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Revitalizing the “civic” and “ethnic” distinction
Perceptions of nationhood across two dimensions, 44 countries and two decades

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Abstract:

This article describes how contemporary publics think about the nation along Kohn’s classic distinction between “civic” and “ethnic” nationalism. The article makes three contributes to the existing literature. Firstly, it introduces a new statistical tool, multi-classification-analysis, to establish and analyse the two-dimensional structure found in this and previous studies. Secondly, it derives at an alternative interpretation with a first dimension distinguishing the level of mobilization of nationalist attitudes and a second dimension distinguishing the relative emphasis given to civic and ethnic elements. Thirdly, it demonstrates how this setup can be used to describe differences within countries, across countries and across time using all three rounds of ISSP data on national identity. The descriptions demonstrate a move toward mobilized ethnic nationalism in Eastern Europe while a stable non-mobilised civic nationalism prevails in many West European countries; despite the rise of new-right wing parties.

Keyword: Nationalism, perceptions of nationhood, Hans Kohn, civic, ethnic, ISSP
Introduction

The distinction between “ethnic” and “civic” perceptions of nationhood has been pivotal for scholarly work on nationalism (Kohn 1961[1944]). Arnason e.g. argues that “In the whole literature on nation and nationalism, it would be hard to find a more seminal work than Hans Kohn’s ‘Idea of Nationalism’” (Arnason 2006: 46). Kohn’s distinction had its roots in Meineke’s (1970[1907]) distinction between “staatsnation” (state nation) and “kulturnation” (culture nation). At the same time, scholars of nationalism have also heavily criticised the dominance of this distinction. It has been argued that the distinction is conceptually unclear, too simple to capture the complex nature of perceptions of nationhood and of little relevance for contemporary attitudes to migration. This article sets out to revitalize the application of this classic distinction by means of a new method to interpret the existing data.

Kohn’s basic argument was that in Western Europe (his examples were France, the UK, The Netherlands and Switzerland) the borders of the state were settled prior to the rise of nationalism, which created a strong focus on the new democratic procedures that could legitimize the existing state. Nationalism therefore contained a narrative about turning oppressed inhabitants into citizens. In a less positive interpretation, Tilly calls it a “state-led nationalism” where “rulers who spoke in a nation’s name successfully demanded that citizens identify themselves with that nation and subordinate other interests to those of the state” (Tilly 1994:133). In contrast, the borders in Eastern Europe were settled after the rise of nationalism, which created a strong focus on the ethnic/cultural dimension of nationhood. Tilly calls it “state-seeking nationalism” where “representative of some population that currently did not have collective control of a state claimed an autonomous political status, or even a separate state, on the ground that the population had a distinct, coherent cultural identity” (Tilly 1994:133). Kohn used the terms “Western” and “Eastern” both to denote the geographic locations of the various ideas of the nation (Kohn drew the line between the area west of the Rhine and the areas east of the Rhine) and to denote two different ideal types of perceptions of nationhood.

The seminal historical work of Kohn has been followed by an important literature about the conceptual and empirical soundness of this distinction and its application on contemporary nation states (Nielsen 1996, Hjerm 2003, Janmaat 2006, Jones, Smith 2001a, Jones, Smith 2001b, Kaufmann 1999, Kuzio 2002a, Reeskens, Hooghe 2010, Shulman 2002, Kymlicka 2000b, e.g. Ceobanu, Escandell 2008). Conceptually one of the key questions has been whether the distinction should be used as a dichotomy, a continuum or a two dimensional space. Empirically one of the key questions has been, which variables actually measure “ethnic” and “civic”. The article contributes to this standing debate. In the first section, the article addresses some of the major conceptual problems with Kohn’s distinction. The second section introduces the data material and previous problems with its interpretation. In the third section multi-classification-analysis (MCA) is introduced as a new and effective tool to establish and interpret a two-dimensional space of perceptions of nationhood. The fourth section provides the interpretation of the established two-dimension space and its four
quadrants. The next sections use this setup to describe difference within four countries (section five), across the latest available data from 44 countries (section six) and across time for 30 countries (section seven). The main finding, a new interpretation of the two dimensional structure, is summarized in the conclusion.

The pitfalls of the ethnic civic distinction

Kohn’s distinction between “civic” and “ethnic” is at the surface simple and convincing but still contains a number of pitfalls. Firstly, it is widely agreed that the use of the term ethnic is problematic. The problem is that ethnic is not easily defined and Kymlicka (2000b) rightly argues that perceptions of nationhood are typically formed around broader cultural markers, i.e. often it is shared norms, values and customs and not common ancestors that is believed to be crucial. And if common ancestors are believed to be crucial, it is typically because it is seen as the best guarantee for maintaining common values and norms. Thus, conceptually it is difficult to keep cultural and ethnic markers apart, which makes Meincke’s old term “kulturnation” more precise. Kohn’s himself actually seems to be well aware of the social construction of ethnic; “Modern nationalities, however, are mixtures of different, and sometimes even very distant, races. ... Few is any nationalities can at present claim anything approaching common descent“ (Kohn 1944:14). The term “civic” is also somewhat problematic. If positively defined as state power legitimized through public participation in democratic procedures, the term gets normative connotations. Thus, Kohn has been accused of distinguishing between a “bad” and “good” kind of nationalism, which could be influenced by his own life story. Kohn was born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire (1891), prisoner of war in Russia after the First World War and ended his life as a college teacher in the free US. Again Meincke’s term “staatsnation” seems more precise and neutral. “Political community” is another possibility.

