

# 11 National identity in comparative perspective

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## Abstract

In the literature on nationalism and national identity, a widespread distinction is that between state-nation and ethno-nations or cultural nations. The first are considered as being based on political and universal criteria, the latter on ethnic or cultural criteria. State-nations are also considered as being open and modern, ethno-cultural nations as traditional and exclusive. The present chapter investigates which elements qualify a person to be or to become a full member of a nation among the public in thirty-three nations around the world. The results clearly contradict the established concepts: both political (citizenship, respect for institutions) and ethnic/cultural (having been born in country, having national ancestry, language, religion) criteria are considered everywhere as being of utmost importance for belonging to a nation. Instead of this distinction, the chapter came upon another finding, that between ascriptive and action-related components of national identity. The chapter also shows that in different countries and regions of the world a different weighting of the several criteria of national identity can be observed, corresponding to their specific history, societal and political context. It also discusses the reasons for the preponderance of the established distinction and the perspectives that follow from the alternative view for the role of the nation-state and national identity in a globalized world.

## 1 Introduction

What is the relevance of the nation and “national identity” today? On the one side, at the end of the “long Twentieth century”, the “age of nationalism” (Rejai 1991) seems to have come to an end. After two devastating world wars, the inclination to war as a means of resolving international conflicts seems to have disappeared. National sentiments are eroding, particularly in Western Europe (Dogana 1994). Sociologists have argued that European integration represents a step towards a wholly new kind of “cosmopolitan”, tolerant and multicultural political community (Habermas 1998; Beck and Grande 2004; for a critical review, see Haller 2008). Economic globalization

is undermining the political-economic autonomy of nation-states all over the world; new international governmental and non-governmental actors are gaining influence (Albrow 1997). Processes of macro-regional integration are going on in many parts of the world, and many of them seem to follow the European model (Kühnhardt 2004).

Yet other events and trends lead to some doubts about the disappearance of the relevance of the nation-state. First, the events after the dissolution of the communist bloc showed that nationalistic sentiments are still very powerful forces; as their consequence, about a dozen new states emerged out of the former multinational states. Similar processes, although not so spectacular, could also be observed in other parts of the world (Spohn 2003). Second, in many present-day multinational countries with significant internal economic and cultural subdivisions the preservation of state unity is an open question. Third, a massive labor immigration led to the emergence of sizable new minorities in many of the rich countries of the North. These immigrants are often felt as a threat, particularly in terms of their culture and religion diverging substantially from that of the majority in the receiving countries.

## **2 Conceptual and theoretical considerations**

What are a nation and the meaning of “national identity”? Here, we are investigating mainly individual attitudes. National identity, however, is a phenomenon which must be analyzed at three levels: at the level of the individual person, of the political system, and at the ideological level (Haller 1992, 1999; Leoussi *et al.* 2004; Kunze 2005; Haller *et al.* 1996). However, even with an analysis at the individual level the effects of the other two have to be considered carefully.

### *Modernity, the nation-state and national identity*

At the level of the individual, national identity and nationalism are often considered as a concomitant of modernization. Since traditional social groups and institutions, such as kinship, the village, religious and other socio-cultural communities, have been weakened, identification with the nation can provide a substitute (Esser 1988). Modern societies are characterized as “risk societies” (Beck 1986). Individuals today have to face many decisive situations during the course of life since it is much less structured by institutionally fixed patterns. In situations of uncertainty and multiple choices the notion of “ontological trust” becomes particularly important to the individual (Giddens 1985). In highly mobile and rapidly changing modern societies, *identity* becomes a central issue for the individual (Weigert *et al.* 1986; Scheff 1990). The question is: Which role is played by the anchoring of an individual in a certain nation-state today? Can national identity provide a man or a woman with some of the basic trust which is an important element of a mature personality (Erikson 1950)?

Here, the answer of the theorists mentioned above goes as follows: Ethnic and national affiliation and feelings are only negative reactions to processes of modernization. They arise particularly among those persons and social groups (often also denoted as “losers of modernization”) who are not able to come to grips with these processes. By focusing their social bonds and political emotions on ethnic and national units, they try to find personal support and emotional anchoring in a changing, impersonal world. They are unable to identify with ongoing social change and humanity as a whole, to establish farther-ranging, “modern” social ties. In order to come to terms with this issue, we have to look at the political and ideological levels of nationalism and national identity more closely.

*State-nation versus ethno-nation? Hypotheses on the components and determinant of national identity*

Referring to the relevant literature on identity (Weigert *et al.* 1986), we might distinguish between three elements of national identity: (1) a self-image, a consciousness of the specific characteristics of one’s own nation, its strengths and weaknesses compared to others (the cognitive component); (2) a certain kind of love for and attachment to the nation, including national pride and shame (these are both primarily emotional components); (3) the readiness to act on behalf of the nation and to support political measures to strengthen and protect the nation (the action component).

