Democratic Nationalism and Multicultural Democracy

Meindert Fennema and Jean Tillie
NIAS, March, 2001
e-mail: fennema@nias.knaw.nl
Second draft

1.0. Abstract
This paper sets out to investigate the relationship between nationalism and democracy and aims to distinguish different types of ethnic mobilization with a democratic nation-state. To clarify the relationship between nationalism and democracy two variants of nationalism (ethnic and civic nationalism) are distinguished. We find that civic nationalism creates better conditions for democracy that ethnic nationalism, while weak nationalism creates better conditions than strong nationalism. Furthermore, we distinguish two dimensions in the democratic regulation of society. The first runs from substantive to procedural conceptions of democracy; the second runs from elitist to participatory governance. Accordingly we distinguish four types of democracy: market-, neo-republican, paternalistic and Jacobin democracy. We conclude that only the first two types of democracy can work in a multicultural society.
Finally we distinguish four types of ethnic mobilization, according to the degree of political participation of the ethnic rank and file and the degree of integration of the ethnic elite in the dominant power structure. Thus we find integrated, mobilized, pacified and isolated ethnic communities.
1.1. Nationalism and democracy.

Modern democracy has been nationalist from its inception. Jean Jacques Rousseau wrote: “If we want the peoples to be virtuous, let us begin by teaching them patriotism. How can they love their fatherland if that fatherland is for them no more than it is for foreigners and if it does not give to them more than what it has to give to everybody anyway?” (Delon 1987, p. 130). In the eyes of Rousseau democracy as a communitarian ideal needed loyal citizens and this loyalty was, for all practical purposes to be focused on a specific fatherland. But it was not until the French Revolution that the nation became the focal concept of democratic discourse. According to Sieyes “the nation precedes everything. It is the origin of everything, its will is always legal, it is the law self.” (Sieyes (1789) 1988) The Revolution tailored democracy into a national ideology. Modern democracy presupposed nationhood: democratic procedures properly implemented automatically result in the expression of the general -national - will. From the 18th century onward democrats did develop their theories of democracy within a national context. For the French revolutionaries nationality was primarily a political choice for democracy. This political perspective of nationhood made it possible to elect, in 1792, the Englishman Tom Paine and the German nobleman Anacharsis Cloots into the Assemblée nationale. Democracy was a political project and the forces of progress – just as were the forces of reaction - were internationally organized. Democratic values were universal values and in that sense the French revolution was also a world revolution.

In America, the French nobleman Lafayette and –again- Tom Paine had played important roles in the War of Independence. Tom Paine even obtained political office in the new Federal government of the USA. In that respect the democratic revolutions created, as Tocqueville observed, an intellectual fatherland where citizenship was open to people from all nationalities and all races. However, this democratic cosmopolitanism was both in France and in America an aristocratic fringe of the revolutionary discourse rather than its democratic core. Democracy, as far as it emphasizes participation in public deliberation and decision-making of political equals, implied membership in a community of equals and thus has an exclusionary aspect towards the outside world (Cohen 1999, p.250 ff). John Jay makes this point in the second of the Federalist Papers. “To all general purposes we have uniformly been one people; each individual citizen everywhere enjoying the same national rights, privileges, and protection. As a nation we have made peace and war; as a nation we
have vanquished our common enemies.” Alexander Hamilton stressed the need for a direct relation between national authority and individual citizens. “The great and radical vice in the construction of the existing confederation is the principle of LEGISLATION for STATES or GOVERNMENTS, in their CORPORATE or COLLECTIVE CAPACITIES, and as contradistinguished from the INDIVIDUALS of which they consist.” (Hamilton, Madison et al. 1990 p. 64, capitals in the original)
The Federalists saw national unity as a means to ‘break and control the violence of faction’ (Madison). And although the amount of national unity was a bone of contention to the Founding Fathers, the idea of nationality was firmly rooted. Lincoln and Grant finally settled the question of whether the United States was a nation-state or a loose alliance among sovereign states (Lind 1997, p. xiv). Loyalty to the nation should trump all other loyalties. That was the message of the outcome of the American Civil War. Most contemporary democrats agreed with Rousseau when he said about his cosmopolitan colleagues: “These gentlemen pretend to love everybody to have a pretext to love nobody”. (Soboul 1989, p.297) Patriotism required a fatherland and democracy required a civic community. Western history made the two coincide, first in the United States of America and subsequently in France.
Even Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels admitted in their Communist Manifesto that the struggle for social democracy was – at least for the time being – a national struggle. But they hastened to add that this was only in its form, not in its content. The great liberal democrat Alexis de Tocqueville (Tocqueville (1856)1966) also argued that the French revolution was universalistic in content (which brings him to conclude that there is a similarity with religious revolutions) but national in form. It formulated rights of citizens as universal rights and aimed to free the newborn citizen from the shackles of local power structures by considering him as an abstract agent of the national commonwealth. Ernest Renan has expressed the intimate relationship between nationhood and democracy most eloquently when he said in 1882 in his Sorbonne lecture:

“The nation is thus a great solidarity, created by the sentiment of the sacrifices that one has made and of the ones that one is willing to make again. It supposes a past, but it is formed in the present by a tangible fact: the consentment, the expressed wish to continue to live together. The existence of a nation is (if you allow me this metaphor) a daily plebiscite …” (Renan (1882)1994, p.28)
The nation, according to Renan, is a voluntary association, but not fully so, because it supposes a past. It is historical and local by definition and thus exclusive. That position was also taken on the other side of the Atlantic by a leading figure of the Progressive Movement, Herbert Croly:

“A nationalized democracy is not based on abstract individual rights, no matter whether the individual lives in Colorado, Paris, or Calcutta. Its consistency is chiefly a matter of actual historical association… A people that lacks the power of basing their political association on an accumulated national tradition and purpose is not capable of either nationality or democracy.” (cited in Lind 1997, p. 66) All this amounts to the belief that, although democratic values may be universal in essence, their practical application cannot but be embedded in a national community.

In the trail of David Miller (Miller 1995, p. 27), we can summarize this nationalist position in five points

1. The national community is constituted by shared beliefs and mutual commitment.
2. The national community is a historical phenomenon. Past and future generations are connected by the present one.
3. A national community has to constitute itself through the commitment of its members to its institutions.
4. A national community is connected to a particular territory.
5. It is marked off from other communities by a distinct national culture in which the members are considered of equal status as nationals.
6. A national community wants to govern itself.
7. Under certain conditions national self-government may take the form of representative democracy.

If in the concept of nationhood the cultural identity and the idea of common ancestry is stressed we approach the ethnic conception of nationhood; if on the other hand the commitment to common institutions and laws is stressed we speak of civic nationalism.

Although democratic institutions have developed in the context of nationhood, nationalism does not necessarily lead to democratic governance. In other words, nationhood was a necessary but not a sufficient condition for democratic governance.
to develop. And history also has shown that nationalism could, under certain conditions be harmful to democratic governance. In combination with anti-democratic ideologies nationalism has lead to authoritarian and even fascist regimes. Under what circumstances then are nationhood and democracy in conflict? We see two different obstacles to democratic governance that are inherent in the idea of nationhood. The first is that national identity may lay so much stress on the need for unity that the democratic process suffers from it. The democratic process cannot properly function if absolute unity of the demos is required. Democracy implies public deliberation and the very existence of contending opinions may jeopardize the national unity. This is what Madison called the mischiefs of factions. From its inception liberal democracy has been under threat whenever the fear of division haunted the political elite. This is clearly seen in the course of the French Revolution when Jacobin dictatorship was introduced under warlike circumstances. In revolutionary France the fear of disunity expressed itself in the form of ‘aristocratic plots’ that threatened the nation. The fear of aristocratic plots propelled the idea of nationhood and the development of national unity. “The ‘aristocratic plot’ thus became the lever of an egalitarian ideology that was both exclusionary and highly integrative.” (Furet 1981, p.55) It was, however, detrimental for the development of democratic governance.

