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Can Civic Republicanism Accommodate Immigrants?

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Abstract

This paper argues that an enlightened form of soul-craft (character formation) can facilitate the integration of immigrants into a sovereign community. Assuming Michael Sandel's defense of civic republicanism, the paper shows that recognizing 1) that identities are relational and 2) that all persons, including immigrants as well as their hosts, are to some extent strangers to themselves, allows one to overcome both the conservative, nativist, opposition to immigration, and, the liberal neglect of the importance of promoting solidarity and loyalty among citizens of the receiving nation. Based on the author's experience as an immigrant, this paper suggests that while respecting the culture of new comers is a civic virtue, it does not imply treating host and new comers on culturally and politically equal footing. The denial of the asymmetry between the claims of guests and of host would not only endanger the practice of hospitality, but it would also provoke extreme reactions by those citizens who feel threatened by those whom they perceive as strangers.

Keywords

Soul-Craft, Relational Identity, Cosmopolitanism, Sovereignty, Integration

1. Introduction

My purpose in this essay is to articulate the gentle kind tutelage immigrants could receive in the context of civic republicanism. In doing so, I will rely on Sandel's *Democracy's Discontent* for the most part. But at the same time I wish to radicalize it. The assumption behind this essay is that the solidarity of citizens within a sovereign state is an important political value. But I will introduce in my discussion two additional ideas. The first, that individual identities are products of processes of what he calls "trans-individuation", is taken from Balibar. The second,

that in a deep sense we are strangers to ourselves, is taken from Kristeva. The concept of trans-individuation allows us to overcome the extremes of individualism and communitarianism. And, the idea that we are strangers to ourselves puts the relation between immigrants and natives in a new perspective. By seeing the immigrant, "stranger", as a mirror of the strangeness in ourselves, and seeing the host by the immigrant as a stranger reflecting the strangeness in them, opens up the possibility for creating new forms of civic solidarity. My own experience as an immigrant plays an important part in my views on how immigrants can achieve civic solidarity with members of the receiving nation. So, I will make occasional reference to that experience. But, first let me outline Sandel's version of civic republicanism: his formative project, and follow that with a hypothesis about how it can be supplemented by recent theories of identity formation. Lastly, I make the suggestion that maintaining solidarity within the host nation should take precedence over granting equality to new comers in all respect in immigration policy.

2. Sandel and His Critics

In his essay: "Michael Sandel's America" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p.175-183) Michael Walzer (2005) complains that the experience of immigration "is almost entirely passed over in *Democracy's Discontent*". And, he adds: "The omission of this experience from the book seems to me astonishing, since any attempt to explain the growing dominance of liberal individualism in American life must deal with the effects of immigration on 'the obligation of loyalty and solidarity' that liberalism, according to Sandel, cannot explain." (Allen & Regan, 2005, p.177) Walzer (2005) notes that the source of Sandel's problem is that he fails to distinguish between two kinds of communitarianism: a) civic republicanism as "a formative project producing and reproducing the citizens it needs" and b) "a kind of pluralism, where the country is conceived as a community of communities" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 175), and as a result he "fails to acknowledge the tension between the two" (ibid,). But, Walzer's main objective is to show that today's experience of mass immigration inevitably contributes to communal weakness: a lack of the feeling of obligation toward ones country. "In an immigrant society", according to Walzer (2005), "there are many different ways of being what one 'is'." Citizens of such societies, natives as well as immigrants, experience participation in the affairs of the community "as matters of individual choice, not as moral encumbrances" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p.178).

In his reply (Allen & Regan, 2005, p.334), Sandel acknowledges that the heterogeneity, along with the weakening of communal identities resulting from mass immigration, "make social solidarity and republican citizenship difficult to achieve". But instead of spelling out an account of how immigrant societies could achieve social solidarity he says only that the republican tradition reminds us of the possibility of its realization. Nevertheless, in his *Democracy's Discontent* Sandel suggests that by abandoning nativist objections against giving citizenship to immigrants there might be non-coercive ways in which good citizens can be made

of them. His formative project of combining soul-craft and state-craft involves a gentle kind of tutelage combining persuasion with habituation (Sandel, 1998, p. 318-20).