Secondly, most contemporary scholars find it useful to replace Kohn’s dichotomy with either 1) a continuum from “civic/Western/political” at the one end to “ethnic/Eastern/cultural” at the other or 2) a two dimensional solution. Those in favour of a continuum often cite Anthony Smith for the argument in his seminal 1991 book that “… every nationalism contains civic and ethnic elements in varying degrees and different forms. Sometimes civic and territorial elements predominate; at other times it is the ethnic and vernacular components that are emphasized” (Smith 1991:13). However, most empirical studies, this one included, find a two dimensional structure in perceptions of nationhood. This has led to the argument that empirically the “civic”/“political” and “ethnic”/“cultural” parts of perceptions of nationhood do not seem to be mutual exclusive phenomenon (Jones, Smith 2001a, Reeskens, Hooghe 2010, Jones, Smith 2001b, Janmaat 2006, Kunovich 2009). However, the previous studies are troubled by a weak conceptualisation of what is means to be high/high or low/low on the two dimensions (though see Bonikowski, DiMaggio 2016 on the American case, and Larsen 2016 on the Danish case). The article will derive at an interpretation where the second dimension distinguishes between “civic” at the one end and “ethnic” at the other, i.e. a one-dimensional continuum.
Thirdly, it can naturally be questioned whether inhabitants of a given nation state share a common perception of nationhood or rather have a number of competing stories of nationhood. Especially scholars working on the American case have documented that a number of competing narratives about nationhood are present within the American public (Smith 2003, Bonikowski, DiMaggio 2016). The obvious answer is that Kohn refers to the dominant perception of nationhood. Kohn argues that “The character of no people is fixed once and forever. Every people participates in the entire spiritual world of humanity and its richness; no human trait is missing in any people. But in different peoples different characteristics, abilities and tendencies receive a different emphasis. It is not the possession of definite traits which defines a people, but the tendency to accentuate them” (1944:30). Kohn did have some substantive arguments for expecting some perceptions of nationhood to dominate. He. e.g. argued that “the growth of nationalism is the process of integration of the masses of the people into a common political form” (1944:4). Tilly is a bit more specific; “states did commonly adopt programs of normative indoctrination designed to homogenize there subject populations and to activate there national commitments” (Tilly 1994:138). The national school system that promotes a standardised language and a common understanding of the history of the nation state is the clearest example. This “program of normative indoctrination” sometimes even include nationwide religious schooling. Other important programmes of normative indoctrination are military service, ministries of culture and state financed public mass media institutions. However, even with such institutions in place, one can find important within-country variation in perceptions of nationhood (see section five). Furthermore, perceptions of nationhood are often formed in opposition to each other, i.e. one narrative only makes sense with a counter-narrative present. In Kohn’s own work “civic” helps to define “ethnic” and the other way around. In the two-dimensional framework below, it will be shown how ideal typical ideas in each of the four quadrants help to define each other.

Fourthly, and most profoundly, Kohn provided a historical account connected to the geopolitical realities of the 18th and 19th century that might not be valid in the 20th or 21st century. The nature of the “birth” of a given nation state might create better opportunities for some perceptions of nationhood than for others. However, history seems to have falsified any idea of a deterministic link between dominant perceptions of nationhood around the formation of a given nation state and contemporary perceptions of nationhood. Germany is a point in case. The archetypical “kulturnation” seems in most aspects to have become a “statenation” (see below). Kohn’s other archetypical Eastern nation states also undergo profound changes after the break down of the Soviet Union (e.g. Ceobanu, Escandell 2008, Shulman 2002, Kuzio 2002b). Using the ISSP data material from 1995, including 15 countries, Shulman (2002) concluded that the covered Eastern European countries were much more “civic” than expected. Schulman did not have longitudinal data and did warn about making firm conclusion based on a single cross-cut. But the available empirical evidence led to the argument that the Eastern countries might have overcome their “ethnic” nationalism of the past. Such a development would support the “optimistic” argument that modernization, i.e. economic development and democratization, has a capacity to replace “ethnic” with “civic” nationalism (but see empirical results below). In contrast to the optimism on behalf of the Eastern European countries, it has been feared
that the rise of new-right-wing parties in Western Europe within the last two decades indicate a shift towards more “ethnic” nationhood perceptions. The election of Donald Trump and UK’s decision to leave the European Union has led sweeping statements about the rise of national conservatism on a global scale. While there is a large literature on public attitudes toward migration and migrants, especially in Western Europe, little is known about changes in the more fundamental perceptions of nationhood. Bail’s work on migration experiences and perceptions of nationhood is an exception (Bail 2008). However, Bail did not describe changes over time and his inductive country-classification based on fuzzy-set analyses did not relate to the conceptual discussions about “ethnic” and “civic”. This article is to our knowledge the first to describe (potential) changes in nationhood perception over time using the full ISSP-dataset (see below).

**How to measure dimensions in perceptions of nationhood?**

The majority of cross-national empirical studies of the “ethnic-civic” distinction have used the ISSP-module on national identity (International Social Survey Program, www.issp.org). This is for good reasons as it is the most comprehensive dataset on perceptions of nationhood. The module was fielded in 23 nation states in 1995, 33 in 2003 and 33 in 2013. In each nation state a representative sample of adult (18 years old and above) have been asked a common set of standard survey items. Most studies use the seven ISSP-items where respondents are asked what it means to be truly American, Russian, Dutch etc. The argument is that the criteria used to construct the (imagined) boundary between those inside and outside the nation are pivotal for the underlying perceptions of nationhood. This approach follows what has been labelled the boom in boundary studies within sociology (Wimmer 2008). The specific ISSP-question had the following introduction “Some people say that the following things are important for being truly [nationality]. Others say they are not important. How important do you think each of the following is…” The respondent was then asked about:

1) to have been born in [country].

2) to have [country] citizenship.

3) to have lived in [country] for most of one's life.

4) to be able to speak [country language].

5) to be a [dominant religion].

6) to respect [country nationality] political institutions and laws.
7) to feel [country nationality].