In the newborn USA the fear of disunity expressed itself in the accusation of the Hamiltonians that the opposition, organized in Democratic Societies, was engaging in unconstitutional activities while supporting the French Jacobins. The government of George Washington combined nationalist and anti-democratic measures in the Alien Act and the Sedition Act (Hofstadter 1969, p.115 ff). The Jeffersonians, on the other hand, accused the Hamiltonians of siding with England in a secret attempt to restore the colonial relations. The contending parties accused each other of willingly or unwillingly undermining the nation by supporting the enemy. The danger was clearly of an international nature, e.g. one nation was juxtaposed to another. More than a hundred years later Lenin developed the concept of democratic centralism to deal with diverging opinions in circumstances where military discipline is required. Again the result proved that democratic governance is incompatible with the need for absolute discipline (Waller 1988). In general we would suggest that the stronger the need for national unity, the less are the chances for liberal democracy.

The second obstacle that nationhood creates for democracy is its implicit ethnic character. In its most civic formulation a nation is “an association of people that have
decided to live under a common legislation, represented by the same legislator.” (Sieyes (1789) 1988) In this definition it becomes clear that the civic nation is based on contract. Belonging to a civic nation is always voluntary, never primordial. But even in the most civic conception of nation, there is always some aspect of cultural homogeneity implicated. In the juxtaposition of civic and ethnic nationalism one tends to overlook that they both are forms of nationalism and that even in its most ‘civic’ form there is a cultural dimension to it that makes the nation always a historical group. We should therefore conceive the distinction between civic – and ethnic nationalism not as mutually exclusive but as a single dimension of nationalism. This is not to say, however, that the distinction has no analytical value, as Brubaker recently has argued, implicitly debunking his own former research (Brubaker 1999, p.62).

Contrary to what is often assumed, the different conceptions of nationhood are not solely determined by the historical foundation of the nation-states. Even if in Germany the ethnic conception of nationhood tends to be dominant whereas the civic conception of nationhood is dominant in France, in both countries we find citizens who do not share the dominant discourse. Hence the two conceptions of nationhood can be seen as country characteristics as Brubaker (Brubaker 1992) and many other have done, but they can just as well be seen as discursive positions of individual citizens. Or, as Vermeulen and Govers have phrased it: “Groups or communities are more or less ethnic. Notions of common descent, substance and history and the use of kinship metaphor may be present in various degrees, even within the same community.” (Vermeulen and Govers 1997, p, 7) We have measured the two variants of nationalism in a survey among Amsterdam citizens. Some 41 per cent of the respondents conceived the nation primarily in ethnic terms, while some 33 per cent conceived it primarily in civic terms. The remaining 26 percent positioned themselves in the middle of the scale. We found that the different conceptions formed a one-dimensional scale. We also found that the position on the nationalism scale had a significant impact on the preference for the extreme right (Fennema and Tillie 1996, p.199). This finding corroborated our assumption that ethnic nationalism is less supportive of democratic governance than civic nationalism.

There is a specific danger of ethnic nationalism for democratic governance. Since an ethnic conception of nationhood assumes a high degree of cultural unity, ethnic nationalism makes it difficult for democratic institutions to function in a multi-ethnic
society. The answer to this democratic predicament has been a revival of civic nationalist discourse, which distinguishes constitutional patriotism from communitarian or ethnic nationalism (Tamir 1993; Habermas 1995; Miller 1995). Such models of constitutional or civic nationalism try to squeeze the cultural content out of nationhood so as to allow for multicultural democracy. Although some authors have argued that these attempts are bound to fail because national citizenship tends to “thicken” and take a cultural form over time (Lind 1995; Cohen 1999), we will in this book see how far the attempts to incorporate newcomers in contemporary local democracies without assimilating them in the dominant culture of the polity have succeeded. If we now combine the two aspects of nationalism that might hamper development of democratic governance we can present the following 2x2 matrix that predicts the life chances of liberal democracy.

![Figure 1.1 Types of nationalism and life chances of democratic governance](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Civic nationalism</th>
<th>Ethnic nationalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong nationalism</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak nationalism</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From figure 1.1 it becomes clear that the opportunities for democratic governance are highest in a polity where the nationalism is civic and has a low intensity. In The Netherlands nationalism is both weak and civic, thus giving high opportunities for democratic governance. Where nationalism is strong and civic, as is the case in France, the opportunities for democratic governance are somewhat less. The same is true for the case of Germany, where nationhood is ethnically defined but this ethnic nationalism has a low profile. In the case where nationhood is defined in ethnic terms and nationalism is strong – as in the case of most Eastern European countries – we
expect democratic governance to encounter many problems, especially when society is split according to ethnic cleavages.

We may also draw another conclusion. At the local level democratic governance stands a better chance than at the national level, for two reasons. For one, because in the local polity nationalism is less noticeable than in the national level. National symbols are hardly ever of a local nature and the organization of national solidarity has its focus at the national rather than at the local level. The local level is of course part of the national polity, but in terms of nationalism it can easily keep a low profile. Secondly, because the municipality is primarily defined in geographical terms and because there are no specific legal and other provisions for of exclusion from the local polity – city walls have been demolished long ago - local chauvinism will most likely be of a civic rather then of an ethnic nature. This is certainly true for cities - like Amsterdam, London or Paris - that always had a strong international orientation and have received many immigrants (Rogers and Tillie 2001). Thus the requirement for ethnic or cultural homogeneity in those cities is low. This is one of the reasons why voting rights for foreign residents has been introduced in several European countries at the municipal level but not at the national level.

1.2. Fundamental values of democracy: equality, autonomy and knowledge.

Ross Harrison (Harrison 1993) has convincingly argued that the three most fundamental values incorporated in democracy are equality, autonomy and knowledge. Democracy would mean little to most people if it did not produce or protect these fundamental values. The protection of individual rights can only be called democratic when they are related to these three values. Thus property rights are not part of the democratic rights. One can think of a democratic community that is not based on private property. Even the *habeas corpus* is not a necessary prerequisite of a democratic process. The death penalty is implemented in states that are democratically ruled according to our criteria.

*Equality* is constructed in democratic theory by making the citizens equal members in a national association. “Everybody to count for one, nobody for more than one.” (Bentham as cited by Harrison 1993, p. 177) Democratic equality is neither economic nor social; it is political. In a democracy people can be fathers or mothers, workers or entrepreneurs, city dwellers or peasants, rich or poor, but they are equal *as citizens.*
The question is, of course, in how far individual citizens have to abdicate all signs of economic and social inequality and difference before stepping into the public space. During democratic revolutions, feudal titles that referred to social position such as Lord, Lady, Reverend, Sir, were either abolished or generalized. In the public space everybody should appear equal, and thus the title in the political arena was ‘citizen’. If a particular public office or public domain was separated from the rest, quite often a uniform became the marker of that domain. Such a uniform symbolized the equality of the participants. Symbols that refer to particularistic identities were banned from public life. Recently, the wish of Islamic girls to wear a headscarf in school has caused much distress in France, just as the desire of Sikh policemen to wear turbans on duty has created a public debate in England. Many democrats see it not just as a violation of the separation of church and state, but also as a threat to civic equality, because wearing these particular religious symbols in public space or on public duty is seen as infringing upon the abstract equality of citizens. The legal separation of church and state is not only intended to protect democratic governance from particularistic interests, it is also meant to protect citizens from undue infraction upon their freedom of conscience.

