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# Introduction: Nation-state, Schools and Civil Enculturation

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*Gerd Baumann*

Nation-states, which love to dress up as stable, organic, and self-perpetuating entities, have often had to re-invent themselves. To reproduce national identifications, civil structures, and civic credibility requires continuous labours of adjustment, re-definition, and reformulation of what ‘the nation’ is thought to stand for. One of the crucial challenges to face the northwestern European nation-states over the past twenty years has been the task of ‘integrating ethnic minorities’ – a rather questionable phrase, but one which has become an instantly recognizable shorthand throughout the European Union. If integration means to incorporate an originally autonomous entity into the fabric of another pre-existing and pre-defined whole (Baumann 1987), then the loaded word is indeed the apt one, for most European nation-states have certainly addressed the challenge as fully-fledged national characters, if not self-perpetuating structures. In each country, politicians and national media, civil societies and, as we shall see, even state schools, agree that there is such a thing as a Dutch way of facing the multicultural challenge as opposed to a British one, a German path to democratic pluralism as opposed to a French one. Yet for schools, still the primary site for integrating social and cultural differences into a pre-defined national whole, the matter is far more complex and interesting. They operate on the cutting edge between, on the one hand, reproducing recognizably nation-specific structures and routines and, on the other, recognizing and engaging with cultural differences and socio-cultural inequalities on a day-to-day basis.

The nation-state school has thus taken on two missions at once: it is expected to perpetuate a sense of nation-state continuity but also to integrate non-nationals and first-generation citizens into the democratic project of equalizing chances and access for all. To explore the resulting dynamics between

nation-state agenda, state schooling, and the negotiation of ethnic or cultural difference, we have researched and compared four schools in four European countries and have conceptualised our findings in relation to processes we have summarised as civil enculturation. The term can be specified by adding nothing more than the adjective 'civil' to the well-established definition: (civil) enculturation is 'the process by which an individual acquires the mental representations (beliefs, knowledge, and so forth) and patterns of behaviour required to function as a member of a [civil] culture, [...largely] taking place as part of the process of...education' (Rhum 1997). To sketch the theoretical background of the project and our eventual analytic trajectory, it will be easiest to start with the long-established relationship between the nation-state and 'its' school.

### **A Commonsense Nexus: Nation-state and School**

State-supervised schooling has long been recognized as the quintessential mechanism by which nation-states turn children into citizens or individuals into political persons, and this has fundamental effects upon the person thus enculturated into a new civil and/or civic identity. Without state schools, there would be no nations as we know them in northwestern Europe, no national *conscience collective*, and no effective means of inculcating and rehearsing the conventions of the dominant political culture: 'certainly, most governments since the end of the nineteenth century have seen it as one of their prime duties to establish, fund and increasingly direct a mass system of public education – compulsory, standardized, hierarchical, academy-supervised and diploma-conferring – in order to create [both] an efficient labour force and [a] loyal, homogeneous citizenry' (Smith 1995: 91).

We need not rehearse the historical constellations which led to this pivotal role of the nation-state school in northwestern Europe. Here, universal schooling under nation-state supervision responded to new elite formations in the great cities, expanded outward from there to advance the process of nation-building in the rural areas, and eventually managed to define a national identity on a standardized canon of purportedly shared cultural and moral norms. The process has been shown with exemplary quality by Weber who traced the transformation of *Peasants into Frenchmen* (1976) and stressed the role of the school in advancing a unified French nation during the Third Republic. In the other countries, the same process started at around the same time, from the 1870s on, but took rather longer to develop unitary structures. In the Netherlands, the delay was due to long-inscribed Catholic-Protestant enmities; in Germany, with the exception of Prussia, it was held up by the slow pace of political centralization; in England it had to compete with class-based resistances to a unitary education system. The different histories, however, came to converge on

systems and practices that readily allow for comparison across nation-state boundaries.

Yet taking for granted the intimate relationship between nation-state identities and nation-state schooling, we face the problem of turning common-sense into empirical precision: what exactly is it that schools pass on to the citizens-to-be, or indeed to those of their pupils who are not citizens or nationals in the legal sense? Our answer is, in short: civil culture.

### *A Missing Link: Civil Culture*

There are three good reasons to specify more precisely what schools pass on to their pupils in the process of nation-state education. First, northwestern European schools are no longer transmitting simplistic messages of patriotism or nationalism: their civic and political messages have become far more subtle and sophisticated, concerned with seemingly universal values of democratic participation, supra-national inclusiveness, and the peaceful resolution of all conflicts. Imagine analysing the nation-state dimension in school education by comparing French lessons about Napoleon with British lessons about Wellington. Although we shall return to the example, we clearly need a more subtle approach to, and ethnography of, the national specificity of political enculturation.

Second, northwestern European nation-states have become multi-ethnic and multi-national, and so have their schools, especially in the major cities. This means that schools can no longer focus their political mission on nationality in a strictly legal or vaguely ethnic sense. Unable any longer to teach their pupils to 'feel German' or 'be proud to be Dutch', they have had to develop a variety of ways to translate nation-state exclusivities into nationally specific, but productively inclusivist 'styles' (Anderson 1991) of participation and identification.