Historians of nationalism (Meineke 1928; Lemberg 1964; Kohn 1968) have often juxtaposed two models concerning the self-image or self-consciousness of a nation-state and its citizens; this distinction has also been taken up by sociologists and political scientists (Smith 1991; Brubaker 1992; Wodak *et al.* 1998). (1) The concept of *state-nation* means that membership in a nation is based primarily on political criteria, especially citizenship; everybody who gets the citizenship (say, by his birth in a country) is regarded as a full member of the nation; Switzerland, France and the United States are seen as examples for this conception. (2) The concept of *ethno-nation* or *culture nation* means that members of a nation should have their roots in the generations that have lived in the nation’s territory and share its customs and culture (e.g. language, religion) since childhood. One of the constitutional elements connected with this concept is the *ius sanguinis*, which means that the prerequisite for obtaining a citizenship is that the parents, too, have been citizens. Seen from this perspective, it seems nearly impossible to change one’s “nationalhood” during a lifetime; this can be effected only over the course of generations. Germany is often quoted as an example for such a concept. In fact, people in Poland or Russia who can prove that their ancestors were of German origin are entitled to immigrate and obtain German citizenship more or less automatically. On the other side, the several million guest-workers, often living in Germany for decades, did not become German citizens (Heckmann 1992; Elwert 1999).

The distinction between the ethnic-cultural and political or state-nation concept includes also a normative component: it is assumed that the first is a more universal, progressive and “modern” form, while the latter is more traditional and conservative. In this vein, already Alexis de Tocqueville (1947) has distinguished between *natural* or *traditional patriotism*, based on feelings of connectedness with the place of birth and traditional customs, veneration of ancestors and glorification of the past; and *rational patriotism*, unfolding according to the laws and growing in a person only by exercising social and political rights, and merging with his/her personal interests (see also Miller 2000; Spohn 2003). The following hypothesis is set forth in this regard:

*Hypothesis 1: In general, we shall find two different concepts of nationhood among the respondents: one pointing to the concept of the “state-nation”, stressing citizenship and loyalty to the political institutions, another pointing to the concept of “ethnic or culture nation”, stressing national ancestorship and lifelong acquaintance with the customs and the culture (language, religion, etc.) of the respective nation.*

The following hypothesis is formulated concerning the prevalence of the two concepts among different groups of the population and in different types of nations:

*Hypothesis 2: The state-nation concept will be more prevalent (a) among persons and population groups which are more open to modern developments, such as younger and better-educated persons, persons in more qualified occupational positions, persons leaning towards left parties, and less religious persons; (b) in more highly developed nations; in nations whose citizenship law is based on the ius soli; in nations which differ internally in terms of ethnicity and religion. The concept of the ethno-cultural nation, vice versa, should be more prevalent in all opposite cases.*

### *The prevalence of different concepts of nation in different parts of Europe and the world*

Some authors consider the distinction between the two concepts of nation-state also as a historical sequence. The historian Theodor Schieder (1964) has related the concepts of state-nation versus ethno-cultural nation to the rise of nationalism in Europe. The birth of the modern nation took place through the British and French revolutions of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; here, the state was created by the political elites, the identification of the citizens followed step by step. A closely circumscribed territory, a state oriented towards the *volonté générale* (Rousseau), the “third estate” or people (*Volk*) as the ultimate sovereign are the new characteristics of this state. Citizens are all those who have been born on the state’s territory, independent of blood,

ancestry or estate. In the second stage of nation-building in Europe, the nineteenth century, nation-building occurs in processes of unification of hitherto divided territories and peoples into larger, homogeneous nations. Now language determines who belongs to a nation; Germany and Italy are paradigmatic examples. In this stage, writers, historians and other intellectuals (like Herder and Fichte in Germany, Mazzini in Italy) have played a decisive role in defining the true "spirit" of a people or nation (*Volksgeist*). In the third stage of nation-building in Europe, in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the continued existence of the multinational empires in East and South-East Europe (Austria-Hungary, Russia, the Ottoman Empire) was decisive. National consciousness in these cases was aroused against these empires, which were characterized as "people's prisons". Uri Raanan (1991) sees an additional Southern European principle by which religion is a basic characteristic of national identity. Its origins lie in the Ottoman institution of *millet* within which the subjugated peoples could enjoy some degree of religious and civil autonomy. Thus, also in this case, language and religion were basic cultural criteria for movements of national independence. However, since many of the new "nation-states" established in the early 1920s (Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union) remained political units with large ethnic-cultural subgroups or minorities, their dissolution after 1989 and the establishment of many small nation-states may be considered as the ultimate victory of the principle of national self-determination based on the ethno-cultural concept of the nation.

The idea of ethnic and cultural homogeneity was relevant also for non-European nations. One of the most prominent figures of Philippine nationalism, the physician and writer José Rizal (1861–96), spent many years studying and working in Spain, France and Germany where he became acquainted with the European romantic and nationalist literature and movements. In Latin America, Catholicism was – besides the oligarchy and the army – one of the three pillars on which the new, independent states rested when they emerged out of the colonial empires of Portugal and Spain (Dussel 1992); Catholic social doctrine provided a unifying ideological base for those societies characterized by pervasive internal heterogeneities and inequalities; the Catholic church was closely connected with the dominant political elites; in some states (like Paraguay) it even took over political functions itself.

