CIVIC IDENTITY IN AUSTRALIA

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A typology of macro-social identities is suggested based on the strength of social attachments (strong vs. weak) and the nature of the objects-referents of such attachments (society vs. nation). It yields three types of identity: civic, ethno-national, and denizen. This typology is then operationalized using national survey data (1995 ISSP). The analysis reveals two modal forms of identity in Australia (the denizen identity appears to be very rare). The largest proportion (38%) of Australians embrace civic identity, and this identity is most widespread among 'baby boomers', tertiary educated, and the secular. Ethno-nationalists form a sizable minority (30%), and they are predominantly older, less educated and religious people. The key issue dividing the adherents to civic and ethno-national identity is immigration and its socioeconomic consequences. The proportion of ethno-nationalists is likely to shrink in the process of generational replacement, educational revolution and progressive secularization.

Citizenship and identity have become hot issues in contemporary social sciences. This undoubtedly reflects the enhanced status of cultural and actionalist sociology coming with a sense of increased 'causal efficacy of sentiment, belief and emotion in social life' (Alexander et al. 1993:12), as well as conceptual fashion reflecting what Stewart Hall described as 'a veritable discursive explosion' (Hall 1997:1). It is also a symptom of the enhanced political salience of issues related to immigration, 'ethno-nationalism' and, generally, political mobilizations of the welfare-nationalistic and populist type. These mobilizations, especially in multi-ethnic settler societies, increase the fears of ethnic/racial conflicts. They have

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been fanned in Australia by a strong 'populist-nationalistic' One Nation movement. The sudden and rapid mobilization of One Nation raises the question of the nature and strength of social bonds and identities in contemporary Australia. How strong are these social bonds? What are the dominant types of social identity they engender? What are the key attidudinal correlates of the major types of social identity?

Before we address these questions, some qualifications are necessary. First, in pursuing our analysis we may violate some popular semantic conventions by giving somewhat specific meanings to the terms 'nation' and 'national identity'. We propose a terminological convention whereby 'nation' and 'society' refer to quite differently circumscribed 'imagined communities'. Moreover, the term 'ethno-national identity' is contrasted here with 'civic identity' (as well as 'denizen identity'), and it is reserved for a specific type of identity in which the object-referent of social attachment is a culturally defined people. However, we are also aware of alternative usage of the terms.[1] Second, we exaggerate the contrast between ethno-national and civic identities by conceptualizing them as a dichotomy, although they may not always function in this dichotomous fashion, and by ignoring those cases where both ethno-national and civic identifications are declared. Third, we are interested primarily macro- social identities, their social distribution, and their attitudinal correlates. We recognize that such macro-social identifications and ties are neither exclusive nor universal. Australians identify themselves with a broad range of micro- mezo- and macro-collectivities: families, occupational groups, gender categories, denominational groupings, status blocs, social strata and classes, regional segments etc., and they evoke these diverse and multiple identies in a situationally variable fashion (e.g. Emmison and Western 1991). Moreover, it has also been argued that some of the macro- identities and ties, including the national identities, have been weakening and 'fracturing' thus making their identification and assessment difficult and/or problematic (e.g. Bradley 1996).

The final qualification concerns the distinctiveness of our inquiry. In analyzing collective identities in contemporary Australia using survey data we follow at least three recent research projects that follow a similar line of analysis and use similar survey-based materials (Phillips 1996, Jones 1997, Jones 1998).[2] However, we differ from these studies by using theoretically derived typology, distinguishing more than one type of 'national identity', and identifying a broader range of social correlates.

The Languages of Social Attachements and Identifications

Social identities reflect patterns of social bonds and attachments. While there is agreement among social scientists that social identity is a universal characteristic (or at least that the absence/weakness of collective attachments is symptomatic of a pathology), there are interesting differences as to what social attachments are seen as the most important. Conservatives tend to privilege – and lament the decline of – those bonds, attachments and solidarities that link us to the *family, community* and *nation* (national community). They tend to define the bonds, as well as the referent collectivities, in socio-cultural terms. Attachments, bonds and solidarities to communities and nations are seen as extensions of familial bonds: as 'natural', organic, growing out of common history, experience and traditions. They are anchored in, and form the foundations of, the common moral beliefs (hence the importance of religion). Their severing or decline – weakening of familialism, religiosity, community spirit and patriotism – are seen as endangering social and moral order.