Part of the inconclusiveness of the previous studies is caused by a confusion about which of these items respectively measure “political community / civic / Western” and “cultural community / ethnic / Eastern”. One solution is to choose indicators deductively. Schulman (2002) e.g. choose “born” (1), “citizenship” (2), “lived” (3), “laws” (6) and “feel” (7) to reflect “civic” and “language” (4) and “religion” (5) to reflect “ethnic”. Another approach is to inductively look for dimensions in the responses of citizens. Here previous studies of the 1995 data derives at a two dimensional solution, where “born” (1), “citizenship” (2), “lived” (3) and “religion” (5) form the first dimension and “laws” (6), “feel” (7) and “language” (4) forms the second dimension (Jones, Smith 2001a, Jones, Smith 2001b). Previous studies of the 2003 data derives at a similar solution for the second dimension and a close to similar solution for the first dimension (though “citizenship” is left out of the first dimension and an additional item added in 2003 about ancestry was included) (Reeskens, Hooghe 2010: 589). The interpretation of these dimensions differs. Reeskens and Hooghe use the label “ethnic” (dimension 1) and “civic” (dimension 2), whereas Jones & Smith argue that the dimensions cut across the “civic-ethnic” divide (they especially find it problematic to include “language” (4) in “civic” and “citizenship” (2) in “ethnic”. Thus, in a review Janmart argues that “a number of items... could have been interpreted differently by the respondents, which makes it difficult to assign meaning to underlying dimensions in the data” (Janmaat 2006:58). Furthermore, the interpretation is (perceived to be) troubled by the fact that it has proved difficult to find a relationship between what these studies labelled the “ethnic-dimension” and negative attitudes to migration/migrants and between what these studies labelled the “civic-dimension” and positive attitudes to migration/migrants (Janmaat 2006). It has also proved difficult to link proudness measures (also measured in the ISSP-survey), the boundary measures and xenophobic attitudes more broadly (e.g. Hjerne 2003). All in all this leaves an uncertainty about the interpretation, which e.g. leads Ceobanu & Escandell (2008) to replace the ethnic-civic distinction with four alternative dimensions, Janmaat (2006) to supplement the ISSP data with Eurobarometer data, Bail to apply fuzzy-set techniques (2008) and Wright to test alternative rank order measures to distinguish “ethnic” and “civic” elements in perceptions of nationhood among Americans (2011). The solution suggested by this article is to apply MCA (se next section), which comes with a number of advantages when dimensions are to be interpreted.

The article makes use of the full ISSP dataset on national identity except South Africa in 2013 (due to a difference in response category of the used items) and the sample of Palestinian citizens in Israel (due to their exclusion from citizenship in practise). Thus, the Israeli sample only contains the non-Palestinian population. Furthermore, in all countries the article only uses the answers from respondents where both parents had citizenship in the country. Thus, it is a description of how “the natives” imagine the national community. The ISSP data are not suitable to describe the national perceptions of the “migrants” due to high drop-out rates and self-selection of the most assimilated migrants. ISSP provides data from 44 countries. 15 countries conducted the national identity model
in all three waves, 15 countries conducted two waves and 14 countries conducted one wave. Thus, in all the data include 88 national samples including 104,605 respondents (see online appendix Table A2 for sample sizes and see www.issp.org for more information). The ISSP data is not a random sample of countries around the world. There is an overrepresentation of European countries, which is of importance for the inferences that can be made from the data material. However, the European countries are of special interest as they were the point of departure for Kohn’s historical work and the strand of literature that followed (see Bail 2008 for a good overview of the many previous focused comparisons between a few European countries).

**Multi correspondence analysis**

This article contributes with a better interpretation of the two-dimensional structure that has been found in the previous studies of the ISSP-data. It does so by means of MCA, which is part of the broader methodology labelled geometric data analyses (Clausen 1998, Le Roux, Rouanet 2004, Husson, Lê & Pagès 2017). The article uses the MCA COREM procedure in SPAD (version 7.3). It is a method developed to describe relationships among categorical variables in large tables. Thus, in contrast to traditional factor analysis, MCA has no assumption about the distributions. Each category of variables is treated as a separate data point. The method was most famously applied in Bourdieu’s “The distinction” and the article shares the premise that human thinking often take place in a field or social space where positions are contrasted against each other (Bourdieu 1986, see also Le Roux et al. 2007). The basic point is that thinking about nationhood is done in a context of competing narratives. This is the case both in the historical process of nation state formation and in contemporary public discussions fueled by increased immigration. One of the main advantages of MCA is the ability to visualize these “spaces” in low dimensional maps.

In the first step of MCA, the relevant variables are chosen. The article follow the previous literature and use the seven items introduced above. These so-called active variables are used to establish the relevant “space”. The respondents could answer the questions using the following categories “very important”, “fairly important”, “not very important”, “not important at all” and “can’t choose”. The answers are recoded into “very/fairly important” (marked by a “+” in Figure 1) and “not very/not all important” (marked by – in Figure 1). The share answering “very/fairly important” in each country sample is found in online appendix Table A1. This grouping was done in order to avoid categories with few answers, in our case very few respondents used the category “not important at all”, as MCA spaces are known to be sensitive to outliers (Clausen 1998:23). This leaves us with a table with 128 cells (2 x 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 matrix) that include 14 categories or so-called modalities. Based on so-called row profiles and column profiles, MCA calculates the chi-square distances between the categories. This is the so-called cloud of modalities. In the same way chi-square distances can be established for each individuals. This is the so-called cloud of individuals.
In the second step of MCA, the relevant number of dimensions is chosen. The weighted sums of the chi-square distances are minimized by means of principal component analysis, which as in classic factor analysis produce a number of dimensions with eigenvalues. There are no fixed rules when it comes to choosing the number of dimensions but in line with previous studies and the so-called “elbow criterion” a two-dimensional solution is chosen (Clausen 1998). The eigenvalue of the first dimension is 0.34 (x-axis), explaining 33 percent of the inertia within the data, and the eigenvalue of the second is 0.15 (y-axis), explaining 15 percent of the inertia. Figure 1 shows the derived two-dimensional space (or cloud of modalities). Categories located close to each other indicate that these answers tend to go together.