In the Madisonian conception of democracy there is more opportunity to enter the public space without removing all economic, social and cultural characteristics. One is, in the USA, entitled to act in the political arena as a representative of economic interests, as a spokesperson for a collective identity. This is not seen as an infraction on the principle of equality. In the Jacobin conception of democracy citizenship can only be exercised alone, that is as individuals. In public space only national symbols are allowed, no other loyalties should be expressed. (Gaspard and Khoroskhavar 1995)

Not only equality, but also autonomy is constructed by abstracting from all vertical ties and loyalties except the national loyalty. Vertical ties and primordial loyalties, such as those of guild associations or kinship, of religion or ethnicity, should not interfere in the political process. Submission of one person to another must always be voluntary and be restricted to the economic or social domain. When submission tends to be enforced or becomes ‘total’, it becomes incompatible with liberal democracy (Van Gunsteren 1998). Historically, those members of the national community that suffered from forced or total submission - such as slaves, servants or housewives -
were disenfranchised for this very reason. Slaves, servants and housewives lacked the autonomy to exercise citizenship. But this solution did not prove a stable one: eventually all excluded groups acquired citizenship rights and in the process they also acquired more social and economic autonomy. Tocqueville realized that democracy and individualism were twin concepts. “Individualism has a democratic origin and tends to become stronger when the social circumstances become more equal.” [De la Démocratie en Amerique II 1981: 125] In a liberal democracy the only vertical relation that citizens legitimately maintain is their relation with the state; the only ‘abstract and universal’ position is that of the national citizen. All other political, social and cultural loyalties should be secondary to that first loyalty of the citizen to the nation. But if such an abstract conception of democracy is implemented with some force, it may easily chase the life out of the democratic procedures, as the Jacobin version of democracy has demonstrated. In the American conception of citizenship the autonomy of the citizen is rooted in civil society. The citizens can defend themselves against the potential intrusion of the state by organizing themselves into voluntary associations. Their embeddedness in civil society gives the individual citizen the basic autonomy vis-à-vis the state. Without it the democratic state becomes a despotic state.

*Knowledge* is a third central value in democratic governance. It is crucial for the stride of progress of society and for finding the common good. Knowledge is conceived both as technical know-how and as the ability to relate the private interests to the common good. We will call the latter civic competence. Democratic citizens have to acquire civic competence, that is, they have to articulate their private interests in terms of the common good. Since the common good is always concrete it requires – as we have seen – a specific community. Civic competence thus implies loyalty to the political community. It implies at least a form of constitutional patriotism. Citizens are also supposed to have certain technical skills even to be able to act as citizens at all.

Knowledge is constructed at two levels: it is assumed to be out there in civil society and it is produced by general and public education. The French republican conception of democracy stresses the role of the state in producing knowledge. “Public instruction is an obligation of society toward its citizens. It would be vain to declare that all men enjoy equal rights, vain for the laws to respect the first principle of
eternal justice, if the inequality of men’s mental faculties were to prevent the greatest number from enjoying these rights to their fullest extent.” (Condorcet 1996, p. 105)

Public education provides all citizens not only with technical, but also with civic competence. In the American tradition civic competence primarily resides in civil society.

In the American tradition civic virtue does not imply a complete abstraction of private interests as Rousseau wanted to have it, but it does imply that each citizen when looking after his private interests takes the common good into consideration. In the French tradition civic virtue refers to the abstracting from the private interests while acting as citizen, in the American tradition it refers to seeing the link between private interest and public good. “It is difficult to draw a man out of his own circle to interest him in the destiny of the state, because he does not clearly understand what influence the destiny of the state can have upon his own lot. But if it is proposed to make a road cross the end of his estate, he will see at a glance that there is a connection between the small public affair and his greatest private affairs…” (Tocqueville as cited by Putnam 2000, p. 337) According to the American democratic tradition participating in voluntary associations creates civic competence, i.e. the art of collaboration with fellow-citizens to advance a common goal. Civic competence involves both the moral and technical skills needed to connect the private with the public. It therefore always implies trust in fellow-citizens and embeddedness in the civic culture of the nation. But civic competence also means to be informed and to be able to have a voice in public discussion. Thus language and literacy is a crucial element of civic competence.

1.3. State versus civil society.

Despite the fundamental agreement on democratic values in the newborn democracies, there was a lot of disagreement about how democratic values should be protected and implemented. In revolutionary France it was the democratic state that should watch over society, in the United States of America it was a democratic society that should monitor the state. In French democratic discourse all forms of feudal, religious, local and economic interests were seen as enemies of democratic governance. Denial of regional, socio-economic or cultural embeddedness was the foundation of French citizenship. This then seems indeed a very empty, civic, definition of citizenship and nationhood. A vertical relation between each citizen and
the state complemented the abstract equality of all citizens. As early as 1856, Tocqueville sensed not only the strength but also the weakness of this democratic discourse: the lack of reflection on the cultural embeddedness of the citizen.

“The French Revolution’s approach to the problems of man’s existence here on earth was exactly similar to that of the religious revolutions as regards his afterlife. It viewed the “citizen” from an abstract angle, that is to say as an entity independent of any particular social order, just as religions view the individual, without regard to nationality or the age he lives in.” (Tocqueville (1856)1966, p. 43)

This emphasis on abstract equality leaves little room for the embedded equality in civil society. It tends towards a centralized power structure. The nation was to be ‘one and indivisible’. The ideal structure of democratic society is in this – French – perspective a star like network. Individual citizens are connected to the state through elected representatives. The state, in turn, has a direct relation to its subjects, a relation that is not mediated by societal power structures. There is, in this model, no need for horizontal ties among the subjects. Such horizontal ties could only lead to factions that were, by their very nature, anti-democratic.

The idea of the \textit{indivisibility} of national sovereignty was taken from the political discourse of absolutism, where the monarch tried to impose a centralised form of modern governance upon the decentralized and feudal society. As Tocqueville has shown in his \textit{L’Ancien Régime et la Revolution Française} (1856), the French revolution speeded up the pace of a political centralization that had been long under way. The aim of the revolution was to smash primordial communities, destroy the local power of feudal lords and restrain the economic power of guild corporations. The Jacobin conception of democracy replaced the will of the absolute monarch by the general will of the people but the Jacobins took over a large part of the monarch’s mission, that was to turn peasants into Frenchmen (Weber 1979). In other words, the people who form the nation have to be constructed in the very process of democratic governance. The nation is not given but has to be created, not just in a daily plebiscite, as Renan wanted to have it, but also by the state policies of national integration. Thus the nation-state is more than just the expression of the aggregate preferences of the citizens, it is an expression of national unity and national reason.
In America the basic conception of democracy was quite different. Here democracy was seen to reside in civil society and the powers that were to be constrained by the constitution were those of government rather than those of local power holders, economic corporations or religious associations. The Federalists were much less convinced of the natural goodness of men. “If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed, and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.” (Hamilton, Madison et al. 1990, p. 163) These ‘auxiliary precautions’ are in the checks and balances of “the subordinate distributions of power, where the constant aim is to divide and arrange the several offices in such a manner as that each may be a check on the other – that the private interest of every individual may be a sentinel over the public rights”. (Idem, p. 163) “In the compound republic of America, the power surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments, and then the portion allotted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments”. (Idem, p. 164) Hence, American democracy was based on mixed government, in which the democratic aspect was to be contained by institutional arrangements and procedures. The tyranny of the majority was feared just as much as the power of local and aristocratic authority. So in the American model we find a strong emphasis on institutions and procedures whereas in the French model the emphasis is on republican values. 

That ‘republican’ conception of democracy still very much alive is in contemporary France. The French historian Pierre Rosanvillon, who has influenced the policies and discourse of the Parti Socialiste away from statist socialism during the last two decades of the 20th century, recently remarked:

"Our history is directed towards a rationalist conception of democracy. In France, democracy is not based upon the confrontation of interests, it is not based upon the negotiation of demands and needs. It wants to establish itself upon an objective image
of the general interest. And this general interest is not determined by confrontation: it is understood by reason. ” (cited in Jennings 2000, p.578)

Hence the French model of representative democracy distances itself from society to such an extent that one can even juxtapose civic democracy as it developed in America to French notions of ‘republican’ democracy. According to Régis Debray the two conceptions of democracy – one of which is expressed in the ‘republic’ to other in ‘democracy’ - are quite distinct:

"The universal idea governs the republic. The local idea governs democracy… Reason being its supreme point of reference, the state in a republic is unitary and by nature centralized…Democracy, which blossoms in the pluricultural, is federal by vocation and decentralized out of scepticism... In a republic there are two nerve centres in each village: the town hall, where the elected representatives deliberate in common about the common good, and the school… In a democracy, it is the church (le temple) and the drugstore (…) ” (Cited in Jennings 2000, p.585)

