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Abstract

This article tests three classical theoretical assumptions about the cause of nationalism. It does so by testing if elite discourse, internal- and external threats have any impact on nationalist sentiments in Europe. Macro data from various sources is combined with attitudinal data from the International Social Survey Programme 2003 for 20 European countries. It is concluded that the nationalist articulation by the political elites does not matter. Internal threats, in the form of foreign born population and language fractionalization effects nationalist sentiment negatively, i.e. nationalist sentiments are weaker in more heterogeneous countries. Finally it is shown that external threats, in the form of experience of war, has a positive impact on nationalist sentiments, i.e. people are more nationalist in countries that have a more recent experience of war or independence from an external ruler.

Keywords: Nationalism, nationalist sentiments, theory, multilevel modelling, cross country comparasion.

Mobilizing nationalist sentiments - Which factors affect nationalist sentiments in Europe?

1. Why Nationalism - again?

Nationalism is still a powerful political driving force. The case of former Yugoslavia and Tibet are only two recent examples of nationalism leading to violent conflicts about sovereignty. Even in the 21st century nationalism continues to show its many faces in forms of ideologies, social movements, political party programs, state founding doctrines, socially shared belief systems and sentiments, drawing its power from the ability to disguise itself and adapt to different social and cultural contexts. Nationalism is used by political power holders in order to improve their legitimacy and to realize their political and economic interests as well as emerging amongst minorities in their struggle for sovereignty. Nationalism is at the same time an integrating and separating force that might lead to a violent breakout of conflicts. It is, according to Elias (1990), "the most powerful belief system of the 19th and 20th century" (p.194)

The body of literature analyzing the historical roots and development of nationalism is extensive. Authors like Deutsch (1966), Anderson (1983), Smith (1986), Gellner (1983) and Hobsbawm (1990) have tried to come to terms with the emergence of nationalism. Others have focused upon nationalism in terms of political philosophy (e.g. Miller, 1995; Moore, 2001; Norman, 2006) trying to disentangle the importance of nationalism for social cohesion and its relation to liberal democracy and political rights while some focus on territorial identities and their interplay (c.f. Smith, 1992; Calhoun, 1993; Opp 2005; Berg, 2007). Yet others focus on the consequences of nationalistic attitudes (Hjerm, 1998a, Knudsen, 1997, Luedtke, 2005). This article combines assumptions about the historical and political process of nationalism with the research dealing with nationalistic attitudes in trying to explain how the latter is upheld in the 21st century. Given the vast body of literature there is surprisingly limited discussion that empirically assesses the factors producing, supporting or hindering nationalism in different countries nowadays. *Therefore, we set out to empirically analyze how different structural factors help to maintain nationalist sentiments? The article focuses on*

three, theoretically taken for granted factors, namely; elite discourse, external and internal threats.

We analyse the nation as collective of people “united by shared cultural features (myths, values, etc.) and the belief in the right to territorial self determination” (Barrington, 1997: 713)¹. The nation does not need to be a manifest collective that calls itself so but it may be an “imagined community” (Anderson 1983) that serves as a latent focal point of people’s orientations. Although nationalism clearly has a political impact we examine nationalism simply as a sentiment or feeling and not as a defined political movement. In this regard we assume nationalist sentiments to vary with the degree of feelings people develop towards a particular territory and the people living within this territory. These feelings are expected to depend on characteristics of the broader context of the nation that is assumed to influence people’s perception of, and attachment to, the imagined community of the nation. These factors themselves are treated as irreducible facts that can develop causal power on individual decision and towards which individuals can develop attitudes and bonds.² This line of argument ties in with former research on nationalism depending mainly on larger macro-sociological and structural factors. Especially, within the extensive body of literature analyzing the structural factors that historically enforced the developments of nationalism, like homogeneous language and culture (e.g. Gellner, 1983), imagined or manifest enemies (e.g. Langewiesche, 2000), or social-economic conditions like mass communication, public schooling or the loss of importance of the churches (e.g. Anderson, 1983).

We use data from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) from the year 2003 to analyze how the elite's nationalistic discourse, external, and internal threats influence the level of nationalism within different European countries. By this we will provide some reasoning why a decline of nationalist sentiments even in Europe is not to be expected in the near future.

2. Understanding nationalist sentiments

Although being a prominent concept in social research the meaning of nationalism covers partly different phenomena. In difference to older approaches, the before cited modernists Gellner (1983) and Hobsbawm (1990) as well as Anderson (1983; 1998) see nationalism as a *political principle* that aims at unifying political and national unities which comprises bureaucratic and legal institutions, a shared language and the loyalty of the citizens to this unit (Gellner 1983: 57; Hobsbawm 1991: 20). This political principle developed out of a process of social engineering and does not necessarily refer to a natural order of territories. All three authors more or less explicitly stress the point of the nation as an “imagined community” and nationalism as a system of ideas, a belief system that aims to create or maintain a nation-state containing a homogeneous nation (for a summary see: Wehler 2004: 8). Other authors, like Symmons-Symonolewicz (1965: 227), emphasize more strongly the mobilizing aspect of nationalism as a social movement containing an aspect of action. Symmons-Symonolewicz defines nationalism as “[...] the active solidarity of a group claiming to be a nation and aspiring to be a state.” Similar to this, Barrington (1997: 714 [emphasis added]) sees nationalism as “[...] the pursuit - through *argument or other activity* - of a set of rights for the self-defined members of the nation, including, at a minimum, territorial autonomy and sovereignty.” Others, like Billig (1995; see also Calhoun, 1997), refer to ideological habits and discourses that contribute to reproduce modern nation-states through everyday practices. Treanor (1997), on the other hand, argues that nationalism is a functional world order that minimizes the divergence within states and determines the number of states in the world.

