LONGING FOR THE GOOD OLD DAYS OF 'OUR COUNTRY': UNDERSTANDING THE TRIGGERS, FUNCTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES OF NATIONAL NOSTALGIA

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ABSTRACT

Research indicates that national nostalgia thrives across the world and is harnessed by populist radical-right parties (PRRPs) to mobilize people for their exclusionary standpoints. While national nostalgia is a timely issue, the topic has only recently started to get attention in social psychology. In this chapter, I investigate the triggers, functions and consequences of national nostalgia for present day group dynamics by integrating social psychological theories on intergroup relations, group-based emotions, and identity motivation with sociological and anthropological work on collective nostalgia and political scientific research on PRRPs. I demonstrate that, on the one hand, national nostalgia can be seen as functional and constructive for native majority members, in the sense that it helps them protect to national identity continuity in times of uncertainty and change. On the other hand, national nostalgia can be seen as a destructive force, as it results in exclusionary understandings of national identity based on historical roots and in anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiments. I demonstrate that the stronger endorsement of this nativist ideology forms an important explanation for why national nostalgia is related to a greater likelihood of PRRP voting in the Netherlands.

It is in times of danger, either from without or from within, that we come deeply conscious of our heritage…of a nostalgia … for what we think of as a happier world which we have lost (Strong, Binney, & Harris, 1974, p. 10).

Collectively, nostalgia supplies the deep links that identify a particular generation; nationally it is the source of binding social myths. It secures, and it compensates, serving…as a kind of safety valve for disappointment and frustration suffered over the loss of prized values (Hewison, 1987, p. 46).

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We live in a time of change. The mobility of people, goods and information has never been so extensive, and these developments are profoundly changing people's understanding of the world and their place in it. Specifically, mass migration to western Europe since the 1960s has led to a diversification of the populations of these societies resulting in greater plurality of lifestyles and religions. Research shows that many native majority members in these societies perceive the increasing presence of immigrants, particularly those from Muslim countries, as a threat to their national identity (Verkuyten & Zaremba, 2005; Strabac & Listhaug, 2008; Spruyt & Elchardus, 2012). In line with the quotes above, theorists of nostalgia have suggested that, in response to such threatening changes to national identity, national in-group members may develop a collective nostalgia for 'the good old days of our country' as this helps them to restore or maintain a sense of national identity continuity (Boym, 2001; Davis, 1979). Indeed, the Ipsos Global Trends Survey of 2016 shows that many people in western societies would like their country to be the way it used to be (Ipsos Mori, 2016).[1] What is more, research demonstrates that, in an attempt to mobilize voters against immigration, leaders of contemporary populist radical-right parties (PRRPs) in western Europe typically harness or even evoke such national nostalgic sentiments (Mols & Jetten, 2014). This rhetoric seems to pay off as is suggested by the electoral successes of these parties in many countries.

These recent findings and developments raise new and timely questions for social psychological research. What are the psychological triggers and functions of national nostalgia? And what are the consequences of this collective emotion for attitudes towards the national in-group, immigrant out-groups and support for PRRPs? While social psychologists have extensively studied personal nostalgia (for a review, see Sedikides, Wildschut, Routledge, & Arndt, 2015b), they have only recently started to examine the triggers, functions and consequences of collective forms of nostalgia, such as national nostalgia, for group processes and intergroup relations (Cheung, Sedikides, Wildschut, Tausch, & Ayanian, 2017; Smeekes, 2015; Smeekes et al., 2018; Smeekes, Verkuyten, & Martinovic, 2015; Wildschut, Bruder, Robertson, Van Tilburg, & Sedikides, 2014).

In this chapter, I will examine feelings of national nostalgia among national in-group members in relation to personal nostalgia, perceptions of identity continuity, exclusionary understandings of national identity, anti-immigrant prejudice, and support for PRRPs. I will discuss my research on the topic, in which I apply and integrate insights from major social psychological theories on intergroup relations, group-based emotions, and identity motivation, such as self-categorization theory (SCT; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987), intergroup emotions theory (IET; Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000) and motivated identity construction theory (MICT; Vignoles, 2011), with sociological and anthropological work on collective nostalgia and political scientific research on PRRPs. The chapter relies on a review of my previously published work as well as new and unpublished theoretical and empirical analyses. First, I will discuss the way in which we can understand national nostalgia by focusing on the distinction between personal and collective nostalgia. Subsequently, I will address the way in which national nostalgia is related to perceptions of identity continuity and how this affects attitudes towards the national in-group and immigrant out-groups. Finally, I will discuss the relationship between national nostalgia and support for PRRPs.

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[1] https://www.ipsosglobaltrends.com/longing-for-the-past/

UNDERSTANDING NATIONAL NOSTALGIA

What is national nostalgia? Historically, nostalgia — from the Greek words 'nostos' (home) and 'algia' (pain) — was seen as a medical and psychiatric disease characterized by feelings of grief and mourning as a result of being distant from one's homeland (for a review see Batcho, 2013). In the late 19th century its understanding shifted: to be nostalgic was no longer thought of in medical or geographic terms but in terms of sadness and wistful regret for the past. Being nostalgic was hence seen as an negative state as a result of a separation in time rather than space. A more positive approach to nostalgia emerged in the late 20th century as empirical studies showed that most people associated nostalgia with yearning for happy old times rather than sadness and mourning (Davis, 1979). Moreover, in this time period, nostalgia became increasingly studied by psychologists who demonstrated that this emotion mainly has positive consequences for individual well-being (for a review see Sedikides et al., 2015b). As such, nostalgia became understood as a predominantly positive, past-oriented emotion characterized by a sentimental longing for happy memories of the past.

Theorists of nostalgia from various academic disciplines have proposed that this emotion does not only pertain to personal, but also to collective memories (e.g., Cheung et al., 2017; Davis, 1979). Families, neighborhoods, generations, and even entire nations are bound together by a shared set of images and knowledge of past events, that are collectively created and shared and have not necessarily been personally experienced (Páez, Bobowik, Guissmé, Liu, & Licata, 2016; Pennebaker, Paez, & Rimé, 1997). These collective memories create a sense of common fate and hereby form the basis of developing a sense of social identity. A key function of collective memories is to give direction to social identities ("we need to feel or behave in a certain way because of our past"). A growing body of research in social psychology has demonstrated that collective memories influence the present psychological states of group members in the form of collective emotions, which subsequently inform present day intragroup and intergroup attitudes and behaviors (for a review see Páez et al., 2016; see also Figueiredo, Martinovic, Rees, & Licata, 2017).