Out of these considerations, we can formulate the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 3: We shall find two or three different concepts of national identity: the state-nation concept will be prevalent in advanced Western countries (e.g. the Anglo-Saxon countries outside Europe), and the ethnic-cultural concept will be prevalent in German-speaking Central, in Eastern and Southern Europe. The latter might also be more prevalent in Latin America, the Philippines, South Africa and Israel. In all these regions and countries,*

*nationhood developed under the strong influence of religion. Cultural aspects may also have been important for nation-building in East Asian states like Japan, Taiwan and South Korea, which did exist as culturally homogeneous societies well before the rise of the modern nation-state.*

### 3 Empirical findings

#### *Data, countries compared and methods of analysis*

The data presented in this chapter have been collected within the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP). The topic “National Identity” has first been surveyed in ISSP in 1995 and replicated in 2003.<sup>1</sup> In National Identity II (2003), the dataset which we are using here, thirty-three nations participated. They can be combined into subgroups: the old West European “state-nations” France, the United Kingdom and Switzerland; the Scandinavian countries Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden; the German-speaking countries Germany-East and Germany-West;<sup>2</sup> Austria; Catholic [South] Europe, including Portugal, Spain and Ireland; eight Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia); two North American (Canada, the United States) and three South American countries (Chile, Uruguay, Venezuela); four Asian countries (Israel,<sup>3</sup> Japan, South Korea, Taiwan); and three countries from other continents (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa).

In the data analysis, we use factor analysis to prove if the proposed basic dimensions – the state- versus ethno-cultural concept of nation – do exist in the minds of the people. Multilevel regression analysis is used for investigating the determinants of the affinity to the one or the other of these dimensions; this analysis is the appropriate method here since we assume that both individual and macro-level characteristics are important (Goldstein 1995).

#### *Concepts of nation and national identity*

Our first hypothesis was related to the issue of how a nation is conceived among the general public. The first question is if the respondents make a distinction between the concept of a state-nation, on the one side, and that of an ethno-nation or culture nation, on the other side. In the survey, the following item battery was developed to capture this dimension<sup>4</sup> (in parenthesis, we indicate the theoretical dimension to which the items belong).

“Some people say that the following things are important for being truly [nationality corresponding to country]. Others say they are not important. How important do you think each of the following is . . . (very important/fairly important/not very important/not important at all/can’t choose):

- Theoretical concept
- |   |   |                                  |
|---|---|----------------------------------|
| a. to have been born in [country]                                   | → | (state-nation)                   |
| b. to have [country nationality] citizenship                        | → | (state-nation)                   |
| c. to have lived in [country] for most of one's life                | → | (state-nation)                   |
| d. to be able to speak [country language]                           | → | (ethno-cultural nation)          |
| e. to be a [Christian]  | → | (ethno-cultural nation)          |
| f. to respect [country nationality] political institutions and laws | → | (state-nation)                   |
| g. to feel as [country nationality]                                 | → | (ethno-cultural or state-nation) |
| h. to have [country nationality] ancestry."                         | → | (ethno-cultural nation)          |

As a straightforward way to test our hypothesis, factor analyses of this item battery were carried out. It is well known from comparative research that the results of factors analyses can vary between countries. In order to control for this, all analyses were carried out separately for each country, as well as for the whole sample.

Hypothesis 1 stated that two different concepts of nation and national identity should exist, the first pointing to the concept of "state-nation", the second to that of "culture nation". The findings of factor analysis show that this is definitely not the case (see Table 11.1). In twelve out of the thirty-three countries, only one factor did come out; in the other twenty-one countries, as in the whole sample, two dimensions did emerge but they do not coincide with hypothesis 1.

Two items show high loadings in factor 1: "Born in a country" and "have national ancestry"; in addition, the factor includes items *c* ("having lived in the country for long time") and *e* ("being a [Christian]"). Already the combination of these four items into one factor contradicts the distinction state-nation v. ethno-nation: one distinguishing criterion of the first is the *ius soli*, of the latter the *ius sanguinis*! The same is true for the second factor, which comprises the following two items with high loadings: "speak the language of a country" and "respect its institutions and laws". Again, the first is usually considered as a main distinctive criterion for an ethno-cultural nation, the latter for a state-nation. One item – citizenship – seems to be quite ambiguous since it loads on both factors. Thus, the theoretical distinction between political items on the one side (citizenship, respect institutions) and ethno-national or cultural items on the other side (ancestry, language, religion) does not come out at all (see also Jones and Smith 2001a, b).

