**AQCI #1: Lecture:** Multiculturalism in Western Europe and North America

**Lecturer:** Dr. Antonin Mikes **/ Student:** Tashejian Antonios **/ Date:** March 7th 2019

**AQCI: Brubacker, Rogers, “Civic and ethnic nations in France and Germany”, text 28. In Hutchinson, John, Smith, Anthony, ed. (1996) Ethnicity, Oxford – New York. Oxford University Press pp. 168 – 173.**

**Central Quotation:** “If the French understanding of nationhood has been state-centered and assimilationist, the German understanding has been *Volk*-centered and differentialist” (Burbacker, Rogers)

**Argument:** In this essay, Rogers Brubacker[[1]](#footnote-1) explains the difference between two very prominent schools of thought on the origins of the complex phenomenon which is “Nationhood”. France and Germany are the main examples given in this text; the former is a civic nation based on *jus soli[[2]](#footnote-2)* and *jus sanguinis[[3]](#footnote-3)* while the latter is an ethnic one, solely based on *jus sanguinis[[4]](#footnote-4).* In France, nationhood is perceived as a political and cultural form of uniting the country; citizens and immigrants are supposed to ‘assimilate’[[5]](#footnote-5) into mainstream society, where there are standards as to what ‘French traditions’ mean. In Germany, nationhood is ‘ethnocultural’ and not political. Although the concept of nationhood started in Germany prior to the development of nation-states[[6]](#footnote-6), it started in France while the state was being “conceived in it’s institutional and territorial frame”. “The argument of inertia[[7]](#footnote-7)”, as explained by Brubacker is that for immigration laws to change, there must be a change in the conception of what is a ‘nation’ in not only the minds of the people (cultural and political traditions) but also in ‘*legal’* terms. In other words, the author’s main argument is based mostly on the historical significance of nationhood and what it means to be a citizen of both France and Germany respectively.

**Question:** The main question Brubacker raises is, **“**why is it hard for both France and Germany to reform their laws regarding immigration and citizenship (or citizenry[[8]](#footnote-8))?” Since ‘traditions’ has a “pure political rhetoric”, the author proposes the concept of “*legal* traditions” as opposed to ‘cultural’ or ‘political’, although ‘tradition’ in itself is a construct and not really objective.

**Experimental connection:** As someone who has lived in France for the past four years, an immigrant myself, I agree with Brubacker’s argument on how history plays a huge role in immigration policies; and the initial concept of who is a “citizen” and what/who is ‘french” are questions asked in every political debate but are essentially taboo topics in everyday societal conversations. France is known to be a “country of immigration”, as Brubacker puts it. No matter how much some people in society and in government want more restrictive measures, immigration and the phenomenon which is “civic nationality” is imbedded in France’s DNA[[9]](#footnote-9).

**Textual connection:** “Against Brubacker, I will try to demonstrate that in the case of France, citizenship and nationhood were in fact productive of the territorial state that Brubacker considers prior. In the case of Germany, I will show that the givenness of 'nation' on which Brubacker bases his argument disables him to properly understand the nationalizing politics in which the German state engaged after its foundation”. In a very intriguing article[[10]](#footnote-10), Andreas Behnke, is critical of Brubacker’s argument, and says that contrary to Brubacker, he would emphasize on the “openness of history”, which brings out the possibility of alternative ways of studying the relationship between ‘Nationhood’ and ‘Citizenship’.

**Implications:** As of March 2019, each member-state in the EU, including France and Germany are responsible for dealing with immigration (regular or irregular) on their own. More integration in the EU is needed from all dimensions, including strong external borders, for example, to regulate immigration[[11]](#footnote-11). “Nationhood” is a thing of the past and Europe is the future. There must be one supranational state with one citizenship — a European one.

**Sample Self assessment form**

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**AQCI ASSESSMENT FORM**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student’s name: | Antonios Tashejian | Name of assessor: | Elli Vougiouka | Date: | March 7th 2019 |
| Essay title: |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Excellent | Good | Average | Poor | Not acceptable | Comments |
| 1) Is the chosen **quotation** central to the author’s argument?  | ++ |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2) Has the main **argument** been fully understood (including its ‘for’ and ‘against’ sides, if applicable)? |  | ++ |  |  |  |  |
| 3a) Is the **question** raised important/relevant/interesting? | + |  | + |  |  |  |
| 3b) Has this **question** not been fully answered in the text? | + |  | + |  |  |  |
| 4) Is the **experiential connection** relevant/interesting? | + | + |  |  |  |  |
| 5a) Is the **textual connection** relevant/interesting? | ++ |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5b) Has it been cited properly? | ++ |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5c) Has it been adequately explained how the present text's argument contrasts with, contradicts, confirms, clarifies, or elaborates the other text's argument or point? |  |  | ++ |  |  | I could go on explaining even further but the fact that all should be written on one page stresses me out. I wonder if it’s wrong to cite such a long sentence from the original text. |
| 6) Have the **implications** been well understood, can they have a practical impact for policy making? | + |  | + |  |  | It just doesn’t seem to me that the “supranational state” is a practical solution. |
| **7) Expression/Presentation**  | + |  |  |  |  |  |
| a) Are the style, grammar and general use of English adequate? | ++ |  |  |  |  |  |
| b) Is the AQCI professionally presented? | ++ |  |  |  |  |  |

Essay grade:

Further comments:

1. American Sociologist at the University of California, Los Angeles. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Jus Soli,* latin for “right of the soil” means that any child born on this ‘soil’ acquiers citizenship directly (some conditions might apply depending on the country in question). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Jus Sanguinis,* latin for “right of the blood” means that citizenship is only passed from one generation to the next. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. As of 1996. In 2000, Germany introduced restricted *jus soli.* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. It is the process of losing one’s culture, traditions, language and all that constitutes one’s identity to satisfy and integrate into the dominant society (Assimilation facts, information, pictures | Encyclopedia.com). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. It "is one where the great majority are conscious of a common identity and share the same culture" (Nira Yuval-Davis, 1997). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Literally when there is a resistance to a change in motion from a physical object (Cambridge dictionnary) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Citizenship is the status of being a citizen while citizenry is the group of all citizens. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Figurative speech. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Entitled “Citizenship, nationhood and the production of political space” (1997); https://doi.org/10.1080/13621029708420657 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Whether economic migration, family reunification or asylum seeking. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)