The different understandings of nationalism determine the level of empirical analysis. Breuilly’s distinction between nationalism as a doctrine, as sentiments, and as politics sums

up such differences well (Breuilly, 1982; 1996). For the following analysis we follow the before mentioned authors in regarding nationalism *as a sentiment that is included into a wider belief system concerning an administrative territorial unit and claiming its own internal and external autonomy and sovereignty*. In this regard, nationalist sentiments can be seen as an ideology in a broader sense.³ The analysis at hand focuses on the aspect of a socially shared belief system. We are not going to analyze the historical development of nationalism and its relationship to the nation-state. We admit the mobilizing aspect of collective national identity but concentrate on factors explaining the strength of nationalist sentiments in different European already existing and unified nation-states.

The belief system of nationalist sentiments has some distinct particularities. Although there are different ways to understand content and composition of nationalism most scholars agree that nationalism has its roots in (more or less real) historical experiences that have formed nationalism into a thick form of attachment (e.g. Calhoun, 1995, 1997; Smith, 1995). Nationalism covers the right to territorial self-determination where ethnicity continues to play a substantial role (Brown, 2000; Gellner, 1983, Calhoun 1993). In the words of Smith: “Yet in practice, [...] a given national state will often display ethnic as well as civic components in its form of nationalism, sometimes in a historical layering, or its nationalism may move some way from one type to another and back” (1998: 212). Regardless of all the well-known Janus-face differentiations of nationalism (liberal–illiberal, eastern–western, civic–ethnic, new–old, evaluational–project, etc), a crucial point of all nationalist discourses is that they define the “other” in a more or less exclusive way (c.f. Spencer and Wollman, 2002). The distinction between “us” and “them” derive from political and ideological ideas that mostly include the myth of common ancestry, or ethno-cultural belonging, and the idea of yet existing common cultural features. In difference to other forms of communities (or “Vergemeinschaftungen”) national sentiments additionally always refer to a distinct geographical territory that is perceived as a homeland. The emphasis of commonalities among certain members of a society at the same time leads to the marking of differences and the exclusion of “others” that are defined as not belonging to the nation, irrespective of whether those “others” are situated within or outside the state borders (Barrington, 1997: 774; Triandafyllidou, 1998). Individual nationalistic sentiments derive from these particularities of nationalism and cover the belief in the unity amongst the people, the existence of a homeland and its right to autonomy. It is the individual’s alliance with a specific nation. This alliance with the nation can vary across nations as well as between individuals of the same nation depending on a number of circumstances, but on a general level it is the alliance and love to the (imagined) people, which leads us to agree with Connor (1974) about the nonexistence of any civic nationalism. The latter should better be termed patriotism.⁴

3. What influences nationalist sentiments?

In trying to explain nationalist sentiments we mainly focus on three components that are expected to be of fundamental importance in modern nations: namely, elite discourse, internal and external threats. Emphasizing these factors we concentrate on macro-structural, contextual factors that are consensually assumed to develop an influence on individual nationalistic sentiments. Admitting that individual perceptions and evaluations, stereotyping and status characterizing are very important mechanisms explaining nationalist sentiments beliefs, and actions towards “us” and “them” (e.g. Cerulo, 1997; Mummendey, Klink and Brown, 2001; Hopkins and Moore, 2001; Hampton and Sperling, 2002) we nevertheless mainly take contextual factors into consideration here. That is due to the fact that they are theoretically taken for granted and empirically neglected in the majority of empirical research about nationalistic attitudes.

3.1 The top-down perspective

As argued above, nationalism in a political sense always relates to the aspiration of founding a new, sovereign state, or at least to some form of political self determination, or preserving an already existing state (e.g. Symmons-Symonolewicz, 1965: 227; Barrington, 1997: 714). It is often used by the majority to legitimate a political national order or, alternatively, to delegitimize the power holders by an opposing minority. Although the different strands of theories about nationalism may in some sense be more or less incompatible they nonetheless share a common feature: the emphasis on elites - be it the elites of the power holders or of the opposition - in promoting nationalism.

Kedourie (1993) is most outspoken when claiming that the intellectual elite creates nationalism. Similar claims are being made by Kedourie's modernist colleagues (Anderson, 1983; Deutsch, 1966). If they do not claim explicitly that elites create nationalism like Gellner (1983), they at least emphasize the emergence of the modern (industrialized) society as pushing the need for a common language and culture that in turn enforces the need for a developed bureaucratic system that can facilitate a common political arena and public mass education. The nation becomes institutionalized within the civil society strongly driven by political elites obliged to a belief system formed around the idea of nationalism. The elite proponents are, admittedly, not claiming any casual relation between elites and nationalism, but they are still recognizing the importance of the elites as bearers of the nationalist discourse.

Others like Smith (1998), Breuilly (1982) and Whitmeyer (2002) claim that elites do not create nationalism as such. More specifically, they state that elites are not alone responsible for the development of nationalism, but that elites use nationalism to unify and legitimize their positions as well as for mobilizing political action, which implies the importance of the elites in the creation and sustainment of nationalism amongst the people.