This imagery *cum* vocabulary, historically linked with the European Romantic tradition, has strong affinity with the concept of (ethno-) nationalism, which sees nations – understood as principal macro-collectivities sharing common culture and tradition – as most basic, natural and primordial social entities and privileged referents of macro-social identifications. This is reflected, as some authors claim, in the very etymology of the term. 'Nation' comes from the Latin *natio (nascere)*, meaning 'to be born'. This highlights the nativist overtones and understandings of national membership and identity. To be a part of a nation, according to ethno-nationalist ideology, one has to share 'blood and territory' – a criterion reflected in the traditional legislation which specified national membership either in terms of ius sanguinis (by blood, that is, birth) or ius soli (by living in a certain territory and adopting a certain lifestyle). Ethno-national ideologies, identities and solidarities were historically strengthened by states, especially during military conflicts, and surrounded by elaborate symbols and myths (e.g. Giddens 1991, Anderson 1983). Therefore ethno-national identities tend to be exclusive and intolerant of other macro-social contenders, including cross- or supra-national identities. Ethno nationalism often becomes an intellectual tool of dividing us from them, friends from foes.

By contrast, liberally-minded people are ambivalent about national identity, and they tend to reject ethno-nationalism. They see the macro-social collectivity of attachment as a *society* which is a large scale voluntary (civic)

association. Thus conceived society – an 'imagined community ' that is seen as open and inclusive – is the main and preferred object of social attachment and solidarity. This is reflected by and engendered in the institution of citizenship, strong *civic identity*, and robust civic engagement. Citizenship is seen by liberals as the central institution of modern society, and civic engagement is treated as the key correlate of strong civic identity and as a core civic virtue. Membership in/of a society, typically circumscribed in sociopolitical terms, is seen as a matter of voluntary commitment, rather than birth and/or primordial ties. Attachment to society does involve a moral commitment, but this commitment reflects the awareness of civil rights and obligations, the latter including respect for laws and other central political institutions. There is no single favored sub-unit of commitment: liberal civic engagement covers a broad range of intermediate associations with voluntary (vs ascriptive) membership: occupational, political, local interest, neighborhood, etc. Civic identity is thus seen as compatible with broader supra-national identifications – ultimately with the entire humankind.

This liberal imagery, vocabulary and theoretical argument are most strongly linked with the Durkheimian tradition in social theorising and research, although it has been also cultivated (especially in the USA) in the Tocquevillian tradition (e.g. Fenton 1984, Turner 1993). Durkheim (1964) saw social change as correlated with the important transformations of social bonds and forms of social integration (social solidarity) from predominantly doctrinal-ideological ('mechanical') to predominantly civic-secular ('organic'). The latter are based on individualism ('the cult of the individual'), tolerance of differences, and understanding of social interdependence. He contrasted such organic bonds of solidarity and civic identity with the more primitive bonds based on shared ideological commitments and religious-cultural affinities, and he actively opposed ethno-nationalistic campaigns of the French right during the so called 'Dreyfus affair' in the 1890s.

In contemporary formulations, this secular and individualistic form of (civic) identity is closely linked with citizenship (e.g. Turner 1991, Kymlicka and Norman 1994). Citizenship refers to a formal legal status acquired together with a passport (formal membership in a nation-state), and to the specific egalitarian status it confers, including specific rights and duties safeguarded by the state. Citizenship is typically universalistic, inclusive and blind to race, ethnic, gender and other ascriptive social ties and divisions.

Within the modern liberal vocabulary citizenship also implies a form of social identity – civic identity. Such identity, to repeat, means a subjective identification with and a sense of being a part of a society, a large-scale voluntary association of all citizens of the state. This is often contrasted with national identity 'proper', or what we call ethno-national identity. The latter stresses the importance of 'primordial ties' acquired by birth and residence, the ties that bind us to the culturally defined nation. By contrast, civic identity emphasizes the centrality of 'voluntary ties', social inter-dependence and shared commitments to core institutions of a society. Civic identity thus refers to a 'macro-' identity that is typically alternative to national identity, as defined above. It involves a subjective sense of belonging to a society, a sense of being a part of a collectivity circumscribed in secular and typically institutional terms.