This body of work is based on Intergroup Emotions Theory (IET; see Mackie et al., 2009), which develops key insights derived from social identity theory and self-categorization theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al., 1987). According to IET, when group membership becomes part of the psychological self, people can experience emotions based on their social identity, which function as regulators of intragroup and intergroup attitudes and behaviors. This means that people cannot only feel nostalgic for memories from their unique individual past (i.e., personal nostalgia), but also for memories related to objects, periods or events from a past that they share with fellow group members (i.e., collective nostalgia), such as their national past (i.e., national nostalgia). While the emotional experience is the same (i.e., a sentimental longing for a positively remembered past), the referent of collective nostalgia is the group rather than the individual. As such, national nostalgia can be understood as a specific form of collective nostalgia that is based on national group membership, and that is likely to regulate intragroup and intergroup attitudes and behaviors of national in-group members. More specifically, national nostalgia can be defined as sentimental longing for a positively remembered national past that was shared with fellow national in-group members: 'the good old days of our country'. Unlike personal nostalgia, collective and national nostalgia can also be experienced for a past that individuals have not experienced themselves, through the shared

knowledge of positive collective memories. Scholars argue that this "secondhand nostalgia" can be as strong and persuasive as "firsthand nostalgia" (Velikonja, 2009).

The findings of my research indicate that personal and national nostalgia can be both theoretically and empirically distinguished, across various countries (Smeekes, Psaltis, & Žeželj, 2018; Smeekes, 2015; Study 1, Smeekes et al., 2015; Study 1). To assess personal nostalgia, I asked respondents how often they longed for things from their personal past and childhood, such as their childhood toys and their school. For national nostalgia, I asked respondents how often they longed for the way things were in their country of the past, such as the way society was or the way people were. In these studies, conducted in six different countries (Serbia, Kosovo, Cyprus, Israel, Croatia, and the Netherlands)[2], I found that the two constructs loaded on two separate factors. Moreover, the correlations between personal and national nostalgia ranged from weak ($r = .27$) to moderate ($r = .49$). Taken together, this indicates that personal and collective nostalgia can be seen as distinct psychological experiences. In addition, I showed that national nostalgia can be empirically distinguished from national identification in all these contexts, which indicates that national nostalgia is not the same as feeling a sense of positive attachment to one's country.

Importantly, I observed that only national (and not personal) nostalgia was related to attitudes towards the national in-group and immigrant out-groups (Smeekes, 2015; Study 1, Smeekes et al., 2015; Study 1). These findings were in line with other research on collective nostalgia (see Wildschut et al., 2014), showing that only collective (and not personal) nostalgia had consequences for attitudes and behaviors towards the in-group. According to IET, these findings demonstrate that national nostalgia qualifies as a collective emotion as it can be differentiated from the analogous individual-level emotion of personal nostalgia and because it motivates and regulates attitudes and behavior in relation to social groups (Mackie et al., 2009).

TRIGGERS, FUNCTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES
OF NATIONAL NOSTALGIA

Scholars propose that both personal and collective nostalgia are triggered by threats to identity continuity, because this past-oriented emotion has restorative properties for the self (e.g., Davis, 1979; Sedikides, Wildschut, Routledge, & Arndt, 2015a). The reason is that in longing for the positively remembered aspects of one's past it becomes clear which aspects of identity are valued and should be preserved, which helps people to maintain or restore a sense of identity continuity. As such, psychologists propose that nostalgia can be seen as functional coping mechanism in response to threats to self-continuity.

According to social psychological work on identity motivation (Vignoles, 2011), maintaining a sense of self-continuity is a basic psychological need. It refers to having a sense of connection between one's past, present and future self. Research shows that perceived self-continuity provides an important basis for having a sense of identity (Bluck & Liao, 2013) and

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[2] Data in Serbia, Kosovo, Cyprus, Israel, Croatia, and the Netherlands for the Smeekes, Psaltis, and Žeželj (2018) study were collected within the framework of COST Action IS1205 'Social psychological dynamics of historical representations in the enlarged European Union'.

is a crucial factor for psychological well-being (Diehl, Jacobs, & Hastings, 2006; Sani, 2008). More recently, research demonstrated that people are also motivated to maintain a sense of sense of continuity of their social identity (i.e., collective continuity) because this provides them with existential security (Sani, Herrera, & Bowe, 2009) and boosts mental health and well-being (Haslam et al., 2008; Smeekes, Verkuyten, Çelebi, Acartürk, & Onkun, 2017).

In my research on collective continuity, I integrated theories of identity motivation (Vignoles, 2011) with the social identity perspective (see Turner & Reynolds, 2001) and literature on self-continuity and applied this to the study of national identity (for a review see Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015). I proposed that, since an important part of people's sense of self is derived from their memberships in social groups, this group membership should also be able to afford a sense of self-continuity. There are various groups that can provide people with a sense of self-continuity, but this is particularly likely for national groups. The reason is that nations are mainly defined and understood as communities that live together through time (e.g., Anderson, 1983; Bhaba, 1990), and are often perceived as having a shared culture and identity that is passed on from generation to generation (DeVos, 1995; Smith, 1998). Nations play an important role in the lives of individuals, and because national identities are rooted in historical and cultural heritage it is likely that self-continuity forms an important reason for why people feel attached to their national group membership. This idea is in line with theories on identity motivation, such as Motivated Identity Construction Theory (MICT; Vignoles, 2011), suggesting that people identify with groups to the extent that these groups fulfill their identity needs. The findings of my research indeed confirmed that the sense of self-continuity that people derive from being a national group member forms an important and unique motivational basis for national identification, next to the identity motives of belonging and self-esteem (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2013; Study 1). I also showed people are particularly likely to identify with national groups that are seen to possess essentialist continuity (i.e., the perception that core features of the group's culture and identity are stable and continuous over time, see Sani et al., 2007) as this satisfies their psychological need for self-continuity (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2014a).

As self-continuity is a basic psychological need (Vignoles, 2011), people are strongly affected when this feeling is disrupted. Studies show that feelings of personal self-discontinuity are related to impaired psychological functioning and even suicide (Chandler & Proulx, 2008; Jetten, O'Brien, & Trindall, 2002). People can also experience threats to the continuity of their social identity, such as when they fear that cultural values and traditions of their national in-group might be lost (Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2013; Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2014b; Jetten & Wohl, 2012). According to MICT (Vignoles, 2011), situations that elicit threats to basic psychological needs will lead to identity coping strategies. Recent work shows that personal nostalgia functions as a coping mechanism to deal with threats to personal self-continuity (Sedikides et al., 2015b), because it bolsters feelings of social connectedness (Sedikides et al., 2016). The theoretical reasoning is that through nostalgia people re-experience important social bonds and hereby reestablishes a symbolic connection with significant others, which gives them the feeling that their relational self is temporally enduring.