We do not claim that the development of nationalism always is a top-down phenomenon inoculated by the elites as there are clearly cases where nationalism rises from the masses. The foundation of modern England is one example of the latter. However, we follow the decisive trend of argumentation that elites play a very important role in supporting or constraining the level of publically pronounced nationalist sentiments.

Elaboration and utilization of nationalistic ideologies by the elites did not stop with the creation of the modern nation-state; it is a still ongoing process as lately to be witnessed in French elections in which right wing nationalism could gain ground, or the recent elections in Switzerland preceded by a populist campaign against foreigners. The elite's public disclosure of nationalistic standpoints is a process that admittedly varies in strength and substance across political entities, but is nonetheless prevalent in all modern societies. The articulation can vary from being extremely manifest, as in newly founded states or in states in war, to being more of a discursive force in "the marketplaces of ideas" in older and pacified states (Snyder and Ballentine, 1996).⁵ The question here is to what extent this elite articulation of the nationalistic ideology today influences people's nationalist sentiments in European countries?

The possibilities of measuring the elite's nationalistic ideologies are restricted, especially for comparative analysis. For the following analysis we use data from the Manifesto data group (Budge et al., 2001; Klingemann et al., 2006) to measure the political elite's articulation of nationalism. The Manifesto data set is based on extensive content analyses of all political party manifestos in a large number of countries. It provides a straightforward measure of political articulation factoring out the intermediate interpretation processes of the mass media

and other mediating experts and render the interpretation processes of the recipients. Parties use their party manifestos strategically to reveal their political position in form of a package of political statements. It is not self-evident that the voter really perceives these programs but research has shown that the perception of the party stand points has a significant influence on voting behaviour: voters seem to take party manifestos and party standpoints about major social issues into consideration, evaluate them, and elect the party that offers a program considered most valuable for the individual and common interests (Behnke 1999, Klein 2005). Using the Manifesto data reduces the influence of the societal elite's nationalistic ideologies to the impact political parties have on nationalist sentiments. Political parties are, needless to say, only a small part of the national power elite and even one single part of the political elite of a country. Due to data reason and to reduce the complexity of explanation we nevertheless restrict the analysis to only these political party's discourses.⁶

We have used the most recent Manifesto data set that covers elections between 1990 and 2003. The manifesto data is analyzed for numerous different areas and we have adopted one of the available indicators that deal with the national way of living. This indicator appeals to the support for national ideals as well as a protection of those ideas from subversion. The higher the value the more frequent is the emphasis of cultural/nation within those party manifestos. It means that the higher the frequency the more prevalent is this discourse within a single country.

3.2 The threat from within

Historically, non-ethnic nationalism during the 19th century in Europe provided an ideological frame that united people from different political, religious and class background.⁷ Its ability to mobilize masses and integrate them was considered as one of its most attractive features (Langewiesche 2000: 17, Wehler 2004: 24 ff). Almost from the earliest developments of nationalism the issue who was to be considered as part of the *demos* - and therefore of the nation - was most crucial.

Today, political theorists even claim that the *demos* needs to coincide with the *ethnos* for functional political institutions to be possible (e.g. Lijphart, 1977; Scharpf, 1999). This line of reasoning is also put forward by liberal nationalists (Kymlicka, 1995; Miller, 1995; Moore, 2001; Tamir, 1993; Young, 1990). The latter mainly differs in the perspective of focusing on the question of equality in a plural society. They also assume, as do the political theorists, that some form of collective culture is intrinsic for national institutions to function. The commonality between the two, partly different, strands of research is the assumption that a thick form of attachment needs to be the foundation for the *demos*, or in other words that nations need to be homogeneous in some sense in order to work as the cement that binds people together. Some even state that lack of homogeneity undermines political stability (Salins, 1997).

This question may be even more salient today due to increasing diversity within countries, where internal changes in the form of increasing pluralism risk to undermine and diminish the "vast majority" to include fewer and fewer people (Anderson, 2002). The modern nation-states are put under threat by increasing diversity (c.f. Parekh, 2002).⁸ The essence of this argument is that the sheer number of peoples not considered being members of the *demos* can be seen as threatening the cohesion of society, which in turn can affect people's nationalist sentiments. The problem is that it is difficult to predict if the degree of nationalism is lower or higher in homogeneous countries than in heterogeneous ones, as several possibilities are reasonable. We must acknowledge that the notion of heterogeneity may differ between countries as it is clearly a difference between countries consisting of a number of ethnic

groups residing within the territory (e.g. Belgium, Spain or Switzerland) and countries consisting of one large majority of one ethnicity facing migrants of various kinds (e.g. Germany and Sweden).

In countries where heterogeneity is primarily related to immigration, threat theory (e.g. Bobo, 1983; Sears and Jessor, 1996) seems to be applicable. Even though the majority of work embarking in threat theory focus on explaining prejudice it can be assumed that the sheer number of immigrants threatens the national way of life and by this enhances both anti-immigrant sentiments as well as strengthening in-group cohesion, i.e. increases nationalist sentiments (Stephan and Stephan, 2000). However, it is not obvious that the threat theory logic applies to nationalist sentiments as it is possible that it is more difficult to sustain nationalism in a heterogeneous context.

Even if it is not evident it is at least plausible that immigrant heterogeneity have negative impact upon the extent of nationalist sentiments. Considering ethnic group heterogeneity versus homogeneity the direction of effect is even less obvious. Nationalist sentiments may be of less importance in heterogeneous countries in favor of other bonds related to non-national geographical territories or cultural spheres like in the case of Belgium for instance. On the other hand it is possible that nationalism needs to be promoted and sustained in order for heterogeneous countries to exist at all, like in the case of Switzerland.