This is also proved if we look at results of the factor analyses for the single countries. In twenty-one countries where two factors emerged, the three most frequent items significant for factor 1 are "born in the country", "lived long in the country" and "national ancestry", followed by the items

Table 11.1. Factor analysis of items relating to different concepts of national identity (factor loadings)

Items	Total Sample*		Subsample with one factor**
	Factor 1	Factor 2	
(a) Important: To have been born in [country]	0.81	0.16	0.77
(b) Important: To have [country nationality] citizenship	0.55	0.48	0.78
(c) Important: To have lived in [country] for most of one's life	0.69	0.35	0.76
(d) Important: To be able to speak [country language]	0.24	0.65	0.71
(e) Important: To be a [religion]	0.65	0.07	0.54
(f) Important: To respect [country nationality] political institutions and laws	-0.06	0.81	0.57
(g) Important: To feel [country nationality]	0.34	0.64	0.72
(h) Important: To have [country nationality] ancestry	0.81	0.12	0.74

*Method:* Principal component analysis. Varimax with Kaiser normalization.

\* 33 countries (N = 38,172).

\*\* ES, PT, SK, CZ, PL, RU, BG, VE, ZA, JP, PH, KR.

*Source:* ISSP 2003 "National identity II".

"religion" and "citizenship". Factor 2 includes, first of all, the item "respect the institutions and laws of the nation", followed by the items "speak the national language" and "feel as a member of the nation". Thus, in both cases items from both theoretically hypothesized dimensions (state-nation v. ethno-cultural nation) are included.

Again we see that hypothesis 1 is clearly disproved by the data. The respondents in the countries investigated do *not* differentiate between a state-nation and a culture nation concept. The concept of "nationhood" comprises everywhere at the same time political, cultural and emotional components to a stronger or lesser degree. This fact turns out most clearly when we look at those twelve countries where all the items are loaded on only one factor (see Table 11.1). The most important, highly loading items in this overall factor, are birth and long residency in a country, citizenship, knowledge of its language, feeling a member of a nation and having national ancestry.

It seems, however, that the two dimensions which came out in the majority of the countries can be interpreted in a quite different but meaningful way. Here we can see a distinction between more *ascribed* characteristics or aspects assigned to a person by the external circumstances (have been born and grown up in the country, member of the dominant religion) and the more *functional* or *action-related* components of citizenship. In fact, it is a characteristic of both the items "respect the institutions and laws" and "speak the dominant national language" that these can be acquired by anybody and are related to actual behavior. On the other side, ancestry and the



place of birth are characteristics which cannot be changed but are given once and for ever. From this point of view, even citizenship can be considered as a characteristic which has an ascribed quality for most people.

Also from a normative point of view, it may be legitimate for a nation to use “ascribed” characteristics for granting citizenships. In this regard a famous historic example exists – in fact, the country which invented the principle of democracy. When Athens enacted its first citizenship law in 451 BC, under the initiative of Pericles, it was decreed that in future only those whose parents both were citizens would be citizens of Athens. Through this law, citizenship at the same time became more exclusive (against foreigners), democratic and egalitarian; and from this point on also poor people could attain full citizenship (Ehrenberg 1973).

If we look at the distribution of the answers to the single items, we see further evidence for the lack of a clear distinction between the two concepts of “state-nation” versus “ethno-nation” or “cultural nation” (see Figure 11.1). Four characteristics are considered as the most important for being a true member of a nation by respondents all over the world: the mastery of a nation’s language, the feeling of being a member of the nation (two items that one would classify as belonging to an ethno-national or cultural concept),