There may also be a third, less distinct and less clearly crystallized vocabulary of attachments linked with radical/socialist traditions and ideologies. This imagery and vocabulary stresses the centrality of *class*, defined in socioeconomic terms, and *class identity* seen as a sense of attachment to and solidarity with other class members. However, this form of attachment and identification seems to be largely extinct in contemporary Australia, possibly because of the decomposition of classes and declining popularity of socialist ideologies. One may occasionally detect some signs of persisting class identities and solidarities (especially during industrial disputations), but these identities and solidarities tend to be weak and ambiguous in contemporary Australia (Baxter et al 1991:279-305, Emmison and Western 1990). Moreover, class identification is more partial and relative then its national and civic counterparts. Bonds with co-members of a class coincide with a sense of contestation of cum detachment from the bourgeois social order and hegemonic structures. This sense of critical detachment from the social order tends to be stronger than positive attachment (class solidarity).
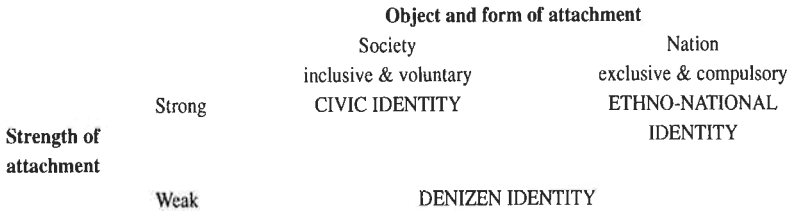
Macro-Societal Identities – A Typology

Social identity involves a sense of attachment, bond, belonging to, feeling a part of, and solidarity with a collectivity, an imagined or real social grouping or category. Macro-social identities define and circumscribe these referent collectivities in an abstract way as peoples, nations, races, or even 'civilizations' (Huntington, 1998). While there are debates about the changing patterns of social identifications, 'nations' are still regarded as the

key references of macro-social identifications, and 'national identities', in a generic sense, are still seen as the core social identities.

The object-referents of macro-social identities, we stress again, may be described in a variety of ways: as 'Australia', 'Australian people', 'Australian state' or 'Australian nation'. Although we are concerned here with the meanings attached to the terms and with the content of the imagery that underlie the macro-social identifications - in the nature of the 'imagined community' Australians feel attached to – we have to rely on simple terminological indicators available in the survey data. The survey questions allow us to assess the (declared) strength of (macro-)social attachments, as well as to identify their key referents. The key features of civic identity can thus be operationalised as involving a declared sense of *strong attachment* to Australia understood as a *society*, that is as people with whom one shares major social institutions. Ethno-national identity also involves a declared sense of strong attachment but, in contrast with civic identity, the core object-referent of this attachment is Australian *nation* understood as a collectivity sharing a specific culture, traditions and customs (specific ways of living). Such a collectivity is culturally circumscribed and less inclusive than a society. To be a full member of thus understood Australian nation one has to be born in it, or at least live in it long enough to absorb (through assimilation) the core elements of its cultural traditions, values, norms and customs.

Thus defined, civic identity and ethno-national identity belong to a family of macro-scale social identities organized here along two analytic dimensions: the strength of macro-societal attachment, which we dichotomize into *strong* or *weak*; and the object *cum* form of such macro-societal attachment, which is also dichotomized as a society or a *nation*. While in the case of a strong attachment we can differentiate the object of such an attachment relatively clearly, when the attachment is weak, the object is vague. Therefore a weak attachment to macro-societal collectivity result in only one type: 'denizen identity', which means the identity of an inhabitant (Figure 1). For reasons of brevity, we will refer to these three types as 'citizens', 'ethno-nationalists' and 'denizens'. [3]

Figure 1: A Typology of Macro-societal Identities

		Object and form of attachment	
		Society inclusive & voluntary	Nation exclusive & compulsory
Strength of attachment	Strong	CIVIC IDENTITY	ETHNO-NATIONAL IDENTITY
	Weak	DENIZEN IDENTITY	

We operationalised the three types of macro-social identity using questions from the 1995 National Social Science Survey conducted on a nationally representative sample and containing a module on national identity (Kelley et al. 1998). As in all such operationalizations, we had to make a number of assumptions. The strength of identification and attachment was measured by a question 'How close – how emotionally attached to Australia – do you feel?'[4] 94% of respondents declared 'very close' or 'close' emotional attachment to Australia, and they have been subjected to further analysis. The remainder 6% who declared weak attachment constitute our 'denizens'. We comment on them at the end of the next section.

