

Culture, National Identity, and Admission to Citizenship

North Atlantic countries are witnessing record levels of immigration.¹ The volume and diversity of recent immigrants have raised concerns among some liberal nationalist philosophers that newcomers are not being sufficiently integrated into receiving societies, at a high cost to both citizens and immigrants themselves. Some commentators worry that embracing large numbers of unacculturated immigrants will disrupt the cultural conditions that enable citizens to act autonomously. Others are concerned that the presence of ethnically diverse immigrants will diminish the strong sense of national solidarity that is necessary to sustain vital liberal democratic ideals, including tolerance and social justice. Some liberal nationalists view the naturalization process as the solution to these apparent problems, proposing two specific naturalization provisions. The first would require immigrants to assimilate to the national culture of the receiving society as a condition of naturalized citizenship. The second would encourage newcomers to adopt the shared civic national identity of the receiving society, while presumably permitting them to retain their native cultural practices. This paper argues that liberal states ought to

¹For instance, during the 1970s, annual legal immigration to the United States averaged nearly 500,000 immigrants per year. These numbers grew to over 700,000 immigrants per year in the 1980s. During the 1990s, the number of immigrants per year averaged between 800,000 and 1 million. U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, *Fiscal Year 2001 Statistical Yearbook*, Table 1. Available online at <http://www.bcis.gov/graphics/shared/aboutus/statistics/IMM01yrbk/IMM2001list.htm>. In 2002, more than 32.5 million U.S. residents, or 11.5% of the total population, were foreign-born. (The actual foreign-born population was probably much larger, since this figure includes only authorized foreign residents.) Dianne Schmidley, *The Foreign-Born Population in the United States: March 2002*, Current Population Reports P20-539 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 2002), p. 1. Postwar immigration has also dramatically increased the foreign populations of the countries of Western Europe. For instance, between 1950 and 1998, the foreign populations of Germany, France, and Belgium grew as follows: Germany's foreign population increased from 1.1% to 8.9%, France's from 4.2% to 6.3%, and Belgium's from 4.1% to 8.7%. SOPEMI Publications, *Trends in International Migration: Annual Report, 2002 Edition* (Paris, 2002), pp. 17-58. On the whole, the foreign-born population of Western Europe increased from 1.3% in 1950 to 4.4% in 2001. SOPEMI Publications, *Trends in International Migration: Annual Report, 2002 Edition*, pp. 17-58.

reject these policy proposals on the grounds that they are either illiberal or counterproductive, and unnecessary in either case. In contrast to liberal nationalists, I argue that the civic virtues necessary for liberal democratic citizenship can be developed in the absence of a common culture or shared civic national identity, and I develop a non-nationalist model of naturalization that would encourage immigrants to become integrated into liberal democratic societies by participating in their major economic and sociopolitical institutions and practices.

A Note on Liberal Nationalism

For the purpose of clarification, I will provide a brief sketch of the aspects of liberal nationalism that will be relevant to my discussion. First, all nationalist theories, including liberal nationalism, are committed to two descriptive claims: "humanity is divided into nations" and "there are criteria for identifying a nation and its members."² Theories of nationhood generally attempt to distinguish nations from mere ethnic or racial groups, on the one hand, and communities defined entirely on the basis of geographical or political boundaries, such as states, on the other. The proper criteria for identifying a nation are hotly contested, but for the purposes of this paper, it will be sufficient to define a nation as a large, territorially concentrated, historical community comprised of individuals who believe that they belong together by virtue of characteristics that nearly all of them possess. Such national attributes could include any or all of the following: ethnic descent, shared historical memories, a language, a common culture involving shared customs, traditions, moral values, and religious beliefs, and a commitment to a set of historically embedded political ideals and institutions. Members of a nation share a common national identity based on their perceived possession of these characteristics.³ This shared national identity involves a strong sense of collective belonging characterized by a sense of relatedness and mutual and exclusive sentiments of solidarity and sympathy.

These descriptive nationalist assertions are associated with various normative claims that emphasize the significance of national belonging

²Yael Tamir, "Theoretical Difficulties in the Study of Nationalism," in Ronald Beiner (ed.), *Theorizing Nationalism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), pp. 67-90, at p. 82.

³This definition does not stipulate that members of a nation must actually possess the defining national characteristics. It is sufficient that members believe that they possess such characteristics and share a common national identity based on them. This broad description of national membership is meant to include both "objectivist" and "subjectivist" accounts of nationalism. See Andrew Mason, "Political Community, Liberal-Nationalism, and the Ethics of Assimilation," *Ethics* 109 (1999): 262-63.

and the proper rights of nations. For instance, nationalists typically maintain that national members are morally permitted, and in some cases morally required, to show partiality for their nation and their fellow nationals. They also contend that national members have a moral right to live together as a distinct community, including the right to some form of political self-determination. Finally, nationalist theorists usually defend the right of nation-states to engage in nation-building projects, which aim to forge a strong shared national identity among national members. The tools of nation-building include official language laws, naturalization policies, and national symbols, holidays, and rituals.⁴ Nationalist ideologies have been condemned as exclusionary, intolerant, and illiberal. However, liberal nationalists insist that many nationalist values are consistent with liberal democratic commitments, including moral equality, inclusiveness, autonomy, and state neutrality, and they seek to articulate and defend these liberal nationalist ideals.

Naturalization as a Tool for Immigrant Integration

In the face of unprecedented human mobility, political philosophers have become increasingly concerned with the issue of immigrant integration. Since naturalization policy is the state's primary formal means for ensuring that immigrants are sufficiently integrated before they are granted full citizenship, it has been central to these debates. Philosophers disagree about what a liberal state may legitimately demand of naturalizing immigrants. Some prominent liberals contend that a modest length of residence is the only justifiable naturalization requirement. Joseph Carens, for instance, argues that liberal democratic principles entail that membership in a society entitles a person to full citizenship in that society.⁵ Since a person's claim to social membership develops naturally and rapidly while she lives and works in a society, a modest period of residence is the only substantive naturalization requirement that liberal states may legitimately adopt. Carens does believe, however, that a liberal state may expect, if not require, immigrants to learn the dominant language, consent to basic liberal democratic ideals, and participate in the public life of their new society, provided that the state makes its expectations known to immigrants and provides them with the resources necessary for

⁴Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 263.