In the third step of MCA, the dimensions and clustering of categories should be given a substantial interpretation. MCA calculates each variable’s contribution to each dimension, which is useful for the interpretation of the dimensions as in classic factor analysis. “Born” (1) and “lived” (3) deliver the highest contribution (cumulated contribution at 20.3 for each) to the formation of the first dimension. However, “citizenship” (2) (cumulated contribution at 19.1) and “feeling” (7) (cumulated contribution a 13.1) also delivers a clear contribution to establish this dimension, which has been a puzzle in previous studies. Our suggestion is to interpret the first dimension as a matter of more or less mobilization rather than a matter of degree of ethnic nationalism (see further interpretation below). The dimension will be labelled, the “mobilization”ii “Law” (6) delivers by far the highest contribution (45.5) to the formation of the second dimension.iii However, “born” (1) (cumulated contribution 16.8) and “language” (4) (cumulated contribution at 13.4) also contributed to the dimension. Therefore, the article suggests that it is not simply a matter of degree of “civnicness” but rather a dimension that distinguish between the weighting of civic versus ethnic (see below). The second dimension will be “civic-ethnic”.

The MCA-analysis largely replicates what is found with other techniques in previous studies (close to identical to the solution with six multidimensional indicators provided by Kunovich 2009:580) but as discussed above the substantial interpretation of these dimensions have troubled previous studies. MCA comes with the advantage that so-called supplementary variables can easily be added. These variables do not actively shape the constructed space but the position of the categories of the supplementary variables ease the interpretation of the dimensions and the clustering. The added additional variables are importance of family background (item added in 2003), feeling of national belonging, feeling of proudness about the nation, attitudes to the size of migration, attitudes to whether migrants should assimilate and preference for given priority to national programs and films in TV, see online appendix Table A3 for exact wording of the included supplementary variables. Thus, the article advances the field by using these supplementary categories in the substantive interpretation of dimensions and clustering. This is done in the next section.
In a fourth step, the established MCA space is used to describe within-country variation (section five) and describe across-country variation (section six), which also help to underpin the interpretation of the space. Finally, the setup is used to describe across-time-across-country variation (section seven). The method is based on the bold assumption that survey items carry the same meaning across countries and across time. The aim is to provide an overview, which can function as a point of departure for more detailed national studies. The estimated exact position of each country
can be found in the online appendix Table A2. The significant ellipses for six selected countries are depicted in Figure A1 in online appendix (at 0.05 level). An overlap in ellipses indicates that one cannot distinction the country-position from each other. As ISSP provides large national samples, the confidence ellipses of countries are narrow. Thus, in order to reduce complexity, the confidences ellipses have not been included in the shown figures. All the described changes in country-positions are significant. The article cannot give a substantial explanation for the position of each country but will deliver a first descriptive overview.

The interpretation of the two dimensions of perceptions of nationhood

The substantive interpretation of the dimensions and the clustering is crucial but complex. The first dimension is suggested to distinguish between those who in general find these criteria important, located to the right in Figure 1, and those who in general find these criteria less important, located to the left in Figure 1. Though the importance assigned to be born in the country and have lived most of the life in the country (see above) contributed the most to this dimension, it is not simply an “ethnic” dimension. Our interpretation is that it is a matter of more or less nationalism, in any form. It is probably so that mobilization of nationalism is typically fuelled by “ethnic” markers; it is indeed difficult to fuel strong nationalistic attitudes based on ideas of democratic citizenship. The ”verfassungspatriotismus” (constitutional patriotism) suggested by Habermas, and most vividly practices in Americans’ celebration of the constitution, is seldom enough to fuel nationalistic feelings. However, once nationalistic attitudes are mobilized, it is easy to imagine that the mobilized begin to assign importance both to ethnic and civic elements. Therefore it is not so puzzling that those who find it important to have lived most of the life in the country also tend to find it important to have citizenship in order to a truly e.g. American. This is what is indicated by the low distance between these two categories in right side of Figure 1. And the other way around. Among the non-mobilised, it is not so puzzling that those who do not find it important to have lived most of one’s life in the country neither find citizenship very important in order to be e.g. truly French. The second dimension is, as already mentioned, suggested to distinguish “civic” and “ethnic”; or in more neutral terms between the relative weight respectively given to the political or cultural (imagined) community. The “civic” minded, high on the vertical axis, find it unimportant to have been born in the country, to have lived in the country most of the life and belong to the dominant religion but find it highly important to respect the laws. The “ethnic” minded, low on the vertical axis, find it unimportant the respect the law, speak the language and feel national but find it important to belong to the dominant religion and be born in the country. Turning to the supplementary variables and the four established quadrants, one can further elaborate on this interpretation. Figure 2 shows how the categories of the supplementary variables are located in the established space (axes values are changed in order to make the figure more readable).
The lower right quadrant

Those in the lower right quadrant distinguish themselves by finding it important to belong to the dominant religion in the country, to have been born in the country and to have lived most of one’s life in the country in order to be “really” French, American, Turkish etc. This is the mobilized ethnic nationalistic segment. Those answering “very proud” of their national identity tend to be located in the lower right quadrant. Those in the lower right quadrant also tend to answer that migration should be “decreased a lot” and agree in the statement that national television should give preference to national films and programs. Finally, they also find it important to have family background in the country in order to be a real member. This support the interpretation that the lower right quadrant is a national conservative segment. In the established space of individuals, the MCA-analysis locates 34 per cent of the respondents in the dataset in this quadrant. The unification of Germany in 1871 was by Kohn used as the classic example of perceptions of nationhood with a strong focus on a mobilised cultural community within an unsettled political community. For national conservatives, the nation is not an imagined community (in contrast to the point of departure of this article). It is a historical given cultural community on which the political rule rests. Therefore immigration from
cultural distant areas is easily seen as a challenge for upholding a nation. This is the basic national conservative idea that many contemporary new-right-wing parties share (Kitschelt, McGann 1997). What to do with already present immigrations is not easily answered within national conservatism. One solution is full cultural assimilation but the classic answer is segregation (McGarry, O'leary 2013).