The overall question is what effect ethnic heterogeneity has on the degree of nationalism within one country? We will take into account two different types of heterogeneity; namely heterogeneity dependent on migrants of the first generation and heterogeneity dependent on the coexisting of different ethnic groups. Internal threat is therefore measured in two different ways. First, we use the proportion of foreign born individuals living in the country to measure threat from newcomers to the society. Data is adopted from Dumont and Lemaitre (2004). Second, we use the language fractionalization index developed by Alesina et al. (2003) to measure heterogeneity coming from coexisting ethnic groups. The latter measures the proportion of people not speaking the majority language of the particular country. The reason for using two different indicators is to enable us to capture both dimensions of heterogeneity. The proportion of foreign born people varies across countries not only on account of quantity but also on account of ethnic composition which is not fully captured in the first measure. Still, many of the large immigration countries in Europe, like Germany or Sweden, have a large proportion of foreign born people residing within the territories of the country, but are nonetheless quite homogenous whereas other countries have less foreign born people but are more heterogeneous with regard to language fractionalization due to different languages spoken by those born within the country (e.g. Belgium or Luxembourg). In focussing on language differences to measure the degree of heterogeneity within a country we follow the mainstream of research about nationalism e.g. Hobsbawm and Kertzer (1992: 3) stating that "language is taken, wherever possible, to express and symbolize ethnicity".⁹ We are aware that these two dimensions are not completely independent of each other since some migrants do not speak the language of the majority at all as we observe in the US for example. However, they measure two different aspects that need to be distinguished: migrants in most countries are forced to learn the language of the majority while in countries with different ethnic groups language fractionalization might consist over long periods as the case of Switzerland illustrates most vividly.

3.3 The threat from outside

Nationalism can be seen as emerging from external threats towards the nation. External threats come in many forms including economic and political ones, but the most obvious one

is the threat of one nation ruling on behalf of another nation. The later form of threat and the responses to it can take many forms ranging from secessionist movements claiming political autonomy like the Kurds or the Basques. It can also be the increased saliency of nationalism as the force of cohesion within nation-states in times of war, like in the USA during the Gulf war.

The reason for the emergence or increased salience of nationalism lies at the very core of nationalism and the preference of unity between nation and state. Gellner (1983) makes this obvious when defining nationalist sentiment as the feeling of anger aroused by a violation of its principle, defined as congruence between the political and the national units. The most severe violation of this principle is a nation ruled by people who do not belong to the same nation as the majority of those being ruled. Herbst (1990) stated that “[e]xternal threats have such a powerful effect on nationalism because people realize in a profound manner that they are under threat because of who they are as a nation” (p. 122). Triandafyllidou (1998) argues in the same way emphasizing the "significant other" for the development of nationalist sentiments: serious threats from groups from outside challenging the sovereignty and autonomy of the nation-state are able to evoke sentiments of nationalism in defense against these threats.¹⁰ Boehnke and Kinderwater (2007) show, in one of few empirical studies trying to explain nationalist sentiments, that nationalist sentiments are higher in areas where conflicts are more immanent. One of the most serious external threats is the declaration of war. We therefore expect to find a higher degree of nationalist sentiments in countries having declared war or have been declared to it. In spite of the almost taken for granted view of a strong link between nationalism and war the empirical evidence showing that nationalist sentiments are higher when the external threat is larger is at best meager. So, the third question to be answered in the analysis is: does the assumed association between declared war and a high degree of nationalist sentiments hold empirically?

Since all of the countries of our sample are pacified we constructed a variable that takes into account the last time a country was in war or alternatively gained independence from an external ruler. It means, for example, 1814 for Sweden as it was the last time the country was in war, and 1982 for Britain’s participation in the Falkland war and 1991 for Hungary as they gained independence from the former Soviet Union.¹¹ We assume that the longer the period between the last external threat and the current measurement of nationalist sentiments the less salient the external threat will be. Therefore, its influence should be less. More current threats to the contrary should have a higher impact because they are more salient yet.

4. Method

The individual data come from the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2003. The ISSP is a program for international comparative attitude studies. One topic is examined each year in the same way in all the participant countries. The 2003 study, ‘Aspects of National Identity II’ deals with areas like national identity, nationalism, national pride, globalism and xenophobia and is in large a replica of the 1995 survey with the same name. As we do not focus on changes the choice is to use the most up to date round of the ISSP data sets. 33 countries performed the 2003 survey. We have chosen to focus on the European countries in ISSP only. The reasons for this are twofold. First, data is available only for particular non-European countries so we don’t want to draw conclusions of these quite particular cases. Second, focusing only on European countries enables us to avoid too large cultural and historical differences to remain unobserved between the countries. Taking all European countries into consideration makes it possible to derive results for this cultural and historical quite homogeneous area. However, the representativeness is limited: we do not assume that it

will be possible to draw any conclusions for any non-European countries on the basis of our results.