The third reason to specify the missing link follows straight from the previous two: if nation-state schooling can no longer be nationalist in the simplistic sense, then the nation-state dimension in state education will tend toward a more subtle understanding of its specificity: it is no longer about content within and boundaries to the outside, but about ways and means, methods and discourses of legitimate political participation and civic or civil identification. These methods and discourses are no longer about 'who you are', for everyone has the right, at least in normative parlance, to cultural or ethnic difference, but about 'how one does', for in that respect there must be some similarity of 'style' regardless of the variety of 'roots'. This, by the way, is why in the last chapter of this book we speak of 'discursive assimilation' rather than 'new identities'.

Taking these three considerations together, we needed to specify anew what it is that nation-state schools put across to their present-day pupils. The specification had to be empirically useful, but had also to be sufficiently abstract to

allow for comparison across nation-state boundaries, take account of pupils who are not nationals, and respond to the increasing emphasis on the 'how' rather than 'who' of political participation and identification. The simplest choice fell on the term 'civil culture'.

### *Why Civil Culture?*

Civil culture combines three elements: competence in relation to the workings of a country's civil society; competence with regard to its nationally specific conventions of civic culture and norms of civility; and some familiarity, conformist or hopefully critical, with its dominant national self-representation, what Taylor calls its 'social imaginary' (Castoriadis 1987; Taylor 2002). In proposing the term 'civil culture' to span these three dimensions, we want to stress two things. First, when we speak of competence we do not mean compliance with something. The competence we speak of is a capacity to conform to or reject, play along with or undermine dominant representations, all in a socially shareable way. Civil culture is not about conformity or resistance; it is about the competence of arguing for or against an option within a (nationally specific) framework of discursive conventions. One can say Yes or No to any one proposition, only the style of arguing and the phrasing of agreement, difference or any compromise proposal must be recognizable as a legitimate option by one's companions. Take an example taken straight from school practice: when Muslim pupils at the British school wanted *halal* school meals, they argued as Muslim Britons who should have their community rights in a nation-state formed of different communities; when Muslim pupils at the Dutch school wanted the same for their annual celebratory dinner, they argued, not for a separate provision for Muslim pupils, but for *halal* meat to be offered to all alike: not a separate concession as had already been made to vegetarian pupils, but a unifying consensus carried by all. Sectional solutions are encouraged less in this civil culture than a consensus which, however vague, has repercussions across communities and aims at masking, rather than exposing, cultural cleavages. Let me emphasize, using this example, that discursive competence is not the same as conformity, self-denial, cultural assimilation or a denial of one's heritage. It is about the methods of arguing one's point rather than the content of any one argument.

The second reason for choosing 'civil culture' as our central analytic term is its independence from criteria of citizenship in the sense of nationality. The term has not arisen from any theorizing ambition spun out for its own sake; rather, it arose from the simple fact that many pupils in western Europe are not citizens in the sense of nationals. The proportions vary from country to country, as do the increasingly frequent reforms of the laws governing nationality, naturalization, and dual nationality. What was required, therefore, especially in

a comparative study that spans four different nation-states, was an analytic term which specifies those aspects of citizenship which apply to all school pupils, whether nationals in any one of the multitudinous legal definitions or not. No less importantly, it was the setting of the school that demanded a composite term to describe the astonishing coherence of all three dimensions put across to the pupils as one package. The three elements are intertwined at school, and this intertwining is functional, if not crucial. Any pupil must have the right to question a particular national imaginary; must be free to relativise a given civic culture and flaunt its behavioural conventions; and must be motivated to take a reforming interest in its civil society. This, perhaps, is the whole point of a democratic education: the pupil gets a tied-and-tagged package of civil culture, but is yet expected to untie it carefully and examine it piece by piece.

Civil culture, in summary, is comprised of all three elements: civil society, civic culture, and dominant national imaginary; these can be observed to operate regardless of the national or civic status of its performers. Messages of civil culture are put across by teachers and schoolbooks, formal curricula and informal disciplines or conventions, and they are received or rejected, absorbed or critiqued by pupils in their daily lives at school. It is, as we shall detail further on, this focus on daily lives that has dictated the methodology of the researchers: empirical observation in schools, close-to-the-data interviews with pupils and teachers, mutual visits in each other's schools, and a painstaking precision to distinguish what is contingent within any one school from what is characteristic for the dominant civil culture that it puts across to its pupils.