The object of attachment was identified using the following questions: 'Some people say that the following things are important for being truly Australian. Other say they are not important. How important do you think each of the following:

a. Being born in Australia
c. Having lived in Australia most of one's life
f. Respecting Australia's laws and political institutions
g. Feeling Australian'

These four items were selected because they formed two distinct clusters when subjected to factor analysis (not included in this paper).[5] Thus those who stressed the importance of birth and long residence for 'being truly Australian' were contrasted with those who stressed feelings and 'respect for Australian laws and political institutions'. In order to strengthen this contrast, we also used a question asking for agreement/disagreement with the following statement: 'It is impossible for people who do not share Australian customs and traditions to become fully Australian'. About equal proportions of Australians agreed and disagreed with this statement. Those who disagreed, that is did not see cultural affinity as essential for being 'fully

Australian' – and who, in addition, declared close attachment to Australia and saw feeling Australian and respecting Australian laws and political institutions as 'very' or 'fairly' important - constituted our citizens, that is, displayed civic identity. They comprised 38 % of our sample. Those who agreed that cultural affinity is essential for being 'fully Australian' – and who, in addition, declared close attachment to Australia, and saw being born and having lived in Australia for most of one's life as 'very' or 'fairly' important – constituted our ethno-nationalist category. They comprised 30 % of the sample. The rest of the sample (about a quarter) showed what we may call for the absence of a better label an 'inconsistent' identity. In the rest of the paper we ignore this 'inconsistent' category and focus on the characteristics of persons with civic and ethno-national identity.

To sum up: civic identity is the most frequently embraced of the three macro-social identity types distinguished here. More than one-third of Australians who adopt it feel strong emotional attachment to Australia conceived of as a large voluntary association. The membership in this association is a matter of personal commitment and respect for Australian laws and institutions. Ethno-national identity, by contrast, is embraced by less than a third of all Australians who see themselves as a culturally distinct people. For them, full and true membership in the Australian nation is conditional on sharing customs and traditions acquired either through birth or long residence (presumably combined with assimilation). Finally, denizen identity, which is found only in about six percent of our sample, characterizes persons with a weak attachment to Australia.

Social Characteristics and Social Location

Tables 1 and 2 show the socio-demographic characteristics of the three types as revealed by a series of bi-variate (Table 1) and multivariate (Table 2) analyses. They show that what distinguishes most strongly the holders of the modal identity types in Australia is their age/generation, education, status/class identification and religion. They also demonstrate further that civic identity is likely to grow. A relatively large proportion of Australians see their society as open to everyone who respects its laws and political institutions and feels a part of it. Moreover, people showing such civic identity tend to be disproportionately from the Baby Boomer generation, more educated, especially at the tertiary level, and more secular in their outlook. This means that the processes of generational replacement, educational upgrading and secularization are likely to boost the numbers of citizens at the expense of ethno-nationalists (and, possibly, denizens). There

is also some indication of an 'occupational effect' – civic identity seems to be strongest among the upper status professional and managerial ranks, and, one would expect, among the elites.[6]

Table 1: Socio demographic Characteristics of Identity Types
(per cent compared with proportion in the sample)

	Citizen	Denizen	Nationalist
Tertiary Education (completed)	29.0	24.8	15.0
Subjective Social Class			
Middle	62.4	53.3	53.2
Working	35.7	39.4	43.2
Age Groups			
16-34	20.5	20.5	25.7
35-54	49.3	38.0	43.6
55+	30.2	41.5	30.7
Religion			
Never attend religious services	33.9	39.7	29.0
Denomination			
Anglican, C of E	20.0	18.3	31.3
Catholic	23.2	23.0	23.8
None	37.4	43.7	25.6
Political Party ID			
Labor	48.7	47.6	42.0
Liberal	39.7	45.2	46.8
National	6.2	4.0	6.3
Australian Democrats	5.4	3.2	4.8