⁵Joseph Carens, "Membership and Morality: Admission to Citizenship in Liberal Democratic States," in William Brubaker (ed.), *Immigration and the Politics of Citizenship in Europe and North America* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1989), pp. 31-50.

such integration.⁶

Most liberal nationalists reject this minimalist position, arguing that a successful naturalization policy must demand more from immigrants who seek to become citizens. They offer at least two alternative models of naturalization. Proponents of the first, the civic national identity model, share Carens's view that liberal states may expect prospective citizens to consent to liberal democratic ideals and to participate in public life, but they believe that citizens must also possess additional qualities and attitudes if liberal democratic societies are to flourish. In modern pluralistic societies, responsible citizenship requires citizens to be willing to make sacrifices for their fellow citizens, including those who are distant or different from themselves, and to respect their cultural differences. This view is not unique to liberal nationalists; liberal virtue theorists, such as William Galston and Stephen Macedo, also argue that civic virtues are required to sustain stable and healthy liberal democratic institutions.⁷ However, liberal nationalists stand alone in their view that a sense of "peoplehood" or national identity is necessary to sustain the beliefs, qualities, and attitudes necessary for responsible citizenship. They argue that a robust commitment to liberal democratic values is only possible if these values are connected with a particular national history and motivated by national symbolism, ceremonies, and holidays. Moreover, only a shared civic national identity can provide the social solidarity, social trust, and sense of relatedness that are necessary to sustain tolerance and a willingness to make sacrifices among citizens. Thus, these liberal nationalists believe that the primary goal of a liberal naturalization policy ought to be to promote a strong civic national identity among newcomers.

The second liberal nationalist naturalization model, the cultural preservationist model, also emphasizes immigrant assimilation, but focuses on culture rather than national identity per se. Proponents of this model view naturalization policy as an important tool for preserving existing national cultures. They give two arguments for the cultural preservationist model, both of which turn on the claim that national culture is an instrumental good, which liberal states are entitled to protect. Some liberal nationalists contend that a common culture is valuable because it is a precondition of the sense of relatedness and social solidarity necessary to

⁶Joseph Carens, "Cultural Adaptation and Integration. Is Quebec a Model for Europe?" in Ranier Bauböck (ed.), *From Aliens to Citizens: Redefining the Status of Immigrants in Europe* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994), pp. 149-85.

⁷William Galston, *Liberal Purposes: Goods, Virtues, and Duties in the Liberal State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), chap. 10; and Stephen Macedo, *Liberal Virtues: Citizenship, Virtue and Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), chaps. 6, 7.

sustain stable and healthy liberal democratic societies. Others argue that citizens require access to a common national culture in order to achieve autonomy. Both arguments conclude that the primary aim of a liberal naturalization policy should be to ensure that immigrants assimilate to the national culture prior to becoming citizens.

In the following sections, I grant the liberal nationalist assumption that a desirable naturalization policy will encourage newcomers to endorse basic liberal democratic ideals, participate in public life, respect cultural diversity, and meet their citizenship obligations willingly, while sustaining the capacity of both immigrants and citizens to live autonomous lives. However, I argue that from a liberal perspective, neither the cultural preservationist nor the national identity model of naturalization is an appropriate means for meeting these worthwhile goals.

The Cultural Preservationist Model of Naturalization

The most important goal of the naturalization process, according to some liberal nationalists, is to protect existing national cultures by requiring immigrants to acculturate as a condition of naturalized citizenship. Such assimilation involves adopting, at least in public contexts, the defining cultural practices of the receiving society, and abandoning any aspects of one's native culture that conflict with these national practices. Culture is a notoriously ill-defined concept; for the purposes of this paper it will be sufficient to specify a very general definition of national culture as consisting of all or most of the following: a language, a system of moral values and practices, a set of traditions, social customs, and a general way of life, and, in some cases, religious beliefs. Thus, in practice, the cultural preservationist model includes some or all of the following formal naturalization requirements: a lengthy period of residence, linguistic competence, commitment to the national moral values and practices, adoption of the defining traditions, social customs, and general way of life, and when relevant, conversion to the national religion. Several liberal democratic states, including Germany, Switzerland, and France, have adopted naturalization provisions that require some degree of cultural assimilation. Prior to 1999, when Germany's Alien Law was amended to facilitate the naturalization of long-term guest-workers, conditions of naturalization included legal residence of at least ten years, written and spoken competence in the German language, the ability to work and possession of an assured income, assimilation to the German way of life, and a "faultless" lifestyle.⁸ Similarly, Switzerland's naturalization law requires

⁸Brett Klopp, *German Multiculturalism: Immigrant Integration and the Transformation of Citizenship* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002), p. 43. 1991 and 1999 amendments

immigrants to demonstrate to officials that they are suitable for Swiss citizenship, where such suitability is usually interpreted in terms of integration in Swiss society and familiarity with Swiss traditions, customs, and habits.⁹ The French Civil Code requires naturalizing immigrants to maintain residence in France for a minimum of five years, possess a clean criminal record (which is considered to be evidence of good moral character), have a secured income, and demonstrate assimilation into the French community.¹⁰ Proof of assimilation can include evidence of participation in French cultural life, such as membership in a sports club and contact with French citizens.¹¹

Liberal nationalists wish to show that cultural preservationist naturalization policies are consistent with liberal state neutrality; thus, they typically defend such policies by appealing to the instrumental, as opposed to intrinsic, value of culture. They offer two such instrumentalist arguments. The first, which I call the autonomy argument, is advanced by legal theorists Jules Coleman and Sarah Harding.¹² The argument begins with a basic liberal nationalist claim—that cultural communities are instrumentally valuable to individuals because they enable them to act autonomously. Before I discuss Coleman and Harding's reasons for believing that cultural communities are important to individual well-being, it will be necessary to explain their conception of a cultural community. Drawing upon Margalit and Raz's definition of an "encompassing group," Coleman and Harding identify a set of six properties shared by all cultural communities.¹³ First, the most important feature of cultural communities is that they possess a culture that is shared by most of their members. Second, the culture of the group is sufficiently pervasive that individuals who grow up as members of the group adopt its defining cultural characteristics. Third, members of a cultural community are recognized as belonging to that community. Fourth, community membership is

to the Alien Law reduced naturalization requirements to the following: a minimum residence of eight years, a secure income, a clean criminal record, the renunciation of former citizenship, and integration in the form of language comprehension and a declaration of allegiance. Heike Hagedorn, "Republicanism and the Politics of Citizenship in Germany and France: Convergence or Divergence?" *German Policy Studies/Politikfeldanalyse* 1 (2002): 243-72, p. 246.

⁹Dilek Çınar, "From Aliens to Citizens. A Comparative Analysis of Rules of Transition," in Steven Vertovec (ed.), *Migration and Social Cohesion* (Northampton, Mass.: Edward Elgar Publishing, 1999), pp. 335-58, at p. 339.

¹⁰Jules Coleman and Sarah Harding, "Citizenship, the Demands of Justice, and the Moral Relevance of Political Borders," in Warren Schwartz (ed.), *Justice in Immigration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 18-62, at p. 31.

¹¹Hagedorn, "Republicanism and the Politics of Citizenship," p. 248.