It is easy to detect in these magniloquent lines several dimensions in the juxtaposition of French and American conceptions of democracy. The French conception celebrates the public reason; the American conception celebrates public opinion. The French conception stresses faith in the ‘transcendent goals’ of democracy, the American conception stresses the right to have different interests. The French conception of democracy stressed abstract equality before the state, the American conception of democracy stresses concrete equality in civil society. In the French conception of democracy the state is the main instrument for establishing social equality and societal progress, in the American conception “government even in its best state is but a necessary evil”, to borrow a famous phrase from Tom Paine. (Foot and Kramnick 1987, p.66) Liberty, equality and progress was, according to Tom Paine, to be found in civil society. Or as John Dewey phrased it: “Fraternity, liberty and equality isolated from communal life are hopeless abstractions… Democracy must begin at home, and its home is the neighbourly community. ” (cited by Putnam 2000, p. 337)

In the American model checks and balances should protect civil society from the state. Hence, American democrats are focused on procedures rather than on substance.
French democrats are primarily focused on republican values and want society to be monitored by the state. In short, French democrats tend to conceive democracy as a substantive and top down model of governance, while American democrats tend to see it as bottom up and procedural. In the French tradition the fundamental values of democracy are embedded in the vertical relations between the citizens and the state, whereas in the American tradition the same values are embedded in a series of lateral relations between individuals and groups. Joël Roman sees in the French tradition a “democracy of emancipation” and in the American tradition a “democracy of recognition”. (Roman 1998, p. 193-220)

All this has enormous consequences for the way in which newcomers are introduced in to the polity. In a substantive democracy new citizens are supposed to embrace and defend the values of the polity. In a procedural democracy, on the other hand, these values are embedded in the procedures. Citizens become democrats in the democratic process; they are invited to participate without being questioned about the values they cherish. They are supposed to gradually accept the democratic values in the process of political integration.

1.4. The role of elites in democratic governance.

Modern democracy not only assumes the competence, equality and autonomy of citizens, it also assumes a political elite to govern the country. This is so because modern democracy is representative democracy. Representatives are elected because they have qualities that are considered by the voters to be superior to the qualities of other candidates. Hence, apart from competence, equality and autonomy of citizens, representative democracy is also characterized by a principle of inequality: that of elective representation. The elected will, by definition, form an elite, even though it is the electorate that determines the criteria on which this elite is constructed. Manin (Manin 1997) calls this the aristocratic principle of representative democracy. Democracy is elective aristocracy.

A second principle of representative democracy is that the representatives are relatively independent from the electorate. Mandating the representatives is not allowed in representative democracy, nor is the practice of discretionary revocability. “None of the representative governments that have been established since the end of
the eighteenth century has authorized imperative mandates or granted a legally binding status to the instructions given by the electorate.” (Manin 1997, p. 163) Even the electors who actually choose the president of the United States are legally free to vote for the candidate they personally want as president and do not have to follow the preference of the electorate. This formal independence of the elected from the voters in the decision making process is yet another elitist aspect of representative democracy.

A third principle of representative democracy is that of freedom of speech and freedom of association. This principle forms a counterbalance to the aristocratic aspects of representative democracy. Freedom of speech and freedom of association create a public opinion that holds the representative accountable to the electorate. Public discussion, therefore, is a crucial mechanism that ties the activities of the political elite to the preferences of the voters. Although public opinion does not imply a principal-agent relation between the people and their elected, it assures that political decisions have to undergo the trial of discussion. “No proposal can acquire the force of public decision unless it has obtained the consent of the majority after having been subject to trial by discussion.” (Manin 1997, p. 190) Public debate in a representative democracy serves two purposes. First, it stresses the need for rational argument to support a public decision. Secondly, it ties the minority opinion to the majority opinion. Public discussion thus increases the quality of the decisions and the acceptance or democratic legitimacy of the decisions.

However, public debate may also lead to dissensus and turmoil, it may even lead to ‘wrong’ decisions, that is decisions that harm the common good, if the electorate lacks civic competence and enemies of the people take advantage of ignorance. Lack of competence and lack of autonomy of citizens may coincide and play into the hands of a demagogue. To prevent such a situation Rousseau prefers no debate at all in the decision making process. If, says Rousseau, the people have enough information, and the citizens have no communication one with another, “the grand total of the small differences would always give the general will, and the decision would always be good” (Rousseau 1990, p.396). Others don’t go so far but in all cases the democratic deliberation is constrained by some rules and regulations. Hamilton warns the American people against political debate when he writes: “And yet, however just these sentiments will be allowed to be, we have already sufficient indications that it will happen in this as in all former cases of great national discussion. A torrent of
angry and malignant passions will be let loose.” (Hamilton, Madison et al. 1990, p. 30) In all these instances democratic leaders carry a great responsibility. They should lead the citizens in the direction of a rational discussion and try to suppress passions. Passions, so it seems, are inimical of democratic governance, especially if these passions become organized in factions. In the classical model of democracy “each citizen should think only his own thoughts” (Rousseau 1990, p. 396). One should be wary of all group formation but especially of cultural groups that might lead to deep moral conflicts. However, if there are groups, then the more groups the better. If there are many groups, the chances of one group gaining the upper hand are small. A second way to neutralize the negative effects of group formation is to have overlapping membership. Now, as Lijphart has convincingly argued (Lijphart 1968; Lijphart 1971), if overlapping memberships do not exist the political elite may make up for this lack of crosscutting solidarities by creating bridges between the elites of the different groups.

We now can construct a typology of democracy that is based on two dimensions discussed in the former sections. The first dimension is based on the number of liberal values that are assumed to be necessary for democracy to function properly. The second dimension is the degree of political participation of the citizens. The two elitist versions require low levels of political participation and tend to restrict the political participation of citizens to the ballot box. But even the most elitist version of democracy requires at least a certain amount of electoral participation. This becomes clear when we analyse the theories of democratic elitism as presented by Joseph Schumpeter and Anthony Downs. According to the famous definition of Schumpeter, “the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote”. (Schumpeter 1976, p. 269) Schumpeter had chosen this definition to emphasize that the chief role of the people is to produce a government and not so much to decide upon political issues. We can easily see that the emphasis is on procedures rather than on shared values. Schumpeter also argued that political participation outside the ballot box is not desirable because it may hamper the process of governance once the political elite is appointed. This is so because ordinary citizens have too little information about policy issues and voters tend to behave irrationally, especially in
national elections. In Downs’ economic theory of democracy citizens are assumed to 
behave rationally and to express their interests and preferences in the voting process. 
Yet Downs follows Schumpeter in giving the voter the role of electing democratic 
governments. According to Downs (Downs 1957), full-scale political participation 
through the ballot box is not a necessary condition for democracy. Citizens do not 
even have to vote. Abstention is seen as a sign of agreement with or indifference to 
the policies of the ruling government. Yet a minimal level of electoral participation is 
acquired in Downs’ model. There are two reasons for this to be so. First, if the citizen 
is seen as a rational consumer of policies, the political elite requires a minimum 
amount of voting if they are to have an accurate impression of the citizens’ 
preferences. If elections are merely opportunities for voters to advance their interests 
or to register their preferences, low levels of voting make it difficult to discern those 
interests or preferences (Dagger 1997 p. 135). This is also – and maybe more – true 
in multicultural democracies where the political elite may have very limited contact 
with cultural minorities and thus may find it difficult to gauge preferences and 
interests. But even if we assume that ordinary citizens – and cultural minorities in 
particular - are not very good at articulating their own interests and preferences, as is 
the assumption of paternalist democrats like Schumpeter, a certain level of electoral 
participation is still needed to maintain the legitimacy of political institutions. Indeed, 
the recent decrease of voters turning out in the elections for the European Parliament 
has raised the question of the minimal voters’ turnout in order to speak of a 
'representative body'.(Eijk and Franklin 1996)

