

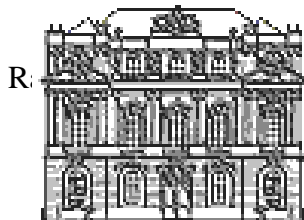


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Farewell to Multiculturalism?  
Sharing values and identities in societies of immigration

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# Farewell to Multiculturalism?

## Sharing values and identities in societies of immigration\*

After the assaults of September 11 several observers were quick to proclaim “the end of multiculturalism”. We have heard this before. There was the “end of history”<sup>1</sup> and then the less noted “end of democracy”<sup>2</sup>. If statements like these outlive the short attention span of the media, they will be remembered primarily for their shortsightedness. As history and democracy, multiculturalism, too, is likely to survive those who announce its death.

However, September 11 has certainly changed the way immigrants are perceived in western democracies. The terrorist attacks may have long-term impacts not only on immigration control but also on integration policies. For participants in the Metropolis network this should be an occasion not merely for defending multiculturalism, but also for rethinking it. “Rethinking multiculturalism” happens to be the title of an important book published by Bhikhu Parekh in 2000.<sup>3</sup> The task description I have been given as a speaker at the 2001 Metropolis Conference in Rotterdam quotes Parekh’s keynote address at last year’s Vancouver conference where he proposed that social cohesion in societies of immigration needs to be built explicitly upon a foundation of diversity rather than of similarity.<sup>4</sup> It is this idea that has recently come under attack. What is controversial about multiculturalism is not the coexistence of diverse cultural practices and ways of life, but more specifically the affirmation that such diversity extends into the realm of morality and politics. The core question is about the legitimacy and the limits of a pluralism of moral values and political identities. Opponents of multiculturalism believe that liberal democracies have been excessively tolerant in this regard. They insist that social cohesion in societies of immigration must be built upon shared values and identities.

### 1. Who is challenging social cohesion?

A first question I have about this assertion is what exactly we mean when we talk about social cohesion. There is a venerable tradition of this concept in sociological theory going back to Emile Durkheim.<sup>5</sup> In this discourse the problem is not specifically related to the impact of transnational migration but emerges from the fact that in large industrial societies everybody is a stranger for most other individuals with whom he or she interacts in the public realm. Social cohesion is provided by a functional division of labour in which individuals occupy different and complementary roles, rather than by a “mechanic solidarity” that relies on similarity. Modern societies becomes structurally open for immigration by uprooting *native* populations and by creating rules for public encounters of anonymous individuals. Analyses of nationalism by Ernest Gellner,<sup>6</sup> Benedict Anderson<sup>7</sup> and others have pointed out that something more than this is

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\* This paper was first presented as a keynote speech at the panel “Diversity and Social Cohesion” at the Sixth International Metropolis Conference, 26 – 30 November 2001, Rotterdam.

30 November

<sup>1</sup> Fukuyama, Francis (1992) *The End of History and the Last Men*, Free Press, New York

<sup>2</sup> Guéhenno, Jean-Marie (1993) *La fin de la démocratie*, Flammarion, Paris.

<sup>3</sup> Parekh, Bhikhu (2000) *Rethinking Multiculturalism. Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*, Macmillan, London.

<sup>4</sup> A transcript of Parekh’s speech is available at [http://www.international.metropolis.net/frameset\\_e.html](http://www.international.metropolis.net/frameset_e.html).

<sup>5</sup> Durkheim, Emile (1902) *De la division du travail sociale*, F. Alcan, Paris.

<sup>6</sup> Gellner, Ernest (1983) *Nations and Nationalism*, Blackwell, Oxford.

<sup>7</sup> Anderson, Benedict (1983) *Imagined Communities. On the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London.

needed. Social and economic mobility requires a common “cultural capital”; an industrial division of labour needs a literate population so that strangers can communicate in a shared idiom. And the democratic revolution that derives legitimate government from popular sovereignty needs the nation as an “imagined community”. These are the boundaries that define immigrant minorities as “others” who do not belong or who must transform themselves in order to fit into the receiving society.

Yet this is still no sufficient explanation why immigration should threaten social cohesion. Nowhere in western democracies have immigrant minorities tried to establish their own idioms as official ones to the exclusion of native majority languages, nowhere have they claimed a territory where they can rule themselves through their own institutions of government. Immigrants in our countries do not destroy the societies they enter, as European settlers did in the territories they colonized. Nor do they demand that the receiving society should give them the same political autonomy that national and indigenous minorities are claiming in many North American and European states. Those who accuse immigrant multiculturalism of leading to “balkanization” must be either ignorant about the causes and horrors of the breakup of Yugoslavia, or they deliberately conjure up images of civil war in order to impose their version of cultural homogeneity.