The findings of my recent research indicate that national nostalgia operates in a similar fashion. In a cross-cultural study, based on a cross-national survey study in 27 countries

(Smeekes et al., 2018)[3], the general pattern of results showed that national nostalgia was a response to feelings of fear and uncertainty about the country's future (i.e., collective angst), and that these stronger feelings of national nostalgia subsequently helped national in-group members to maintain a sense of collective continuity by strengthening feelings of social connectedness with national in-group members. These findings were in line with previous work showing that collective nostalgia strengthens a sense of in-group belonging (Wildschut et al., 2014). The results of this cross-cultural study are in line with sociological, anthropological and historical accounts of collective nostalgia (e.g., Boym, 2001; Davis, 1979; Hewison, 1987; Milligan, 2003), arguing that it is a response to threats to collective identity continuity as helps to preserve or restore a sense of collective identity. The proposed reason is that, based on the awareness of a shared past, collective nostalgia enables people to reestablish a connection with fellow in-group members, which gives them the feeling that their in-group identity has continuity over time. More specifically, according to Davis (1979), collective nostalgia strengthens a renewed sense of social identity based on the awareness of shared past experiences in order to mend the lost one. For national nostalgia, this means that longing for the 'good old days of our country' helps people to preserve their national identity in contexts of continuity threat, because becoming aware of the positive and valued elements of their commonly remembered national past fosters a renewed sense of national identity based on the social connection with fellow 'old-timers' (i.e., those national members that were part of this positively remembered national past). In this way, national nostalgia can have positive consequences for the national in-group.

However, by fostering a sense of national identity and belonging that is based on the past, national nostalgia also marks differences between the old "us" that share a positively remembered past and the new "them" who are not part of this past. This is in line with propositions from self-categorization theory (SCT; Turner et al., 1987), suggesting that when a shared social identity is salient individuals tend to see and define themselves as interchangeable representatives of their shared social category membership (rather than as individual persons), and also tend to perceptually accentuate intragroup similarities and intergroup differences on relevant dimensions of social comparison. Applying this to the case of national identity, it means that it is likely that national nostalgia fosters processes of social categorization based on the national past, whereby native majority members start to define themselves as national in-group members on the basis of their old-timer social identity in contrast to national out-group members ('newcomers') who have arrived later from elsewhere. This process of social categorization is likely to result in exclusionary understandings of national identity that may hamper intergroup relations, or as Svetlana Boym puts it in her seminal book on collective nostalgia,

> …the moment we try to repair "longing" with a particular "belonging" — the apprehension of loss with a rediscovery of identity and especially of a national community and a unique and pure homeland — we often part ways and put an end to mutual understanding. (Boym, 2001, p. XV)

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[3] North America (Canada, and the US), South America (Chile, Brazil), Europe (Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, UK), Asia (China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, India, Pakistan), Middle East (Iran), Africa (South Africa), and Oceania (Australia).

The findings of my research indicate that national nostalgia among native majority members can have negative consequences for the evaluation of immigrant out-groups, because it tends to foster exclusionary understandings of national identity based on the past. In my studies among native Dutch majority members (Smeekes, 2015; Smeekes et al., 2015; Smeekes & Verkuyten, 2015), I examined the relationship between national nostalgia and two different exclusionary understandings of national identity that are both based on the distinction between national 'old-timers' and 'newcomers': (1) autochthony and (2) ethnic nationhood. Autochthony is an anthropological concept (e.g., Ceuppens, 2011; Ceuppens & Geschiere, 2005; Geschiere, 2009) that has recently been introduced into the social psychological literature (see Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2013) and can be defined as a belief that assigns ownership and the related rights and entitlements to the group that is considered the first inhabitant of a territory (i.e., primo-occupant; Geschiere, 2009). Just like first possession of an object is generally accepted as a basis for claiming ownership (Friedman, 2008), 'being here first' is considered a legitimate argument to claim ownership of the respective land (Geschiere, 2009). Applying this to national identity, autochthony and the related sense of ownership define national belonging as being historically rooted in place marking differences between 'firstcomers' and 'newcomers' of a national territory (Geschiere, 2009). The notion of autochthony is particularly salient in the Netherlands where it was introduced as a policy term in the 1980s, in order to make a distinction between natives (autochthones) and immigrants (allochthones).

Where autochthony forms an exclusionary understanding of national identity based on place, the concept of ethnic nationhood marks differences between national old-timers and newcomers on the basis of common origin and blood ties. This concept also figures prominently in literature on nationalism and citizenship (e.g., Brubaker, 1992; Smith, 2001; Weldon, 2006), as it defines the national group and hereby indicates the bounds of national sovereignty and equality. A belief in ethnic nationhood reflects the perception that one only truly belongs to the country if one is of native descent. This belief excludes newcomers from national in-group membership as they do not fit the ancestry requirement. As such, both autochthony and ethnic nationhood are exclusionary understandings of national identity based on historical roots. Research shows that these concepts are empirically distinct and are both strongly related to anti-immigrant attitudes (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2013; Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2015).

The findings of my prior research indicated that national nostalgia among national in-group members has negative consequences for the evaluation of immigrant out-groups and Muslim expressive rights (Smeekes, 2015; Smeekes et al., 2015; Smeekes et al., 2018), and that stronger beliefs in autochthony and ethnic nationhood form an important explanation for these relationships (Smeekes, 2015; Smeekes et al., 2015). Specifically, in the cross-cultural study in 27 countries (Smeekes et al., 2018), I found that national nostalgia was related to anti-immigrant attitudes in 20 countries and that this relationship was present for all 12 western countries in the sample. Moreover, in a series of studies among a variety of samples of native Dutch adults (Smeekes, 2015; Smeekes et al., 2015), I found support for autochthony and ethnic nationhood as explanatory mechanisms linking national nostalgia to prejudice towards immigrants and opposition to Muslim expressive rights (such as wearing a headscarf and building mosques).