¹²Coleman and Harding, "Citizenship," pp. 18-62.

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 41-42; and Avishai Margalit and Joseph Raz, "National Self-Determination," *Journal of Philosophy* 87 (1990): 439-61.

a primary aspect of the identities of individual members. Fifth, community membership is typically a matter of belonging rather than achievement. Individuals may join a cultural community, but only through the necessarily slow process of cultural assimilation. Finally, cultural communities are typically large and anonymous. This distinguishes cultural communities from intentional and intimate social organizations such as sports teams and social clubs. Coleman and Harding also take care to distinguish cultural communities from "narrow ethnic communities."¹⁴ In doing so, they develop a conception of cultural community that is consistent with most liberal nationalist understandings of the cultural nation.

Based upon Kymlicka's theory of minority rights, Coleman and Harding maintain that there are at least two preconditions for the meaningful exercise of autonomy.¹⁵ First, since acting autonomously involves making choices among various options, individuals must have access to an adequate range of meaningful options from which to choose. Second, since the options that seem worthwhile to a person will depend on who she is and how she conceives of herself, autonomous individuals must have reasonably well-developed identities. Cultural communities provide a "context of choice," a "framework within which individuals form identities [and] formulate projects, plans, and goals based on legitimate expectations regarding the behavior of others."¹⁶ Therefore, membership in a cultural community is a precondition of autonomy and ultimately of individual well-being. Having arguably established the value of cultural membership to individuals, Coleman and Harding imply that granting citizenship to large numbers of unacculturated immigrants would disrupt the national cultural community that enables citizens to act autonomously. Thus, they conclude, relatively homogeneous cultural nation-states are entitled to establish membership policies as necessary to preserve existing national cultures, including naturalization provisions that require immigrants to acculturate as a condition of citizenship.¹⁷ Accordingly, Germany, Israel, and France would be candidates for adopting cultural preservationist naturalization policies on Coleman and Harding's view, whereas the United States and Canada would not.

The general liberal nationalist claim that access to a cultural community enables individuals to lead autonomous lives appears to be well founded.¹⁸ However, Coleman and Harding's version of the autonomy

¹⁴Coleman and Harding, "Citizenship," p. 44.

¹⁵Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), chap. 8. See also his *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), chap. 5.

¹⁶Coleman and Harding, "Citizenship," p. 42.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 48-51.

¹⁸However, Kymlicka seems to overlook that fact that nations are not the only collec-

argument is open to at least one decisive objection. The implied assertion that granting citizenship to large numbers of culturally diverse immigrants would transform the national public culture so as to disrupt the context of choice that enables citizens to act autonomously misrepresents and exaggerates the effects of immigration on national cultures. Of course, immigrant groups can influence the culture of the societies in which they live, but it is far from evident that such influences would be sufficient to disrupt the context of choice provided by that culture. To explain this point, it is useful to refer to Kymlicka's distinction between the *character* of a cultural community and its *structure*.¹⁹ The character of a culture refers to the substantive norms, values, and institutions of a cultural community at any particular time, such as its moral beliefs, art forms, and churches. The cultural structure, by contrast, refers to the "cultural community ... itself,"²⁰ understood as "a viable community of individuals with a shared heritage (language, history, etc.)."²¹ Kymlicka contends that members of a cultural community can modify the character of that community without disrupting its cultural structure.²² He uses the example of the "Quiet Revolution" in French Canada to illustrate his point. During the 1960s, members of the French-Canadian cultural community radically transformed its cultural character; by decade's end, many of Quebec's traditional institutions were no longer supported by a majority of French-Canadians. Yet the structure of the French-Canadian cultural community was never seriously threatened, because these cultural transformations were endorsed by a majority of community members.

Kymlicka contends that it is the structure of a cultural community that provides a context of choice for individuals.²³ He is particularly concerned about the ways in which the economic and political decisions of the broader society can threaten the stability of the cultural structures of minority nations within multinational states. In the absence of special group-specific minority rights, he argues, externally imposed policies can jeopardize the distinct identity and ultimately the very existence of minority nations. Coleman and Harding seem to assume that Kymlicka's argument can be extended to the case of multicultural immigration: in the absence of cultural preservationist naturalization policies, culturally diverse immigrants will transform the culture of a receiving society,

tivities to provide options and sources of identity; subcultural groups, including social groups, or possibly even a "world culture," may also offer contexts of choice.

¹⁹Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, pp. 166-67.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 167.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 168.

²²*Ibid.*, pp. 166-67.

²³*Ibid.*, p. 166. Thus, he concludes that liberal states have the right to protect only the structure, and not the character, of cultures.

thereby destabilizing its cultural structure. However, the two cases are not analogous. In the case of minority nations, cultural structures are threatened by unwelcome policies imposed by the broader and more politically powerful society. Yet in the case of multicultural immigration, immigrant groups are the minority groups, and thus have little power to impose unwanted changes on the cultural structure of the majority society. Although immigrants can contribute new cuisines, art forms, and religious and moral perspectives to existing national cultures, altering them in the process, such changes to the character of a culture tend not seriously to influence its deeper structure.

Furthermore, to whatever extent the presence of culturally diverse immigrants does affect the cultural structure of a receiving society, it is highly unlikely that these effects would jeopardize its ability to provide a relatively stable context of choice. Cultural communities evolve quite constantly without diminishing members' capacity to attain autonomy, and Kymlicka himself does not believe that individuals require a static cultural framework. Thus, it would seem that the degree of cultural stability necessary to sustain a viable context of choice does not require the protection of substantive aspects of the dominant culture against foreign influences, as Coleman and Harding suggest, but rather the maintenance of an adequate measure of "cultural continuity."²⁴ That is, sustaining a stable context of choice does not require that changes to the existing cultural structure be prevented, but instead that cultural changes occur slowly enough so that a sufficient degree of continuity is maintained.²⁵ Of course, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly what degree of cultural continuity is necessary to sustain a stable context of choice. However, I think it is safe to say that the cultural changes caused by immigrants are rarely rapid and concentrated enough to disrupt the continuity of receiving cultures in any serious way, particularly given that the vast majority of immigrants tend, in time, to assimilate to much of the dominant culture willingly, in the absence of cultural preservationist policies.²⁶

For these reasons, Coleman and Harding's version of the autonomy argument fails under typical circumstances of immigration.²⁷ This comes

²⁴Stephen Perry, "Immigration, Justice, and Culture," in Warren Schwartz (ed.), *Justice in Immigration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 94-135, at p. 115.

²⁵Indeed, Perry believes that cultural structure essentially reduces to cultural continuity. See "Immigration, Justice, and Culture," pp. 116-17.