So my first suggestion is that we should be more specific when using terms such as social cohesion and should pay careful attention to what work these concepts are doing in a certain public language game. There is little doubt that multinational societies face a problem of political cohesion and territorial integrity when a national minority campaigns for secession. Yet it is not at all obvious what problem for social cohesion immigrants pose when they ask that the receiving society should respect their cultural traditions.

My other questions are about shared values and identities. These are often mentioned together so that they appear as almost interchangeable concepts, or at least as closely interconnected ones. Democratic values are said to provide the only defensible basis for national identity in societies of immigration, and, conversely, national identities in western societies are seen as profoundly shaped by a common belief in democratic values. I want to separate the ingredients of this package by distinguishing between values and identities and asking in which sense each of the two ought to be shared.

## 2. Sharing democratic values: is it enough?

In the 1990s Jürgen Habermas used the old American idea of constitutional patriotism to explain to Western Europeans why they should integrate their nation-states into a larger European Union and how they should integrate their immigrant minorities into the political community.<sup>8</sup> Constitutional patriotism provides indeed an attractive guideline for the latter task. Immigrants don’t have to support the particular cultural traditions of the host society or to assimilate into a national identity defined by a history that is not theirs. All that is required is that they subscribe to those political values that are at the core of democratic constitutions. While basic values such as equality, liberty, and life are always controversial in their interpretations and applications, there is a body of well-established principles of human rights, the rule of law and democracy that define

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<sup>8</sup> Habermas, Jürgen (1992) ‘Staatsbürgerschaft und nationale Identität’, in: *Faktizität und Geltung*, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt am Main: 632-660.

the values that immigrants must be committed to if they want to be accepted into the political community. They can be asked to do so because these values are universalistic. Even if their contemporary codification may have originated in western societies, their content is culturally neutral and ought to be shared by all groups and traditions.

In the 1990s some have rejected this claim of cultural neutrality. In the so-called “Asian values” debate an ideological coalition of South and East Asian politicians united authoritarian rulers from Singapore via Malaysia to Beijing. They challenged the universality of human rights by claiming that these are rooted in individualistic traditions that are incompatible with the core values of other societies. I do not want to revive this debate. Instead of asking whether the values proclaimed by western democracies can be supported from within the cultural traditions of immigrants from non-western societies, I will accept that there are moral and political values that are universally valid even if they are not universally supported. The question is whether this supports the conclusion that nothing more is needed for social cohesion in societies of immigration.

As some critics have pointed out, if these values are indeed universal then they cannot shore up shared identities because they do not tell individuals which political community they ought to identify with.<sup>9</sup> A statement like this one may seem a philosophical trick, a little brain twister that does not correspond to any problem in the real world. France and the US share the same value of secular politics and a rather strict separation of church and state. For French citizens this will hardly create confusion as to whether they ought to be more loyal to the USA than to their own country, even if they think that the American constitution provides better support for secularism than the French one. This may be, however, a little different with French immigrants to the US who consider whether they should naturalize. By and large, immigrants from wealthy and democratic countries of origin have been less inclined to give up their citizenship in order to acquire that of their host country. This reluctance casts some doubts on the idea that shared universal values are a sufficient basis for political loyalty.

Consider now immigration from countries that are considerably less democratic than the receiving society. In this more familiar context universal values shine in a rather particularistic colour. They become *our* values in contrast with *theirs*. As I have emphasized above this need not affect their validity, but it does affect the immigrants’ choices. They are confronted with a dilemma of choosing between western values and identities of origin – a dilemma that is not properly addressed in the ideal theory of constitutional patriotism. The very demand that immigrants must explicitly profess these values before they can become citizens insinuates that their origins somehow create a predisposition against these values. It is then not the cultural bias of democratic values that creates a problem, but their role as boundary markers for collective identities of citizenship.

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<sup>9</sup> For arguments along similar lines see Norman, Wayne (1994) ‘The Ideology of Shared Values: A Myopic Vision of Unity in the Multi-nation State’, in Joseph Carens (ed.) *Is Quebec Nationalism Just?*, McGill-Queen’s University Press, Montreal: 137-159; Yack, Bernard (1996) ‘The Myth of the Civic Nation’, *Critical Review* 10, no.2, spring 1996: 193-211; Kymlicka, Will (2001) *Politics in the Vernacular. Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, chapter 18.

by I would like to mention the American and Canadian political philosophers Bernard Yack, Wayne Norman and Will Kymlicka.