The data is analysed by using multi-level modelling (MLM) or a hierarchical linear model (see Hox, 2002; Singer, 1998; see Snijders and Bosker, 1999). Multi-level modelling assumes that individuals interact with the social context which they belong to, and is an empirical way of understanding the relationship between the structure and the individual. If the objective is to analyse individual attitudes or country-level differences in isolation, a multi-level analysis is not needed. In this case, however, we were interested in macro-level effects of the elite's discourse, internal and external threads to the nation on the individual outcome. These factors are seen as context variables being part of an independent and emergent over-individual structure of groupings, relations, and discourses that develop influencing power on individuals and their attitudes and sentiments.¹²

We use a hierarchical linear model, which is effectively a multiple regression analysis that can handle nested sources of variability, such as individuals in nation-states. The use of this type of modelling has an empirical advantage over regression analysis, in that it does not underestimate standard errors, which is the case if macro-level variables were to be included in an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis owing to the lack of variability in the macro-level indicators. A minor problem of the analysis is that the number of cases (N) amount to only 21 cases, and thus the variability between countries is relatively small. Nevertheless, it is perfectly possible to perform this kind of modelling with this number of cases. Snijders and Boskers (1999) provide a rule of thumb saying that if N is equal or greater to 10, a random intercept model (i.e. a linear hierarchical model) is preferable to a fixed model as a means of regression analysis.

In the ISSP questionnaire, nationalist sentiment is operationalized as a form of belonging based in both civic and ethnic aspects by using four statements.¹³ Regardless of how the operationalisation is done, it will, by definition, not completely cover the entire multidimensional spectrum of nationalism, but it may be seen as an indicator that can help to understand the nationalistic belief system. The question and statements are as follows:

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1. *I would rather be a citizen of [Country] than of any other country in the world.*
2. *The world would be a better place if people from other countries were more like [Country].*
3. *[Country] is a better country than most other countries.*
4. *When my country does well in international sports, it makes me proud to be [Country].*
5. *People should support their country even if the country is in the wrong.*

Coenders and Scheepers (2003) as well as Knudsen (1997) use these items to denote chauvinism, which they both consider to be a pertinent part of nationalist sentiments whereas Hjerem (1998a) chose to stick with the notion of nationalist sentiment. Empirically, these items produce a one factor solution for the total population within the data material as well as for all the individual countries except for Hungary, Czech Republic and Latvia. However, even for these three countries the deviations from the general pattern is small and the second factor has a very low explained variance. Cronbach's alpha varies between 0.77 for Spain to 0.62 for Hungary, which further indicates that there is strong reason to view these as one dimension - as nationalist sentiments. We added these five variables together and rescaled the

corresponding index so that it varies between zero and 100 with higher values indicating stronger nationalist sentiments.¹⁴

6. Results

Let us first display the country average level of nationalist sentiments. Diagram 1 shows that there is approximately a 17 unit difference between the least nationalistic country (the Netherlands) and the most nationalistic one (Hungary). The aggregate country differences are not tremendously large, but nonetheless clearly prevalent.

(Diagram 1 about here)

Included in the analysis are a number of individual indicators but the aim is not to explain the effect of these individual characteristics. The focus is on the specific condition of elite's discourse, group threat constituted by minority group size and external threats, as we deal with affects of certain structural conditions, rather than individual characteristics, on attitudes. The individual level indicators need to be included just in order to avoid the risk that the effect of group level indicators is wrongly estimated. For example, if a certain individual level indicator has a strong effect while this characteristic is unevenly distributed across the countries then this could be a reason for the country level differences displayed. The included individual indicators are: education measured in years of full time education, sex, age, party voted for in last election (divided into left and right), and being a citizen or not. There are mainly pragmatic reasons for including especially these variables because they have previously been shown to effect nationalistic attitudes (e.g. Heath et al., 1999; Hjerm, 2001).

The individual level indicators are included in the models as fixed effects indicators, meaning that they are assumed to have the same slope in all included countries. This is not the optimal model as some of the indicators do have different slopes in different countries. However, there are only slight deviations on all the included individual level variables with the exception of left-right party affiliation which varies approximately 3.4 units per standard deviation. Still, the aim is not to explain the nationalist sentiments with the individual indicators so the choice has been to display the simplest models, especially, as a more complex modelling of the individual level variables does not change the macro level effects (only in the total unexplained variance which is naturally higher).

(Table 1 about here)

Table 1 presents the results of the analysis. The firstly presented model (Model 0) is the so called "empty model". We present this model including only the individual level indicators so that comparison of variance reduction at the country level makes more sense in the latter models. The true empty model without any indicators shows that approximately ten per cent of the variance can be attributed to the macro level (not displayed in the table), or in other words, there is difference in individual's nationalist sentiment that can be attributed to the country context.

Model 0 shows that women, people with higher education, those with leftist political views, and citizens are less nationalistic than others. There is a curvilinear relation between age and the nationalist sentiment in a way that the younger generation and the elderly are more nationalistic than the middle aged people. These results are expected given previous research.