²⁶Kymlicka's distinction between the character and deeper structure of a culture strikes some commentators as too vague to be of much use. I believe the distinction is helpful; however, my point could be made without reference to it if I were simply to argue that the cultural changes initiated by immigration do not disrupt the degree of cultural continuity necessary to maintain a stable context of choice.

²⁷Of course, it is possible that extremely high levels of geographically and culturally concentrated immigration may pose genuine threats to the cultural continuity necessary

as no surprise, since liberal values generally weigh against cultural preservationist naturalization policies. Consider the ideal of autonomy. Insofar as acting autonomously involves choosing from a range of options and ways of life, it would seem that familiarity with more than one culture would provide a person with a broader range of options, and thus enhance her capacity to achieve autonomy. Members of pluralist societies are typically exposed to a broader range of cultural options than are members of culturally homogeneous nations. This suggests that liberal states ought to reject naturalization policies designed to maintain cultural homogeneity in favor of those that are compatible with cultural pluralism.

The liberal ideal of moral equality also weighs against cultural preservationist naturalization policies. Equality requires that the interests of resident immigrants be given serious consideration in naturalization policy decisions, along with those of citizens. Although immigrants typically assimilate to many aspects of the culture of their new society voluntarily, rapid and extensive acculturation would have a detrimental effect on their well-being. It follows that a liberal state must have a very compelling interest in implementing cultural preservationist naturalization policies if such policies are to be justified. I have already argued that citizens' interest in achieving autonomy does not provide such a strong state interest. A second cultural preservationist argument, which I call the political stability argument, claims to identify an additional compelling interest. The argument maintains that cultural homogeneity is a precondition of viable liberal democratic institutions. It draws upon the liberal nationalist idea, articulated by J.S. Mill and T.H. Green, that political stability can be sustained only if citizens feel bound together by a strong sense of relatedness derived from a shared culture, comprised of the "common memories, traditions and customs, and ... common ways of feeling and thinking which a common language and still more a common literature embod[y]." ²⁸ Thus, concludes the political stability argument, liberal democracy is impossible to achieve in states made up of different cultural nationalities. If the political stability argument were sound, liberal states would have a very strong interest in requiring immigrants to acculturate. However, its basic claims are empirically implausible: simply too many stable multicultural states exist to maintain that cultural

for citizens to attain autonomy. In this case, liberal states *may* have a legitimate interest in reducing the overall number of immigrants admitted. However, it is beyond the scope of this essay to determine whether this state interest would trump immigrants' moral claims to admission, which may be grounded in the liberal egalitarian principles of freedom of movement or international distributive justice, among other principles.

²⁸T.H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (1982), quoted in Perry, "Immigration, Justice, and Culture," p. 113. See also J.S. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1963), p. 309.

homogeneity is a prerequisite for political stability.²⁹ Thus, I conclude that liberal states ought to reject cultural preservationist naturalization policies in favor of those that are compatible with cultural pluralism.

The Civic National Identity Model of Naturalization

Most contemporary liberal nationalists recognize these problems with the cultural preservationist model of naturalization and would reject it on the same grounds. Some have attempted to develop "thinner" assimilation provisions that arguably are compatible with cultural pluralism. The primary goal of the naturalization process, according to these theorists, is to encourage newcomers to adopt the civic national identity of the receiving society. Such assimilation is vital, they argue, because a sense of shared national identity among citizens is a necessary condition of the realization of important liberal democratic ideals and practices. Although different liberal nationalists define national identity in slightly different ways, they all distinguish between a *national culture* and a *civic national identity*. A national culture, on the one hand, includes a language, traditions and social customs, moral values and practices, and religious beliefs. A civic national identity, on the other, is based on a shared commitment, across cultures, to a set of historically embedded liberal democratic principles. Whereas acculturating involves assimilating distinct national cultural practices, adopting a civic national identity involves committing oneself to the political ideals and principles upon which a particular polity is founded. However, adopting a civic national identity is not solely a matter of political allegiance; it also entails identifying oneself as a member of the civic nation, or "people," that defines itself on the basis of its members' shared political loyalties. Such civic national membership involves mutual and exclusive feelings of solidarity, sympathy, and obligation for one's fellow nationals over and above a sense of patriotism for one's country, as ordinarily construed. Noah Pickus, for instance, characterizes the American civic national identity as at once both ideological and affective. It is based on a reflective commitment to American political ideals and principles, yet also "requires some felt sense of communal obligation, some feeling of responsibility derived in part from a perception of shared history and fate. National identity includes a reverential element, an emotional attachment to the polity."³⁰

²⁹See also Perry, "Immigration, Justice, and Culture," pp. 112-15.

³⁰Noah Pickus, "To Make Natural: Creating Citizens for the Twenty-First Century," in Pickus (ed.), *Immigration and Citizenship in the 21st Century* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), pp. 107-39, at p. 111. Here Pickus uses the term "polity" as synonymous with "nation" or "people." It should be noted that his use of the term differs from mine, which I explain below.

Peter Salins expresses a similar point by drawing an analogy between adopting a civic national identity and religious conversion: both require initiates to endorse certain foundational principles, and both culminate in an emotional affirmation that initiates have "become part of 'us' rather than 'them'."³¹ Insofar as a civic national identity is grounded in a commitment to political ideals and principles that are accessible to members of all ethnic groups, immigrants arguably need not abandon their native cultural practices in order to adopt it. Thus, Pickus and Salins insist that naturalization provisions that encourage new citizens to embrace the American civic national identity are compatible with cultural pluralism.³²

Some liberal nationalists, including Pickus and Salins, recently have argued that the primary goal of U.S. naturalization policy ought to be the cultivation of an American civic national identity among newcomers. According to Pickus, the naturalization process should be

an instrument for fostering immigrants' identification with their new and complex identity ... As the pledge of allegiance aims to connect young Americans to the nation, a formal process of incorporation could encourage newcomers to see themselves as part of a new people.³³

Salins believes that the current U.S. naturalization process is sufficient as it is to "hasten and solidify" civic national assimilation, if only more immigrants could be persuaded to become naturalized citizens.³⁴ Pickus, on the other hand, advocates "a more substantive and symbolic naturalization process" that would include mandatory state-sponsored citizenship classes for newcomers.³⁵ His proposal echoes the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform's 1997 *Report to Congress*, which exhorts Congress to establish a new "Americanization" program to help orient new immigrants by providing them with the knowledge about American civic life necessary for successful integration.³⁶ Although formal educational programs would be an important element of a revitalized naturalization

³¹Peter Salins, *Assimilation, American Style* (New York: Basic Books, 1996), p. 49.

³²Pickus explicitly critiques a version of the cultural preservationist view. See "To Make Natural," pp. 113-19. In Salins's words, "One of the hallmarks of assimilation, American style, is that immigrants are free to retain or discard as much or as little of their homeland cultures as they wish without compromising their assimilation." See *Assimilation, American Style*, p. 55.