The subtitle of Sandel's book on democracy is: "America in Search of a Public Philosophy". In fact, the major theme of the book is public philosophy. Much of the book is taken up by a critique of what Sandel calls "procedural liberalism". But the book's positive contribution is the articulation the process whereby characters needed in a healthy democratic society are formed. This, he believes, was achieved, with more or less success, by some earlier advocates of civic republicanism. He does not identify them, but it is safe to say that beside Aristotle (2013), from whom he inherits the notion of self-governance (the view that in the best political regime citizens rule and are ruled by one another) his work echoes ideas of three other of the greatest political philosophers: Plato, Spinoza and Hegel. From Plato (1992) he inherits the idea that soul-craft is inseparable from state-craft, and that those who rule a state must have a knowledge and love of their cities as a whole. From Spinoza he takes the idea that good citizens are made and not found.[1] He also takes the idea from the Dutch philosopher that in a society ruled by reason, the power and virtue of its members is enhanced by their participation in promoting the common good. Hegel's (Hegel, 1971) view that institutions of civil society, especially that of corporations, provide a bridge between the most immediate personal values and the state, also had a significant influence on Sandel's formative project.

William Connolly (2005), another commentator on his book, calls Sandel a "cultural conservative with a generous soul and an economic liberal with a grudge against the voluntarist conception of self" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 205). The label "cultural conservative" does not quiet fit Sandel's position. His fundamental belief is that moral and religious issues should not be excluded from political discourse; instead, they should be debated in the spirit of friend ship and generosity. He does not hold the traditional republican position that members of a well run regime ought to adopt the same conception of the good. The point, he says, is that unless people's moral and religious beliefs are considered to be politically relevant these view will re-emerge in a destructive form. An example he offers this is the debate on abortion (Sandel, 1998, p. 20-21, 98). This example illustrates Sandel's view on how embedded moral and religious beliefs should be debated politically. He resists dismissing anti-abortionists by calling them irrational and illiberal. Instead, he thinks that they should be urged to provide evidence for holding that there are legitimate reasons for infringing individuals' rights in favour of what is considered to be a higher good. It is difficult for pro-abortionist to accept the view held by anti-abortionists that there is no moral difference between a foetus and an infant, but for Sandel airing ones embedded fundamental moral convictions publicly is

[1]Sandel does not refer to Spinoza explicitly, still, his civic republicanism shares much of the Dutch philosophers political views. Also, it is likely that he had Spinoza in mind who said: "Men are not born fit for citizenship, but must be made so" (Spinoza, 1951, p. 313).

part of civic republicanism's formative project.[2] Cultural conservatives do believe that human life begins at conception, but they are less open to debating the issue than civic republicans would be.

Whether Sandel is an economic liberal is also open to question. As he, himself, points out there are two different senses of "liberalism". In one sense it means the politics of equality and welfare; and the other has its roots in European thinkers meaning that the rights of individuals should be respected above all (Allen & Regan, 2005, p.328).[3] Sandel's attack on liberalism is against its traditional market oriented, possessive individualist, form. He advocates for government intervention, since, according to him, it vindicates rather than violates individual freedom. (Sandel, 1998, p. 51) His frequent criticism of it is motivated by his view that the market economy puts undue emphasis on unbridled free choice. So, it is clear that Sandel is opposed to both social conservatism and neo-liberal market boosterism. A passage from *Democracy's Discontent* illustrates the way he sees the link between the two:

Civic conservatives have not, for the most part, acknowledged that market forces, under conditions of inequality, erode those aspects of community life that bring rich and poor together in public places and pursuits. … A politics attentive to the civic strand of freedom might try to restrict the sphere of life in which money matters and shore up the public spaces that gather people together in common experiences and form the habits of citizenship (Sandel, 1998, p.332-333).

According to Connolly (2005), Sandel's "critical reticence" about the divisive political agenda behind civic conservatism, expressed, for example, by William Bennett, is an example of his ambivalence between an outmoded civic republicanism and a progressive "civic pluralism" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 206). However, it would be better to characterize Sandel's position as a civic republicanism that aims at "a revitalized civic life nourished in the more particular communities we inhabit" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 346). The question I would put to Sandel is how his version of civic republicanism could accommodate a progressive immigration policy. The problem I see with his position is not the ambivalence between a nostalgic republicanism and a progressive one but his ambivalence between two conceptions of political identity. Once again I turn to Connolly.