Source: International Social Science Program 1995

Table 2: Logistic Regression Estimates (odds ratios, reference category in brackets) for Social Characteristics of Australian National Identity and Citizenship

	Citizen	Nationalist	Denizen
Men	-1.06	1.21*	1.03
Generation (pre-war)			
Generation X	1.08	-1.05	1.73*
Baby Boomers	1.40**	-1.34**	1.55*
University Degree	1.75**	-1.55**	-1.03
Occupation (clerical/sales)			
Professionals	1.37**	-1.07	-1.36
Managers	1.22	-1.05	-1.42
Farmers	1.97**	-1.48	1.56
Manual workers	1.15	-1.11	-1.26
City Dwellers	1.07	-1.04	-1.07
Religious Denomination			
Catholic	-1.03	-1.06	1.04
Secular	1.22*	-1.40**	1.43
Lived Overseas	1.18	-1.76**	1.90**
Party Identification (ALP)			
Australian Democrats	1.05	1.37	-1.79
Liberals	-1.19*	1.24*	1.04
Nationals	1.01	1.01	-1.57
Model Chi-square, 15 df	94.96	96.17	28.86
p	0.000	0.000	0.0167

* p< 0.05 ** p< 0.01

Source: International Social Science Program 1995

Fewer Australians adopt the ethno-national identity characterized by a strong attachment to the national community, but also a more exclusive notion of who belongs to it, who is 'fully and truly' Australian. In terms of socio-demographic characteristics, ethno-nationalists present a mirror image of citizens: they are older, less educated and religious, especially of Protestant denomination. Not surprisingly, the ranks of ethno-nationalists contain a disproportionately large number of people who have no or little experience of living overseas. More surprisingly, they tend to be disproportionately males.

Only six percent of Australians do not feel strong attachment to Australia. Interestingly, this weak attachment extends to other territorially defined social entities: neighborhood, town/city, state and the region (Table 4). In each case, denizens feel significantly less close and less attached than

citizens and nationalists. This may indicate that denizens approximate 'social isolates' rather than 'cosmopolitans'. However, it also appears that they are very few and socially dispersed, with few common social characteristics. One such characteristic is the experience of living overseas (we do not have data on the birthplaces of respondents); another is relative youth. In fact, further analysis reveals that denizens are predominantly very young and/or recent migrants. One may see this as the confirmation of the acquired nature of social identity – one develops it in the process of socialization and interaction. Since the strength of social attachments increases with age and length of residence, one may expect that many denizens will gradually transform into citizens.

Table 3: Immigrant Approval Scale by Identity Types (Mean Scores)

	Mean
'Citizen'	.69
'Nationalist'	.54
'Denizen'	.60

Source: International Social Science Program 1995

Principal components analysis (PCA) was used to construct a scale to measure general approval of immigrants. PCA of 7 immigrant items using oblique rotation to simple structure, resulted in two factors. However, subsequent reliability testing (Cronbach's Alpha) of the two factor based scales, showed that only one had an acceptably high reliability coefficient (Alpha = .77). The items loading on the second factor were therefore ignored.

A factor scale was constructed from four items and rescaled to range from 0 to 1, with high scores representing approval of immigrants. The variables in the scale were from Likert-type questions (5 point scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). Respondents were asked if they agreed of disagreed with the following statements: 'Immigrants increase crime rates'; 'Immigrants are generally good for Australia's economy' (reversed); 'Immigrants take jobs away from people born in Australia'; 'Immigrants make Australia more open to new ideas and cultures' (reversed). These four items were retained for the immigrant approval scale. The 2 items that formed the rejected scale: 'Australian should limit the import of foreign products in order to protect its national economy' and 'Foreigners should not be allowed to buy land in Australia' were only weakly correlated (Alpha = .29).