After having established in the former section the distinction between procedural and 
substantive democracy (a distinction that we have assumed, for the sake of simplicity, 
to coincide with the American and French conception of democratic governance), we 
now can make a distinction between participatory and rulers’ democracy. The first 
requires a high level of political participation; the second requires a low level of 
participation.
If we combine these two dimensions we find four types of democratic governance. 
The first one combines a procedural conception with a low degree of political 
participation. We call it market democracy, because the citizen is primarily seen as a 
consumer of public policies. As the model is characterized by little participation, it 
can function with a minimum of equality and knowledge amongst citizens. Few
initial requirements for citizenship exist, neither in the sphere of technical nor in the sphere of moral competence. The only capacity that is needed is the ability to vote in a secret ballot. For that a certain amount of autonomy is needed. The second type we call *paternalistic democracy*. This combines a substantive conception of democracy with a low level of participation. In this model citizenship requires a special type of moral competence, i.e. deference for the political elites and an acceptance of their values. Again, few requirements for citizenship are needed. The need for citizens’ equality and knowledge is, like in the market democracy, rather low, while the required autonomy of the citizens is even less than in the market democracy. The third type combines a procedural perspective with a high degree of citizens’ participation. We call the third type *neo-republican democracy*, following the recent literature in political philosophy. In a neo-republican democracy technical competence is more important than moral competence – except of course for the fact that the desire to stick to the rules of the democratic game also requires a certain moral competence. The concept of civic virtue that is central in neo-republican democracy is much more informed by technical skills than the modern use of the term virtue would suggest. Because this model requires active participation of citizens the need for equality amongst citizens is higher than in the former two models. This is also true for the amount of autonomy needed. Citizens in a neo-republican democracy are supposed to be able to stick to their own conception of the good life even under considerable economic or social pressures from fellow citizens. At the same time they have to respond to the voice of reason and be able to change their opinions when public debate confronts them with new evidence or new moral points of view. Finally, the *Jacobin democracy* requires a high amount of value consensus and a high degree of political participation. Ideally it requires high levels of technical as well as moral competence. It may well be this type of democracy that Rousseau had in mind when he wrote that democracy is a system of government that is only fit for a people consisting of gods. When applied to human beings it easily leads to democratic despotism, as both Robespierre and Lenin have demonstrated.
Figure 1.2 Four types of democratic governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of shared values</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(procedural democracies)</td>
<td>(substantive democracies)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of political participation of citizens</th>
<th>Low (rulers’ democracies)</th>
<th>High (participatory democracies)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>Neo-republican</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paternalistic</td>
<td>Jacobin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.5. Ethnic communities and multicultural democracy

What do we mean when we talk about ethnically divided societies? Political pluralist generally talk about societies that form one polity but consist of different indigenous ethnic groups in which no single group is dominant. The dominance is measures in terms of power and influence, not in numerical terms. (Nordlinger 1972) Switzerland is a case in point and so is Belgium or Lebanon. In these countries ethnicity refers to differences in culture as expressed in languages or religions than are all indigenous. We, however, will only consider polities where there exist a dominant national culture plus a number of ethnic minorities that result from immigration. We define ethnic groups here as cultural groups that base their identity on the national identity from the country of origin. This definition implies that we do not consider the autochthonous population in a nation-state as an ethnic group because their ethnicity is taken as a ‘universal’standard and thus there culture is not conceived as a group culture. As a member of the national majority one can only become a member of an ethnic group by migrating to another country. The Dutch in Canada, for example, are an ethnic group (Van Dijk 2001), but not the Dutch in Holland. Our use of the term ethnic is in line with most of the American literature. The concept of ethnicity here is also in line
with the Weberian use of the term. It is related to “a subjective belief in their common 
descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of 
memories of colonization and migration (...)”(Weber 1968, p.389).

The migration-related use of the term ethnicity has a number of implications. In the first place, the ethnic group can be defined objectively as all members of a polity that have been born in another country or whose parents have been born in another country. But an ethnic group can also be defined subjectively as all members of a polity that claim a national identity that is not the one that is dominant in that polity. Such members claim an ethnic identity and by claiming an ethnic identity they emphasize a cultural difference between them and the rest of the polity. A Turk in Germany by claiming to be a Turkish German refers to cultural differences between Turks and Germans. By calling himself a Turk he does not specify what these cultural differences consist of. A German that claims another German to be a Turk also refers to cultural differences between Turks and Germans. Again he does not specify what these cultural differences consist of. The content of the cultural differences may well be contested. The Turk that claims to be a Turkish German may have a different conception of Turkishness than the German that claims his fellow German to be Turkish. They may also have a different concept of what it means to be German. But they definitely agree on one thing: there are cultural differences between Germans and Turks.

We can define an ethnic group ‘objectively’ as a group of persons that have migrated from the same country to another and we can define an ethnic group subjectively as a group of persons that claims a national identity that is different from the dominant national identity. In this study the term ethnic group refers to the objective definition of ethnicity while the term ethnic community- or ethnic minority - refers to the subjective side of ethnicity.

Both the objective and the subjective definition imply cultural differences. The most obvious element of the cultural differences between the dominant and an ethnic group is language. There will be few people who deny that language is a defining element of ethnicity. Nearly all of the ethnic groups we discuss here have a separate ‘national’ language of their own. To speak that language is a clear sign of ethnic belonging. A second important element of the ethnic group is religion. Many ethnic groups we discuss here have a religion that is different from the dominant religion(s). In her study of the Dutch Canadians, Van Dijk (2001) found that protestant Dutch immigrant
maintained their ethnicity better than Catholic Dutch immigrants. The latter joined the Catholic Church and sent their children to Catholic schools whereas the orthodox Dutch Calvinists undertook the building of their own social and cultural structures because they could not find Canadian organizations based on their religious beliefs. The existence of differences in language and religion of immigrant groups are hardly contested. What is contested, however, is the value of ethnic languages and religions, their compatibility with the dominant culture and subsequently what role ethnic languages and religions should play in society. Whether there is room for ethnic groups in public space heavily depends on the way the polity is conceived of by the dominant group and how the dominant group sees the compatibility of the cultural differences. Thus, in a multicultural conception of democracy ethnic groups have more possibilities to articulate their demands than in a monocultural conception of democracy. In the latter case the dominant group does not accept cultural diversity and denies the ethnic groups their ethnic identity. They seem to say to the immigrant group: “You will become like us, whether you like it or not.” (Steinberg 1989) Maintaining an ethnic identity is in such circumstances an act of rebellion. It may also be the other way around. An immigrant group denies its ethnic background and want to assimilate but is forced into an ethnic identity by the dominant group. The dominant group says to them: “However hard you try, you will never be like us.” (Steinberg 1989) The latter is often the case in relations between a dominant national culture and immigrant groups that come from the colonies. These immigrant groups have come to the metropolis with the idea that they are as British, Dutch or French as the autochthonous inhabitants of the metropolis. But the autochthones consider the immigrant groups as ‘different’. Sometimes these differences are ethnicized – as has happened in the Netherlands with most immigrant groups. Sometimes it is racialized – as has happened in England. Whether this is the case depends both on the receiving society and on the immigrant groups. Thus, an attempt by some immigrant women from the Dutch colonies to construct a ‘black’ identity for all immigrant women failed, partly because the Turkish women found it unacceptable to have a ‘black’ identity. The Surinamese, Antillean and Moluccan women themselves did not have enough leverage to propel such a label. (Cadat and Fennema 1998, Loewenthal, 1995 #332) This is different in England, where the term ‘black’ is widely accepted for the group of immigrants from Caribbean countries, alongside ethnic labels such as ‘Pakistani’ and ‘Indians’ for immigrants from Pakistan and India. In France,
however, the term ‘immigré’ is used for all groups. The dominant group declines ethnization of immigrant groups and label groups of immigrants according to the region of origin rather than a country of origin. DOM-TOMs is a reference to the fact that some (black) Frenchmen come from overseas provinces of France (Départements et territoires d’outre-mer) and Maghrébin refers to a region in North Africa rather than to a ‘race’, like the term Arabe did. French official discourse is universalistic and prevents racialization and ethnization of immigrant groups. The term ethnic politician, a term commonly used in The Netherlands, is hardly used at all in France, and considered at odds with the republican values.