Connolly is aware of Sandel's recognition that with the demise of small city states self-government can no longer be seen as an activity rooted in a single particular space, and that there is a need to "search for a public philosophy appropriate to the new circumstances of political action" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 207). In order to do that, Connolly suggests, people need "to become more alert to contestable assumptions and contingent elements in the identities they love most".

[2]As W. A. Galston points out (Allen & Regan, 2005, P. 83), "he never makes clear the conclusions he believes would follow from civic republicanism for the constitutional law of abortion".

[3]In his (Sandel 1998, p. 11) he puts the distinction somewhat differently. There, one is seen as egalitarian liberalism, and the other as libertarianism. In the American context "liberalism" means welfare state egalitarianism, and libertarianism is associated with conservatism.

But, in his view, Sandel bypasses the issue (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 210).

3. Relational Identity and Civic Solidarity

Sandel's response to Connolly is indicative of a different ambivalence inherent in his position. First, he claims that "a heightened awareness of the fragility of our seemingly fixed and secure identities … does not inspire greater openness toward the practices and convictions of others". Second, he claims that "the dogmatism and fundamentalism that Connolly fears may themselves be symptomatic reactions to dislocating forces of contemporary life" (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 334). In *Democracy's Discontents* he rejects civic conservatives' invoking fixed categories of birth and condition in their nativist opposition to citizenship for immigrants (Allen & Regan, 2005, p. 318), but he is also opposed to a policy of open borders. What he needs, but does not give, is a more profound analysis of identity and identity formation. One could say that on a superficial level Sandel is attuned to the difference Balibar, a post Marxist French philosopher inspired by Spinoza, makes between two "tragic or pathological" extreme approaches to the question of identity: the one seeing it as "absolutely massive and univocal" and on the other as "floating without any reference, or privileged tradition" (Balibar, 2002, p. 115). Sandel's rejection of the conservative view of identity aims at the first, and his objection to seeing individual identities only as fragile, aims at the second. In simple terms, his objection to Connolly is misguided because, unlike Balibar, he does not allow for an intermediate position between absolute and floating identities.

Inspired by Spinoza's relational ontology, Balibar declares that individuality is "the very form of *actual existence*". It is a unity "which means that it is always *composed* of some parts and it can never be thought of as an atom". And, he continues, "Since they are not 'given', individuals are constructed … but their construction as well as their activity always involves a previous originally connection with *other* individuals: not only an adaptive reciprocity of the individual and its environment, … but rather a reciprocity of interconnected or interdependent processes of individuation and individualization. Any individual *becomes* (and remains during a certain time) separated and unique because other individuals become (and remain) separated and unique in their own way" (Balibar, 1997, p. 8). Balibar calls this "transindividuation", a term he did not take from but shares with Gilbert Simondon.

One need not believe that Connolly had transindividuation in mind when he spoke of "contestable assumptions and contingent elements in the identities (people) love the most", but given his ontology of becoming, and his intellectual debt to Deleuze who was a follower of Simondon, it is likely that he also had something like transindividuality in mind. In that case, his warning about adhesion to inflexible and absolute identities is politically helpful. Being aware that while identities are real they are only **metastable** (not absolutely stable) moments in processes of becoming, would allow one to arrange ones encounters in a lucid and positive way. In my view, seeing the encounter between natives and immigrants as en-

counters between transindividual beings, could lead to a fruitful result. In addition, such view could be accommodated as part of a civic republican perspective. For, it would respect the identities involved as real, yet provisional, and thereby open the possibility of fruitful deliberations about their histories and future plans between natives and immigrants.

4. Patriotism, Soul-Craft and Immigrants

The task I give myself in this paper is to defend Sandel's civic republican formative project and at the same time to articulate a position on immigration that avoids two extremes: nativist objection to immigration, and a policy of open, unrestrained, admission of immigrants without taking into account the need for preserving the conditions for solidarity among citizens of the receiving country. Nations are real, and loyalty to them is essential for virtuous civic republicanism. Treating both natives and immigrants as transindividual beings whose identities are relational, helps to achieve that goal. Both natives and immigrants need to recognize the relative fragility of their own identity and the relative stability of the identity of the other. In this way, civic solidarity can become possible in countries with a significant proportion of immigrant population, provided that the language, tradition and culture of the host nation receives priority.