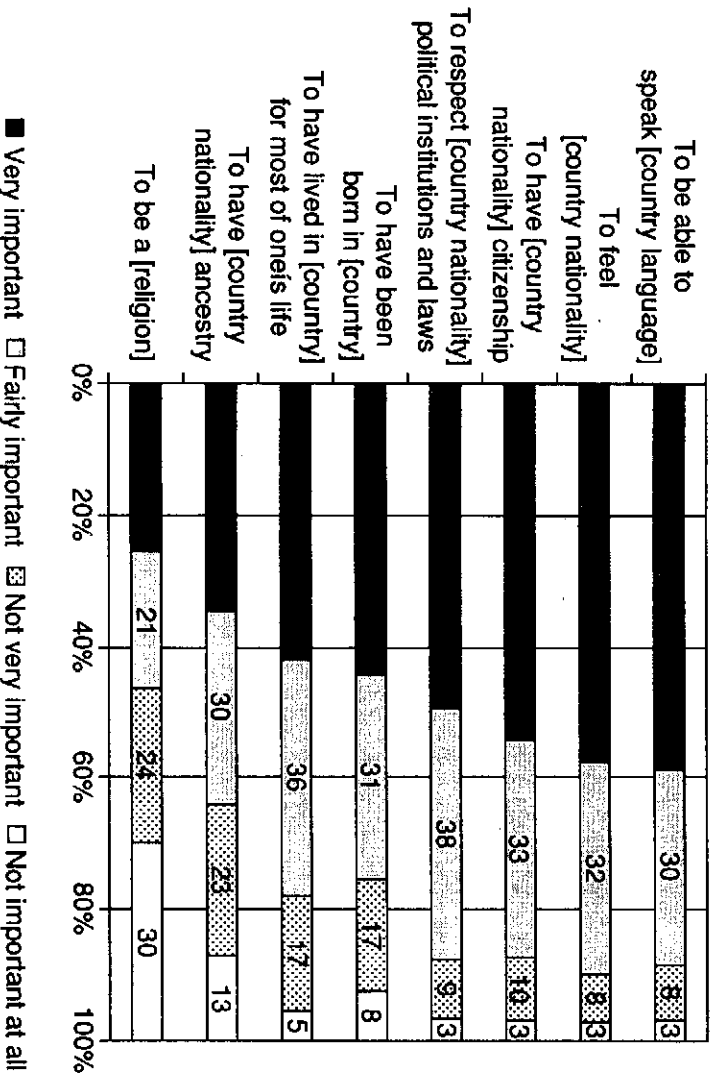


Figure 11.1. The relative importance of different criteria for membership in a nation among the public in thirty-three countries (in %)

Note: Criterion “To have [country nationality] ancestry” without Bulgaria and Latvia; No answers and Can’t choose are not shown.

Source: ISSP 2003 “National Identity II”, 33 countries (N = 44,170).

citizenship and respecting the institutions of a country (two items referring to the “state-nation” concept). Between 87 and 90 percent of the respondents consider all four items as “very important” or “important” for national identity. The items “have been born in” and “have lived long in the country” are also considered important by three-fourths of the respondents; 64 percent also consider “national ancestry” as being very important.

The only criterion which is not considered as being important by a majority is religion. This is a clear indication that the secularization process has gone quite far everywhere, implying – among other things – a definite distinction between the state and nation on the one side, and religious membership and participation on the other side in the minds of the people (Höllinger 1996). In the next section we shall see, however, that in some countries religion remains an important criterion of national identity.

#### *Individual and macro-level determinants of the two concepts of national identity*

In our second hypothesis, we have argued that the state-nation concept will be more prevalent among those persons and social groups which can be considered as being more open to modern developments, such as the young and the well educated, persons in higher positions, and the less religious and politically more liberal or “progressive” persons. Also, the macro characteristics of a country should have some effects; the state-nation concept should be more prevalent among the more highly developed and more heterogeneous nations, among nations with the *ius soli*.

The foregoing analysis has shown, however, that actually respondents make not this distinction but another one, namely that between an ascribed dimension on the one side and a functional or action-related component of national identity on the other side. Based on these findings, we have constructed two scales. The scale for the *ascriptive dimension* of national identity includes four items (have been born in; have long lived in; have national ancestry; to be member of the dominant religion). The scale for the *functional or action-related dimension* of national identity includes three items (respect political institutions and laws; speak the national language; feel being a member of the nation). The otherwise important item “To be a citizen of the nation” was excluded because it was loading high on both dimensions. The indicators for the reliability (internal consistency) of the two scales were satisfying (Cronbach’s alpha for the ascriptive dimension: 0.77; for the functional dimension: 0.59).

As far as macro characteristics are concerned, we collected comparable data on six dimensions for each of the participating countries:<sup>5</sup> GDP per capita (measured in Purchasing Power Parities); racial and linguistic heterogeneity (as given in international indices developed by Vanhanen 1999); dominant religion (measured as the percentage of the largest denomination, based on ISSP data); rate of foreigners living in a country and type of

citizenship law (these two data were collected by inspecting many international and national statistics and data sources).

Table 11.2 shows the results of the analysis. Let us first look at the determinants of the ascriptive dimension of nationhood. At the individual level we can see a considerable number of significant effects. The ascriptive dimensions of national identity are considered as more important among women; among the older and less-educated people (these are the two strongest effects); among persons not working and among those working not in higher occupations; among people attending church more often and among members of all three Christian denominations<sup>6</sup> compared to non-members of a church; among those with a conservative or rightist political orientation; and among people whose parents have already been citizens (this is the third-strongest effect). At first sight, we could say that these findings correspond to hypothesis 2. The support of a nation concept which is focusing on the more ascriptive, in some sense also more "traditional" criteria is clearly more frequent among those population groups which can be considered as being the more traditional and disadvantaged and therefore less mobile.

At the macro level, only two country characteristics are significant: people are leaning more towards the ascriptive concept of a nation if they live in poorer countries and if the country is heterogeneous in ethnic terms. Generally speaking, the first effect could also be seen as confirmation of hypothesis 2.

What about the determinants of the functional or action-related concept of the nations (items: a member of a nation should respect institutions, speak its language and feel a member of a nation)? We come to the rather surprising result that most of the variables significant for the ascriptive dimension have similar effects for the action-related: women, older people (strongest effect), members of a Christian church and regular churchgoers, as well as people leaning towards conservative and right-wing parties are supporting the action-related component of national identity stronger. The same turns out for persons whose parents have been citizens. Only the level of education, the employment status and the occupational position have no significant effect on this dimension.