Table 4: Strength of Social Attachment (Proportions of Those who Feel Very Close or Close to) by Types of Identity

	National	Citizen	Denizen
Neighbourhood	62	65	34
Town/City	80	78	34
Australian State	82	77	24
The Region (Pacific)	39	36	8

Source: International Social Science Program 1995

Identities and Attitudes

We also cast a glance at the attitudinal correlates of the three identity types (Tables 4 and 5). Perhaps the most striking aspect of these correlates is their variable strength. The two modal types – citizens and nationalists – differ on some issues, and not on other. The issues of contention, so to speak, that is the issues on which there is the strongest difference of opinion and attitudes between the two, concern immigration and it economic impact. Items 1-4 in Table 5 show the differences of about 25 percentage points. While there is agreement as to the positive impact of migration (especially cultural), nationalists, unlike the citizens, also tend to blame them for taking jobs away from people, and increasing crime rates. They would also restrict the right of political refugees to stay in Australia. The centrality of the immigration issues as the core issues of contention is also confirmed by the approval scores especially for non-British and non-European migrants. Table 3 shows mean scores for immigrant approval across the three identity types which demonstrate that 'citizens' are significantly more likely than 'denizens' and 'nationalists' to approve of immigrants (p <0.01). This, it must be added, does not necessarily imply xenophobia, but rather (1) the preference for curtailing immigration, especially at time of high unemployment, and (2) abandoning multiculturalism seen as hindering adaptation and potentially divisive. At the same time, nearly 80% of nationalists (and 95 % citizens) agree with the statement that immigrants make Australia open to new ideas and cultures, and both categories (citizens and nationalists) agree that Australian schools should teach more foreign languages.

The second cluster of issues concerns protectionism and assimilation of immigrants. One may see these issues as being about socioeconomic and socio-cultural autonomy and sovereignty. Nationalists tend to embrace more enthusiastically than citizens protectionism, including both economic and what we may call cultural protectionism: assimilationism and the 'melting pot' policy. The majority of them want Australia to follow its own national

interests, restrict the import of foreign products and the sales of land to foreigners, and protect its own culture against ethnic fragmentation and erosion. The latter means, above all, that it is better if ethnic and racial groups blend into the larger society and do not maintain their distinct traditions and customs, especially with government assistance. We may add that there is more agreement than disagreement between the nationalists and citizens on reduction of immigration and endorsement of assimilation (or rejection of multiculturalism).

Table 5: Identity Types and Attitudes (per cent agreeing or agreeing strongly)

	Citizen	Denizen	Nationalist
Immigrants, Refugees and the Economy			
Immigrants increase crime rates (yes)	21.0	32.6	48.1
Immigrants take jobs away from people (yes)	25.8	36.4	53.1
Political refugees should be allowed to stay in OZ (yes)	52.6	38.6	26.8
Immigrants are generally good for Australia's economy (yes)	75.0	52.5	52.4
Assimilation - Melting Pot			
Immigrants make OZ open to new ideas and cultures (yes)	95.0	76.6	79.2
It is better if different ethnic and racial groups:			
maintain their distinct traditions and customs	25.3	22.0	8.7
adapt and blend into the larger society	74.7	78.0	91.3
Australian schools should teach more foreign languages (yes)	68.4	58.1	57.9
Ethnic minorities should be given government assistance to preserve			
their customs and traditions (yes)	21.1	16.1	11.9
Should the number of immigrants be increased (yes)	14.9	17.1	7.2
National Interest Protection (not tariff protection)			
Australia should follow it's own interests, even if this leads to			
conflict with other nations (yes)	39.9	42.9	57.3
Foreigners should not be allowed to buy land (yes)	36.4	37.1	53.2
Limit the import of foreign products (yes)	73.1	66.1	86.6

Source: International Social Science Program 1995

The final point, not reported in Table 5 but apparent in the last section of Tables 1 and 2, concerns political-ideological preferences and self-identifications. Not surprisingly, citizens tend to locate themselves at the center of the political-ideological spectrum while ethno-nationalists lean towards the center-right. Thus even before the issue of identity and immigration was highlighted by Pauline Hanson, there had been a significant division in public sentiments and affinity of ethno-nationalists with the

Liberal Party. Only more recent data would be able to show the extent to which One Nation, rather than the Liberals, became the favorite choice of ethno-nationalists.[7]

Conclusions

Identities reflect patterns of social interaction and attachments. They refer to 'imagined' rather than actual collectivities, but they also tend to form lasting patterns of attachments, orientations and practices. In this sense, identity is synonymous with a bond, a tie of solidarity, a sense of being a part of a broader collective entity: nation, ethnic group, occupational category, etc. It implies a readiness to adopt a social definition of self in terms of the core characteristics of these collectivities. Because of multiple membership in social collectivities, we tend to develop multiple identities, typically organized in hierarchies, and 'enacted' according to social situations.