Although most of these studies were based on a cross-sectional design, I also conducted two experimental studies in which national nostalgia was manipulated. One study was conducted among native Dutch university students and was part of a previously published paper

(Smeekes et al., 2015, Study 3). This study and showed that the salience of national nostalgia increased beliefs in autochthony, which subsequently translated into stronger opposition to Muslim expressive rights. Recently, I collected new data among a representative sample of native Dutch adults ($N = 516$)[4], in which I manipulated national nostalgia in a similar fashion. This new data forms part of an additional study of this chapter that has not been previously published. In a between-subjects design, participants were randomly assigned to a national nostalgia or control condition. In the national nostalgia condition participants received and completed the following reading and writing task:

> According to the dictionary 'nostalgia' means a sentimental longing for past; those good old days. People sometimes sentimentally long for the Netherlands of the past.. For instance, they long for the way Dutch people were and the way Dutch society looked like. Please bring to mind the good and nice things from the Netherlands of the past that you long for the most. Which things from the Dutch past evoke nostalgia in you? How do you feel when you think about this? Please write down what you miss from the Netherlands of the past and how this makes you feel nostalgic (use max.4 sentences).

Similar to my previously published experimental study (Smeekes et al., 2015, Study 3), and following research on personal nostalgia (e.g., Iyer & Jetten, 2011), I designed a control condition that allowed me to differentiate the effect of national nostalgia from that of a more general reflection on the national past and from the mere salience of national identity. Specifically, in this control condition participants received the following reading and writing task:

> Please try to envisage an event that made the news last year and that involved the Netherlands. Try to think about this event as if you were an eye witness. Specifically, try to envisage this event as if you were a historian who wants to know all facts about this event. Please write about this event below as factual, neutral and detailed as possible (as in a court case). Try to avoid emotional wording (use max. 4 sentences).

Participants subsequently completed three manipulation check items assessed on a scale from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*): 'I feel nostalgic when I think about the Netherlands of the past', 'I long for the Netherlands of the past', and 'I am not nostalgic for the Netherlands of the past' (reverse scored). These three items were combined into a scale ($\alpha = .87$). Next, I assessed prejudice towards immigrants and Muslims using the well-known feeling thermometer scale. On a 11-pointscale ranging from 0^0 to 100^0 (with 10^0 increments between two adjacent scale points), participants had to indicate how positive (i.e., warm) their feelings were towards immigrants and Muslims in the Netherlands.

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[4] This experimental study was part of a larger online data collection in February 2018 among a representative sample ($N = 815$) of the native Dutch adult population by a Dutch research agency (GfK), commissioned by the European Research Centre on Migrations and Ethnic Relation (ERCOMER) from Utrecht University. Participants received the questionnaire by means of an e-mail sent by GfK. They were randomly assigned to eight different versions of the questionnaire, and we only selected those who completed the version that contained the measures for the current study ($N = 516$). Respondents were drawn from a panel maintained by GfK, and the characteristics of the panel and the sample closely match those of the general native Dutch adult population. The final sample consisted of 47.9% women. Ages ranged between 18 and 92 ($M = 52.68$, $SD = 16.51$).

One-way ANOVA showed that there was a main effect of the national nostalgia manipulation on feelings of national nostalgia (i.e., the manipulation check), $F(1, 515) = 8.05$ $p = .005$. Participants displayed higher feelings of national nostalgia in the national nostalgia condition ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 1.36$) than in the control condition ($M = 3.99$, $SD = 1.29$). This indicates that the manipulation was successful. In addition, one-way MANOVA showed that there was a significant main effect of the national nostalgia manipulation on prejudice towards immigrants, $F(1, 514) = 5.14$, $p = .024$, and a marginally significant effect on prejudice towards Muslims, $F(1, 514) = 8.05$ $p = .096$. Participants displayed colder feelings towards immigrants and Muslims in the national nostalgia condition ($M_{immigrants} = 5.63$, $SD_{immigrants} = 2.16$; $M_{Muslims} = 4.86$, $SD_{Muslims} = 2.23$) than in the control condition ($M_{immigrants} = 6.08$, $SD_{immigrants} = 2.28$; $M_{Muslims} = 5.22$, $SD_{Muslims} = 2.48$).[5] These results replicate the positive link between national nostalgia and anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim prejudice among a representative sample of native Dutch adults.

Taken together, the findings of this cross-sectional and experimental work are in line with theoretical and qualitative work on collective nostalgia (Boym, 2001; Davis, 1979; Kasinitz & Hillyard, 1995; Milligan, 2003), as it indicates that national nostalgia among native majority members can hamper intergroup relations in culturally diverse settings, because it fosters a renewed and exclusionary sense of national identity based on shared historical roots. Although such renewed and exclusionary understandings of national identity may be functional for native majority members in the sense that it helps them protect to national identity continuity (see Smeekes & Vekuyten, 2015), it can also be destructive for intergroup relations as definitions of national identity based on historical roots foster opposition to those who were not part of this positively valued past (i.e., immigrants/newcomers).

NATIONAL NOSTALGIA AND SUPPORT FOR POPULIST RIGHT-WING PARTIES

Scholars have argued that national nostalgia is an important part of the ideology of populist radical right parties (PRRPs) (Betz & Johnson, 2004; Steenvoorden & Harteveld, 2018) and that this forms an explanation for why these parties are successful (Mols & Jetten, 2014). However, the national nostalgic feature of PRRP ideology is rarely studied empirically with respect to voters. That is, while there are many studies trying to explain the support for these parties, there are no studies that have looked at feelings of national nostalgia as a characteristic of PRRP voters when explaining the electoral potential of these parties. In this final part of the chapter, I will investigate whether and why national nostalgia is related to PRRP support in the Netherlands among Dutch natives. Based on an integration of theory from political science about the link between national nostalgia and PRRP ideology with my previous work on national nostalgia and exclusionary notions of national identity and anti-immigrant attitudes, I expect that national nostalgia relates to more support for PRRPs because it strengthens support for their nativist ideology in the form of ethnic nationhood and anti-Muslim sentiments.

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[5] I repeated the 2-way MANOVA including age, gender and education as controls, but this did not alter the general pattern of results. I also examined whether the effects of the national nostalgia manipulation were dependent on age, but observed no significant interactions for both dependent measures. The results of these robustness checks are available upon request.