Even this dilemma need not cause great concern. I do not want to quarrel with those who regard the act of naturalization as a proper occasion for asserting the democratic values of a society of immigration – although I have slight misgivings about the American oath of allegiance that asks an immigrant to “renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which [he or she has] heretofore been a subject or citizen”. The boundary that distinguishes *our* values from *theirs* becomes much less exclusionary if immigrants are allowed to retain a previous citizenship when they naturalize.

A stronger objection is that in the real world democratic values are never sold to immigrants in their pure universalistic substance. They always come wrapped up in a much heavier package that includes national histories and languages. Again, I do not want to argue that this is wrong, but merely that it is not consistent with the shared value thesis. If immigrants have to learn the language of the receiving society and have to accept that its public culture will be shaped by the history of the native population, then these are good reasons for addressing the question of shared collective identities directly rather than hiding it behind a smokescreen of universalistic rhetoric.

The need for thicker identities becomes obvious when we consider the difficulties of promoting a European constitutional patriotism. The main obstacle for stable popular support for enlargement and political integration of the Union is not so much the lack of a proper European constitution, which EU institutions have now finally agreed to draft, but the absence of a common language and the mental presence of a long history of divisive rivalries.

### 3. Sharing democratic values: is it asking too much?

Shared values are then not sufficient for political cohesion because they cannot define the boundaries of collective identities. At the same time they may not be strictly necessary either, at least not in the sense that immigrants have to actively support them. Asking them to do so may be asking too much – not because it would be difficult for them to reconcile these values with their cultural traditions, but because native citizens are never asked that much.

I am not merely referring here to the fact that native citizens, unless they are sworn in for a public office, never have to take an oath in which they explicitly endorse the democratic values of the constitution. This discrepancy is not really problematic if we assume that individuals who have been politically socialized in a democratic society tend to take these values for granted. The difficulty is that they only take them for granted without actually sharing them. I may be overly pessimistic about my fellow citizens but I do not trust them to believe deeply in sexual and racial equality, in freedom of expression or in the rule of law. Majorities may have learned to give the politically correct answers when asked by opinion pollsters. But scratch a little beneath the surface and try to induce their values from their speech and behaviour in their everyday lives and you will find that many, or even most, citizens of democratic societies hold profoundly illiberal beliefs. In his Vancouver speech Parekh warned that “much of the discussion on multiculturalism goes profoundly wrong in distinguishing groups and societies into liberal and non-liberal.” He pointed out that “groups that come in are not non-liberal, they’re already infused by liberal ideas, and their members insist upon enjoying their rights to individual autonomy and self-determination.” This is one good reason why it makes little sense to classify whole societies as liberal. The other reason is that it may be rather naïve to think that their members actually share and support liberal values.

On the other hand, it seems to me quite possible to distinguish liberal and non-liberal states or democratic and authoritarian forms of political rule. We cannot characterize societies in the same way as states because the role of constitutional values in democratic systems is first of all *institutional*. Contemporary theorists of liberalism have been quite emphatic about this. John Rawls opens his famous theory of justice by claiming that “justice is the first virtue of social institutions”.<sup>10</sup> Ronald Dworkin echoes this when he writes in a recent collection of his essays that “equal concern is the sovereign virtue of political community”.<sup>11</sup> Rawls’s critics were quick to point out that justice is also an ethical principle for individual actions. This is less obvious for other political values. In everyday life equal concern and respect is a very demanding norm that is frequently overridden by special obligations we have towards family, friends, colleagues, neighbours and those anonymous strangers we happen to meet. And even in settings where fairness demands that people ought to treat others as equals, the norm is often only asserted because it is so rarely respected. This picture changes dramatically when we enter the sphere of democratic government. Here we do not regard equality of citizenship as a lofty principle that can never be attained in real life. We expect all sorts of institutional safeguards and procedures to ensure that democratic governments, whose personnel is also motivated by self-interested concerns, will nevertheless provide equal protection under the law for all citizens.