But if it is true that the identity of immigrant groups is partly determined by the dominant civic culture we have to consider the possibility of ethnic groups from the same country having in different receiving countries a different ethnic identity. Turks in Amsterdam may have a different identity from Turks in Berlin; Moroccans in Brussels may differ in their ethnic identity from Moroccans in Amsterdam; Jews in Antwerp may conceive of themselves differently from Jews in Berlin.

On the other hand, the ethnicity of a group is not fully determined by the political and discursive opportunity structure of the receiving country. This becomes clear when we see that in the same country different groups have different intensity of ethnic identity. The strength of ethnic solidarity may differ substantially from one group to the other.

The objective definition of ethnicity has only meaning at the individual level, there is no a priori reason why individuals that have migrated from the same country should form a group in the sociological sense of the word. The subjective definition, on the other hand, can be elaborated at the individual and at the group level. From interviews we had with immigrant politicians in Amsterdam we concluded that Turks conceived of themselves much more in terms of ethnicity than did Surinamese. We could measure this by counting the times these politicians referred to a group in terms of “we” or “us”. The Turks did refer to the group of Turks in the Netherlands 60 percent of the times and referred to immigrants in general only 40 per cent of the times. With Surinamese politicians these figures were reversed. They referred to immigrants in general when they talked about “we” or “us” in 60 per cent of the times (Cadat and Fennema 1998). From this we assume that Turks form a stronger ethnic community than Surinamese. This can be verified at the group level by looking at the ethnic organizations of Turks and Surinamese in Amsterdam. To do so we have to map the
organizations that claim an ethnic identity in Amsterdam. Accordingly, we define an ethnic community as the total number of ethnic organizations and the connections among these organizations. We thus define the ethnic community by the social network they span.

Figure 1.3. **Measurement of ethnic community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual level</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
<th>Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-identification</td>
<td>‘we feeling’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ethnic friendships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group level</th>
<th>Ethnic associations</th>
<th>Number of associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Membership of ethnic associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Network of ethnic associations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If few immigrants descendant from Turkey call themselves ‘Turk’, if friendships are not organized according to ethnic lines, if few Turkish associations are to be found and if these few associations are isolated from each other there exists no Turkish community. On the other hand, if there exists such a community it is likely to demand a certain amount of cultural and political autonomy and thus echo the nationalist aim of self-government that constitutes all national groups. We will discuss in the remainder of this chapter the way in which the different democratic regimes handles such demands.

In a *market democracy* cultural differences can easily be expressed in the ballot box and ethnic entrepreneurs can exploit ethnic loyalties for their own political purposes as well as for the benefit of the group. Ethnic politics is predominantly salient at the elite level. In a *neo-republican democracy* ethnic differences are recognized and ethnic groups participate in politics at all levels of decision-making. In a *paternalistic democracy* the political elite forces the ethnic voter in the dominant political discourse that is organized around the national identity of the host country. Political participation is discouraged and ethnic differences are not recognized as relevant political cleavages. Finally in a *Jacobin democracy* ethnic groups are invited to assimilate and participate in the dominant political culture. Immigrants are welcomed in the polity on the condition that they renounce their ethnic identity.
To function in a multi-ethnic society, democracy necessarily has to be based on a procedural conception of democracy, because the essence of multi-ethnic society is that the amount of shared identity is small. The French model of democracy will seek to solve the problem of multi-ethnic society by assimilation. The American model will solve the problem of multi-ethnic society by creating a multicultural democracy. For the definition of multicultural democracy we will abstract from the degree of political participation, because both market and neo-republican democracy can be multiculturalized. As we have seen above, some minimal degree of political participation is required even in a market democracy. So multicultural democracy can be defined in such a way that it includes both the market - and the neo-republican conception of democracy. *Multicultural democracy then is a democracy where ethnic minorities participate in the democratic process, thus providing the political elites with reliable information about the political preferences of these minorities and the democratic institutions with popular legitimacy among the minority groups.*

To sum up, multicultural democracy is either a market democracy or a neo-republican democracy. In the case of a market democracy no institutional arrangement will be set up to induce political participation other than electoral participation. Participation outside the ballot box is not seen as essential or even supportive to representative democracy. Hence political participation of ethnic minorities is restricted to the electoral market. It is a minimalist form of democracy. The more robust version is neo-republican democracy, where citizens participate even though they do not share cultural values, even not those of democratic governance. The different political elites only have to share the notion of accountability and active citizens that of mutual respect (Gutmann and Thompson 1996).

We now will now discuss the effects of cultural diversity on modern democracy by looking at the impact diversity may have on the basic values of democracy (section 1.5.1) and secondly by looking at the impact it may have on the principles of representative democracy (section 1.5.2).

### 1.5.1 Multiculturalism and democratic values.

The predicaments of multicultural democracy can best be outlined by looking at the consequences of ethnic diversity for equality, autonomy and competence. When we look at the first basic value of democracy, i.e. *equality*, we immediately encounter the problem of cultural embeddedness. Even though political equality in democratic
discourse is set apart from other forms of equality, it is difficult to separate political from social equality. E.g. in cultures that emphasize the importance of patriarchal authority, political equality will take another form than in cultures where such authority is considered as a remnant of the past. In patriarchal cultures female citizens may have more obstacles to exercise their political rights than male citizens. And if two different ethnic groups coexist in civil society, it is very likely that the political culture will become fragmented and the members of these two different groups become unequal in the exercise of citizenship rights. As long as society is not fully homogeneous, citizenship can never be fully equal. Cultural, status or economic distinctions will influence the way in which citizens exercise their citizenship rights. Members that belong to a group which different culture hampers the exercise of citizen rights are disadvantaged compared to members of a group that encourages political participation. The coexistence of such different cultural groups jeopardizes the equality of citizenship. The French approach to the implementation of equality among citizens would be to equalize the cultural embeddedness by wiping out different subcultures. The American approach would be to give active support to the members of the cultural group that have a disadvantage vis-à-vis the members of the other group. However, if the different ethnic groups that make up multicultural democracy do not differ with respect to political equality then cultural diversity does not pose a problem in this respect. (Even though it still poses the problem of communicative competence).

Ethnic diversity may also restrict autonomy. Democracy assumes that all individuals are autonomous in their political judgement. Now this is already a very unrealistic assumption in a culturally homogeneous society. But the pressure of conformism may be even greater in a multi-ethnic society, where the different cultural groups are competing for political power. In such situation the solidarity that is demanded by the own group and the pressures to stay in line can be tremendous. Again, The Netherlands is a case in point. In the period that Dutch society was segmented according to religious denomination it was very difficult to step outside the own ‘pillar’ because there was no place in civil society that was not segmented. Especially in politics this meant that the leaders could exercise a substantial amount of pressure on dissidents (Lijphart 1968; Daalder 1974). Thus the autonomy of individual
citizens very much depends on the amount of segmentation of civil society and on the ‘exit options’ they have from their own cultural group.

Thirdly, cultural diversity jeopardizes the knowledge of citizenry because it leads to Babylonian confusion. This is immediately clear when cultural diversity coincides with linguistic diversity. According to John Stuart Mill, “(f)ree institutions are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among a people without fellow feeling, especially if they speak different languages, the united public opinion, necessary to the working of representative government, cannot exist. The influences which form opinions and decide political acts are different in the different sections of the country. An altogether different set of leaders have the confidence of one part of the country and of another. The same books, newspapers, pamphlets, speeches, do not reach them.” (Mill 1990, p. 425) Note that the emphasis is on the need for cohesive networks of communication rather than on shared values. The need for some form of horizontal communication in a democratic polity refers back to the requirement of knowledge. Cultural and especially linguistic diversity would fatally hamper horizontal communication among the citizens and thus prevent the unity that is needed for democratic government. But even when cultural diversity does not coincide with linguistic diversity, civic competence is at risk, because civic competence is culturally embedded. Each cultural group has its own conception of civic competence. These different conceptions of competence are not always compatible. What makes a competent citizen in the USA does not necessarily make one a good citizen in Canada. If one is a competent citizen in Quebec this may not be sufficient to be on par with a competent citizen in British Columbia. If there exists a dominant culture in a multicultural society then the members of that dominant culture have a comparative advantage in civic competence. But if this were not the case, cultural diversity always has a negative influence on civic competence if we look it from the perspective of the polity as a whole, because horizontal communication is restricted by ethnic diversity.