In the political science literature, PRRPs are labeled as reactionary as they often express the desire to return to a mythical and idealized version of the national past in which the country was (supposedly) still culturally and ethnically homogeneous (Minkenberg, 2000; Betz & Johnson, 2004; Rydgren, 2004). Taggart (2004) refers to this nostalgic portrayal of the national community as the 'heartland' – a conception of an ideal world that is constructed retrospectively from the past – and proposes that this forms the key element of the populism of these parties. Populism is considered to be a central component of PRRP ideology (Golder, 2016) and is most often defined as an ideology that views society as divided into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups ("us" vs. "them"), "the virtuous and pure people" versus the "corrupt elite" and that proposes that politics should be an expression of the general will of the people (Mudde, 2007). In the case of contemporary PRRPs, it has recently been suggested that there is an additional group that is part of "them", namely dangerous "others" that threaten the well-being of the people (Marzouki & McDonnell, 2016). Hence, contemporary PRRPs' populism can be understood as pitting "us" (the virtuous people) against "them" (a set of elites and dangerous "others" who deprive the sovereign people of their rights, values, prosperity, identity and voice) (Albertazzi & McDonnel, 2007). However, in this populism, "the people" are not real but imagined and Taggart (2004) proposes that the way such parties define "us" depends on their understanding of the heartland. For contemporary PRRPs, the heartland consists of a virtuous and morally upright national community that is culturally and ethnically homogeneous. This heartland hence excludes groups that were not part of this idealized past, such as immigrants. Unlike utopias, the (albeit imagined) good old days of this heartland have already been lived and returning is therefore portrayed as feasible.

This nostalgic celebration of the heartland is used by these parties to increase the persuasiveness of their nativist ideology (Marzouki & McDonnell, 2016; Mols & Jetten, 2014). Nativism combines ethnic nationalism with xenophobia and is considered another key ideological feature of PRRPs (Golder, 2016). It holds that "states should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group ("the nation") and that nonnative elements (persons and ideas) are fundamentally threatening to the homogeneous nation-state" (Mudde, 2007, p.19). The nostalgic exclusionary populism of contemporary PRRPs is used to argue for re-asserting native identities and symbols, which are portrayed as being under threat from elites and dangerous "others". In this rhetoric, the main dangerous "others" are almost always immigrants and, in particular, Muslims. Muslims are depicted as wanting to impose their incompatible ways of life on the native majority and are said to be supported by liberal elites, who are accused of favoring minority rights over those of "the people" (Marzouki & McDonnell, 2016). Many PRRPs, including the Lega Nord in Italy, the Tea Party in the US, the French Front National (FN), the Swiss people's party, the Austrian FPÖ and the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV), have actively participated in campaigns against the construction of mosques and minarets, claiming that these symbols undermine the native community's territory and identity.

RELATION OF NATIONAL NOSTALGIA TO ESTABLISHED THEORIES ON PRRP VOTING

The dominant approaches from the demand-side perspective (i.e., the perspective of voters) for explaining support for PRRPs are economic grievances (economic inequality and insecurity) and cultural grievances (clashing cultural values) (Golder, 2016; Inglehart & Norris, 2016). Traditional accounts of both economic and cultural grievance explanations for PRRP support stem from the modernization perspective, where voting for these parties is presented as a reaction to both economic and cultural changes related to modernization processes (for detailed accounts of this perspective see Golder, 2016; Inglehart & Norris, 2016). Economic modernization accounts focus on grievances that emerged after the shift to a globalized and postindustrial economy, which has caused certain professional groups (such as manual workers) to lose human capital. Cultural modernization accounts emphasize the transition to a postmodern society and the rise of progressive values (e.g., open-mindedness towards different cultures and lifestyles, gender equality, same-sex marriage, secular values) which is proposed to have unleashed a cultural backlash or 'silent counter-revolution' among those with traditional values who feel left behind by these progressive cultural tides (Inglehart & Norris, 2016). Individuals who are unable to cope with these rapid economic and cultural societal changes – the modernization losers – are proposed to vote for PRRPs as they promote traditional and authoritarian values and protection of economically vulnerable groups. Hence, from a modernization perspective, the national nostalgia of PRRP voters would reflect a longing for the good old days of our past in which people still held traditional values and had lives that were economically secure.

However, it is difficult to reconcile the cultural modernization account with the fact that several contemporary PRRPs in western Europe, such as the Dutch PVV and the French FN, claim to defend liberal secular values (such as gender equality and homosexuality) against the growing threat of Islam, which is portrayed as a political and totalitarian ideology that is incompatible with the 'Judeo-Christian' western culture (Hafez, 2014). In addition, while the typical PRRP voter from a modernization perspective is older (and therefore has more traditional values) more recent research indicates PRRP support is more often prevalent among younger people (Arzheimer & Carter, 2006; Lucassen & Lubbers, 2012). Moreover, in contrast to the economic modernization account, research indicates that PRRPs are often also supported in times of economic prosperity and by people with higher levels of socio-economic status as they have 'more to lose' (Minkenberg, 2000; Mols & Jetten, 2016).

More contemporary accounts of the economic and cultural grievance explanations (rooted in social psychological theories of realistic group conflict; see Riek, Mania, & Gaertner, 2006, for a meta-analysis) are better able to explain the current electoral appeal of these parties from a demand-side perspective. According to these theories both economic and cultural grievances can emerge as a result of competition over material and symbolic resources. This means that groups can compete over conflicting economic interests (such as jobs, housing, welfare distribution) and cultural ones (such values and traditions). Under these competitive conditions, in-group members are likely to search for a scapegoat (an out-group) that is to blame for their grievances and therefore develop perceptions of threat and negative out-group attitudes. Contemporary PRRPs exploit both these grievances by linking (particularly Muslim) immigrants to economic hardship and cultural ways of life that are incompatible with those of the native population.

Several studies have shown that, although both economic and cultural threats matter for PRRP voting, cultural threats are more important (Lucassen & Lubbers, 2010; Ivarsflaten, 2005). The reason is that PRRPs have become the issue owners of the nativist stance. While

they espouse this nativism as the basis for all their policies (including economic ones, such as welfare chauvinism) it is most strongly directed towards protecting ethnic homogeneity and (reducing) the cultural threats by (Muslim) immigrant groups that undermine the identity of the native majority. In other words, PRRPs have become issue owners of cultural concerns related to national identity and immigration, rather than economic ones, such as unemployment and taxes. Economic issues are often owned by other mainstream parties.

Earlier in this chapter I explained how PRRPs use national nostalgia to increase the persuasiveness of their nativist ideology. As such, national nostalgia can be understood a new element within the cultural grievance explanation for PRRP success. It reflects grievances over the loss of the cherished heartland that was ethnically and culturally homogeneous, hereby fostering support for PRRPs who claim to 'give the country back' to its original inhabitants by fighting against nonnative elements, such as immigrants (Mols & Jetten, 2014). To my knowledge, there have been no empirical studies that have looked at the relationship between feelings of national nostalgia and PRRP support, and whether this can be explained by the endorsement of nativist stances. However, my previous experimental work discussed earlier in this chapter showed that national nostalgia can trigger nativist stances in the form of exclusionary understandings of nationhood (i.e., autochthony) and anti-Muslim attitudes. Moreover, research has demonstrated that anti-immigrant attitudes are one of the most important causes of PRRP voting (e.g., Ivarsflaten, 2008; Werts, Scheepers, & Lubbers, 2012). In addition, research in the field of political science on societal unease (i.e., a concern about the precarious state of society) (Steenvoorden, 2015) - a construct related to national nostalgia - proposes that such broader and more abstract concerns about society inspire grievances with regard to more specific and concrete issues, such as opposition to immigration. Taking these findings together, it is likely that the broader feelings of national nostalgia experienced by voters increases the electoral success of PRRPs by strengthening support for their more concrete nativist stances. I examine these relationships in the context of the Netherlands and predict that national nostalgia among Dutch natives is related to a higher likelihood of PRRP voting, because it relates to stronger endorsement of its nativist ideology in the form of ethnic nationhood and anti-Muslim sentiments.