Sandel is opposed to a policy of open borders,[4] but he does not explain whether it would just means restricting the **number** of migrants entering a sovereign country, or whether it would also mean restricting the right of entry to those **types** who are deemed to be "convenient" to its prevailing ethos.[5] Also, he does not spell out what coercive measures should be placed on resident immigrants before they can be accepted as full fledged citizens. His proposal for a gentle form of soul-craft as

[4]Sandel does not discuss the issue of open borders in his (Sandel, 1998) explicitly, but in his public lectures and discussions available on YouTube, he does. In (Sandel, 1998) he questions both the ethical and the political versions of the idea of cosmopolitan citizenship. His main point is that without cultivating more expansive civic alternatives, transnational political institutions cannot be sustained (P.345). Therefore, an absolutely open border policy, rigidly embraced by those who are hostages to the noble but flawed ideal of cosmopolitan citizenship could, in his view, neither respect what is noble in the cosmopolitan ideal nor could it sustain the all important loyalty to ones nation.

[5]The opposition to open borders raises a number of questions: How are the borders to be controlled? Are illegal immigrants to be deported? How to distinguish between refugees and regular immigrants? Must immigrants provide proof, on entry, of their willingness to protect the language and culture of the receiving country? There are no easy answers to these questions, leading liberal and progressive thinkers to deny the relevance of the concept of nationhood in the modern world. They also question the distinction between refugees and immigrants. For them, national sentiments are at best naive illusions and at worst politically destructive forces. Nation, nationhood and nationalism are also contested notions. A nation does not have to be only a nation-state. It can also be a linguistic and cultural entity inspiring loyalty and political attachment. Also, one can be a nationalist without considering ones nation to be superior to all others. I suppose that opposition to nationalism is motivated not only by thinking that the notion of nationhood has become problematic in the modern world, but also by thinking that nationalism, attachment to ones nation, entails the devaluation of other nations. The distinction between cultural and constitutional patriotism is helpful here. One can love and prefer ones nation on cultural grounds to other nations without supposing it to be culturally superior to them. One can love, and prefer, ones nation on grounds that it has a better constitution and has better laws than others do. For example, I prefer the laws and the Constitution of Canada to that of Hungary and of the United States without thinking that they are culturally inferior to Canada.

it relates to native citizens would be acceptable to most of his readers who are not captive of the libertarian ideology, but what can he propose as the formative agenda for new residents of a host country? I find this to be a pressing question today in the context of mass migration. Most recent discussions of this question are conducted in terms of individual rights, neglecting to ask how a response to immigration can be both respectful of the values of new comers and, at the same time, safeguard the shared sense of national identity of those who already live there.[6]

Being an immigrant myself, someone who is fully integrated in the civic life of my adopted country, I place great emphasis on how nations and individuals can combine the greatest amount of their inner difference with the greatest power[7] that they can possibly attain as persons and as sovereign nations. For nations, this is practically attainable if they affirm those values that they have arrived at in the process of becoming what they are, but at the same time remaining open to the likelihood that as a result of their friendly encounter with others such as immigrants: individuals who are carriers of different values, would increase their own power to be who they are, and the power to become who they aspire to be.

I have already mentioned Balibar, whose ontology of trans-individualism allows us to navigate the tension between individual and communal identities. If identities are real yet relational and reciprocal, individual **identities** are inseparable from the **process** of individuation (identification). In the context of immigration this means that the identities immigrants bring to the host nation are both flexible and relatively firm. And the same goes for the identities of natives of the host country. This imposes on both a delicate mixture of nationalist and cosmopolitan perspectives.[8] It is a mistake, I think, to set up the difference between the two perspectives as irreconcilable. Sandel's critique of cosmopolitan citizenship provides a balanced view on this. Recognizing that the response by previous reformers to the concentration of economic power was to meet it by a similar concentration of political, national, power. (Sandel, 1998, p. 340) But he adds:

It is tempting to think that the logic of their (*previous reformers*) *solution can be extended to our time. If the way to deal with a national economy was to strengthen the national government and cultivate a sense of national citizenship, perhaps the way to deal with a global economy is to strengthen global governance and to cultivate a corresponding sense of global or cosmopolitan citizenship* (Sandel, 1998, p, 341).