This consideration suggests that what democratic values do for social cohesion is not positive in the sense that there is a shared set of beliefs that unites citizens in the same way as believing in a religious doctrine unites a community of faith. The role of democratic values is primarily negative in providing legitimacy for coercive political rule. All political rule, even the most liberal and democratic one, is coercive and for that very reason needs to be justified towards those over whom it is exercised. The core values of democracy offer this kind of justification. Citizens are not required to believe in these values, they are merely asked to accept the legitimacy of a government that respects them. The proof is that citizens who openly proclaim that they do not share these values will not be disqualified. They continue to enjoy the status, rights and liberties whose value foundations they reject.

The enemies of democracy mistake this merely negative consensus on democratic values as a sign of weakness and pervasive liberal self-doubt. They are wrong for two reasons. First, liberal democracy is not itself a comprehensive system of values and world-views, but is instead an answer to the fact of value pluralism. It is meant to regulate the endemic conflicts of interests and ideologies in heterogeneous societies and not to overcome them in some homogenized and sanitized version of a liberal society. Second, democratic values can be strong even if they are negative. They define limits of toleration, e.g. in outlawing all acts of discrimination that are incompatible with a government responsibility to provide equal protection.

A purely institutional account of democratic values is, however, incomplete. It leaves us with the old question: *Quis custodiet custodes?* Who watches the watchmen? Democratic values cannot survive only as a text in the constitution, nor can their defence be exclusively entrusted to a Supreme Court. There is a legitimate agenda of civic education that does not merely teach national history and the rules of the political system, but also norms of behaviour in contexts where individuals should act as citizens. The measure of success for this difficult task is not what citizens answer when they are asked about their values, but whether they can cope with diversity

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<sup>10</sup> Rawls, John (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, Oxford University Press, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> Dworkin, Ronald (2000) *Sovereign Virtue. The Theory and Practice of Equality*, Harvard University Press, p. 1.

in their actions. It is more important that citizens learn not to act on their illiberal beliefs in public settings than to teach them to publicly profess beliefs that do not correspond to their actions.

If we cannot rely much on citizens to actively support democratic values who will then make sure that they are heeded in the daily business of government and who will defend them when they come under attack? The answer must be that political representatives and all those who hold a public office must have a special responsibility for maintaining democratic values. This creates a veritable dilemma. Representatives elected by citizens who do not support these values are unlikely to be guided by them in their political decisions, but there is no way of preventing them from being elected without restricting the basic liberties of free speech and association. Some countries, including my own, have outlawed Neonazi parties. But such moves cannot resolve the bigger problem of populist temptations to which mainstream democratic parties, too, succumb frequently. Attracting votes by campaigning against minorities is often a perfectly rational strategy in democratic elections. And immigrant minorities who cannot vote because they are not yet citizens provide the cheapest of all targets.

What can be done to guard democracies against this danger? First, enfranchise immigrants either through encouraging them to naturalize or through extending the vote to non-citizens. Second, work out ethical norms and codes of conduct for democratic politicians similar to those that have been developed for medical and media professions. These should include commitments of democratic parties not to chase the votes of racist and anti-immigrant parties by adopting their platforms, nor to bring them into positions of power by forming alliances and government coalitions with them.<sup>12</sup> The results of recent elections in several European countries from Austria via Italy to Norway and Denmark are not particularly encouraging in this respect. It should be obvious that these norms are ethical and not legal ones. Instead of introducing legal procedures for sanctions that can only apply when there is already a very serious crisis,<sup>13</sup> we should be thinking more about institutional innovations and incentives that will induce democratic politicians to support democratic values for self-interested reasons.

Ethical standards of this kind should not only be defended by representatives of native majorities, they ought to apply equally to representative of immigrant minorities. At the risk of being provocative I want to suggest that the reactions of some leaders of Muslim communities in western states to September 11 have been inadequate when measured by this yardstick.

Democracy is not only under threat from those who attack it but also from those who pretend to defend it. In the US there are extremely worrying developments that include summary detention of people who are suspected to have contacts with, or information about, terrorists; highly selective enforcement of immigration laws; the proposal to introduce special military courts for non-citizen suspects; and broad emergency powers for the executive. Even more worrying are verbal and physical attacks on Muslims by ordinary citizens that have occurred in most western states. Muslim communities have been outraged by the rhetoric of crusade and clash of

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<sup>12</sup> These points are included in a 1998 Charter of European Parties for a Non-Racist Society, which has been signed by nearly 100 parties including conservative, liberal, social democratic and environmentalist ones.

<sup>13</sup> After the end of informal sanctions of the other fourteen Member States against the Austrian government, which had been introduced in reaction to the formation of a government coalition with the xenophobic Freedom Party, the European Union adopted at its Nice summit of November 2000 a new sanction mechanism against governments of Member States that violate the basic principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law.

civilizations that had been initially introduced and then retracted by US president George W. Bush, but was later repeated by Italy's Silvio Berlusconi and other leading European politicians.