1.5.2. Multiculturalism and the principles of representative government.

Ethnic diversity may also undermine the principles of representative democracy. The first principle is that of elective aristocracy. As Manin has convincingly argued the difference between elective aristocracy and other forms of aristocracy resides in the
fact that an elective aristocracy is based on criteria that are set by the people. In multicultural society these criteria may not be the same, or even compatible. Such a situation will easily lead to the declining legitimacy of the system of governance because the different sections of the population do not feel that the legislators elected by the other cultural groups are fit for the job. If in one political culture the ability to help people personally is considered as an important criterion for political leadership, while in the other such ability is considered a form of political corruption there is a problem. Elite collaboration becomes difficult and the politics of accommodation may break down. If in one culture assertive behaviour of women is considered a virtue, while in the other it is a vice, the two cultures are incompatible in this respect. If one of the cultures is the dominant than the minority may feel not represented at all, because the profile of the political elite does not fit its requirements. Some democratic theorists have proposed to amend such deficiencies in representative government by descriptive representation: representatives are not elected because the total electorate finds them eminent, but because they represent physically or sociologically a certain group of voters. E.g. black voters should be represented by black legislators; women should be represented by female legislators, catholic voters should be represented by catholic representatives, etc. There may be good reasons to advocate such system of representation (Pitkin 1967; Mansbridge 2000), but descriptive representation flies in the face of the first principle of representative democracy that is that the whole electorate and the electorate alone should decide on the criteria for eminence. The second principle, independence of legislators, is in jeopardy if an ethnic community is organized well enough to not only hold ‘their’ representatives accountable to the community but also to give these representatives a mandate. As soon as a certain form of group representation is realized the problem of accountability becomes an issue. Do ethnic representatives really represent the ethnic community? And does the ethnic community have the means to monitor its representatives to such an extent that their independence is not guaranteed? And yet, consociational or multicultural democracy has to come to terms with the problem of accountability of legislators who are seen as representatives of cultural groups. Again, in the French model of democracy the boundaries for ethnic representation are much smaller than in the American model because in the French model any form of particularistic accountability is not legitimate. In the American model the fact that legislators are held accountable to cultural minorities is much more accepted, but even here mandating or
recall can never have legally binding force (Manin 1997, p.164). Representative democracy assumes that the ethnic voters can ex-post decide to ‘dismiss’ the rulers and elect new ones. Since elections are held regularly, this leads to a form of democratic control: the rulers know that at some point they have to submit to the verdict of the people if they want to be re-elected.

Finally the third principle of representative democracy - that of ‘trial by discussion’ - is violated if ethnic diversity leads to such deep moral conflicts that untrammelled public discussion would indeed lead to violent encounters between different cultural communities. (Gutmann and Thompson 1996) First and foremost, all citizens are considered to be morally equal in the public sphere, even though they may not be morally equal in the private space or in civil society. Great difference may exist in moral status between poor and rich people, between men and woman, between intelligent and less intelligent people, between blacks and whites, between gays and straight people, between professionals and blue-collar workers or between Christians and Muslims. Tolerance, respect and a willingness to live in uneasy compromise are the central elements of a democratic culture. Substantive democrats require that citizens adhere to these democratic values in public debate. For the procedural democrats, on the other hand, there is no need for any moral consensus; the only condition for a democratic regime to function is that there exists a pervasive willingness to live according to the democratic rules and regulations (Van Gunsteren 1998).

Discussion in multi-ethnic society is particularly difficult because there are technical –linguistic – as well as moral barriers to public discussion. In a multicultural democracy there is a tendency to evade public discussion, because it may make explicit what the political elites prefer to leave unsaid. Thus in multicultural democracy there will be a tendency to replace public discussion by negotiation, pork barreling and logrolling. This will be more the case if ethnic cleavages overlap with class divisions and geographical lines. The same mechanisms are visible in consociational democracy (Lijphart 1968; Beus 1998).

1.6. Two fears of the democratic nationalist
Democratic nationalists have two different reasons for being fearful of multicultural democracy. The first reason is that multiculturalism may undermine liberal values on which democracy is based. This fear refers to the quality of liberal democracy (Kymlicka and Wayne 2000, p. 31 ff). The second reason is that the unity of the nation-state is undermined by the cultural claims of ethnic or contending national groups. According to democratic nationalists the right to free association in a democratic polity should be restricted if the association aims at secession (Kymlicka 1996; Lehn 1998). Yet the claim of national, ethnic and religious minorities to some form of self-government is difficult to ignore if the idea of minority protection is taken seriously. Democratic nationalists therefore have to confront the issue. But the answers they have come up with depend on the way they have perceived the functioning of representative democracy. Scholars of different democratic convictions provide different answers to the claims of ethnic minorities.

We will first discuss those political theorists that reject a substantive view of democracy. They maintain that the loyalty of the citizens should be focused on - and can be restricted to - the institutional structures and procedures of the democratic state. It should not involve citizens’ loyalty to the values of democracy. According to the market democracy there is no need for group rights if the state refrains from any substantive moral claims. There is no need for ethnic minorities to participate outside the ballot box and even electoral participation is not a precondition for democratic governance. The solution for the problems of multicultural society is an absolutely neutral and minimal state. Granting group rights to cultural groups would play in to the hands of the elites of these groups and undermine the civil and political rights of the individual members of the group (Kukathas 1992). As individual citizens, members of these groups may do what they want in civil society, but cultural groups should not receive any support from the state nor acquire a constitutional status or rights. On the other hand, neither cultural groups nor individual citizens have to support a liberal ideology; they just have to refrain from trespassing against the law. Personal autonomy is the only liberal value that is to be respected by all cultural groups. Since political participation is taken to be of little importance for the working of a representative democracy, civic competence is of lesser importance. This leads to a democracy of the market place.
Neo-republicans share with supporters of a market democracy the conviction that the state should be neutral vis-à-vis the different cultures and groups in society. But they lay much more emphasis on the civic engagement of citizens. According to the neo-republican democrats the state cannot fully refrain from moral judgments because democratic governance requires of its citizens that they adhere to a certain civic culture that makes the democratic institutions work. Multicultural democracy requires in the eyes of neo-republicans an active endorsement of the democratic institutions, or constitutional patriotism (Rawls 1993; Habermas 1995). At least in the public domain people should adhere to the principles of individual autonomy and political equality and they should actively support these principles without which the democratic polity would fall apart. On this basis citizens are free to form their own cultural communities and present collective claims.

In a multicultural society, however, civic competence of many citizens may be limited to their own cultural group. In a market democracy, which requires only compliance of its citizens and not active engagement, this creates no problems as long as their leaders are integrated in the power structure of the democratic society. The ethnic elites, however, should respect if not embrace liberal values in the public sphere.

If multi-ethnic citizenship is combined with a substantive rather than a procedural conception of liberal democracy we arrive at two assimilationist answers. Both assimilationist answers assume that democratic politics rest on a comprehensive liberal culture. Group rights are dangerous because illiberal values can easily chase out liberal values, just as bad money chases out good money. Multicultural democracy is thus impossible. The democratic model based on an adherence to a comprehensive liberal culture leads to democratic paternalism if political participation is discouraged; it leads to Jacobin forms of democracy when high levels of political participation are required. Democratic paternalism assumes that the democratic state should make newcomers into national citizens by supplying state programs of citizenship training that is not just technical but also moral in nature. It should be aimed at destroying the newcomers’ old identity. Citizenship is conceived in terms of civic rights and national culture, but less so in terms of political participation. In the Jacobin model citizenship is conceived in terms of rights, duties and national culture. Political participation is encouraged and conceived of as being part of the national culture. Political participation is not only a right but also a duty. Assimilation is considered as a by-
product of political participation. Although the Jacobin conception of nationhood is a voluntary community it is inconceivable that somebody would like to be a resident and yet not be a member of that national community. It is here that the Jacobin conception becomes totalitarian.