No school in this book is typical of any other school in that country, this much is obvious. There are patterns and indeed consistencies of designing, putting across, and receiving or else rejecting civil-cultural messages, which could not be shifted from Paris to London or Rotterdam to Berlin without the reader accusing us of implausibility. However, the plausibility stands to reason: long-standing nation-states have had a long time to calibrate their dominant civil cultures as they are reproduced in schools. The institutions have been in place for at least a century, at least eight generations of school pupils, and this has allowed for a high degree of systematisation: nation-state bureaucracies and local education authorities, teacher-training colleges and schoolbook publishers, educational and institutional reformers have had ample time to get used to each other, and their multi-stranded compromises with one another have taken on an increasingly routine consistency. This makes it plausible, and often empirically compelling, to see the contours of French civil culture reflected in Paris and their Dutch equivalents exemplified in Rotterdam. The best test case for this nation-state responsiveness may be seen in a much shorter time-frame. If nation-states are indeed redefined periodically, as was said above, then schools should show this, too. German civil culture took leave of some of its previous certainties from the 1950s and turned to a veritable veneration of 'the individual conscience'; British civil culture turned from celebrating the hub of a global empire to

projecting a great multi-ethnic nation from the 1960s; Dutch civil culture replaced religious pillarisation (*verzuiling*) with a neo-moralizing stress on culture-transcending conflict denial. All these new certainties of the dominant civil culture can be traced step by step in the data collected within each of the four schools. A good example of this internal consistency of each civil culture may be seen in Chapter 2: 'Representing the Nation in History Textbooks.' All schools have some, and in three of the four countries very considerable, freedom in choosing their history textbooks. This makes it all the more telling that the history textbooks chosen by the four schools we studied provided compelling examples for the specificity of each nation-state's normative civil culture.

Are the schools, then, representative after all? No, we insist, unless anyone can specify what makes data gathered representative of data unknown. But are they characteristic, typifying, exemplary, unmistakable with, and unexchangeable for each other? The answer is yes: if we can specify the analytical approach under which this is so. Since this approach is one of civil culture, let us review its elements one by one.

#### Element One: Civil Society

In the words of Michael Walzer, civil society comprises 'the space of uncoerced human association and also the set of relational networks – formed for the sake of family, faith, interest and ideology – that fill [...the public] space [of uncoerced association]' (Walzer 1992: 89). These networks include labour unions, churches, political parties, social movements, co-operatives, and, as Walzer puts it with a superb ironic smile at definitional rigour, all kinds of 'societies for promoting this and that' (ibid.: 90). The essence of all these institutions, however they may be bounded in any one case or analysis, lies in their multi-centred contribution toward a democratic style of (self-)governance: 'A democratic civil society is one controlled by its members, not through a single process of self-determination, but through a large number of different and uncoordinated processes' (ibid.: 105). Yet schools, unlike Departments of Political Philosophy, are institutions impatient with un-coordinated processes. They have but ten years or so to imbue any one cohort of children with the idea of the nation-state, and thus they often turn to rather more normative and disciplining notions of how civil society and civil exchanges should be structured and conventionalised. This furthers an empirical, rather than a theoretical, approach.

Furthermore, the notion of civil society is impartial as to citizenship or nationality. Non-nationals, too, take part in the institutions of civil society, be they trade unions or cultural associations, mosques or sports clubs, print or other media, pressure groups or indeed 'societies for promoting this and that'. An understanding of civil society and how it works in any one nation-state is a crucial ingredient in defining its civil culture and in assessing and comparing the civil enculturation of school pupils.

## Element Two: Civic Culture and Civility

In combining these two conceptions, we aim to relate the rather abstract remoteness of the former with the more quotidian and experiential reality of the latter. The term 'civic culture' started off as a label created by American political scientists delivering academic ammunition for their Cold War leaders (Almond and Verba 1960). Why was Soviet Communism never as faithful, committed and service-minded to its citizenries as the media and market democracies offered to 'the people' by the elites of the United States and other Western elites? The answer is largely because the people in non-democratic societies missed their historic chances of developing an equally 'democratic' civic culture, due to bad luck or other factors. Some of what has been published under the name 'civic culture' seems rather simplistic now: dated by variations of political correctness; whereas other contributions have better stood the test of time (Almond and Verba 1980).

Nonetheless, what one can take from this is something quite basic and empirically plausible: there are historically particular, and sometimes even peculiar, conventions in each nation-state about how a citizen should interact with the powers that dominate the public sphere, be they institutions of the state itself, judicial institutions or the rule of law, the conjunction of governmental and corporate powers, or just civil servants running bureaucracies. To make a complaint in Germany, so Mohammed Qurban explained to some of us in Amsterdam, means you ask for the supervisor: that is polite because it absolves the front-line staff from their responsibilities. However, when complaining in Holland, you must never do that: you must ask the lowest-down for their help, because appealing higher up would make the lower ones feel devalued: it is politeness to those at the bottom that will get you your right from the top. Qurban, born in Surinam, learnt during ten years of Dutch schooling how to argue his point by respecting Dutch civic-cultural expectations, namely to avoid any semblance of conflict; and he even knows how the Dutch conventions differ from German ones. His analysis, short and to the point, stands here as a perfect example of civil enculturation and discursive assimilation. More than that, it connects the idea of civic culture – concerned with citizens within state bureaucracy – with the idea of civility. It matters little, after all, whether the officials in charge work for the City of Rotterdam, a Dutch airline or a housing association: the skills of courteous behaviour and civility required are much the same within, but noticeably different across, nation-state boundaries.