³³Pickus, "To Make Natural," pp. 124-25.

³⁴Salins applauds recent U.S. legislation disallowing legal permanent residents from access to social welfare benefits and family-sponsored immigration preferences on the grounds that it provides incentives for naturalization. See *Assimilation, American Style*, p. 216.

³⁵Pickus, "To Make Natural," pp. 130-31.

³⁶U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, *Becoming an American: Immigration and Immigrant Policy* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1997), pp. 43-46.

process, according to Pickus, its centerpiece should be symbolic: the culminating swearing-in and oath-taking naturalization ceremonies should be enhanced so as to provide "a transformative experience that commits immigrants to a new identity."³⁷ Pickus assumes that earnestly completing a revitalized naturalization process will be sufficient to encourage immigrants to adopt the American civic national identity. Although immigrants would be required to pass an exam on United States history and civics, they would not be required to prove to immigration officials that they have effectively adopted the appropriate national identity in order to qualify for citizenship.

Proponents of the national identity provision usually defend it with what I will call the liberal ideals argument. This argument draws upon a second basic liberal nationalist thesis—that a shared national identity is necessary to sustain liberal democratic ideals and practices in the face of the multiple identities and conflicting allegiances that characterize pluralist societies.³⁸ There are several versions of the liberal ideals argument; I will discuss the two advanced by Salins and Pickus. The first version asserts that a shared civic national identity is necessary to sustain the liberal ideals of tolerance and respect for cultural pluralism. According to Salins, only the belief that "they are irrevocably part of the same national family" will enable people of different cultural backgrounds to "transcend their narrow ethnic loyalties" and to tolerate each other's differences.³⁹ Salins is particularly concerned that native-born citizens will be willing to respect the cultural differences of immigrants only if they believe they are united by an overarching civic national identity.

Pickus puts forth a second version of the liberal ideals argument, which maintains that a shared civic national identity is necessary for the realization of social justice in liberal states. He contends that native citizens and newcomers will be "unwilling to fulfill their mutual obligations" in the absence of the fellow feelings that ostensibly flow from a shared civic national identity.⁴⁰ Pickus's words echo the common liberal nationalist argument that certain sentiments, such as solidarity, sympathy, and a sense of relatedness, must be shared among citizens if economic redistribution programs are to receive widespread support on the

³⁷Pickus, "To Make Natural," p. 132.

³⁸David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), chaps. 3-4; Brian Barry, "Self-Government Revisited," in Beiner (ed.), *Theorizing Nationalism*, pp. 247-78; and Yael Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), chaps. 5-6. However, it should be noted that these theorists generally draw upon a broader conception of shared national identity that is not specifically political in nature.

³⁹Salins, *Assimilation, American Style*, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁰Pickus, "To Make Natural," p. 125. Pickus also worries that citizens will fail to fulfill other citizen obligations in the absence of a shared national identity.

grounds of social justice.⁴¹ In the absence of such sentiments, citizens tend to view their redistributive obligations in terms of "strict reciprocity" and thus are reluctant to make the sacrifices necessary to help needy and underprivileged co-citizens, especially those unknown to them.⁴²

To summarize, Salins and Pickus argue that a liberal naturalization policy must foster a shared civic national identity in immigrants because such an identity is necessary to sustain a commitment to tolerance, a respect for cultural difference, and a willingness to make sacrifices for one's fellows among citizens. I do not wish to challenge the basic idea that a desirable naturalization policy will encourage newcomers to develop these citizenship virtues. However, I would like to raise two preliminary objections to the liberal ideals argument. First, I believe Salins and Pickus are overly optimistic about the prospect of using the naturalization process to instill the sort of strong civic national identity they advocate. Salins approves of current U.S. naturalization provisions, which require prospective citizens to meet the following threshold requirements: five years lawful residence, the ability to communicate in English, adherence to constitutional principles, knowledge of the fundamentals of U.S. government and history, and a willingness to take an oath of allegiance to the United States. Pickus essentially also endorses these provisions, provided the naturalization process is enhanced in three ways. First, immigrants should be required to attend state-sponsored citizenship classes, with established citizens serving as tutors. These courses would be designed both to teach prospective citizens about U.S. civics and history and to "engage native-born and naturalizing citizens in a exploration of American values and aspirations."⁴³ Second, several of the questions on the current American civics and history exams are confusing or repetitive, and some of the approved answers are intellectually controversial or condone an instrumentalist conception of citizenship.⁴⁴ These aspects of the exam should be revised so as to be more accurate, coherent, and contextual. Finally, the culminating swearing-in and oath-taking naturalization ceremonies ought to be made more momentous in order to encourage newcomers to undergo the "transformation of consciousness" that should accompany their public expression of allegiance to their new

⁴¹Miller, *On Nationality*, chaps. 3-4; and Tamir, *Liberal Nationalism*, chaps. 5-6.

⁴²Miller, *On Nationality*, pp. 71-72.

⁴³Pickus, "To Make Natural," p. 129.

⁴⁴Controversial answers include "the claim that free speech comes from the Bill of Rights, that the Constitution guarantees rights to 'everyone', defined as 'citizens and non-citizens living in the U.S.', or that American Indians (native Americans) helped the Pilgrims in America." Answers suggesting an instrumentalist conception of citizenship include "one that only lists government jobs, traveling with a U.S. passport, and petitioning for close relatives to come to the United States as acceptable responses to the question "Name one benefit of being a citizen of the U.S.," Pickus, "To Make Natural," p. 122.

nation.⁴⁵

It is likely that the naturalization processes that Salins and Pickus recommend, particularly the additional provisions endorsed by Pickus, could be meaningful to immigrants who engage in them earnestly. However, it is difficult to see how the formal aspects of *any* naturalization process could produce the sort of deep personal transformation that Salins and Pickus wish new immigrants to undergo. Although they take care to insist that a civic national identity is "thin" in the sense of being culturally-neutral (a claim with which I take issue below), a civic national identity is decidedly "thick" in terms of the self-identification, emotional attachment, and commitment it involves. In addition to consenting to a set of political principles, Salins and Pickus expect new citizens to identify as new members of the American people and to possess the strong fellow feelings of solidarity, sympathy, and mutual obligation associated with such national identification. Yet surely no formal naturalization process, no matter how substantive and symbolic, can produce such social solidarity. Civics and history classes would teach immigrants about the basic public institutions and history of their new society and introduce them to the citizens who serve as their tutors, but it is difficult to see how these experiences would translate into strong national identification. Oath-taking ceremonies could produce a sense of patriotism in new citizens, but this sense may be short-lived, and alone does not constitute a civic national identity.