And, he continues:

"Internationally minded reformers have already begun to articulate this im-

[6]The assumption behind this claim is that today's nation-states are fragile but viable entities and, therefore, loyalty to hem is a valuable part of social life. And, for that reason in the encounter between natives and new comers the ethical and political values of natives should have a certain precedence otherwise solidarity among the natives would be hard to maintain. Exercising preference would require a gentle form of tutelage whereby new comers would be encouraged to enter into novel processes of character formation.

[7]Here I mean by "power" what Spinoza means by "*potentia*", the immanent power to be and to act, in contrast to "*potestas*" which is the transcendent power to dominate others.

[8]Nussbaum in her *The Cosmopolitan Tradition* advocates for a responsible patriotism.

pulse…. to 'foster global citizenship', to inspire 'broad acceptance' of a global civic ethic,' to transform 'a global neighbourhood based on economic exchange and improved communications into a universal moral community'". (ibid.)

But, he claims, that "[d] espite [its] merits, however, the cosmopolitan ideal is flawed, both as moral ideal and as a public philosophy for our time". (p. 342) The following passage reveals Sandel's sensitivity to the problem of reconciling the challenges faced by nation-states from above and from below. Namely, the demands of the global economy for more universal forms of political identity, and the pull of particular ethnic, religious and linguistic groups for recognition and self-determination. (ibid, p. 344)

Given the limits of cosmopolitan politics, the attempt to save democracy by globalizing citizenship, as Progressives once thought to save democracy by nationalizing citizenship, is unlikely to succeed…. We cannot hope to govern the global economy without transnational political institutions, and we cannot expect to sustain such institutions without cultivating more expansive civic identities. This is the moment of truth in the cosmopolitan vision. But the cosmopolitan vision is wrong to suggest that we can restore self-government simply by pushing government and citizenship upward…. The most promising alternative to the sovereign state is not a one-world community based on the solidarity of humankind, but a multiplicity of communities and political bodies—some more some less extensive than nations—among which sovereignty is diffused. The nation-state need not fade away, only cede its claim as sole depository of sovereign power and primary object of political adherence. (ibid, p. 345)

Julia Kristeva in her thought provoking work: *Strangers to Ourselves* (*Etrangers a Nous Memes*) (Kristeva, 1988) argues for hospitality to strangers on the basis that, in the final analysis, we are all strangers not only to others but even to ourselves. For her, the subversion of modern individualism opens up the possibility of a cohabitation with others. This is how she puts it:

… from the moment where the citizen-individual stops considering itself as united and glorious, but discovers its incoherence and its inner dept, its "strangeness", in short, that the question poses itself again: no longer of the reception of a stranger into a system that negates it, but of a cohabitation of all these strangers that we recognize all to be (Kristeva, 1988, p. 11, my translation).

While I consider her view that we are, in some sense, strangers to ourselves, I do not agree with her dismissal of modern nationalism as a precursor of and 20th century totalitarianism (ibid, p. 10-11). In fact, my position is that, a sense of belonging to a national community, however fragile it may be, is essential to ones political identity, however fragile **it** may be. The recognition that we are not irrevocably fixed subjects, and that the other in front of us mirrors the other in us, can lead to positive encounters. But in these encounters neither natives or immigrants are stable homogeneous blocks. They are both products of specific processes of unification (identification). In spite of the fact that there is a political asymmetry between them. The question is how this asymmetry can be maintained without becoming oppressive. How, in other words, can immigrants become integral

members of the receiving nation without further disrupting the already fragile sense of community that exists within it.

5. The Noble but Flawed Ideal of Cosmopolitanism

Sandel's objection to a policy of open borders is motivated by his concern that it might undermine whatever sense of community natives have. The main issue, as he sees it, is not so much the threat to jobs, to housing and to social welfare that new comers would pose. More important for him is the danger of further erosion of the host citizen's faith in their government's willingness to stand up for their tradition and their values. In the context of my essay, the question might be put as follows: How can the formative project of civic republicanism be implemented in an immigrant society?