*The upper left quadrant*

Those located in the upper left quadrant distinguish themselves by taking more or less the opposite position as the “national conservatives”. They find most of the criteria unimportant; especially the criteria about been born in the country, to have lived most of one’s life in the country and to belong to the dominant religion. Helped by the inclusion of supplementary variable those in the upper left quadrant also tend to answer that they only fell “somewhat” proud of the nation (not “very proud” as those in the lower right quadrant) and feel “close” to the nation (not “very close” as those in the upper left quadrant). They tend to disagree with the statement that national TV stations should give priority to national programs and they find family background to be unimportant for being a real member. Finally, they answer, on average, that immigration should “remain the same” or “increase a little”. This indicate a distancing from the mobilised ethnic nationalism, which Kohn historically associated with French secularism. The French revolution in 1789 was used as the classic example of a nation defined primarily by the democratic nature of the state. Everybody that adhered to the slogan of “liberty, equality and fraternity” was imagined to belong to the new French nation (Brubaker 1992). In relation to the current debate about immigration, especially in Western Europe, the classic republican idea is that migrants should only assimilate to the existing national democratic political community (Tilly would say the state) (McGarry, O'leary 2013). Therefor the upper left quadrant could be “republicanism”. The MCA-analysis locates 24 per cent of all respondents in this quadrant.

*The upper right quadrant*

Those located in the upper-right quadrant distinguish themselves by finding it important that members respect the law, speak the language, and feel national. This indicates a mobilization of nationalist attitudes but with an emphasis on civic aspects. Those in the upper right quadrant tend to answer that they feel “very close” to the country and that migration should “decrease a little”. They also distinguish themselves by answering that “it is better if groups adapt and blend into the larger society”. This segment is not well described by Kohn’s ethnic civic dichotomy exemplified with the French and German nation building process. However, the American nation building process provides a historical exemplification of the mobilization of nationalistic attitudes with a civic dominance. The notion of an American melting pot is according to Kymlicka, a clear example of a nationalistic nation building project with a strong emphasis on assimilation of migrants and natives; with Canada as the neighbouring contrasting, more multicultural, case (2000a). Within national liberal thinking,
migration flows are not seen as problematic as in the thinking of national conservatives but still there is a nation building process that cannot be taken granted. Migrants are not asked to assimilate into an old authentic culture but are asked to be willing to assimilate into the state and nation that are to come (McGarry, O’leary 2013). Thus, national liberalism tends to be forward looking with a strong demand for assimilation. Therefore this segment is labelled “national liberalism”. The MCA-analyse locates 25 per cent of all respondents in this quadrant.

The lower left quadrant

The segment in the lower left quadrant generally finds the criteria unimportant but is at the same time dominated by ethnic nation perceptions. It is the most challenging quadrant to interpret. Kohn’s old distinction provides little help as he seemed unable to imagine a non-mobilized ethnic nationalism. Empirically, those located in the lower left quadrant distinguish themselves by especially finding it unimportant to be able to speak the language, feel national and respect the law. The supplementary variables added in Figure 2 provides some further insight into this segment. Those located here distinguish themselves by being “not proud at all” or “not very proud” of their nationality. Many also answer that they do not feel “close at all” or “not very close” to the nation. They also distinguish themselves by answering that migration should be “increased a lot” and that it is better for a society “if groups maintain their distinct customs and traditions”. This point to a somewhat fundamental distancing from nationalistic attitudes that cannot be found in the French secular tradition. In lack of a better term it will be labelled “de-constructivism”. The question is what could underpin such a segment, which in the empirical analysis is not insignificant. The MCA-analyses locates 18 per cent of all respondents in this quadrant. A part of this de-constructivism could be rooted in socialist thinking, where the bourgeois nation state (including their liberal democracies celebrated by republicans and national liberals) is seen as a tool to control the working classes. In a more contemporary form what Böss’s labels radical multiculturalists (2006) also promote a kind of deconstructivism. The radical multiculturalists reject the basic idea that some people have a special privilege to a certain territory and question the idea of a national cultural and political community. Parekh (2002) e.g. sees liberal democracy as a Western value that oppresses authentic local cultures. This quest for maintenance of local authentic cultures bears a resemblance to the segregation suggested by hard-core national conservatives. However, widespread “deconstructivism” is unlikely to raise from intellectual left-wing theoretical discussions. The most obvious origin of such attitudes are collective memories of violence attached to mobilized nationalism; which tend to be national conservative. As we shall see, Japan exemplify a case with widespread deconstructivism.

The within-country-variation in perceptions of nationhood

The largest pitfall in the application of Kohn’s framework is maybe the tendency to neglect the within-country variation in perceptions of nationhood. Therefore we will provide a brief description of within
country variation before country positions are described. The within variation is shown by the average position of the voters of major parties (four per cent or above in the last general election, based on the sample), see Figure 3. It is embedded in the MCA-logic that positions need to be interpreted in a relational manner. Figure 3 shows the variation in four countries, which below will be shown to be some of the most stable examples of countries dominated by respectively “republicanism”, “national liberalism”, “national conservatism” and “deconstructivism”. For exemplifications are chosen Sweden (2013), the US (2013) and Japan (2013), which throughout three ISSP waves are located in the same quadrant (see below). The Philippines is located in the lower-right quadrant throughout three ISSP waves (see below) but does unfortunately not hold information on political preferences. Neither does the Polish data and the Bulgarian data from 2003. These two latter countries were in two waves located in the lower-right quadrant (see below). Therefor Bulgarian data from 1995, which does include party preference, will be used.
Figure 3. Position of voters of major parties within Sweden (2013), the US (2013), Japan (2013) and Bulgaria (1995) in two dimensional space

Figure 3 demonstrates that variations in perceptions of nationhood can be found in all four countries. The American two-party system does not allow for much variation but still there was a difference in
the average positioning of the Democratic voters (voted for Obama in 2012) and the Republican voters (voted for Romney in 2012). Both voter groups are by comparative standards “civic-minded” but the Republican voters were more mobilized the democrats, i.e. the former tended to find the criteria more important. The location close to the centre indicates that voters of the two parties include a mix of people with various nationhood perceptions (see Bonikowski, DiMaggio 2016 for a more detailed account of the within-country variation in the US). Nevertheless, by international standards there is a stronger emphasis on national liberal perceptions of nationhood in the US than in most other countries (see below). The multiparty system in the three other countries allows for more variation across voters of different political parties.