Although strongly indicated by research about the influence of political elite's Model 1 shows that there is no significant relation between the articulation of nationalism by political parties and nationalist sentiments in this model. One objection against this simplified model may be that political articulation could be expected to interact with other factors, for example, with external threat so that both factors strengthen each other: in case of strong external threat we may expect the elite's discourse to show a stronger impact. However, a test of this assumption did not show any significant noteworthy interaction effects between political articulation and any of the other included macro level indicators (not displayed in table).¹⁵

Model 2a test the internal threat by including the proportion of foreign born people within the country. The findings here are that the larger the proportion of foreign born people that are residing within the territory the lower the nationalist sentiment amongst the population. Model 2b displays similar result for the effect of language fractionalization. The difference between a hypothetical country with zero language fractionalization and one with 100 percent fractionalization amounts to 14 units. We argued that the results were not theoretically obvious when it comes to internal threats as they could affect nationalist sentiments in both directions even though the negative relation between language heterogeneity and nationalist sentiments was more expected than between the proportion of foreign born and nationalist sentiments. It seems that nationalist sentiment as an exclusionary principle is much more difficult to sustain in heterogeneous countries regardless of the type of heterogeneity. On an individual level, non-citizens are, as expected, clearly less nationalist than citizens, but as this is taken into account in the model it is not the share proportion of 'others' that explain the negative effect from proportion of immigrants or language fractionalization. Thinking in terms of the proportion of foreign born individuals one may argue that this result can be problematic for two reasons. First, if nationalism is an important part of the solidarity that is needed for a functioning liberal democracy than immigration might cause disintegration - at least until this solidarity can be functionally replaced by a more civic based solidarity uniting people. Second, if this results stems from the fact that people are aversive towards immigrants it could imply that people feel less integrated and less "at home in their own country", which may trigger anti-immigrant attitudes. We do not share these objections as both political theorists and liberal nationalists have come up short in proving that these thick forms of attachment really is fundamental for liberal democracies. Moreover, as long as there is a substantive correlation between nationalist sentiments and anti-immigrant attitudes¹⁶ we cannot see that weaker nationalist sentiments are problematic.

Model 3 indicates, as theoretically expected, that nationalism is higher in countries that have experienced war or independence more recently than in countries that have a longer history of peace. The prevalence of external threat in the collective memory cannot be overlooked. The effect is not exceptionally large as a 100 year difference changes the nationalist sentiments, on average, only approximately six units.

Looking at the explained variance we find that the inclusion of the foreign born population has the largest effect on the unexplained variance compared to the empty model. This variable accounts for more than 35 percent of the unexplained variance, whereas the other country level indicators explain approximately 20 percent. Even though the task is not to minimize the unexplained variance, but to make a first attempt to examine if theoretically acclaimed structural differences do affect nationalist sentiments at all, it is interesting to note that our indicators clearly have significant explanatory power.

7. Conclusion

The analysis showed that there are significant differences between nationalist sentiments across the examined countries. But what, exactly, causes these differences?

Although we focused mainly on characteristics of the countries themselves, we found with regard to the controlling factors of the individual level that the nationalist sentiments seem to interact intensively with other parts of the individual identity. We only tested a very small number of individual characteristics and have done so only to control for an uneven distribution of them across countries. However, the models above show quite clearly that these individual characteristics nevertheless contribute to an explanation of nationalist sentiments. Moreover, it comes as no surprise that those individualistic characteristics that have been shown to contribute to more tolerant attitudes diminish nationalist sentiments as well.

With regard to theories that emphasize macro-structural societal factors we can state from the results above that they still matter significantly. As contexts, these factors influence the degree of national sentiments on an individual level - even in countries that are comparatively stable and secured democratic states. How do the results add up in more detail?

In contrast to what we have expected and to what is suggested by the literature, the above results show that the articulation by the political elites does not significantly affect nationalism. The strength of nationalism in Europeans seems not to rely on what political parties advocate. This does not mean that it is impossible to infuse nationalism amongst people from above as there clearly are examples of this. The United States discourse about the “War against Terrorism” after September, 11 can be read as an attempt of the political elite to unite the country with regard to shared culture and history – in order to gain support for military expenses and the implementation of the PATRIOT ACT (Hutcheson et al., 2004). More modestly, we claim that the political articulation by political parties as we measured it does not seem to matter *unconditionally* within the European states. This suggests that the interest of the political elite in nationalism needs a more complex transformation process to reach and mobilize a broader audience. Only a successful transfer, which by no means is impossible, allows nationalist sentiments to become salient (again) and to radicalize them (like we experienced again most recently in Serbia and Kosovo). Although people in Europe experience nationalist sentiments they seem, at the moment, to ignore efforts of politicians to mobilize them. This may support the presumption by Snyder and Ballentine (1996:12) that democracies offer a “marketplace of ideas” where ideas have to compete against each other: “The better institutionalized the market, the better it scrutinizes arguments and forces ideas to confront each other in common forums, and therefore the better the information the market provides.” Within the quite pacified countries we analyzed here the nationalistic discourse implemented by political elites does not seem to be too successful in the competition about people’s beliefs.

Regarding the finding that nationalist sentiments seem to be more salient if the 'last war is not forgotten yet' is an especially interesting result. It seems that external threats keep nationalist sentiments activated. The “other” is to be found outside the borders of one's own country. This perfectly adds up to the literature advocating that experienced threat from the “other” tend to highlight feelings of similarity and community. However, the politicians' attempt to keep nationalist sentiments alive seems not to be too successful if the “real” threat is not significant anymore.

It is not only the external threat that influences the strength of nationalist sentiments. The internal threat, in the form of different degrees of heterogeneity, was shown to have a negative impact on nationalist sentiments as people have weaker nationalist sentiments in more heterogeneous countries. While the “other” outside the nation-state's border seems to activate

nationalist sentiments the “other” inside seem to lessen it. Moreover, both indicators, the quantity of the foreign born as well as the language fractionalization have a significant influence on nationalist sentiments. In a sloppy way one can assume that the daily experience of heterogeneity dissolves the individual's bond to the "imagined community" of the nation which is not perceived anymore. Even though it may be possible to interpret these results in a less positive way, as hinted above, the arguments in favor of a more negative interpretation is not substantive. The results here contribute to this research by pointing into the direction that language fragmentation as well as the amount of foreign born people within a country makes nationalist sentiments weaker. If those countries are less integrated or more tolerant is a follow up question that still needs to be addressed. Moreover, the influence of internal threat, nationalist sentiments and xenophobia is far from well understood and additional research is needed. In This regard, the results at least point into the direction that national sentiments although closely related are quite different concepts.