At the macro level, the level of socio-economic development (GDP per capita) has a significant and strong effect. Persons in less developed countries support this behavioral or functional component of national identity more strongly than those in the more advanced countries. Finally, it is conspicuous that the explained variance is considerably higher for the ascriptive dimension of national identity than for the action-related dimension; in the latter, it is very low even by modest standards (4 percent at the individual and 14 percent at the macro level). We think that this finding means that the importance of this dimension is more or less taken for granted by all and everywhere!

The conclusions of these findings are straightforward and corroborate our results in the foregoing section: it is clearly not true – at least for the

Table 11.2. Multilevel regression analysis of the ascriptive and the behavioral concept of national identity in thirty-two countries (100 = very important – 400 = not important at all)

	Ascriptive concept <sup>A</sup>	Action- related concept <sup>A</sup>
	Beta	Beta
Constant [Intercept]	[107,74]	[122.10]
<i>Micro indicators</i>		
Sex (1 = male, 2 = female)	-0.02*	-0.03*
Age (years)	-0.17*	-0.12*
Education (0 = no formal degree, 5 = University)	0.16*	0.00
Employment status (1 = employed, 2 = not employed)	-0.02*	-0.01
Occupational position (1 = high, 2 = else) <sup>B</sup>	-0.05*	-0.01
Church attendance (1 = several times a week, 8 = never)	0.10*	0.04*
Religion <sup>C</sup>		
– Catholic (1 = cath., 2 = else)	0.08*	0.02*
– Orthodox (1 = orth., 2 = else)	0.08*	0.02*
Political orientation		
– left (1 = left, 2 = else)	-0.02*	-0.01
– right (1 = right, 2 = else)	0.06*	0.06*
Citizenship parents (1 = both parents, 2 = one parent, 3 = no parent)	0.15*	0.04*
<i>Macro indicators</i>		
GDP per capita (in PPP)	0.16*	0.18*
Type of law for citizenship (1 = ius sanguinis, 2 = mixed or ius soli)	0.00	-0.09
Ethnic division (low = homogeneous, high = heterogeneous) <sup>D</sup>	-0.15*	-0.06
Linguistic division (low = homogeneous, high = heterogeneous) <sup>D</sup>	0.00	0.14
Strength of Religion <sup>E</sup>		
– Catholicism	0.02	-0.02
– Protestantism	-0.06	0.09
– Orthodoxy	0.04	0.03
Rate of foreigners (low – high)	0.00	-0.12
R <sup>2</sup> micro level	0.22	0.04
R <sup>2</sup> macro level	0.64	0.14
(N)	27,377	27,326

Note: Owing to missing values, without Slovenia

\* Significant effect ( $p \leq 0.05$ ).

<sup>A</sup> See text for explanations.

<sup>B</sup> High position: ISCO 88 (1000-2470: Managers and professionals).

<sup>C</sup> A third micro-indicator of religion (Protestants) was analyzed; because of the statistical problem of to high negative correlation with Catholics it has to be excluded in these regression models.

<sup>D</sup> Measured by inverse percentages of divisions, see Vanhanen 1999.

<sup>E</sup> Categories: 1 = more than 70%, 2 = 30–69%, 3 = less than 30%.

Source: ISSP 2003 “National Identity II”, 33 countries.

thinking of the general public in more than thirty societies around the world – that the concepts of the state-nation and that of the ethno-nation or cultural nation can be distinguished from each other in a way which sees the former as a modern, progressive, and the latter as a traditional, backward concept. Rather, both concepts are supported in all nations. Their preponderance is also unrelated to structural characteristics of the countries investigated in the expected way. People in less developed and differentiated nations are more inclined to see ascriptive criteria, such as being born in a country and having national ancestry, as central components of national identity; the same is true for them, too, however, as far as “modern” criteria of respect for political institutions. Let us look more closely at this aspect.

*The relevance of different concepts of nation in different macro regions of Europe and the world*

Our third hypothesis was related to the question if the perception of the most important dimensions of national identity varies between the different countries and macro-regions of Europe and the world. Findings in the foregoing section have shown that at least the level of economic development has a significant impact here. Can we find some indications that there exist different concepts of nation as outlined in hypothesis 2, that is, also according to the “official” self-images of a nation as a state-nation or an ethno-cultural nation?

As an empirical approach to answering this question, let us look at the distribution of the responses to the single items concerning the characteristics of a co-national in the different countries. Table 11.3 shows the international variations in five central indicators for national identity: citizenship, respect for institutions, language, born in and religion. In order to make the table not too large, we have formed seven groups of countries; the data for those non-European countries which cannot be subsumed under a more general type are reported individually.