True, on the face of it, civility may sound like a general competence quite untouched by political or nation-state specificities. The first degree of civility to be mastered is indeed how to treat others depending on the situation: it entails certain rules of the social game, more or less internalised, and a certain horizon of social and self-disciplines expected of others and applied to oneself. Yet just as the codes of politeness differ from culture to culture, so the codes of civility dif-

fer from one civil culture to another. Civility recognized as such in any one nation-state describes the preferred method of interaction in the public sphere, and often the only one accepted as competent. Even the degree of internalisation differs from one civil culture to another, as we found in the schools and will detail later on. The civility inculcated at the Parisian school is imperious, but lucid enough to be accessible to all. However, in the school in Berlin it is so low-key and implicit that even teachers hardly try to put it across in class, saying 'if you haven't learnt that at home, there is not much point in telling you now'.

Without learning the dominant style of civility, it is virtually impossible to engage in effective civic participation. Civility, in short, is the positively sanctioned methodology of behaving as, or at least like, a citizen. As Madec and Murard (1995) point out, it can work, and even fail, quite independently of citizenship as a legal status. It is the way to get your way, but also a methodology of distinguishing when, how, and how far you can expect to get it. In effect, the patterns of behaviour that are recognized as civility reinforce the consistency, as well as the inclusiveness or exclusiveness, of any civil culture. The canons of civility, as well as their degrees of transmissibility and transparency, have much to tell us about the chances of civil equality for all.

To summarise, the idea of civic culture is useful as a shorthand to refer to the dominant set of expectations, attitudes and methods deemed to structure the interaction of citizens with a particular state, its civil service and other bureaucracies. At the same time, it suffers from three limitations: its theoretical interest is far more limited than that of civil society; its adjective 'civic' has the inappropriate shortcoming of singling out citizens in the narrow sense of nationals, precisely what the word 'civil' can overcome so easily; and its relevance to young people is rather remote. When combined with the notion of civility, however, it makes for a worthwhile and operational element: a way of dealing with established power structures that obey, but in turn expect, certain nation-state specific conventions of how to argue about what with whom. Only this will allow one to make one's point effectively, get one's rights where they are due, and sometimes even push the boundaries of what is acceptable.

### Element Three: National Imaginary

Both civil society and civic culture unfold their dynamics in the presence of a state, notably a nation-state. The most effective means to turn a cold and coercive state into a nation-state, warm with solidarity and willed by its citizens, lies in the creation of a national imaginary which imbues its organizational controls with a sense of identification with the community. Such national imaginaries work partly on the basis of symbolic imagery – the tangible trappings and tropes of the nation's claim to statehood – and partly on the basis of more abstract repertoires of the nation's self-sameness and historic calling: 'our nation as a beacon of...'. In the following chapters, we therefore use 'national imaginary' as the most general term, 'national imagery' as the more specific. We thus follow



Anderson (1991) who has provided the most influential analysis of the 'imagined' character of national consciousness, but also acknowledge Billig (1995) who has emphasized the pervasiveness of its symbols by drawing attention to their workaday 'banality'. Anderson (1991) stressed that nation-state elites appealed to an 'image of communion', as if to create a seductively 'deep horizontal comradeship'. True, 'in the minds of each [citizen] lives the image of their communion with all others', but Anderson wisely added two great contradictions: this happens regardless of whether they know each other (or even want to) and regardless of the actual inequalities and patterns of exploitation that divide them (ibid.: 6–7). Such a national imaginary draws upon the widest variety of symbolic resources that are no longer recognizable as such: nation-state mythologies are played out and propagated in censuses and registers, in national maps and museums, national heritages and historiographies, national holidays and commemorations, national pastimes and ancestors, national standardizations of language and civility, not to speak of assumptions about public as opposed to private, political as opposed to religious, conscience as opposed to public duty, sociality as opposed to personhood. These are not necessarily the result of grand designs by which scheming elites manipulate the populace: national imaginaries can work all the better when they use the trappings of banality: nationally propagated 'patterns of social life become habitual or routine...: thoughts, reactions and symbols are turned into routine habits and, thus, they become *enhabited*' (Billig 1995: 42). It is this seemingly banal and mundane habituation that renders national imaginaries so hard to resist in daily practice and can even make it hard to diagnose them for an ethnographic analysis. Schoolbooks and curricula are an evident example. Since the national imaginary needs to be inculcated in a credible and subtle form at school, there is little point, as I have said, in looking at French schoolbooks which glorify Napoleon and comparing them to British ones which glorify Nelson or Wellington. Nationalism may be mundane, but civil enculturation into a nation-state imaginary is anything but banal: it cannot rely on a selective manipulation of content or even on descriptive bias, but has to place the same European or postcolonial 'historical facts' into different discursive frameworks. For example, at the French school, Napoleon may be presented as a torch-bearer leading humanity's liberating march toward self-civilization; Wellington at the British school may appear as an exemplar of the recurrent necessity to contain contending forces within a pragmatically calibrated balance of powers – much as British multiculturalism does. It is clear, from this second gloss on a banal example, that we are not dealing with rival schools of contending nationalisms when we analyse different modes of civil enculturation. Rather, we deal with observable differences between nation-state schools at a level of discursive practices, assumptions, and competences. We thus try to specify the habituations or 'enhabitations' that may seem banal on the surface (Billig 1995), but in doing so we find deeply elaborated and highly sophisticated processes of civil enculturation.