In the Netherlands, there is one successful PRRP party called the PVV (literally the Party for Freedom). Established in 2006, in the elections of the same year, the PVV gained 9 of the 150 parliamentary seats. In the 2010 elections, the party won 24 seats, with 10% of the votes, becoming the third largest party in the country. In the 2017 elections, the PVV won 21 seats, becoming the second largest party (after the liberal VVD with 31 seats) in the Dutch second chamber. The leader and only member of the party is Geert Wilders, widely known for his strong anti-Islam stances. An analysis of Wilder's political speeches by Mols and Jetten (2014) shows how similar to other PRRPs in Europe, the PVV uses a rhetoric of national nostalgia to mobilize voters against immigration.

METHOD

Data and Participants

This study used data collected in December 2011 and January 2012 ($N = 928$ and $N = 802$) by a Dutch research agency (Kantar TNS), commissioned by the European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relation (ERCOMER) from Utrecht University. The data were collected in two separate data collections among different samples. Both databases included corresponding measures for the variables used in the study and were therefore merged. Kantar TNS maintains a large database of people who can be approached for a survey, and a random subset of native Dutch people received an invitation to respond to the online questionnaire. The participants are representative of the Dutch population in terms of age, gender, education, household size and region of residence (Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2013; Smeekes, 2015). As the study only focuses on Dutch natives, thirteen respondents that indicated that one or more of their parents was not of Dutch descent were excluded from the analyses. This resulted in a final sample size of 1730 respondents. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 88 ($M =$ 50.23, $SD = 17.16$), and 48.8% was female.[6]

Measures

National Nostalgia

The independent variable national nostalgia measured the degree to which participants longed for the national past. It was assessed with a combination of one item that was measured in both datasets: "I long for the Netherlands of the past" and three additional items that were only assessed in the second dataset ("I get nostalgic when I think back of the Netherlands in past times", "I often think back about the good old days of the country", and "I experience nostalgic feelings when I hear Dutch music from the past"). These items were derived from my previous work (e.g., Smeekes et al., 2015). In the first dataset, the answer options were on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *never,* 2 = *hardly*, 3 = *sometimes*, 4 = *often*, 5 = *very often*), and in the second dataset, a 7-point scale was used ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree)*. The latter answer options were recoded into a 5-point scale and these items were combined with the item in the first dataset, resulting in a mean score of national nostalgia in the combined dataset.

Nativist Ideology

I assessed PRRP nativist ideology with two separate constructs (the mediators) that were both based on items rated on 7-point scales ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree)*. The first construct taps into the *ethnic nationhood* component of nativism and was based on the following two items: "A real Dutchman is someone who is originally Dutch" and "A real Dutchman is someone who has Dutch ancestors". These two items were combined into a scale ($r = .87$).

The second construct, *Muslim threat*, focused on the xenophobic and anti-Muslim component of PRRP nativism and was based on existing items of perceived cultural threat by Muslims (e.g., Velasco González et al., 2008): "Muslims in the Netherlands undermine the

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[6] These datasets have been used separately in my previous work on national nostalgia (Smeekes, 2015), but none of reported measures has been examined in relation to PRRP voting. In addition, the relationship between national nostalgia and Muslim threat has also not been examined before. I did examine the relation between national nostalgia and ethnic nationhood using these datasets (Smeekes, 2015; Studies 2 and 3), but I tested this separately in the two datasets (instead of using the merged data file).

traditional Dutch way of life", "The continuity of Dutch norms and values is threatened by Muslims", and "Muslims' way of life threatens the continuity of Dutch identity" (α = .95). However, in the first dataset, a total of 459 participants received a version of the questionnaire that did not include the items to assess Muslim threat, and their values were hence missing by design. Therefore, I constructed an alternative measure of *anti-Muslim attitudes* that was based on feeling thermometer measures completed by all participants in both datasets (*N* = 1730). In both datasets, attitudes towards the four largest non-Western immigrant groups in the Netherlands (Turks, Moroccans, Surinamese, and Antilleans) were measured using the well-known feeling thermometers. On a 11-point scale ranging from 0° and 11 for 100° (with 10° increments between two adjacent scale points), participants had to indicate how positive (i.e., warm) their feelings were towards each of these groups. In the Netherlands, almost all Turkish and Moroccan immigrants adhere to Islam. I therefore created a scale for *anti-Muslim attitudes* by combining the feeling thermometers towards these two Muslim immigrant groups and recoded the items so that a higher score stands for more anti-Muslim attitudes.

PRRP Voting

The dependent variable was measured with the question: "Which political party appeals most strongly to you?". The answer categories included all the Dutch political parties in parliament, additionally, participants could select the option "other" and an option "I don't know/no answer". Participants that preferred the Dutch PRRP *Party for Freedom* (PVV) got the score "1" and all other party preferences were coded as "0".

Control Variables

As control variables, I first included a measure of *social class*, which consists of a combination between highest obtained educational level and profession, and was measured on a scale from 1 (*Low*) to 5 (*High*).[7] Moreover, I included straightforward measures of age and gender (coded as 1 = *male*, 0 = *female*).

RESULTS

Descriptive Findings

Concerning PRRP voting, 11.7% (*N* = 202) of the respondents indicated PVV as their preferred political party. Table 1 reports the means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations for the continuous variables used in the model. Correlations between the main concepts in the model were all significant and in the expected direction. For national nostalgia, people scored on average below the neutral midpoint of the scale $t(1729)$ = -18.15, $p < .001$, indicating that they had relatively low feelings of national nostalgia. People scored higher than the midpoint of the scale for ethnic nationhood, $t(1729) = 10.84$, $p < .001$, indicating that native Dutch on average endorse this conception of nationhood. For both Muslim threat

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[7] This measure is widely used in marketing research in the Netherlands. It is based on a matrix distinguishing 25 categories of profession and 8 levels of education. More information (in Dutch) about the construction of this measure can be found at https://moa04.artoo.nl/clou-moaweb-images/images/bestanden/pdf/samenvatting_Sociale_Klasse.pdf.

and anti-Muslim attitudes, people scored somewhat above the neutral midpoint of the scale ($t(1271) = 1.66$, $p = .097$ and $t(1729) = 15.51$, $p < .001$, respectively), indicating that people on average perceived Muslims as somewhat threatening and had somewhat negative attitudes towards this out-group.