Let us first look at the items indicating a state-nation concept. *Citizenship* is considered as a central criterion for being a nation by somewhat over 50 percent of all respondents across the world (see Figure 11.1 or Table 11.3). Only the Anglo-Saxon non-European and Latin American countries show a higher percentage (68 percent in the mean, United States 83 percent). This is understandable given their indisputable character as immigration societies whose members are bound together mainly by common citizenship. Citizenship, however, is also considered by Filipinos as being particularly important (74 percent). Also the item “to respect the nation’s institutions and laws” is considered by about half of the respondents in the whole sample as very important for national identity. Countries where this item is mentioned include France, the Scandinavian countries (there, this may also reflect the general high level of trust towards political institutions) and the United States as well as Jews in Israel. Again, we cannot say that people in less developed nations

Table 11.3. Important criteria for membership in a nation in different groups of countries (% considering the respective criterion as "very important")

Groups of countries	Criterion for national identity				
	Citizenship	Respect for institutions	Speak language	Born in nat. religion	
<i>European "state nations"</i> (F, UK, CH)	51	58	62	34	14
<i>Scandinavian countries</i> (DK, FI, NO, SE)	53	68	68	32	11
<i>German speaking countries</i> (A, G-W, G-E)	50	42	67	34	19
<i>Catholic [South] Europe</i> (PT, ES, IE)	46	39	33	44	24
<i>Post-communist East Europe</i> (BG, CZ, HU, LV, PL, RU, SI, SK)	47	40	61	42	42
<i>Anglo-Saxon, "New nations"</i> (AU, CA, USA, NZ) (USA alone)	68 (83)	59 (72)	70 (83)	46 (57)	29 (50)
<i>Latin American countries</i> (CL, UY, VE)	69	60	66	63	34
<i>Other non-European countries</i>					
Israel-Arabs	59	59	24	64	11
Israel-Jews	60	64	71	33	66
South Africa	54	34	69	54	45
Philippines	74	59	76	78	65
Japan	53	24	46	45	10
South Korea	48	28	50	42	12
Taiwan	45	56	24	34	8
Total (43,074)	54	50	59	44	25

Source: ISSP 2003 "National Identity II", 33 countries.

do not consider this "modern" concept as important; also Latin Americans frequently consider it particularly important. However, it is significantly less frequently mentioned in South Africa, South Korea and Japan. In the first two countries, this may be connected with their conflictual and still in some way unfinished process of nation-building.

We have already seen that the item "to speak the (dominant) language of a nation" is considered as being the most important criterion for national identity all over the world (see Figure 11.1 or Table 11.3). Now, Table 11.3 shows a few countries where this is not the case; in all of them, it is easy to understand why this is so. For the Irish,<sup>7</sup> English is no criterion distinguishing them from their big neighbor (and suppressor in former centuries), the

United Kingdom; the same is true for the Arab language in the case of Palestinians in Israel, and for the Taiwanese whose official language – Standard Mandarin – is spoken by over a billion people in mainland China. A somewhat higher international variation exists in the dimension “to have been born in”. In general, this item is considered as very important by 44 percent of the respondents. It is significantly less frequently mentioned in the Western and Northern European countries, among Jews in Israel and among the Taiwanese. Arabs in Israel and people in the Philippines consider it as more important. In the case of the Palestinians, this is easy to understand since they consider the Israelis as invaders of a territory which has been inhabited by their own ancestors for centuries. Finally, we have seen that the item “to be a member of [dominant religion]” is not considered as important in most countries. However, in post-communist Eastern Europe, in the United States, in Latin America, among Jews in Israel and in the Philippines, this is much more frequently the case. Again, in two of these cases (the United States and Israel) rather “new nations” are involved.

These findings lead to two general conclusions. First, there is again no evidence of a distinction between the more developed and modern countries on the one side, and the less developed and more traditional ones in so far as people in the first are more leaning towards a state-nation and the latter towards an ethno-national or ethno-cultural concept of nation on the other side. This fact turned out also in a cluster analysis (not reported here for the reason of space) on the basis of the main criteria for national identity as seen in the different nations. This analysis did not produce meaningful clusters.

Second, it is evident that the relevance of specific dimensions of national identity depends also on the concrete historical preconditions and situational circumstances in specific countries. Language, for instance, can only become a distinctive criterion of national identity if a national language exists; so religion will become a distinctive criterion if a certain religion or church has participated in creating a nation (such as in Israel) or in supporting a nation during periods of foreign suppression (as in the cases of Ireland, Poland and the Philippines).

#### **4 Summary and discussion**

An influential school of thinking posits that nation-states are more and more losing their autonomy and influence. Cognitive adherence and emotional attachment to the nation – in essence, national identity – becomes an outdated, conservative or even reactionary attitude which should be substituted by a continentwide (e.g. European, American) or a cosmopolitan orientation. Following this line of thinking, we have deduced three concrete, testable hypotheses.

Our findings contradicted all three hypotheses. First, they failed to show that there exists a distinction between a state-nation and an ethno-cultural concept of nation in the minds of the public: Throughout the thirty-three

nations investigated in this paper, *both* the political and the ethno-cultural elements are considered as central components of national identity (see also Jones and Smith 2001a, b). Instead of this distinction, an alternative one was found – that between *ascribed* and *functional* or *action-related components of national identity*. The first contains national ancestry, the birth and growing-up in a country and citizenship; the second contains the respect of the institutions and laws of a country, the mastering of its language and the feeling of being a member of a nation. The dimension “citizenship” has an ambiguous state since it is associated with both meanings.

