action on prioritising a specific cultural potential entity above other nations. Michael Freeden showed that this 'vision' can be every kind of ideology. Further, he wrote that nationalism always needs a hosting ideology, because nationalism cannot exist on its own. Every ideology, and therefore every political party based on an ideology, can host nationalism.

To detect this ideology of nationalism in politics several questions should be asked. First of all, what is part of the national culture that is worth to prioritise? Secondly, how did these items become part of the national culture? And finally, how does one want to prioritise the national culture and thus secure it from other nations? While answering these questions with debates and publications of political leaders, it is necessary to keep in mind these leaders led their party during different times. The historical context, but also a close reading on motivations for nationalism itself, are essential to understand how a political party hosted nationalism.

The first ideology discussed was Christian democracy. In chapter two we have seen that various scholars put their light upon the hosting capacities of the ideology. Andrew Vincent and Michael Freeden claimed that central to Christian democrats' views on the fundamentals of the nation were the traditions and conventions that formed it. To answer the question of the origins of the national characteristics, Andrew Vincent is convinced that, for Christian democrats, the 'roots of the past' are the sources for these traditions. To secure the national culture Michael Freeden thought that Christian democrats would focus on the community as a whole to tackle possible threats. Two of the CDA-leaders, Jan-Peter Balkenende and Sybrand Buma, showed how Christian democracy can accommodate nationalism in the way Vincent and Freeden had in mind. Indeed, norms and values, rooted in the past, are essential elements of the Dutch culture. And indeed, the community should be strengthened to be able to defend the nation. One of the units that is named to defend the national culture are families, because they pass traditions down to other generations. The national threats Balkenende and Buma saw, dealt with a wide range of things, like migrant integration, international economic competition and the rise of individualism. In the end, Christian democratic nationalism does go hand in hand with the hosting theories of the named scholars.

In case of social democracy, the various theories proposed by the discussed scholars did not always seem to apply to the political reality. The only theory that fitted perfectly were the

thoughts of Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels and Otto Bauer on the focus on the social value of equality as key driver of the national culture. The two main characters of social democracy, Wim Kok and Wouter Bos, did present the value of solidarity as a national value of equality. But some vagueness appeared when Kellas discussed in his theory how one becomes part of the national culture: just ‘adapting social and cultural norms that belong to the value of equality’. Though this theory is vague and did not cover the way national values become national, Bos partly showed how it can be understood: migrants should adapt the Dutch culture as part of their integration. This adaption can best be done when natives help migrants. So, when natives show ‘solidarity’ to the ones that need to integrate. This can be the social democratic nationalist way to become part of a new culture. The last question considered how to secure the national culture. Kok simply pointed at laws and the constitution together with cultural investments as sufficient protecting instruments. Bos had a much wider look: next to cultural investments he also considered national icons, economic protection and stricter immigration rules as useful possibilities to prioritise the national community. Kok and Bos partly fit within the theory of Hroch about the focus on promoting culture as a typical social democrat way of prioritising the nation. But with his focus on laws and the constitution, Kok also fits in the way liberalism ought to secure the nation. Bos borrowed some security measures that theoretically better fit into Christian democracy because of the focus on communal interests. Though there is a vague social democrat fundament under their visions, the PvdA-leaders personally flirted with other ideologies as well.

The way liberalism hosts nationalism used to be food of thought for a number of scholars as well. First of all, liberal nationalism would characterise the nation by focussing on the process of gaining self-determination, according to Neil MacCormick. The two liberal key figures in this chapter, Frits Bolkestein and Mark Rutte, confirmed this theory: values that support the process of becoming self-dependent are seen as national values. Yael Tamir said that these values are linked with the individual freedom of choosing to belong to the nation and the rights of communities as a whole. Though Bolkestein and Rutte made it visible that these freedom of choices for both individuals and communities are part of the liberal ideology, they also showed that it is hard to put these liberal thoughts into non-contradictory visions. Both politicians placed restrictions on the choices of people that want to become part of the Dutch culture. And the immaterial culture is not really based on choices but rather on traditions and historical roots dating back from the French Revolution and the Enlightenment. For this, Bolkestein and Rutte used arguments that theoretically fit in the ideology of Christian

democracy. Individual rights also played a part in the discussion of how liberalism could prioritise the nation. According to Freedon liberalism uses individual rights and the constitution to secure the nation. But these rights did not seem enough for Rutte; he introduced restrictions on individual rights by banning chanceless immigrants from coming to the Netherlands as a way to protect the community. This does not fit in Freedon's theory anymore and would better fit in the model of Christian democracy, which emphasises communal rights over individual rights.

All cases of how political parties host nationalism come down to the following: ideology does partly influence the way nationalism is hosted, but personal factors also have a big influence on the host. The ways to accommodate nationalism distilled from the theoretical analysis in the second chapter do often fit in the way political parties shelter nationalism. One can say that ideology forms the basis that is needed to host nationalism. But that is not the entire story, because political leaders showed that a party can ignore its ideology or supplement it with ideas that would ideological better fit within other parties. In this, the expectations mentioned in the introduction are partly confirmed: theories did form a fundament to show how nationalism is hosted by other ideologies, but this fundament is not true for all ideologies in the same amount. In political action parties do differ from the theoretical basis, but to what extent deviates per party. The reasons for this deviation can be partly found in the historical contexts. But the conclusion of this research is that political leaders themselves have a big influence on how nationalism is hosted by political parties. Therefore, it is much more interesting to take a closer look on how these leaders developed through the given time period. Placing their biography next to this research provides a much richer context that just the history of some major events between 1990 and 2017. This might result in a better understanding of why one chooses to host nationalism that way.

Other interesting topics for further investigation would be to analyse the different reasons behind using nationalism in politics. This can be studied on a meta level, but it would also be interesting to see whether one ideology or party is more likely to host nationalism in one specific way than another. The same kind of inquiry can be done by looking at any differences between parties and leaders that are part of the opposition and part of the coalition. Especially the transformation of a political leader from opposition to coalition or vice versa is worth to examine intensely, because their reasons, and thus arguments, might change when they change from one role to another.

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