Yet all this is no reason to forget that September 11 was an attack on the most fundamental human rights and democratic values. There is a danger that the victimization of Muslims living in western societies fosters a discourse of victimhood within their communities. We have heard voices, not only from Muslim leaders, but also from them, that the real cause of terrorism is US foreign policy. It is not far-fetched to understand this as a search for excuses. In today's media discourse Muslim communities in the West are presented as a security risk because they might harbour many more terrorists. This is utter nonsense. Searching for Muslim terrorists among the millions of immigrants who visit mosques is no more intelligent than would be a plan to fight the IRA by keeping under surveillance all Catholic churches in Ulster. There is no specific risk that ordinary immigrants will turn into terrorists. However, there is a real problem of widespread ambivalence towards, or even sympathy for, the 'causes' of the terrorists.

I can see again two tasks that might alleviate this problem. First, it would obviously help if western governments became more strongly involved in the search for a fair and lasting settlement for the Palestinian people as well as for other festering conflicts throughout the Muslim world. Second, representatives of immigrant Muslim communities should not merely be asked to distance themselves from terrorism, but should be engaged in a public debate how to reconcile democratic values with religious belief. This second goal can only be achieved if Muslims participate actively in mainstream politics and elect members of parliaments and local councils from their midst. Full political integration is the essential precondition for then holding these representatives accountable as opinion leaders within their communities who ought to defend democratic values.

#### 4. Can we share a pluralism of identities?

Some critics of multiculturalism agree that shared values are not enough and emphasize instead the need for shared identities. Only four years after the American sociologist Nathan Glazer announced that "We are all multiculturalists now"<sup>14</sup> there is a growing mood that western societies should once again become melting pots.

In a liberal version this argument does not suggest full assimilation, but merely that immigrants must adopt the national identity of the receiving country as their primary affiliation. They can, for example, remain Muslims as long as they become British, French or German Muslims. They can also remain Turks if they learn to see their Turkish identity as an ethnic rather than a national one, so that it can be hyphenated with a dominant national identity. German Turks must then be turned into Turco-Germans in the same way that Irish immigrants to the US have become loyal Irish-American citizens.

The fear behind this model of integration is that immigrants have strong loyalties to political communities whose authorities operate outside the sphere of influence of the receiving state and often against its interests. This remedy is that immigrants are not only invited to *share* the national identity of the receiving society, but must accept it as *overriding* all other affiliations, especially in case of conflict.

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<sup>14</sup> Glazer, Nathan (1997) *We are all multiculturalists now*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA.



This is a profoundly illiberal idea. It denies the transnational character of many contemporary migration flows and the pluralistic transformation of destination societies that has resulted from this. In a state of emergency, democracies may have to defend themselves by checking that none of their citizens are loyal to their enemies. But democracy cannot flourish if precautions for emergencies serve as a pretext for constraining freedom in times of peace. Imposing national identities as overriding ones is like reacting to a crisis in globalization by going back from free trade to protectionism, or like reacting to terrorism by suspending civil liberties. It is a cure that may be worse than the disease and ought to be banned from the arsenal of *preventive* medicine.

We need other principles for constructing shared identities in societies of immigration. I would like to propose two guidelines for this task. The first one is that we should conceive of such identities as *overarching* and *overlapping* rather than as overriding.

Let me illustrate this idea by looking at the legal status of dual nationality that is rapidly proliferating throughout the western world as a result of migration. The great majority of cases results from acquisition of two nationalities at birth. Nearly all states have provisions for the transmission of nationality by descent to at least the first generation born abroad. In countries like the US, Canada or Australia, which grant citizenship upon birth in the territory, children born to foreign residents will be dual nationals. In most continental European states the first generation born in the country does not acquire citizenship automatically, but because the transmission based on descent applies to both parents, children from mixed marriages will also hold two nationalities. The third mechanism that produces dual nationality is through naturalization when applicants are either not released from their previous nationality or are not asked to renounce it.