An additional set of objections concern the desirability of aspiring to a strong, shared civic national identity, assuming it were possible to foster among immigrants. First, Pickus and Salins underestimate the difficulty of theorizing a civic national identity that is genuinely culturally neutral. Salins's failing in this regard is most conspicuous. He maintains that admission to U.S. citizenship is best understood as a contract between immigrants and citizens: immigrants will be welcomed as naturalized citizens if they agree to abide by three precepts.⁴⁶ First, they must accept English as the national language. Second, they must "take pride in their American identity and believe in America's liberal democratic and egalitarian principles."⁴⁷ Third, immigrants must agree to live by the "Protestant ethic," which emphasizes self-reliance, hard work, and a strong moral character. Despite Salins's insistence that this model of "assimilation, American style" is perfectly consistent with ethnic pluralism, the American civic national identity fostered by these requirements is distinctly cultural in nature.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 126-27.

⁴⁶Salins, *Assimilation, American Style*, p. 6.

⁴⁷Ibid.

Pickus is more careful to characterize the American civic national identity in purely political terms, yet his vision also may require a degree of cultural assimilation in practice. Liberal nationalists, including Pickus, have been quick to argue that abstract political commitment alone cannot produce the fellow feelings associated with civic national belonging. In practice, the affective elements of a civic national identity must be invoked by emotional symbols of collective identification, such as the national anthem, the flag, and monuments to dead national heroes, and maintained through participation in national ceremonies and rituals. However, it is frequently charged that the symbols and rituals of collective national identification are not equally accessible to members of all cultural groups. For instance, some great American heroes also owned slaves; celebrations of so-called discovery of the Americas and the founding of the United States seem to celebrate the genocide of American Indians; and most national ceremonies, including naturalization ceremonies, are brought to a close by asking a Christian God to "Bless America." Pickus believes that national symbolism and ceremonies should be the focus of a revitalized naturalization process; however, he fails to acknowledge that the more symbolic and ritualized the naturalization process becomes, the greater the risk that it will require a problematic degree of cultural assimilation.

A final objection to the liberal ideals argument concerns the ways in which the nationalist principles associated with it could be used to justify additional restrictive immigration policies. For instance, Salins's version of the liberal ideals argument, which maintains that a shared civic national identity is needed to motivate citizens to fulfill their mutual obligations, is closely linked to the belief that national members are morally permitted, and in some cases morally required, to be partial to their nation and to one another—that is, to give some degree of priority to the national interest or one another's interests over the interests of nonmembers. In the context of the civic nation-state, in which citizenship and civic national membership are considered to be coextensive, the partiality principle could be used to justify immigration policies that privilege the interests of citizens over noncitizens, including long-term resident noncitizens. A common example is legislation barring resident noncitizens from receiving social welfare benefits on the grounds that providing such benefits would be too costly to citizens. Not only are such policies inconsistent with the ideal of moral equality, but, paradoxically, they also cut against the goal of social solidarity, since immigrants are unlikely to develop a sense of solidarity with citizens if little solidarity has been shown to them.⁴⁸

⁴⁸For sustained arguments in defense of my view that liberal ideals entail extending

Toward a Desirable Liberal Naturalization Policy: The Polity Model

I have raised two preliminary objections against the liberal ideals argument. First, the formal naturalization provisions that Pickus and Salins recommend are unlikely to instill a shared civic national identity in immigrants. Second, a strong civic national identity is undesirable from a liberal perspective, for two reasons: it too easily collapses into a cultural conception of identity, and it is associated with additional illiberal and counterproductive immigration policies. These objections provide a strong *prima facie* case against the civic national identity model of naturalization. This case will become decisive as I argue, in this section, that neither version of the liberal ideals argument successfully proves that a shared civic national identity is necessary to sustain the liberal democratic ideals and practices with which Salins and Pickus are concerned. Tolerance, respect for cultural difference, and social justice can be realized in the absence of a shared civic national identity, provided that immigrants and citizens have what Mason terms "a sense of belonging to a polity." As he describes it,

a person has a sense of belonging to a polity if and only if she identifies with most of its major institutions and some of its practices and feels at home in them. When a person identifies with the institutions and practices of a polity, she regards her flourishing as intimately linked to their flourishing. In order to be able to identify with something outside herself, a person must be able to perceive it as valuable, at least on balance, and see her concerns reflected in it. When a person feels at home in a practice or institution, she is able to find her way around it, and she experiences participation in it as natural.⁴⁹

For the purposes of clarification, I will briefly compare a *civic national identity* with a *sense of belonging to a polity*. In doing so, I will highlight the essential differences between these nationalist and non-nationalist conceptions of political belonging and discuss the implications of Mason's notion for naturalization policy. First, both conceptions ground political membership in a commitment to liberal democratic values, yet each offers a distinctive characterization of what such a commitment entails. As we have seen, embracing a civic national identity requires allegiance to a particular set of historically specific political ideals and principles, such as the "American" ideals of liberty and equality as articulated in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Possessing a sense of belonging to a polity, in contrast, involves

social rights to permanent residents, see Shelley Wilcox, "American Neo-Nativism and Gendered Immigrant Exclusions," in Barbara Andrew, Jean Keller, and Lisa Schwartzman (eds.), *Feminist Interventions in Feminist Ethics and Social Theory* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, forthcoming, March 2005), and Carens, "Membership and Morality," pp. 31-50.

⁴⁹Mason, "Political Community," p. 272.

valuing the major institutions and central practices of that polity and feeling at home in them. To value an institution or practice, a person must endorse the institution or practice in its current form as well as the political ideals upon which it is based, and have an interest in its continued flourishing. However, she need not identify with the historical processes that led up to the creation of the institution or practice, or accept the national myths told about these developments. Nor must she accept any particular interpretation of the political ideals it embodies.⁵⁰

Second, both a civic national identity and a sense of belonging to a polity may be associated with certain affective states, yet the character and genesis of these feelings is different on each account. A civic national identity involves a strong sense of collective belonging characterized by a sense of relatedness and mutual and exclusive feelings of solidarity, sympathy, and obligation. Such sentiments stem from the belief that members of the nation belong together by virtue of characteristics that nearly all of them possess. A sense of belonging to a polity also may be associated with certain emotions, including feelings of loyalty to one's country, pride in its political institutions and practices, and the sense of a shared future that can develop when individuals participate together as equals in democratic practices. However, it is possible for people to have a sense of belonging to their polity without believing that they belong together as a nation or possessing any special feelings of relatedness with or sympathy for one another.⁵¹

Finally, despite some similarities, cultivating a civic national identity and fostering a sense of belonging to a polity in immigrants would require very different naturalization policies. I have already discussed the naturalization provisions that Salins and Pickus recommend to encourage new citizens to adopt the defining civic national identity. How, then, would a sense of belonging to a polity best be fostered in immigrants? Only an inclusive and participatory naturalization policy that encourages immigrants to participate fully in the socio-economic and political life of their new polity could nurture this sense of belonging. The policy must be inclusive because immigrants will be unable to identify with the major institutions and central practices of their new polity if they are excluded from any of these institutions or practices or marginalized in relation to them.⁵² It must also be participatory, since immigrants must feel comfortable participating in an institution or practice in order to feel at home in it. In short, a naturalization policy that fosters a sense of belonging to a

⁵⁰Mason, "Political Community," p. 281.