One average Sweden distinguish herself as the most clear-cut example of a country with a civic mind public that find the criteria rather unimportant in order to be truly Swedish (see below). However, still one finds internal variations. In Sweden in 2013, the voters of the Green party and the Left party are more “republican” than are the voters of the Swedish Christian Democratic party and the Social Democratic party. The electorate of the Swedish democrats, the new right-wing party, is clearly more mobilized than are the electorate of the mainstream Swedish parties. The voters of the new-right party also give more emphasis to ethnic elements, which cause a heated internal political discussion about the rise of national conservatism. However, by international standards the electorate of the Swedish new-right wing party can hardly be classified as national conservative.

Japan is stably located in the lower-left quadrant, which could come as a surprise. Japan is an extremely ethnic homogeneous country with a long intellectual tradition for studying, and even promoting, the authentic Japanese culture, the so-called “nihonjinron” (Burgess 2007, Yoshino 1992, Befu 2001). However, this historical experience with national conservatism combined with a somewhat unsettled relationship with democracy provides an explanation for the position in the lower left quadrant. Symbolically the deconstructivism is reflected in the absence of a national army and the absence the national hymn at sport event. vi Again, this average position comes with internal variation. In Japan in 2013, the tension was between the voters of the communist party, which are highly sceptical about any notion of Japanese culture and the more “republican” voters of the Democratic party and the more “national conservative” voters of the Restoration party and New Komito.

Finally, Bulgaria is an example of within country variation in a country located in the lower right national conservative quadrant. In Bulgaria in 1995, the tension was between the more national conservative voters of the Bulgarian communist party and the more republican voters of the Movement for rights and Freedoms. This point to the well-known fact that many of the Eastern European communist parties turned national conservative after the breakdown of the Soviet Union. Thus, left-wing ideologies are by no means a guarantee for the promotion of anti-national rhetoric.

Whether one should study this within-country-variation or the between country variation depends on research interest. However, the large strength of the ISSP-data is the ability to study the between country variation, which was at the centre of Kohn’s historical analyses. Therefore the next
section describes the average position of all the publics included in the ISSP-survey. If there is any merit in Kohn’s comparative approach, one should as a minimum expect across-country variation.

The cross-country-variation in perceptions of nationhood

The ISSP data clearly indicate across-country-variation. Figure 4 shows the (average) position of the country in the latest available sample (see online appendix Figure A1 for examples of included confidence ellipses). In the upper left “republican” quadrant one largely finds the Northern European countries. As expected from Kohn’s historical account, France is found in the republican quadrant. France, however, is by 2013 not the country with the most “republican” public. The two countries with the most clear-cut republican publics are Sweden (2013) and the Netherlands (2003). In accordance with Kohn’s historical division, one also finds Denmark (2013), Switzerland (2013) and Belgium (2013) in the upper left republican quadrant. In conflict with Kohn’s division, Germany (2013), Estonia (2013) and Slovenia (2013) and Taiwan (2013) are found in this quadrant. Norway (2013), Finland (2013) and Iceland (2013) are “Western” countries but their borders were settled late in history. Thus, one could also perceive these cases as deviant if Kohn’s historical distinction is applied in a deterministic manner.

In accordance with Kohn’s historical division, one finds most of the none-Western countries in the national conservative quadrant. East European countries such as Poland (2003), Slovakia (2013), Bulgaria (2003), Hungary (2013), Czech republic (2013), Lithuania (2013) together with neighbouring Russia (2013) and Georgia (2013) are located here. So is Austria (2003) and Italy (1995). In accordance with Kohn, one also finds countries with late settled state borders such as the Philippines (2013), Venezuela (2003), India (2013), Turkey (2013), Mexico (2013), Uruguay (2003), Chile (2003), South Korea (2013) and South Africa (2003) in the lower right national conservative quadrant. The latter, South Africa, is positioned as the country with the most clear-cut national conservative public by 2003. The only country in the quadrant in conflict with Kohn’s historical division is New Zealand (2003) but she is positioned close to the centre, which indicate a fairly equal distribution of citizens with “republican”, “national liberal”, “national conservative” and “deconstructivists” nationhood perceptions.
Figure 4. Latest available position of country in two dimensional space. N=44
Finally, one finds the positions of countries that cannot easily be handled by Kohn’s dichotomy. In the upper right national liberal quadrant, one finds the settler societies such as Australia (2003), the US (2013) and Canada (2003) together with Portugal (2013) and Latvia (2013). UK (2013) is located at the border between the national conservative and national liberal quadrant. Again, the location near the centre indicates that most of these countries have large groups of citizens located in the other segments. Nevertheless, it fits the historical account that the mobilised civic nationalism is particular widespread in settler societies. The lower left quadrant can neither be handled by Kohn’s dichotomy. In Ireland (2013), Israel (2013), Croatia (2013), Spain (2013) and Japan (2013) there is an overrepresentation of citizens that find the criteria unimportant but still are dominated by ethnic nationhood perceptions. Our interpretation is that is primarily has to do with collective memories of violence attached to mobilised nationalism, this would explain indication of low-mobilization, and a somewhat unsettled democratic political system, this would explain the absence of civic elements.

The main conclusion of these empirical findings is not that Kohn’s historical account for the birth of nations has a predictive power. In the next section it will be demonstrated that countries are by no means locked into a fixed position. The main contributions are that Kohn’s distinction still makes analytical sense and that the applied MCA-method enables a meaningful classification that allows cross-country comparisons.