Table 1. Bivariate correlations between continuous measures

	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. National nostalgia	2.53	1.07	-	.28***	.39***	.23***	-.26***	.11***
2. Ethnic nationhood	4.45	1.73		-	.48***	.35***	-.24***	.08**
3. Muslim threat	4.08	1.65			-	.58***	-.29***	.01
4. anti-Muslim attitudes	6.72	1.94				-	-.24***	-.07**
5. Social class	3.43	1.18					-	.05*
6. Age	50.23	17.16						-

Main Analyses

I performed a logistic regression mediation analysis to test the prediction that national nostalgia is related to a higher likelihood of PRRP voting, via ethnic nationhood and Muslim threat. I conducted this analysis using the PROCESS macro (version 3.1; Model 4) in SPSS 24.0 designed by Hayes (2012), which allows for having a dichotomous outcome measure. In this model all (mediational) paths were estimated simultaneously while controlling for social class, age and gender. Due to the missing values by design on the Muslim threat scale, this model was tested on a sample of 1271 respondents of which 11.6% ($N = 148$) voted for the PRRP. The model results are presented in Figure 1. As expected, national nostalgia was positively related to both elements of nativist ideology and also to a greater likelihood of PRRP voting. Both ethnic nationhood and Muslim threat were also positively related to a greater likelihood of PRRP voting. The indirect effects in this model were estimated using bootstrapping procedures (5000 samples). There were significant positive indirect effects of national nostalgia on PRRP voting via ethnic belonging (B = .043, LLCI = .001, ULCI = .098) and Muslim threat (B = .344, LLCI = .245, ULCI = .473).[8]

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[8] In this model, social class was negatively related to ethnic nationhood (B = -.273, $p < .001$) and Muslim threat (B = -.289, $p < .001$) and related to a lower likelihood to vote for the PVV (B = -.243, $p < .001$). Age was positively related to ethnic nationhood (B = -..007, $p = .007$), unrelated to Muslim threat (B = -.001, $p = .600$) and related to a lower likelihood to vote for the PVV (B = -.018, $p = .001$). Gender was unrelated to ethnic nationhood (B = .069, $p = .453$) and PVV voting (B = .307, $p = .119$), but positively related to Muslim threat (B = .251, $p = .003$), with males perceiving higher levels of Muslim threat than females.

.20*
.33***

Nativist ideology

National nostalgia

.31***
.37***

Ethnic nationhood

.15**
.25***

PRRP voting

.51***
.40***
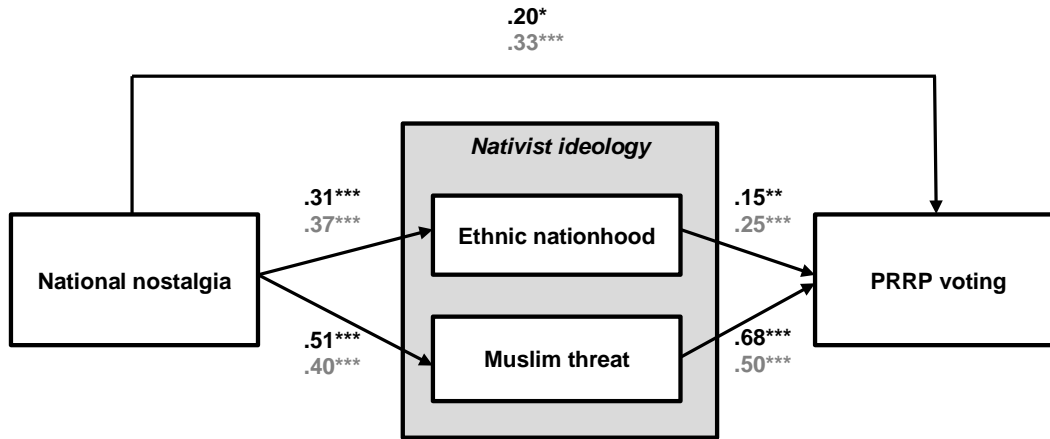
Muslim threat

.68***
.50***

Figure 1. Logistic regression mediation model: Influence of national nostalgia on PRRP voting, via ethnic nationhood and Muslim threat (controlling for social class, gender and age). Path-coefficients are unstandardized estimates, where those printed in black indicate the results from original model and those printed in grey indicate the results for the first robustness check mode.

As a first robustness check, I tested the model among the full sample of 1730 respondents by replacing the missing values on the Muslim threat scale with the mean. These results are also presented in Figure 1. Although the coefficients changed somewhat in size the pattern of results is similar to the original model. There were again significant positive indirect effects of national nostalgia on PRRP voting via ethnic nationhood (B = .091, LLCI = .045, ULCI = .148) and Muslim threat (B = .203, LLCI = .137, ULCI = .280).

As a second robustness check, I tested the model among the full sample of 1730 using the alternative measure for anti-Muslim attitudes. These results are presented in Figure 2. Although the coefficients changed somewhat in size the pattern of results is similar to the original model. There were again significant positive indirect effects of national nostalgia on PRRP voting via ethnic belonging (B = .109, LLCI = .062, ULCI = .167) and anti-Muslim attitudes (B = .073, LLCI = .039, ULCI = .115).