The necessity to disengage civil-cultural participation from civic or national status could not be more obvious from the literature: witness the indiscriminate use of the vague term: 'active citizenship' in political rhetoric and the proliferation of new adjectives in the social science literature of the past few years: from 'differentiated citizenship' (Young 1989) and 'postnational citizenship' (Soysal 1994) to 'neo-republican' (van Gunsteren 1994), 'cultural' (Turner 1994), and 'multicultural citizenship' (Kymlicka 1995) to 'transnational citizenship' (Bauböck 1995). All of these go back to Thomas Marshall's classic idea of 'social citizenship' (1965), and all of them question the link between citizenship and nationality. Yet this lexical jungle provides only limited help. Positively, it recognizes citizenship as a competence, rather than a status; negatively, it neglects to trace empirically what this competence consists in and how and where it is acquired. This is where we see our place with regard to normative debates.

To sum up our approach so far, we engage with a reality where nation-state schools are no longer schools of nationalism, yet we continue to recognize that state-directed schooling is always related to identity-shaping purposes within the framework of that nation-state. It matters little whether the state's own rhetoric uses words like multicultural, multi-ethnic or pluralist to describe its population or civil society or whether it refuses to designate its territory as a 'country of immigration': the realities of cultural plurality are comparable across European schools, certainly in the metropolitan centres. How then do nation-state schools manage to maintain and update their old links with the national imaginary despite there being so many school pupils who are not nationals or else not ethnically recognizable as such? Among the schools we studied, the proportion of such pupils was roughly between a third and a half, so questions about inculcating civil cultures had to be separated from questions of nationality or ethno-national identification. (This was another reason why we chose the inclusive adjective 'civil', rather than the restrictive 'civic' to specify the processes of socio-political enculturation as they happen at school.) This pluri-national and multi-ethnic composition of schools, however, gives a particular urgency to an older and more general problem of late-modern civil cultures, first analysed by Schiffauer (1993) in relation to the nation-states of northwestern Europe.

### *The Paradox of Universalism and Exclusiveness*

It stands to reason that the propagation at school of an outspokenly nationalist national imaginary would spell an exclusion of non-nationals, followed by marginalisation or confrontation. While the established national imaginaries were reasonably successful in projecting cohesive nation-state 'communities' from the 1870s to the 1950s, they have now reached their sell-by dates with European integration and the settlement of more migrants from outside the European

Union. The time-honoured imaginaries did not drop out of school practice altogether, as we shall show in our analysis of schoolbooks and curricular guidelines; yet, they were transformed into more sophisticated, less offensive, and at least superficially inclusivist forms.

The paradox is not resolved as easily when it comes to the particularities of a nation-state's structuring of civil society. As Bryant (1997) found out in his portrayals of the four civil societies dealt with here, any comparison at the empirical level, country by country, shows up far more contrasts than areas of similarity or overlap. Yet right across these historic differences, most of the civil societies of northwestern Europe, and certainly the four treated here, have been faced with a paradoxical relationship between universalising aspirations and exclusivist compensatory practices. In analysing this paradox, Schiffauer (1993) takes as his starting point the oft-stated claim of these 'liberal' civil societies, namely, that they aim at a public sphere where all individuals can and ought to enter into free exchange with all others under the authority and control of nation-states. The central institutions of exchange can be paraphrased with Schiffauer as the market, the forum, and the stage. The market stands for the free and rational exchange of goods; the forum for all the institutions of public politics which co-shape the *intérêt général* in a free exchange of convictions so as to agree on the *bien commun* (Montesquieu); the stage may stand for those sites of public culture which enable symbolic exchanges and endorse classifications and values. Each of these institutions can also be found in other societies; what is specific about them in the northwestern European developments is their early and near-total integration.

Such an integrated civil society based on free exchange is, in some ways, a historical aberration in that it requires an exceptional form of socialization in order to enable free exchange. It has to go against the ingrained and intuitive idea that seemingly primordial relationships such as family, friendship, patronage, and perhaps ethnicity must be granted primary importance. This older model of selective exchange relations implies a concentric construction of the social world: one feels oneself most indebted and loyal to one's dearest or nearest; the larger and more inclusive the social unit becomes, the smaller the primary commitment to axiomatic loyalty. In the new and inclusivist model, however, the collective good came to be deemed more important than individual advantage and the general public interest more compelling than the particularist. In the event of conflict, the collective, that is, formally the rule of free exchange, materially the *bien commun*, had to take priority over the individual and its primary or seemingly primordial collective identifications.

This new ideal, of free and equal exchange among all, places extraordinary demands upon the individual and his or her socialization, not least when it comes to the distribution of social positions. The individual must now make decisions regardless of the personalities concerned and allot positions to the best, not to his or her nearest or dearest. Deviating from this new ideal will now

be branded as nepotism, favouritism, or 'jobs for the boys'. One may call this model the most impudent imposition of modernity. True, it can work with unprecedented efficiency and success; but it also requires an extremely counter-intuitive process of socialization – and thus a highly precarious one.