We only scratched the surface in trying to empirically come to terms with explaining nationalist sentiments by focusing on contextual factors. Due to restriction in available data we have only used one measure of political articulation. Even though this item is as clear cut as possible it cannot capture the infusion of nationalism from above in a comprehensive way. As for the internal and external threat there are a number of other forms of threat that could be examined. Examples of the latter is horizontal shifts in the political decision making process from the state to supra-national political entities as well as devolutional movements. We also observe economic challenges from an increasingly globalized world as well as vertical shifts in the political decision making process exemplified by new grassroots movements, cross-county allegiances and the increasing power of cooperation that may contribute to both strengthening as well as weakening nationalist sentiments. Last, not least the particular opportunity structure democratic systems provide for feeding in nationalist interests seem to play an important role for the development, uphold and the effects of nationalist sentiments as Newman (2000) suggests. If special interests have a chance to be considered seriously, the extent and degree of nationalist sentiments have a chance to be transformed into more civic forms of affiliation.

Although it gives rise to additional questions this article gives supports to some of the major theoretically claimed, but empirically seldom proved relations, between different contextual circumstances and nationalism in a comparative perspective.

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Diagram 1: Nationalist sentiments by country (0-100).

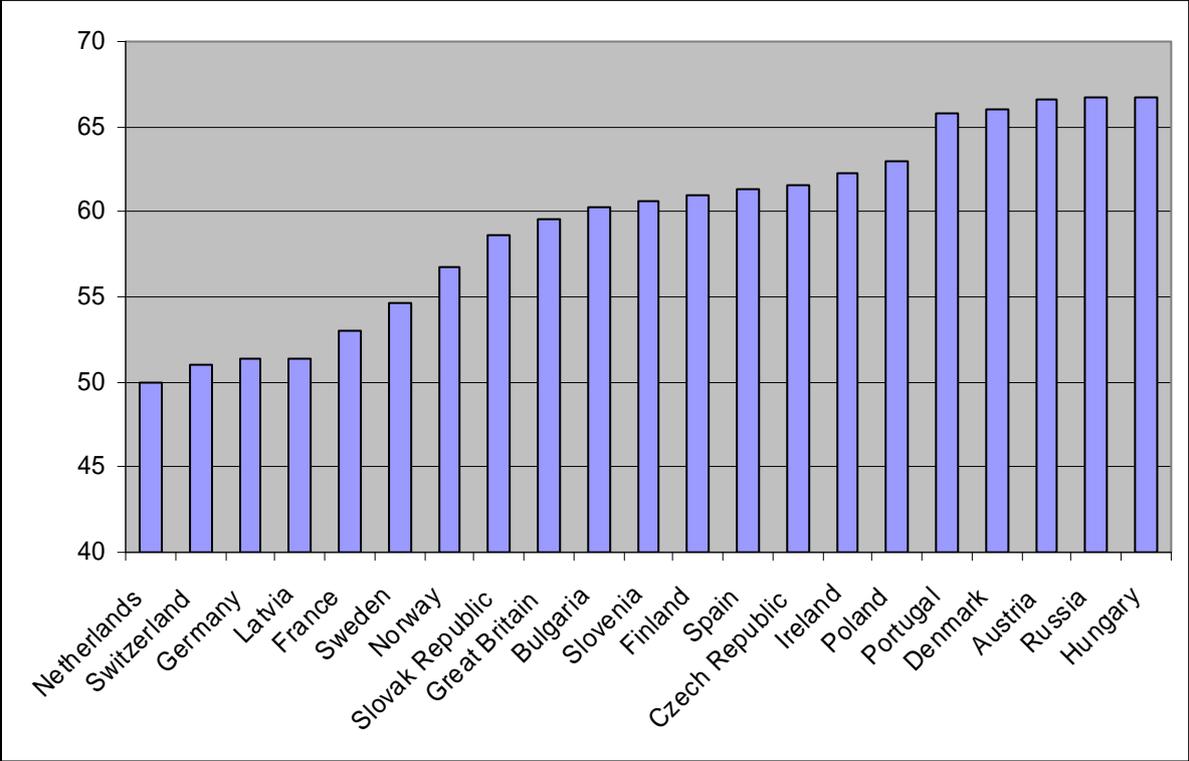


Table 1: Results from the multilevel analysis testing the influence of individual and structural factors on nationalist sentiments¹⁷

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2a	Model 2b	Model 3
<i>Individual indicators</i>					
Women	-1.05**	-1.06**	-1.62**	-1.05**	-1.05**
Age	-0.09*	-0.10*	-0.12**	-0.09*	-0.09**
Age*age	0.0028**	0.0029**	0.0030**	0.0028**	0.0028**
Years of education	-0.81**	-0.80**	-0.86**	-0.81**	-0.81**
Political right	3.61**	3.76**	3.90**	3.60**	3.61**
Non citizens	-6,72**	-6,75**	-6.43**	-6.61**	-6.74**
<i>Country level indicators</i>					
Nationalistic articulation	-----	0.63	-----	-----	----
Foreign born population (%)	-----	-----	-0.77**	----	-----
Language Fractionalization	----	----	----	-14.37*	-----
Last time in war/year of independence (year)	-----	-----	-----	----	0.058*
<i>Variance</i>					
Individual level	286.95	288.02	273.80	286.95	286.95
Country level	30.03	32.73	19.00	24.65	23.78
**< 1% * <5%					