**The changes in country position over the last two decades**

It is not the aim of this article to explain these time trends in any detail but a simply description of changes can provide an important base for judging the soundness of the assumed historical stability sometimes assigned to Kohn’s distinction. The country-trajectories from 1995 to 2013 are shown in Figure 5 and those from either 1995 to 2003 or from 2003 to 2013 are shown in Figure 6.
Figure 5. Country trajectories from 1995 to 2013. N= 15 (end point marked full)

TW-Taiwan, HR-Croatia, CZ-Czech Republic, DK-Denmark, EE-Estonia, FI-Finland, FR-France, GE-Georgia, DE-Germany, HU-Hungary, IS-Iceland, IN-India, IE-Ireland, IL-Israel, JP-Japan, KR-Korea (South), LV-Latvia, LT-Lithuania, MX-Mexico, BE13-Belgium, NO-Norway, PH-Philippines, PT-Portugal, RU-Russia, SK-Slovak Republic, SI-Slovenia, ES-Spain, SE-Sweden, CH-Switzerland, TR-Turkey, GB-Great Britain, US-United States, I- Italy, AU-Australia, PL-Poland, BG-Bulgaria, CA-Canada, NL-Netherlands, NZ-New Zealand, AT-Austria, CL-Chile, VE-Venezuela, ZA-South Africa, UY-Uruguay.
Of the 13 countries located in the “republican quadrant” in Figure 4, the ISSP data enables us to trace ten countries across time. Three of the four countries can be traced from 1995 to 2013 (see Figure 5). Sweden, Norway and Germany were placed in the quadrant in all three waves. Norway and German with very similar positions, whereas Sweden became even more republican. Slovenia was located directly at the border between the upper left and right quadrant in 1995 and moves towards republicanism. Five of the six countries in the upper left republican quadrant in Figure 4, that can be traced over two waves (see Figure 6), were also earlier positioned in this quadrant. That goes for the Netherlands, Denmark, France, Switzerland and Finland. Thus, despite the rise of new-right wing parties in all of these countries and worries about immigration, it has not fundamentally altered perceptions of nationhood; at least until 2013. Finally, Taiwan (2013) entered the upper left republican quadrant from a position at the border of the lower left de-constructivist quadrant (2003).

Of the 21 countries located in the lower right national conservative quadrant in Figure 4, the ISSP data enables us to trace 11 cases back in time. Of the six countries that can be traced from 1995 to 2013 (see Figure 5) only the Philippines were found in the quadrant in 1995. Russia derived from a position in the lower left quadrant in 1995. The same did Hungary. The Czech and Slovak republics arrived from a position in the upper left quadrant in 1995; the latter with a position in the lower-left quadrant in 2003. Thus, the data indicate a movement (back) towards national conservatism rather than a fixed of overrepresentation of national conservatives in Eastern Europe. The UK experienced a move towards national liberalism but is positioned close to the middle. For the five countries that can be traced over two waves (see Figure 6), Bulgaria and Poland had in both samples an overrepresentation of national conservatives; Poland with a move towards even more national conservatism. New Zealand arrived from a republican position in 1995 and Austria arrived from a national liberal position in 1995. Thus, these two countries experienced a move towards national conservatism but the position close to the middle should be kept in mind. Finally, South Korea arrived from a position at the lower left quadrant in 2003.
Figure 6. Country trajectories from 1995 to 2003 and between 2003 to 2013. N=15 (end point marked full)

See Figure 6 for country labels.
The five countries located in the national liberal quadrant in Figure 4 can all be traced back in time. Only the US was found in this quadrant in all three samples. Thus, the US is the most clear-cut example of having a public with an overrepresentation of national liberals. Latvia was in the quadrant in 1995 but not in 2003. Australia (2003) and Canada (1995) arrived from a position in the upper left republican quadrant in 1995. Finally, Portugal (2013) arrived from a position in the national conservative quadrant (2003). Especially, the changes in perceptions of nationhood among Canadians are remarkable. In 1995, Canada had an overrepresentation of republicans, which positioned the country together with the Netherlands and Sweden; the three countries that have experimented the most with so-called “multicultural policies” (Koopmans 2005). In 1995, only 52 per cent of Canadians found it important to have been born in the country, only 55 per cent found it important to have lived most of one’s life in Canada and only 26 found it important to be Christian. In 2003, the shares had increased to 82 per cent, 83 per cent and 54 per cent (see Appendix Table A1). This Canadian retreat from “republicanism” is also described in national studies. Wong & Guo e.g. describe how the Canadian multicultural “civic” policies of the 1990s were replaced with more “integrative” policies of the 2000s (2015:4).

Of the five countries located in the lower right deconstructivist quadrant in Figure 4, four can be traced back in time. Japan and Ireland are in all three waves (see Figure 5) located in this quadrant, which point to the possibility of having a stable situation where the public tend to find the seven criteria unimportant and at the same time lean towards ethnic nationhood perceptions. Spain (2013) is located closer to the middle in all three waves. Israel can be traced from 2003 to 2013 (see Figure 6), which indication a shift towards a lower level of mobilization of nationalism.

**Conclusion**

The article has revitalized one of the most enduring distinctions within studies of nationalism. Despite all the pitfalls of Kohn’s distinction between “ethnic” and “civic” nationalism, the article argues that it points to some very basic insights, which continue to be of relevance for contemporary analyses of perceptions of nationhood. When narratives about nationhood are constructed, the rulers and the ruled continue to rely on identities that can be connected to the political community around the governing of the state and/or identities that can be connected to cultural communities around shared language, religion, food, arts etc. The puzzling fact is that survey researchers have had such a hard time distinguishing between ethnic and civic dimensions in nationhood perceptions. The article contributed with a new statistical tool, the MCA-analysis, which led to an alternative interpretation of the two dimensions found in this and previous studies using the ISSP-data on national identity. In line with the MCA philosophy, the interpretation of dimensions was established in an interplay between active and supplementary variables and contextual knowledge. The article suggests that the first dimension distinguishes between the degree of mobilization of nationalist attitudes while the
second dimension distinguishes between the orientation towards political (civic) or cultural (ethnic) community. Based on this interpretation the articles established four positions or call it ideal types, which in Figure 7 respectively is summarized as 1) low intensity civic nationalism or republicanism, exemplified by Sweden, 2) high intensity civic nationalism or national liberalism, exemplified by USA, 3) high intensity ethnic nationalism or national conservatism, exemplified by Bulgaria and finally 4) low intensity ethnic nationalism or de-constructivism, exemplified by Japan.