As we demonstrate here, different macro-social identities in Australia are linked with different social locations. Education, cultural capital and generation emerge as most important correlates of the different forms of identity in Australia, and this is an important clue for understanding their origins, nature and dynamics.

What is the dominant form of national identity in Australia? We argue that there are, in fact, two modal forms: one ethno-nationalistic, which is derived from the traditional conservative imagery; and one civic, which coincides with the dominant liberal orientations. Both reflect a high degree of social attachment but these attachments are two differently constructed and circumscribed 'imagined communities'. Both are associated with distinct patterns of public attitudes, especially on issues of immigration, ethnic relations and protectionism. These different attitudes can be ideologically mobilized and politically harnessed, and some signs of this partisan harnessing are already visible in our data.

Are Australians strongly nationalistic, in the sense of widely adopting the ethno-nationalist identity? Our analysis reveals rather modest degree of such nationalism. The largest proportion (38%) of Australians embrace civic identity, and this identity is most widespread among the growing sociodemographic categories: the young, the highly educated and the secular. This makes Australia, as we argue elsewhere (Pakulski and Tranter 1999), one of the most civic societies in the world. Ethno-nationalist identity forms a sizable minority, which is likely to shrink in the process of generational replacement, further secularization and the 'educational revolution'.

This very fact may help in explaining the current political mobilization of ethno-national idiom. Its sudden rise may indicate increased visibility and vocality, rather than increased size. It is often the case that certain identities are enhanced and mobilized precisely when they are in decline. The current upsurge of ethno-nationalist idiom in Australia looks like a defensive reaction to a threat of marginalization. The growing civic identity articulated in mainstream politics and left-libertarian movements makes this threat feel real and ubiquitous to minorities holding ethno-national identities. When combined with economic marginalization, this sense of identity erosion can easily be harnessed by populist demagogues who are experts in the exploitation of fear and frustration. However, the potential social constituencies of such nostalgic and populist nationalism are shrinking, and they are unlikely to encompass elites and the 'political classes'.

Notes

1. For example, see Smith (1991) Greenfeld (1993), Gellner (1983). One may argue that since all of us are citizens of at least one nation-state, and since this nation state remains the main referent of macro-identifications, all of us have some form of national identity. Those who adopt this way of thinking, may see our research as an investigations of two types of national identity engendered in two forms of macro-social 'imagined community'.

2. Jones analyses attitudes to identity by using an empirical typology derived from a cross-cutting of two relatively independent scales of identity, labeled 'Australian nativism' and 'affective civic culture'. While these scales are based on items that are similar to to the items used in constructing our civic and ethno-national identity, Jones does not include the strength of attachment cum closeness dimension in his typology. Phillips, in turn, starts from the Durkheimian theoretical typology of 'symbolic boundaries of the national community' along two dimensions: friend/enemy and internal/external, and then operationalizes this typology using the survey data. We follow a strategy similar to Phillips in initially conceptualizing identity in abstracto; and by relying heavily on the Durkheimian analytic and theoretical framework.

3. We do not include in our typology 'class identity' because of its weak articulation in contemporary Australia, and because of ambivalence it contains about macro-social attachments.

4. In our view, this was a better indicator of the macro-social bonds than an alternative question about attachment to 'Australian state'. Judging by the significantly lower level of declared attachment, the latter may have been identified with 'the Government', thus providing respondents with an

opportunity to vent their political frustrations. Moreover, it may also reflect a mildly anti-authoritarian orientation: weak attachment to 'the state' is correlated with a center-liberal position in political affiliations.

5. They loaded highly on two separate dimensions: a+c on factor 1, and f+g on factor 2.

6. A more surprising finding is the strong affinity of civic identity with farming.

7. Jones' (1998) analysis seems to indicate that this is the case, and that party-political conflicts in Australia seem to be increasingly focusing on the issues of citizenship and national identity.

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