Appendix

Country	Political articulation	Internal threat		Year of last war/independence
		Proportion foreign born	Language fractionalization	
Germany	0,611947	12,5	0,164231	1945
Great Britain	2,077373	8,3	0,053169	1982
Austria	0,967856	12,5	0,152187	1945
Hungary	2,245629	2,9	0,029665	1990
Ireland	1,161967	10,4	0,031242	1948
Netherlands	0,53445	10,1	0,514293	1945
Norway	0,657061	7,3	0,067345	1945
Sweden	0,438676	12	0,196756	1814
Czech Republic	1,751688	4,5	0,323343	1993
Slovenia	1,596349	8,9	0,220109	1991
Poland	2,504866	2,1	0,046813	1990
Bulgaria	1,19884	---	0,303091	1990
Russia	5,509324	---	0,24852	2003
Spain	0,25866	5,3	0,413218	1945
Latvia	3,559465	---	0,579514	1994
Slovak Republic	---	---	0,255123	1993
France	2,269723	10	0,122098	1945
Portugal	0,307848	6,3	0,019781	1945
Denmark	1,241662	6,8	0,104947	1945
Switzerland	3,177739	22,4	0,544095	1847
Finland	1,317632	2,5	0,141208	1945

¹ The reification of nation to a collective is not unproblematic (e.g. Brubaker, 1996). However, the more discursive view of what a nation is, or how it is being institutionalized, leaves us even more unsatisfied than do the more classical understandings of nation as collective.

² For a full discussion of emergent phenomena in this regard in social science see e.g. Sawyer (2001 and 2002).

³ By this, we follow Fine and Sandstorm (1993: 24) stating that ideologies always have "an explicit evaluative and implicit behavioral component". More narrow definitions refer to ideologies as the philosophical, rational and scientific basis of politics (Gouldner 1976) or the aspect of rational self-reflexion (Habermas 1970). In contrast to this, Fine and Sandstorm stress the point that ideologies are linked belief systems that imply affection as well as disposition to act. Such a broader notion of ideology seems to be more adequate to cover all of the sense making and mobilizing aspects of nationalism.

⁴ For an expanded discussion on the difference between nationalism and patriotism see e.g. Billig (1995) and Hjerm (2007).

⁵ Additionally, van Evera (1994) analyses the role nationalism plays in war and violent conflicts, while Hutcheson et al. (2004) demonstrate for the U.S. after September 11th how the external threat activated the nationalist discourse by the political elites.

⁶ The concept of elites, even political elites, is a quite complex one and in most cases it is unclear who is meant by it. Most definitions refer to political elites as power holders able to decide about what is important for society (for a discussion of measurement and comparison problems see Zuckerman (1977: 327/328). Operationalizing political elites by political parties provides a clear definition of who is meant and enables comparisons between countries since all countries employed are parliamentary democratic systems.

⁷ Equally, some of the anti-colonial, third world nationalism promoted e.g. by state founders like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela or Zulfikhar Bhutto, aimed at unifying people over tribal, communal, sectoral or regional identities to form a nation-state (see Hobsbawm and Kertzer 1992).

⁸ See Riggs (2002) for a discussion of what types of democratic organization forms that are most suitable to handle diversity.

⁹ In the same way Gellner (1964) used a cultural based notion of nationalism already strongly emphasizing the importance of a shared language for the development of the nation.

¹⁰ According to Triandafyllidou (1998) challenges can come as well from inside groups attacking the legitimacy of the power holders. For both, inside and outside groups, she argues that the threat only provokes nationalistic sentiments if they are considered as salient and the groups became "significant others".

¹¹ We only count threats to the existence of the nation and not other types of military interventions like participation in UN military interventions or similar.

¹² Sawyer (2002) defines emergent systems on the basis of non-reducibility and downward causation. We follow this by assuming that the higher level entities are sufficiently complex that their developments could not be predicted by properties and laws of a lower level and that they have causal power over lower level entities, in this case individual attitudes and sentiments.

¹³ In the original questionnaire, three more statements were included. One was excluded since it did not measure the same dimension as the others when tested with Cronbach's alpha. The other two were excluded in order to guarantee that all statements are in relation to the respondent's own nation/state and not to the general concept of nation/states; the aim was also to keep a more neutral concept.

¹⁴ The last two questions are not available for Bulgaria so the Bulgarian scores have been calculated for the first three questions.

¹⁵ However, in fact it matters who articulates and who listens: nationalistic articulation from right wing parties tends to increase nationalistic sentiments amongst right wing voters and it decreases if the articulation comes from leftist parties. These observations are not analyzed in depth here.

¹⁶ Nationalist sentiments correlate across all countries .26 to a xenophobia index and .19 with the will to decrease immigration.

¹⁷ To be sure that economic factors are not decisive for the results we tested for both GDP and the Gini coefficient, but nor the economy nor the distribution of resources matters for individual's nationalistic sentiments and therefore those indicators are not considered in the analyses.