.40*

Nativist ideology

National nostalgia

.37***

Ethnic nationhood

.30**

PRRP voting

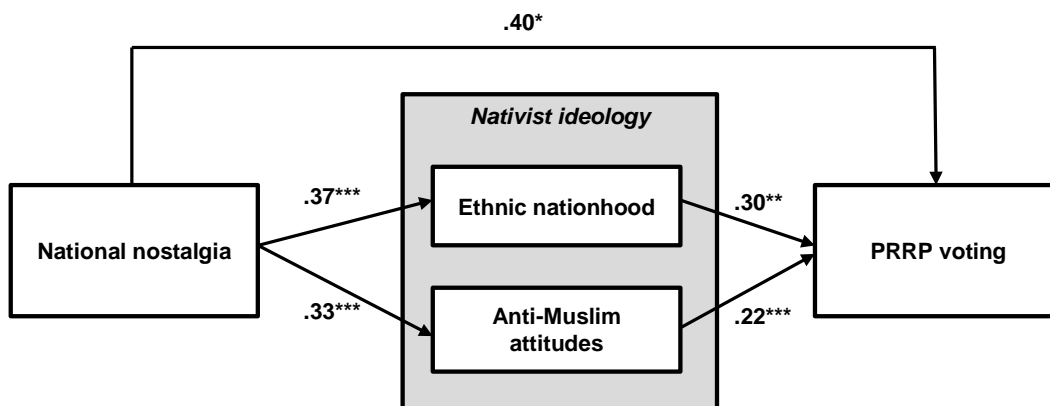**.33*****

Anti-Muslim attitudes

.22***

Figure 2. Logistic regression mediation model: Influence of national nostalgia on PRRP voting, via ethnic nationhood and anti-Muslim attitudes (controlling for social class, gender and age). Path-coefficients are unstandardized estimates.

Taken together, the results of these robustness checks confirm the findings of the original model and indicate that national nostalgia among Dutch natives is related to a greater likelihood of PRRP voting, because it relates to stronger endorsement of these parties nativist ideology (ethnic nationhood and xenophobia in the form of anti-Muslim sentiments). Importantly, these relationships are observed while controlling for other well-known indicators of PRRP voting (age, gender, and social class).

CONCLUSION

Research indicates that national nostalgia thrives across the world and is harnessed by populist radical-right parties (PRRPs) to mobilize people for their exclusionary standpoints (Ipsos, 2016; Mols & Jetten, 2014). While this suggests that national nostalgia is a timely issue, the topic has only recently started to get attention in social psychology. In this chapter, I studied the triggers, functions and consequences of national nostalgia for group dynamics by integrating social psychological theories on intergroup relations, group-based emotions, and identity motivation with sociological and anthropological work on collective nostalgia and political scientific research on PRRPs. More specifically, I focused on feelings of national nostalgia among national in-group members in relation to personal nostalgia, perceptions of identity continuity, exclusionary understandings of national identity, anti-immigrant prejudice, and support for PRRPs.

First, I discussed findings from prior work, including several of my own studies, showing that personal and national nostalgia are both theoretically and empirically distinct psychological experiences. Nostalgia is a sentimental longing for a positively remembered past that not only pertains to personal, but also to collective memories. People can feel nostalgic for memories from their unique individual past (i.e., personal nostalgia), but also for memories related to objects, periods or events from a past that they share with fellow group members (i.e., collective nostalgia), such as their national past (i.e., national nostalgia). As such, national nostalgia can be understood as a sentimental longing for a positively remembered national past that was shared with fellow national in-group members: 'the good old days of our country'. My prior work demonstrated that personal and national nostalgia can be empirically distinguished across various countries and that only national nostalgia motivates and regulates group dynamics.

Second, I presented an overview of the findings of my previous work and one additional experimental study on the relationship between national nostalgia, perceptions of identity continuity, exclusionary understandings of national identity, and anti-immigrant prejudice. This work demonstrated that national nostalgia functions as a restorative coping mechanism when people face threats to the continuity of their national identity. People want to have the feeling that their national identity and culture stays stable over time as this helps them to fulfil their psychological need for self-continuity. National nostalgia is triggered when this feeling of national continuity is disrupted, because it helps people to maintain or restore a sense of in-group continuity by strengthening a sense of social connectedness with fellow in-group members. The theoretical reasoning is that longing for the 'good old days of our country' helps people to preserve their national identity in contexts of continuity threat, because becoming aware of the positive and valued elements of their commonly remembered national past fosters

a renewed sense of national identity based on the social connection with fellow 'old-timers' (i.e., those national members that were part of this positively remembered national past).

While this indicates that national nostalgia can have positive consequences of the national in-group, the findings of my research showed that it can be destructive for intergroup relations because it fosters exclusionary understandings of national identity. By fostering a national identity and belonging that is based on the past, national nostalgia also marks differences between the old "us" that share a positively remembered past and the new "them" who are not part of this past. I demonstrated that this process of social categorization can result in exclusionary understandings of national identity that are based on the distinction between national 'old-timers' and 'newcomers': (1) autochthony (i.e., national belonging as being historically rooted in place) and (2) ethnic nationhood (i.e., national belonging as being historically rooted in common origin and blood ties). On the basis of both experimental and survey designs, I showed that national nostalgia predicts negative attitudes towards immigrant out-groups and Muslim expressive rights, and that autochthony and ethnic nationhood form important explanatory mechanisms for these relationships.

In the final part of the chapter I presented a new study, in which I examined whether and why national nostalgia is related to support for PRRPs. Although it is widely argued that national nostalgia forms an important part of the ideology of populist radical right parties, the national nostalgic feature of PRRP ideology has hardly been studied empirically with respect to voters. Based on an integration of theory from political science about the link between national nostalgia and PRRP ideology with my previous work on national nostalgia and exclusionary notions of national identity and anti-immigrant attitudes, I predicted that national nostalgia relates to more support for PRRPs, because it strengthens support for their nativist ideology in the form of ethnic nationhood and anti-Muslim sentiments. I tested this prediction in a survey study among a representative sample of native majority members in the context of the Netherlands, which has an increasingly successful PRRP called 'the PVV'. Results were in line with this prediction, but the data were cross-sectional it is therefore not possible to make causal claims. While scholars have proposed that PRRPs use national nostalgia to increase the persuasiveness of their nativist ideology (Marzouki & McDonnell, 2016; Mols & Jetten, 2014), it is possible and likely that the national nostalgia experienced by PRRP voters is both a cause and consequence of such nativist stances. That is, when people feel that their country should be solely inhabited by members of the native group and that immigrants are fundamentally threatening to the homogeneous nation-state, they may also develop a nostalgic longing for those 'good old days of the country' when this was supposedly still the case. Although my previous experimental work discussed in earlier parts of this chapter demonstrated that national nostalgia can indeed strengthen the endorsement of such nativist stances, future studies could experimentally manipulate elements of PRRPs' nativist ideology to see whether this increases their attractiveness by strengthening national nostalgia.

Taken together, the results of my research suggest that, on the one hand, national nostalgia can be seen as functional and constructive for native majority members, in the sense that it helps them protect to national identity continuity in times of uncertainty and change. On the other hand, national nostalgia can be seen as a destructive force, as it results in exclusionary understandings of national identity based on historical roots and anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim sentiments. The stronger endorsement of this nativist ideology forms an important explanation for why national nostalgia is related to a greater likelihood of PRRP voting in the Netherlands.

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