A key problem in this form of socialization is the drawing of boundaries, for it is boundaries that must determine how far this imposition of modernity is required to go. In terms of the market, they mark the range of all persons to whom one must apply the rule: 'may the best one win'; in terms of the forum, they mark the state to which one is subordinated and the networks whose decisions on the *bien commun* one is expected to accept; in terms of the stage, they mark which exchanges of classifications and values must be free and which are ruled out as illegitimate or taboo. It is thus no coincidence that the history of northwestern Europe revolves so blatantly around the drawing of boundaries and the legitimation of exclusions. Every opening of the boundaries to universal exchange signifies a further demotion of seemingly primordial loyalties, threatens an increase in competition, and thus a further reduction of opportunities based on familial, ethnic, or other seemingly essential bonds. The problematics of boundary maintenance describe the crucial dilemma of these civil societies: their own internal logic and conception aim at universalisation; yet in practice any expansion spells a higher degree of imposition and a wider field of competition, not to speak of ever more anonymous authorities to watch over the process. In fact, the history of these civil societies could be written as a history of boundary manipulations. Not uncommonly, the integration of new groups led to the exclusion of older ones, or integration on one level was counteracted by exclusion on another: it is no coincidence perhaps that the legal emancipation of Jewish Germans in nineteenth century Germany was simultaneously countered by new forms of economic and cultural exclusion.

This new model of civil society, Schiffauer (1993) concludes, is an inherent contradiction. On the one hand, it emphasises free exchange and an equal participation of all, and it thus tends to admit many previous outsiders into its midst. On the other hand, it makes bold to deny the intuitive salience of people's perceived primordial bonds, be they family, ethnic or religious loyalties, and it will thus provoke its participants into finding ever-new ways of partly excluding those whom it partly included.

How, one must ask then, can a nation-state school resolve this paradox between the universalizing exchange of all with all and the subjective desirability of exclusivist boundaries? The answer we give is not so different from the answer that schoolbooks and curricula have given to the exclusivist troubles attached to national imaginaries: as we indicated above, these were transformed from ethno-national achievements into more sophisticated and more inclusivist norms of social behaviour.

Civil enculturation in its currently observable forms strives hard at managing the seemingly paradoxical: to inculcate pupils with a civil culture that is

nationally specific, yet normatively open to all regardless of their backgrounds, identifications or possible loyalties. The squaring of the circle relies on shifting the emphasis from an ethno-national content to civil-cultural methods. At the risk of oversimplifying, one can say that it favours process over results, and one could paraphrase it loosely by the re-assuring statement: 'It is not what we did and do here that is great, but how we did it and do it; and it is not who you are that matters, but how you do whatever you do'. One may see in this a hopeful model of democracy as a shared method for articulating differences, rather than a conformist ideology in which everyone has to endorse the same contents or opinions. Civil enculturation, as we observed it, often aimed at elevating civil culture from content to method. Perhaps this is why it seems to work in all four countries with such unpredicted success: all of us had expected to find data of a far more dialectical twistedness, social divisiveness, and civil-cultural plurality.

As against these expectations, all four schools that we studied tended, on the whole, to do an astonishingly consistent job of propagating and inculcating the country's dominant civil culture. True, their curricula and schoolbooks were seldom up-to-date enough to be truly post-nationalist, but that was not the schools' fault: their options were limited by the nation-state authorities, bureaucracies, and schoolbook publishers. By the same token, their 'majority pupils' (sometimes in a minority) were not always mature enough to take pleasure in cultural diversity – but then, why should young people be expected to? Nonetheless, the staff in all four schools did their very best to facilitate exchange and dialogue between and among an enormous variety of, sometimes vociferously self-conscious, national, ethnic or religious identifications. Most university teachers, dare I say it, would flee from their lecture theatres if faced with similar challenges. However, the school teachers at each nation-state school faced these challenges in very different ways.

This observation adds a fourth and last reason to distinguish different civil cultures in the four different schools, each co-shaped by its respective nation-state and that imagined community's self-understanding, unwritten assumptions, and educational emphases. Compare, if you will, the different teachers' reactions to the more blatant breaches of civil-cultural conventions that happened in a lively classroom. In Berlin, as we will see, a 'Turkish' pupil called Ferhat protests against a well-meant excuse for 'Gypsies behaving like thieves' contained in a worksheet distributed by the teacher; but his protest is ruled out as an undisciplined interference in the classroom agenda: it militates against the individualist, but teacher-centred, conscience-building project so crucial to the self-reforming civil culture of the German school. In Rotterdam, by contrast, even fundamental disagreements about what is to be learnt from schoolbook examples are submitted by the teacher to an exhaustive (and, unmistakably Dutch, inconclusive) process of chewing the cud until any and all normative conflicts have been rendered invisible and muted by exhaustion. In Paris, you will notice that such discussions were absent, but it was not for lack of trying to

witness them: when a French schoolbook explains migration to France as a 'demographic pressure' of too many foreign adults having too many children, there is, within French classroom routines and the rationalizing methodology of French civil culture, no come-back against such a scientific objectification. At the London school, all comparable opportunities to critique schoolbook wisdoms were relegated to private homework: 'think about this tonight', the instruction went, implying that the matter should now be left to each pupil's private sphere.