⁵¹See *ibid.*, p. 272.

⁵²*Ibid.* Mason is concerned with the invidious effects of exclusion and marginalization in the context of pluralist societies; however, he does not discuss immigration or naturalization policy explicitly.

polity in immigrants must provide immigrants with the tools they need to participate fully in their new society.

I will now outline the specific provisions of the inclusive and participatory naturalization model that I endorse, which I call the polity model of naturalization. Since formal rights are a precondition of immigrant inclusion and participation, the polity model would extend civil, social, and political rights to all legal permanent residents soon after they establish residency in their new society.⁵³ Both civil rights, including non-discrimination rights, and social welfare rights would be granted to legal permanent residents immediately upon their arrival.⁵⁴ Such basic civil rights and "safety-net" protections are necessary to ensure that immigrants are able to take part in and enjoy the common life of society. If any of these rights are withheld, immigrants may be marginalized and unable to participate fully. Since a sense of belonging to a polity emphasizes political belonging and participation, political rights, including the right to vote in local and federal elections, would also be extended to legal permanent residents upon satisfying a short residence requirement (for instance, two years). During this initial residence period, immigrants who are unfamiliar with the dominant language and public institutions and practices of the society would be required to participate in basic publicly funded language and civics courses. The residence period would thus ensure that immigrants have the opportunity to learn the language, become socio-economically integrated, and learn about the major public institutions and practices of their new society before they are expected to help shape its future.

The polity model of naturalization posits the period of legal permanent residence as the most vital part of the naturalization process. Perma-

⁵³My argument refers only to immigrants with legal permanent resident status. However, although I cannot defend my view here, I believe amnesty should be granted to long-term undocumented immigrants. Amnesty would extend legal permanent resident status to these immigrants, thus qualifying them for formal rights, and ultimately for naturalized citizenship.

⁵⁴In the end, I believe that the liberal state is required to extend civil rights to everyone present in the state and social welfare rights to all permanent residents, regardless of their citizenship or immigration status. See Wilcox, "American Neo-Nativism and Gendered Immigrant Exclusions." Legal permanent residents could, however, be barred from certain jobs if there were a compelling reason for their exclusion. For instance, it would be justifiable to exclude recent newcomers from jobs that require detailed knowledge about the receiving country that could be acquired only by living in that country for a lengthy period of time. However, such exclusions can only be justified by virtue of one's length of residency, not one's citizenship status per se, and thus also would apply to citizens in similar circumstances. It is likely that a liberal state could also legitimately restrict certain national security jobs to citizens on the grounds that legal permanent residents have not yet formally expressed their commitment to full membership and to the loyalties that it implies.

ment residence is understood as a transition to full citizenship, a period during which immigrants develop a sense of belonging to a polity by participating in its major institutions and central practices. Immigrants who complete a modest period of permanent residence (for instance, five years, including the two-year initial residence period) would be granted full citizenship upon request. Thus, the polity model would include only two formal naturalization requirements: a modest period of residence and participation in publicly funded language and civics courses.⁵⁵ It would differ from the cultural preservationist and civic national identity models in several significant ways. The polity model would neither require nor encourage immigrants to undergo cultural assimilation, develop a sense of peoplehood, or demonstrate their capacity for good citizenship by passing knowledge-based exams. Although culminating swearing-in rituals may play a role in the naturalization process, such formal ceremonies would not be expected to take the place of active participation in public life in fostering a sense of political belonging among immigrants.

The most important reason for endorsing the polity model of naturalization is that it would produce the purported benefits of a shared civic national identity without incurring the same moral costs as the civic national identity model. As we saw in the previous section, Salins asserts that a shared civic national identity is a precondition of tolerance and respect for cultural diversity in multicultural societies. It is certainly possible that a shared civic national identity could provide a basis for these citizenship virtues assuming it were equally accessible to members of every cultural group. But Salins provides no argument for this assertion, so it is difficult to see why a sense of belonging to a polity could not play much the same role in promoting tolerance and harmonious social relations between immigrants and established citizens as a civic national identity, especially since, as I have argued, civic national identities tend to be articulated in ways that privilege the identities of dominant cultural groups. A sense of belonging to a polity is cultivated through participation in the major socio-economic and political institutions and practices of that polity. When immigrants and established citizens engage with one another in the common, day-to-day activities associated with working and caring for their families, they form social connections. Such social interactions tend to discredit pernicious stereotypes about immigrants and enhance social trust between the groups. Beyond interpersonal encounters, mutual participation in neighborhood associations, school boards, and local and national public decision-making processes can lead newcomers and established residents to discover that they have common

⁵⁵Certain groups of immigrants could reasonably be exempted from these requirements, including older and disabled immigrants.

interests that cut across ethnic and cultural divisions, and immigrants will certainly feel more welcomed by a society that values their democratic participation. A recent project by the Ford Foundation lends empirical support to these claims. The study identifies "the exclusion of immigrants from economic, social, and political opportunities as one of the major barriers to more harmonious relations between newcomers and citizens" and concludes that policies that encourage immigrants to participate in public life, and especially in democratic politics, would "best overcome 'ethnic alienation and nativism'."⁵⁶ We should not assume that these modes of immigrant inclusion would necessarily be easy or uncontested. However, to the extent that they are achieved, the interpersonal connections, social trust, and sense of a common future that grow out of them often may be enough to ground the tolerance and respect for cultural difference with which Salins is concerned without requiring a deeper sense of belonging together as a people, which a civic national identity involves.

Pickus argues that individuals will be motivated to fulfill their obligations to their fellows only if they possess the mutual feelings of solidarity, sympathy, and a sense of relatedness that allegedly flow from a shared civic national identity. Like Salins's argument, Pickus's version of the liberal ideals argument also is essentially under-defended. It is quite plausible that sentiments of sympathy and solidarity could motivate us to fulfill our obligations to our fellows in small, close-knit communities such as a church or village. However, Pickus provides no evidence that the benevolent fellow feelings associated with a shared civic national identity would be sufficient to motivate citizens of large states to make sacrifices for persons who are different from or unknown to them. Ironically, Pickus seems to be unaware that the American national identity he extols has not prevented many Americans from shirking their citizenship obligations, especially those involving economic redistribution. Nor is it clear that certain fellow feelings, such as sympathy, would be an appropriate source of motivation for meeting one's redistributive obligations, even if it were possible to enlarge their scope to include all citizens. If we take the perspective of those in economic need, we find that being "the recipient of sympathy from a stranger can often be offensive and unwelcome. Often what is desired is not the compassion of someone better off than ourselves, but rather a recognition of our claims in terms of justice and equality."⁵⁷ While this perspective should not lead us to conclude that sympathy for strangers is always unwelcome or inappropriate,

⁵⁶Interestingly, Pickus cites this 1993 study. See "To Make Natural," p. 116.