Figure 7. Summary interpretation of two dimensions

Despite the aim of revitalizing Kohn’s work, the article has not suggested a deterministic link between the birth of nation states and contemporary perceptions of nationhood. There were indeed examples of countries such as Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway and Denmark with a stable non-mobilised civic nationalism. There were indeed also examples, such as Philippines, Poland and Bulgaria, with a stable mobilised ethnic nationalism. However, one of the main empirical findings was that national perceptions undergo changes. The unique feature of the ISSP-data is that the same questions have been asked across time and across countries. Many of the most remarkable changes occurred in Eastern European countries, which after the breakdown of the Soviet Union struggle to develop new and stable perceptions of nationhood. Judged by the 2013 data, there are clear indications of an “ethnic” backlash in countries such as Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. However, changes can also occur in more stable nation states such as Canada, which moved from the upper-left to the
upper left quadrant. The article does not systematically explain changes over time, which is left to future studies. However, it is clear from the simple descriptive results that it will be hard to find any overreaching logic in the time trends. There is no indication of a global move toward national conservatism, as is sometimes stated in public debated, or a global move toward republicanism, as is e.g. implied in Joopke’s study of citizenship policies in Western countries (2005). On the contrary, contemporary nation states seems to be in a constant internal dispute about the content of the imagined national community, which within the last two decades have pushed countries in different directions.
End notes

i “Can’t choose” are treated as missing (list wise deleted).

ii The cumulated contributions for the other variables to the first dimensions are “religion”, 10.7, “language”, 10.5 and “law”, 6.0.

iii The cumulated contributions for the other variables to the second dimensions are “born”, 16.8, “language”, 13.4, “fell”, 10.4, “religion”, 8.6, “lived”, 5.1 and “citizenship”, 0.2.

iv A single of the previous studies did empirically study the assumption of homogeneity of dimensions (Reeskens, Hooghe 2010). Using confirmatory factor analysis it found a presence of somewhat deviant cases (religion e.g. having larger impact on the “ethnic” dimension in Israel). In contrast to confirmatory factor analysis, the MCA analysis does not have tests for homogeneity in dimensions. However, the two dimensional solution for each sample has been inspected and they largely conform to the “average solution” found in Figure 1.

v Furthermore, SPAD has the limitation that confidence ellipses can only be calculated on dataset with below 40.000 cases. Therefore Figure A1 in online appendix is based on the space produced by the six included countries and not the full sample.

vi Another interpretation would be that the ISSP items simply do not capture the special Japanese national conservatism. The argument could be that it is so strong that it takes more than being born in the country to be really Japanese. However, even on item about ancestors, added in 2003, the Japanese seem moderate. In 2013, 63 per cent found in important to have Japanese ancestors, which is around the average of 64 per cent in the whole sample.

vi As Israel is known for extreme national conservatism this interpretation will probably be challenged. One reason for Israel being located more the left is that many assign little importance to being born in the country, at least compared to countries located in the national conservative quadrant. 67 per cent and 57 per cent of Israeli found it important respectively in 2013 and 2003 (see Appendix Table A1). The obvious explanation is that Israel has a very special history, where bringing bearer of the Jewish culture around the world back to Israel is part of the national conservative narrative of nationhood. However, the changed
position of Israel indicated by the ISSP-data is caused by lower importance given to all seven criteria (see Appendix Table A1). This indicates a real shift away from national conservatism, which call for more detailed national studies.
References


Online appendix:
Table A1: Share answering that the criteria is “very important” or “fairly important for being a real national (active variables in MCA-analyses)

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<td>Value 2</td>
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<td>South Africa</td>
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Table A3: List of supplementary variables in MCA analyses

Some people say that the following things are important for being truly [NATIONALITY]1. Others say they are not important. How important do you think each of the following is... to have [COUNTRY NATIONALITY] ancestry
1. Very important.
2. Fairly important.
3. Not very important.
4. Not important at all.

How proud are you of being [COUNTRY NATIONALITY]? 
1. Very proud.
2. Somewhat proud.
3. Not very proud.
4. Not proud at all.

How close do you feel to you country 
1. Very close.
2. Close.
3. Not very close.
4. Not close at all.

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Television should give preference to [COUNTRY] films and programmes
1. Agree strongly.
2. Agree.
3. Neither agree nor disagree.
4. Disagree.
5. Disagree strongly.

Some people say that it is better for a country if different racial and ethnic groups maintain their distinct customs and traditions. Others say that it is better if these groups adapt and blend into the larger society. Which of these views comes closer to your own?
1. It is better for society if groups maintain their distinct customs and traditions.
2. It is better if groups adapt and blend into the larger society.

Do you think the number of immigrants to [COUNTRY] nowadays should be...
1. Increased a lot.
2. Increased a little.
3. Remain the same.
4. Reduced a little.
5. Reduced a lot.
## Table A4: Coordinates, contributions and squared cosines of active categories

### AXES 1 TO 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDEN - LABEL</th>
<th>REL. WT. DISTO</th>
<th>COORDINATES</th>
<th>CONTRIBUTIONS</th>
<th>SQUARED COSINES</th>
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<tr>
<td>114 . cc9</td>
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<tr>
<td>m1 = Born in country</td>
<td>10.38</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.42 0.25</td>
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<td>m2 = Born in country</td>
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<td>2.90</td>
<td>-1.18 -0.72</td>
<td>0.18 0.21 -0.28</td>
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<td>m1 = Lived most life</td>
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<td>m1 = Respect law</td>
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<td>m1 = Feel national</td>
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</table>

**CUMULATED CONTRIBUTION**

- 114 . cc9: 20.3 16.8 1.9 3.6
- 115 . cc10: 19.1 0.2 12.3 2.4 18.8
- 116 . cc11: 20.3 5.1 1.2 0.4 0.7
- 117 . cc12: 10.5 13.4 0.8 72.2 0.0
- 118 . cc13: 10.7 8.6 65.9 0.7 3.3
- 119 . cc14: 6.0 45.5 14.1 11.4 16.1
- 120 . cc15: 13.1 10.4 4.4 11.1 57.5
Figure A1. Country trajectories from 1995 to 2013 for six selected countries. Including confidence ellipses at 0.05 level.