### *Evidencing Civil Enculturation in Daily School Practice*

Civil enculturation, to sum up, combines three strands of learning and teaching participation in a nation-state's civil culture: first, an understanding vis-à-vis civil society as a space of, relatively more or less, uncoerced association in the presence of a centralized state claiming to remain a nation-state; second, an understanding of the locally dominant civic culture, that is, the methods to structure the interactions of citizens and residents with the organs of the state, as well as the expected and sanctioned criteria of exercising 'proper' civility; and third, an understanding of, or at least familiarity with, the particular nation-state's national imaginary. These three strands of inculcation are made possible by a recent shift, whether conscious or intuitive, pedagogical or political, from proving national superiority to privileging nationally-specific methods. How, then, can the analytic idea of civil enculturation be operationalised in an empirical study of daily realities at school? We have relied on two answers to this. The first was empirical, the second methodological.

The empirical answer was simple: use the most detailed methods to observe and clarify what is happening in the classroom. We have aimed at a 'thick description' of what we could observe (Geertz 1993a), rather than at bloodless abstractions of what a theorist might have expected. Just like all other studies of civil society, a concrete understanding of civil enculturation 'requires that careful attention be paid to a range of informal interpersonal practices overlooked by other disciplines' (Hann and Dunn 1996: 3). Sometimes we have even taken the liberty of analysing the same case in more than one way. Thus, when the pupil Ferhat insists, in blatant opposition to his well-meaning German classroom material, that Gypsies may not require an excuse for thieving at all, and when the pupil Selim is imagined to 'turn into a squirrel', we have re-analysed these gems of classroom observation in different chapters and according to each chapter's different analytic focus. We have thus done our best to apply classic anthropological methods to penetrate below the rhetorical surfaces and ideal-type programmatic enshrined in the school's workaday pedagogical practice. The second, the methodological answer made use of these anthropological empirical

approaches because of their special aptitude in dealing with collective representations.

Schools convey representations, rather than unmediated imprints, of the crucial constellations: nation versus state, citizens versus newcomers, civil equality versus cultural difference, and even the attribution of individual merit or failure are refracted through a succession of interpretive lenses. Schools, to adapt two established oppositions, provide normative 'models for', not descriptive 'models of', nation-state realities as they are, and they draw up 'charters for', not 'blueprints of' what they re-represent (Geertz 1993b; Malinowski 1922, 1948). It is part of their job, quite literally, to re-juvenate the civil societies that they serve and to turn private children into civic-minded adults (Madec and Murard 1995). Yet the civil societies, civic cultures, and national imaginaries that they serve up to their pupils are not unrefracted projections. Schools do not mirror realities, whatever these may be, but they re-represent and re-convey representations.

Sometimes, the difference is so obvious as to strike one as surreal: Dutch history books deal with a region which has never been able to feed its population (hence the wax-wrapped Dutch cheeses traded for ship-building timber from Scandinavia to import wheat from the Baltic). Yet the history of the Netherlands as taught in various Dutch school books is the history of a Happy Island amidst the storms of past and present-day world power conflicts (see Chapter 2). Germany, the chaotic junction in the middle of Europe, is portrayed in German history books as an ethno-linguistic organism, almost a monadic cell, that germinated at its own peril. Such absurd representations, detailed in the body of this book, are only mentioned here to clarify the methodological point: schools deal in representations, and no representation should be confused with national or nation-state realities, however powerful the school as an institution may appear to its pupils or even to the reader. For a study of representations, however, the methods of anthropological research, that is, intense immersion and context-seeking analysis, are the methods of choice. They can document representations without sharing them, trace their efficacy without endorsing them, and contextualise cultural constellations without reifying them.

Admittedly, it is easy, faced with the remarkable internal consistency of different civil cultures, to fall into the trap of reification: 'French civil culture decrees' and 'German civil culture expects' – these formulas are all too easy, especially if one tries to avoid jargon and circumlocutions while recognizing the general in the specific. Yet even if there are echos of essentialisation here and there, we would submit at least one mitigating factor. The usual drift of reification is to define the 'minority cultures', or in this case 'minority pupils', vis-à-vis 'the majority pupils' or 'the dominant culture'. To de-reify or de-essentialise 'minorities', however, can sometimes only be done at the expense of reifying the semblance of uniformity which they face: a powerful, self-positing, and often self-defining imaginary of nation-states and their civic cultures. If schoolbooks

express 'British' as opposed to 'other' values and if teachers speak of 'proper Germans' as opposed to 'mixed ones', then certain reifications are part and parcel of the empirical data. Moreover, the powers of reification are, after all, powers: differentially distributed and used for very particular ends. As against this, we have shifted the burden of concretization away from the habitually-reified 'minority pupils' and dealt the false trump card back to those who played it first to label 'others'.