The second fear of the democratic nationalist is that of decomposition of the polity. This has been a long-standing debate that was not so much focused on the need to defend liberal values as on the consequences of moral and ethnic cleavages for the stability of democracy. Classical democratic theory assumed that religious or ethnic divisions were antagonistic to democratic governance, not because it would be detrimental to liberal values, but because it would undermine the stability of the polis. According to Aristotle the polis should for that reason consist of like-minded citizens. Procedural democrats also tend to pose the problem of multicultural democracy in terms of stability.

Arend Lijphart has tried to solve this problem of stability in a culturally divided society in his work on consociational democracy. He argues that a lack of social cohesion that is due to religious and ethnic cleavages can be made up for by elite collaboration at the national level. It is interesting to note that what the author initially saw as a second best solution for a society divided by religious and ethnic cleavages, he finally described as a “softer and gentler form of democracy” (Lijphart 1999). In a survey of 18 established democracies Lijphart has demonstrated that democracies based on proportional representation and consociationalism not only give superior political representation of the demos, but also are up to par with majoritarian democracies when it comes to maintaining public order and managing the national economy (Lijphart and Aitkin 1994, p. 1-17). Lijphart has worked predominantly on institutional designs that can successfully cope with ethnic diversity by facilitating elite collaboration. He also has suggested that consociational democracy requires a certain passivity and deference on the part of the rank and file. Even though Lijphart has changed the formulation of his theory several times, his emphasis on the importance of elites in a multi-ethnic society remains untramelled. It seems to us that multicultural democracy cannot survive either unless the different ethnic elites find ways of successful negotiation and collaboration. Nordlinger has spelled out the conditions under which this is likely to occur. He argues that the leaders’ political security largely determines their willingness to accommodate and compromise. “(T)he
top leaders’ political security is not a necessary condition for conflict-regulation, but, in conjunction with the appropriate motivations, conflict-regulating behavior, and perhaps effective regulatory practices as well will often follow” (Nordlinger 1972, p. 68). Nordlinger then goes on to argue that another condition for successful conflict regulation in divided societies is elite predominance. He sees elite predominance related to the exchange relations between the elite and the rank and file and the political culture of the group. Nordlinger stresses the importance of deference and obedience in the group culture, just as Lijphart has done. We will see in chapter 2 that social capital of the group and the civic engagement of its members may also explain the tendency of the rank and file to follow. Thus we will challenge the classical assumption that political mobilization in ethnically divided societies will necessarily “strain and destroy” the cohesion of the polity (Deutsch 1961, p. 501). The dominance of the ethnic or religious elites over their rank and file is but one side of the coin. It is our contention that without a strong civic communities within the different segments of the plural society there cannot be a thriving consociational democracy.

Lijphart and other theoreticians of plural societies have stress the problem of stability. When it comes to ethnic groups whose origins are in migration the problem of political stability is normally not so acute. The hegemony of the receiving society is so overwhelming that the sense of urgency for institutional designs that will manage communal conflict is, from a democratic process point of view, not so great. This situation may change, however, if we shift our focus from the national to the local level. In most European cities the number of immigrant citizens has increased dramatically in the last ten years or so, and it will continue to increase if we include the second generation. Soon about half the citizenry in the largest cities in Western Europe will be of foreign extraction. Many immigrants belong to an ethnic minority whose national culture differs substantially from the dominant - national - culture and who live relatively separated from mainstream civil society. Large cities become global cities and their democratic viability increasingly depends on the strength of multicultural democracy. Municipal governance crucially depends on consensus formation, and on information about the political preferences of the different ethnic communities. Policies of induced assimilation will not work – at least not in the short run – whereas the institutional dominance of the autochthonous population is part of the problem rather that a solution.
1.7. The role of elites in multicultural society.

In how far does multicultural democracy as we have defined it approach the consociational model of democracy defended by Lijphart? One overlapping characteristic is the key role played by the elites of the different ethnic groups. Another characteristic is the importance of the political opportunity structure to facilitate the mobilization of groups and the integration of their leaders in to the power structure. Like Lijphart, we assume that the possibilities for ethnic communities to articulate their preferences and express their claims in the political arena depend at least partly on the integration of their ethnic leaders in the local power structure. In figure 1.4 we present a typology of political integration of ethnic groups based on the level of political participation of the members of the ethnic group and the degree of integration of the ethnic leaders in the local power structure. If both are high than we can call the ethnic group politically integrated. If the members of the ethnic group show a high degree of political participation but the ethnic elite is not integrated in the local power structure, we may call the ethnic group mobilized. If the elite of the ethnic group is well integrated but the rank and file does not participate we call the group pacified. Finally if the members of an ethnic group do not participate and the leaders of that group are not integrated into the power structure we call that group isolated.

Figure 1.4 Political participation and elite integration of ethnic minorities in representative democracy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of integration of the ethnic elite in the power structure</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Integrated</td>
<td>mobilized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>pacified</td>
<td>isolated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Political participation
Of all members of the Ethnic community

35
If we combine the figures 1.2 and 1.4 we may conclude that pacified ethnic groups are most likely to be found in multicultural democracies that adhere to the market model. The mobilized ethnic group will most likely be found in a Jacobin model of democracy. If a mobilized ethnic group does not succeed in getting its leadership integrated into the power structure, the fear of decomposition of the polity may become reality. Ironically, the Jacobin type of democracy is vulnerable to secession and ethnic conflict. The isolated ethnic community is typically to be found in a paternalistic democracy. No ethnic group claims are recognized nor is any form of participation encouraged. Such a situation may look unproblematic from a system’s point of view – especially if the isolated groups are small. These groups may well be forced to assimilate and disappear. The fate of the Indische Nederlanders, who were forced to ‘repatriate’ from Indonesia after the loss of empire is a case in point (Ellemers and Vaillant 1985). They may, however, under specific conditions also become a challenge to the political regime if they become mobilized. Race- and ethnic riots often stem from isolated groups.

The fully integrated ethnic group is typical of the neo-republican model of multicultural democracy. In such a democracy the political participation of the different ethnic groups is high and the ethnic leaders are well integrated in the power structure. From a democratic perspective this is the optimal solution.

References


We thank Frank Buijs, Hans Daalder, Jan van Deth, Boris Slijper, Susan Olzak and Hans Vermeulen for critical comments and Anne Simpson from NIAS for editorial assistance. This is the first chapter of a book on Multicultural Democracy. We thank the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences for the hospitality that we received while being NIAS fellow in the academic year 2000-2001.

Lack of civic competence has been a reason for disenfranchising incompetent citizens. Yet in a procedural democracy there is less reason for doing this, because civic competence is seen as something you learn by practice. It is the outcome of democratic governance rather than its precondition.

Hence subsequent attacks on liberal democracy are quite often based on a more realistic notion of cultural and local embeddedness. Thus José Antonio Primo de Rivera argues in defence of embeddedness when he founded the Spanish Falange: “Nobody was ever born into a political party; on the other hand, we are all born in a family, we all live in a municipality, we all toil in a job.”


Of course we find in French history many voices that defend civil society against the state Constant, B. (1988). Political Writings. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.


To call these different types of liberal democracy French and American is therefore a matter of convenience.

Abstention at the polls is not seen as alienation because alienation does not exist in Downs’ rational choice model of voting behavior.

It is assumed that mass media cannot take over the function of voting to articulate political preferences of the electorate, because they intervene in the process of articulation. This may be less the case, however, when new media and opinion polls are applied Saris, W. E. (1991). “New Possibilities for political participation: Tele-democracy.” Schweizerisches Jahrbuch für Politische Wissenschaft 31: 327-336.

Of course, if the dominant group loses its dominant position they may turn ‘ethnic’, as tends to happen with the Anglo South-Africans after the abolition of the apartheid.

It may, of course, at the same time be the case that cultural diversity increases civic competence for other reasons. It may increase the consciousness of choice, for example.

Earlier research has demonstrated that ethnic legislators in The Netherlands are well aware of this principle and take care not to violate it in the public eye. See Berger, M., M. Fennema, et al. (2001). Politieke participatie van etnische minderheden in vier steden. Amsterdam, IMES.