We think that the main reason for the disconfirmation of our hypotheses was a weakness in the underlying theoretical concept. The distinction between a “state-nation” and an “ethno-nation” or “cultural nation” is based on flawed concepts of state and nation by assuming that in modern times the first can be divorced from the latter. However, if a state aspires to become more than just a rationalist apparatus of administrative and political domination, it must also include components of emotional attachment of its citizens; this, in turn, presupposes some degree of cultural homogeneity, basic common values, and a recognized common language (which must not be spoken by all in their home). In short, the state must become a “nation” in order to be able to survive periods of deep internal and external conflicts and crises. The concept of “patriotism” has long been used to denote these positive aspects; a patriot is a person who feels attached strongly to his or her nation and who engages actively in the daily and public life of his/her political community (Anderson 1991; Guibernau 1996; Miller 2000). Every state must also exhibit at least some degree of cultural integration as it must be based on a politically conscious civil society (through active participation of the citizens). The distinction between the ethno-cultural nation and the state-nation has probably become so popular in the West because it is implicitly value-laden. It enables people (and sociologists) from the more advanced countries to denote their own political communities as modern and “good” state-nations, while the often bloody ethnic and national conflicts and wars in other parts of the world can be traced back to their adherence to an ugly, traditionalistic and “bad” concept of ethno-nation. However, we know, too, that state-nations like France, the United States or Australia exerted strong pressures towards creating cultural homogeneity among their citizens and today try to restrict immigration from countries very different in ethno-cultural terms. Also within these seemingly liberal, tolerant and multicultural modern states, processes of national streamlining, of the reproduction of national ideological habits are going on all the time (Billig 1995). Our findings have shown that the political and cultural, even ethnic, aspects of national identity are considered as being important in all thirty-three countries compared. If there is a distinction between different components of national identity, it is rather between characteristics which have a more or less ascribed character (these include even citizenship), on the one side, and characteristics that are related to social and political involvement and



behavior, on the other side. The latter includes also the knowledge of language of a nation. Both, however, are indispensable ingredients of a modern nation.

How can these findings be reconciled with the theoretical thinking about national and supranational or cosmopolitan political affiliations? In this area a tradition is able to integrate our findings much better than the one sketched out in the first part of our chapter. Following sociologists like Georg Simmel (1923), George H. Mead (1983 [1929]) and Norbert Elias (1987), we would argue that the distinctive characteristic of modern social ties is not their range or "universality" so that only those persons are truly modern who identify themselves with overall humanity. Rather, modernity lies mainly in the fact that one is able to develop and maintain *multiple, complementary identities* one at a time. For instance, we can consider it as a sign of a universal humanitarian ethos ("cosmopolitanism") if somebody is engaged in a local social civic or political project in the same way as it is a sign of modernity to engage in a worldwide movement such as Greenpeace or Amnesty International. Ailon-Souday and Kunda (2003) have shown that national identity can be used by the members of globalized organizations as a resource in their social struggles. Edmunds and Turner (2001) found among postwar British women a new type of "cosmopolitan nationalism" has emerged. It might also not be true that there exists a contradiction between the aims connected with national unity and identity, and the issues traditionally central to sociological theorizing and research, such as social inequality and justice. Social movements often aim towards a more equal distribution of rights and opportunities between centers and peripheries, privileged and deprived or suppressed groups (Vogler 1985; Blomert *et al.* 1993; Ailon-Souday and Kunda 2003). Thus, if nationalism is a traditional attitude, it is at the same time a modern one. Moreover, not only one (the Western) model of nationalism exists, but several different ones which can all contribute to modernization.

### Acknowledgment

A similar analysis, focusing only on European societies, was published in Max Haller and Regina Ressler, "National and European identity: a study of their meanings and interrelationships", *Revue française de sociologie* 47: 817–50.

### Notes

- 1 Each module is first developed by a drafting group. The drafting group for the module "National Identity I" included four ISSP member states, with the first author of this paper (on behalf of Austria) as chair; the drafting group for "National Identity II" had seven members, with Spain (Juan Díez-Medrano) as chair.
- 2 The latter includes the German *Bundesländer*, which were part of the German Democratic Republic up to 1990; owing to their half-century experience of Soviet-type socialism, attitudes of the citizens there are still in some regards different from those in West Germany.

- 3 In Israel, we have distinguished between the Jews and the Palestinians (Arabs) since their national identity is based on quite different dimensions.
- 4 In Bulgaria and Latvia item h, ancestry, was not included.
- 5 Owing to limitations on space, we cannot reproduce the detailed table showing these characteristics here.
- 6 The Protestants had to be excluded from the regression analysis because of collinearity problems; however, the test of this variable also showed a significant effect.
- 7 Only 13 percent of them consider language as important, compared to 47 percent of the Portuguese and 34 percent of the Spaniards.

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