We have focused our observations of ethnic and cultural difference on what we call 'Turkish youth'. The shorthand term is a misnomer since most of these young people are neither born in Turkey nor even, or only, Turkish nationals. Yet the commonsense term seemed to us preferable to boring the reader with jargon ('youth of (part-) Turkish descent', not to speak of 'pupils tracing their ancestry to [present-day] Turkey'). 'Turkish youth' is what the pupils call themselves in a vast variety of situations, meaning different things at different times; we saw no reasonable alternative. Why Turkish pupils though? Some reasons are easy to see: Turkish migration to Europe has a special interest not only numerically and economically in the four countries, but also raises crucial questions of civil rights and what politicians and pundits are pleased to call 'integration'. One may further think of Turkey's liminal position between a self-declared 'West' and its orientalist 'East' and its more than ambivalent reception even by the proponents of a 'United Europe'. Speaking in terms of methodology rather than politics, a further factor is that Turkey has never been colonized. The historically special bond and the distancing that is at work between, say, Jamaicans and 'native' Britons, Surinamese and 'native' Dutch, or North Africans and 'native' French cannot be replicated in any other country in Europe. If one wants comparison, and a project such as this depends on it, it should not be over-determined by a specifically post-colonial set of bonds or aversions. With pupils who trace their descent to parents or grandparents born in Turkey, this is possible, feasible, and appropriate.

There are differences, of course, even within this category. Mainland Turks, Cypriot Turks, and Turkish Kurds are obvious distinctions, and we shall refer to them whenever the data suggest that they are relevant. The topic of this analysis, however, is not 'Turkish youth' as such but, as the title says: 'nation-state, schools, and ethnic difference.' We therefore report the comments and arguments of 'native' pupils almost as much as those of 'foreign' ones. We also leave intact the discussions where pupils from Turkey are seconded or contradicted by other Muslim pupils from Somalia or Mauritius, just as we report 'native' pupils seeking the support of fellow pupils born in Bosnia or the Caribbean. How could one do otherwise when working in 'mixed schools' where different cultural identifications run across each other according to changing contexts? So far as there is a focus on 'non-native' pupils, it is for an obvious reason: if civil enculturation is the crucial mechanism of the post-nationalist nation-state school, then we need to focus on the non- or yet-to-be-nationals, the future citizens.



## **Acknowledgements and Anonymity**

To gather, write up, compare and re-write our rich empirical evidence, we needed not only close-focus methods within each school, but also a large-focus lens so as not to lose our way in myopic details. To obtain this bigger picture, the Volkswagen Foundation enabled all researchers to visit each other's schools and then critique each other's accounts, swap responsibility for different chapters, and finally put their names to what they thought best and wanted to stand for as authors. This would have been impossible without the Volkswagen Foundation consistently thinking along with us, prepared to respond to changing needs and priorities, and giving us maximum liberty to adjust the internal division of labour as the project took empirical shape. We are at a loss for words with which to express our appreciation of so much flexibility (budget-neutral, we hasten to add) and ethnographic patience, but want in particular to thank Dr Hiltgund Jehle for her commitment and contribution.

The result, needless to say, is not one homogenised account, written as it were by some Olympian intelligence presiding over 4 x 1200 pupils and 4 x 100 staff across four different countries. As Sabine Mannitz pointed out, a German researcher at a German school may be rather more critical of the school treatment of the national imaginary than a German-born researcher placed at a French school; the Dutch researcher in Rotterdam may be less critical about Dutch civil-cultural conventions than our Turkish-educated researcher was towards the British school's agenda. There is no gainsaying such possible subjectivities of judgement, and we have done what we could to let each researcher experience the other schools and counteract another's description or over-acceptance of 'the normal course of events'.

This has led us to accept, and indeed embrace, some deliberate imbalances in the presentation of the data. 'The German model...', so a deeply perceptive reader of the pre-publication manuscript observed, 'ranks lowest in terms of the authors' sympathy.' Was this, we asked ourselves, because of, or despite, the fact that four of the eight participants in the project were born as German citizens and two as Turkish citizens? We cannot know, but have resolved, precisely for that reason, to maintain the slight but noticeable imbalance between more detail on the school in Germany and a little less detail on the other three. If it is true that the German case study shows the greatest difficulties of civil enculturation, then it also deserves slightly more space and detail so that we can see just why and how. One chapter (7) indeed singles out the comparison between Berlin and Paris to highlight the point on 'Regimes of Discipline and Civil Conduct' for these two schools, without labouring it for the other two.

The greatest pleasure in this brief introduction is to thank the schools' pupils and staff for co-operating with our research. Pupils, on the whole, were eager to talk to us and warmly tolerant of our sitting in on classes, talking to them afterwards, probing and asking questions. The staff of the schools, more remarkably

perhaps, were co-operative beyond the demands of any courtesy. They talked to us, corrected us, and even shared their misgivings and doubts. We would love to acknowledge them by name; but the conventions of ethnographic anonymity do not allow for this. All schools have been given fictional names, all teachers and pupils have taken on *noms de plume*, and all local areas have been described without being named. To us, this was an almost melancholy duty, for there are plenty of pupils and staff whom we would rather thank in person and acknowledge by name. But the rules of propriety are as strict in publishing research as they are in civil culture.