The growing number of dual nationals among people of migrant origins forces democratic governments to take a stance on the issue of dual loyalty. There are four different responses to this problem. Austria is among the few western European states that still insist that nationality should in principle be singular and that try to enforce this at least in the naturalization of immigrants as well as when their own citizens naturalize abroad. Others, among them the US, do not require written evidence that immigrants have actually renounced a previous nationality, but simply choose to ignore when they hold on to it. They assume that all immigrant citizens owe a primary loyalty to their new country and that this makes a second citizenship ineffective. A third approach is to accept that a second citizenship will become active when dual nationals return to their country of origin, but that it remains dormant while they live in the country of immigration. Finally, a fourth perspective is to accept that dual nationals may enjoy simultaneous rights in two states, for example by voting from abroad.

The first stance is, in my view, out of synch with the real world and clings to a conception of exclusive loyalty that has no bearing on the actual formation of identities in contexts of migration. The second approach exemplifies the condescending tolerance that has been characteristic for great empires throughout history. A rule of primary loyalty cannot be simultaneously applied by both sending and receiving states and implicitly assumes the superiority of the latter. The third perspective is adequate whenever dual nationality creates a real conflict between legal norms, rights and obligations and the fourth one should be accepted as the default position where no such conflict arises. Taken together, the third and fourth approaches to dual nationality recognize that for migrants national identities may overlap and cannot be neatly

separated. This should not only be acknowledged for the legal status of nationality, but for other manifestations of identity, too.

The second guideline I want to propose is that shared identities in societies of immigration cannot be fixed in their cultural and historical content but should become *self-transformative*.

Multiculturalism has emphasized minority rights and autonomy, but has sidestepped the more difficult task of changing established conceptions of nationhood among native majority populations in such a way that immigrants can come to share common identities without having to fully assimilate. The problem is that all national identities have historic depth, even if this depth may often be an optical illusion that emerges from a selective view of history as the past of a present nation-state. Deconstructing national histories provides no answer to the real problem that citizens of a democratic polity must see themselves as sharing a common future, for the sake of which they are willing to make sacrifices. It is, however, impossible to imagine a common democratic future without also sharing the past. This past need not, and should not, be a historical narrative of national glories from which all atrocities have been purged. On the contrary, public remembrance of past crimes, especially those committed against religious and ethnic minorities, will be an essential condition for toleration and respect among today's diverse communities. This raises, however, a formidable problem for the integration of immigrants who do not seem to share a common past with the host society.

The assimilationist approach replies to this question that immigrants must learn to forget their national histories and adopt instead those of the receiving society as if they were their own. In American schools their children will then learn that their families arrived on a boat called Mayflower, in French ones that their forebears stormed the Bastille, and in German ones they may learn to feel guilt about the Holocaust. Conventional multiculturalism would instead accept that societies of immigration do not only form a patchwork of diverse cultural practices, but also of separate historical memories and myths and that immigrants will pass on theirs to subsequent generations. The neglected task is to make native majorities reimagine their own history so that it includes the divergent pasts of all groups who share a common future in a democratic state. This may be difficult but it should not be impossible. Migration rarely hits a destination country out of the blue sky. There are nearly always past connections or present involvements that link the receiving state to the sending society. Tracing the origins of particular migration flows contributes to rewriting the histories of receiving countries in such a way that today's immigrant minorities will be included.

This is merely one illustration for the broader idea that shared identities can emerge from a public culture that transforms itself in response to immigration. The assimilationist perspective has been associated with the image of the melting pot. Multiculturalism has been characterized as a salad bowl in which each leaf retains its distinct taste and form, but which becomes more interesting the more separate ingredients are added. Canadians have introduced the metaphor of the multicultural mosaic, whose monochrome stones create the visual impression of a larger picture. Let me conclude by suggesting a – somewhat less elegant – label for the modified version of multiculturalism that I have defended in this talk. One could call it the catalyst model. A catalyst triggers a chemical reaction that changes the substance to which it is added. We should not expect that immigrants will simply melt into national identities that have been constructed for native populations, nor should we promote segregated identities that will not support civic solidarity across ethnic boundaries. Instead, we should see transnational migration as a catalyst

that sets into motion a process of self-transformation of collective identities towards a more pluralistic and maybe even cosmopolitan outlook.

## 5. Conclusions

Let me sum up my answer to the questions I have posed at the beginning. Do democracies need shared values? Yes, they do. These values must be embedded in democratic institutions and political representative must be held accountable for defending them. However, democratic values cannot provide a common identity and sense of affiliation with this particular political community. Do societies of immigration then need shared identities? Yes, they do. But national identities cannot be truly shared in such societies unless they allow for overlapping loyalties and unless the immigrants' narratives become part of mainstream identities. This is how I interpret Bhikhu Parekh's suggestion that cohesion needs to be built on a foundation of diversity.