⁵⁷Susan Mendus, *Feminism and Emotion: Readings in Moral and Political Philosophy* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), p. 107.

it does provide reason to doubt that sentiments such as sympathy provide the best foundation for the realization of social justice. Finally, even if Pickus were able to show that the feelings associated with a shared civic national identity are effective and desirable sources of motivation, he provides no evidence that a sense of belonging to a polity could not also motivate members to meet their mutual obligations. In particular, the sense of a shared future that is associated with a sense of belonging to a polity may help to motivate individuals to meet their obligations to one another. Perhaps even more important, individuals are most likely to accept their mutual obligations if they see themselves as active participants in the democratic processes in which these obligations are articulated and the corresponding social policies are developed.

I have argued that liberal states ought to adopt the polity model of naturalization on the grounds that it would promote a commitment to tolerance, a respect for cultural difference, and a willingness to make sacrifices for one's fellows among immigrants, while sustaining cultural pluralism. Before closing, I will consider two objections to the polity model. First, I expect that some critics would argue that the polity model requires dangerously little from naturalizing immigrants. Merely requiring immigrants to fulfill a short residence requirement and to participate in language and civics courses will not guarantee that they will be competent to participate in public life in an informed and intelligent way. An adequate naturalization process must require immigrants to demonstrate their capacity for good citizenship by passing language, history, and civics exams before they are granted political rights. I would like to offer two responses to this objection. First, there simply is no evidence that formal history and civics examinations are accurate measures of the competencies required for citizenship. Immigrants are just as likely to fail such examinations due to nervousness as lack of knowledge, and even those immigrants who do not know the correct answers still may be perfectly capable citizens. As Carens puts it, the "knowledge required for wise political judgment is complex, multifaceted, and often intuitive. It's not something that can be captured on a test of this sort."⁵⁸

Yet even if it were possible to develop a means for accurately measuring the citizenship competencies of immigrants, excluding prospective citizens on the basis of these competencies would be problematic from a liberal perspective. Conditioning naturalized citizenship upon citizenship competencies would demand more of naturalized citizens than of birthright citizens: naturalizing immigrants would be required to meet competencies requirements, but in most liberal

⁵⁸Carens, "Why Naturalization Should be Easy: A Response to Noah Pickus," in Pickus (ed.), *Immigration and Citizenship in the 21st Century*, pp. 141-46, at p. 142.

democracies, birthright citizenship is automatically extended to any persons who happen to be born within the territorial boundaries of the state or to parents who are citizens, regardless of their capacity for good citizenship. Although this inequality of treatment is commonplace, it is difficult to see how it could be justified. Why does simply being born in a state or to parents who are citizens entitle one to the rights of citizenship when living in a society does not? The polity model of naturalization avoids this unequal treatment by including naturalization provisions that are analogous to those that regulate birthright citizenship. Like birthright citizens, legal permanent residents would be granted civil and social rights upon establishing residence in their new country. And like birthright citizens, legal permanent residents would be granted political rights after a reasonable period of residence and integration. During this residence period, naturalizing immigrants would be required to participate in publicly funded language and civics courses that are no more demanding than the formal language and civics classes included in the compulsory elementary education of birthright citizens. In neither case would rights, including political rights, be predicated on the possession of particular competencies.

The second objection maintains that the polity model removes an important incentive for naturalization. I argue that civil, social, and political rights should be granted to permanent residents partly on the grounds that such rights are a precondition of a successful transition to naturalized citizenship. This implies that it is important for permanent residents to become citizens. But if most of the rights of citizenship, including political rights, were granted to permanent residents before they are eligible for naturalization, they would have little incentive to become naturalized citizens when given the opportunity.

The claim that extending civil, social, and political rights to permanent residents will be a disincentive for naturalization falsely implies that permanent residents only become citizens in order to secure these rights. However, many immigrants naturalize for non-instrumentalist reasons, such as the desire to become lifelong members of the polity in which they live. Of course, the desire to become a full, permanent member of one's polity will not be strong enough to compel every permanent resident to pursue naturalized citizenship, even if the naturalization process is fair and relatively easy to complete successfully. Some immigrants will retain their permanent resident status indefinitely. But I do not think this is as serious a problem as critics might suggest. The concern seems to be that permanent residents will be able to enjoy most of the benefits of citizenship without being subject to the same duties as citizens, much as trial members in a club are able to enjoy club activities without paying dues or helping with the planning or clean-up of these events. This is a legiti-

mate concern. A naturalization model that grants permanent residents most of the rights, but none of the duties, of citizenship would be unfair to citizens. But this is not the case with the polity model, according to which permanent residents are bound by the same basic duties as citizens.

Conclusion

I have argued that liberal democratic states ought to reject the cultural preservationist and civic national identity models of naturalization in favor of a model that cultivates a sense of belonging to a polity in immigrants. The polity model posits naturalization as a two-way process of immigrant integration in which liberal democratic institutions and practices are required to be inclusive of immigrants, and newcomers are expected to participate in public life. Immigrants will be unable to develop a sense of belonging to a polity if they are excluded from any of its major institutions or central practices or marginalized in relation to them. Thus, as I have argued, legal permanent residents routinely should be granted civil, social, and political rights. However, even among citizens of multicultural societies, many members of disadvantaged and minority social groups, including immigrant groups, lack a sense of belonging to their polity, despite possessing equal rights and formal equality of opportunity. This suggests that work remains to be done to make these institutions and practices genuinely inclusive. The polity model places the responsibility for such changes squarely on liberal institutions and practices, rather than expecting immigrants to conform to unjust or exclusionary practices, institutions, or identities. In doing so, it lends support to additional inclusive immigration and citizenship policies that would promote cultural pluralism.^{59,60}

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⁵⁹Polyethnic rights, which would grant immigrant groups some greater degree of the legal and political autonomy in order to express and protect their cultural identities, are an obvious example of such policies. For a classic explication and defense of such rights, see Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*, chaps. 2, 6, 9.

⁶⁰I would like to thank Barbara Andrew, Gina Clemens, Alison Jaggar, Jean Keller, Claudia Mills, Lisa Schwartzman, Rachel Singpurwalla, Dan Sturgis, and the referees of this journal for their very helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article.

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