Again, speaking from my experience as an immigrant from Hungary,[9] as a citizen of Canada and as an inhabitant of Quebec I can speak to the issue in concrete terms. Without taking, or wanting to take, an active role in the politics of Hungary, I keep alive my original interest in its history. Also, I make every effort to keep alive my love and knowledge of the Hungarian language. As a Canadian Quebecker my Hungarian origins give me a heightened awareness of the importance of cultural and economic independence of Canada from the United States, and of the need to protect Quebecois culture and the French language on the North American continent.[10] Did I come to Canada as a *proto* civic republican? It is likely. In spite of their fierce opposition to the Bolshevik regime, most members of my anti-communist family were either socialists or social democrats. Being a Canadian social democrat myself, civic republicanism, as Sandel sees it, is congenial to me. But not all immigrants arrive to their new country already pre-disposed to civic republicanism. So, how can they become that?[11] Immigrants need

[9]My family were "refugees" in the most conventional sense: after having fought it, they were fleeing an invading power. In addition, my father was released from prison by the short lasting revolutionary government. His recapture and imprisonment by the puppet Hungarian regime would have been inevitable had he stayed. So, our situation was different from those facing the need to flee today. We were escaping from an oppressive regime that was universally condemned by Western nations. We took up arms against them and lost. And, we were white Europeans. These factors should not be ignored in discussing the plight of current refugees. We should give them, too, the respect they deserve. The source of their plight might be different from my family's but is, still, very real.

[10]I do not know to what extent my position on what it takes to be one is shared by other immigrants, especially by those who arrive today in great numbers with significantly different racial and cultural backgrounds from mine. I am opposed to multiple citizenship even though I am still deeply emotionally attached to Hungary: not to its current politicians or its current government. To me, the Hungarian nation represents not a specific form of the state, rather, it represents a cluster of emotional attachments: to its language, to its history and to its culture. My attachment to the Canadian nation is less emotional; it is mainly to its laws, to its institutions and to its people. For me, the difference between the two attachment is not absolute but it is real. The way many Quebeckers see their nationalism is illustrative. They also distinguish between their attachment to Quebec's language and culture and their civic attachment to Canada. Being a historical minority, Quebecers also demand, rightfully, political instruments to protect their language and culture. In my view, these demands would not be justified coming from recent immigrants.

[11]Did I come to Canada as a *proto* civic republican? It is likely. In spite of their fierce opposition to the Bolshevik regime, most members of my anti-communist family were either socialists or social demo-

to embrace the central elements of the culture of their host country: its institutions, its language and its lessons of its history. This could be achieved through habituation and persuasion and a certain measure of compulsion. Most immigrants come to countries in the West either as refugees, or as regular immigrants seeking a better life. Refugees fleeing politically oppressive regimes might already be leaning toward civic republicanism, but the great majority more likely tend toward liberal individualism.[12] The same would be true of regular immigrants. Respecting their difference along with gentle tutelage and persuasion, they could become, over time, civically virtuous citizens of their new country.

The current controversy about immigration centers around the question of what to do with great numbers of immigrants coming to the West from radically different cultures. Opposition to immigration from Africa and the Middle East is, for the most part, motivated by racism and religious intolerance. The first is inexcusable but the second can be seen as a misguided identification of radical Islamism with Islam itself. This has the unfortunate result that law abiding religious people are refused asylum and are discriminated against once they are residents. In my view, the challenge presented to civic republicanism by immigration from **any** country or culture is that most people immigrate for personal reasons and, therefore, when they arrive, they tend to favour individual freedom over loyalty to community. This means that a host country that aims to guide newcomers toward civic republicanism, needs to recognize the institutions of immigrant communities and to encourage immigrants to participate in them, and, at the same time, inspire in them a love for their adopted country. For, without that love, and without expressing it in their daily interaction with the natives, they will not only find that their desire to be accepted frustrated, but they will also continue to experience the solitude which was part of their lives on arrival.[13]

Sandel's main objective is to articulate a public philosophy that is appropriate for our times. His advocacy for a civic republican formative project is an attempt to go beyond a narrow, what he calls, "procedural liberalism". In short, he believes that politics should not simply be aimed at protecting the rights of individuals without concern for their moral values and for their being embedded in a specific culture and history. What makes it difficult to evaluate Sandel' critique of liberal-

crats. Being a Canadian social democrat myself, civic republicanism, as Sandel sees it, is congenial to me. But not all immigrants arrive to their new country already pre-disposed to civic republicanism. So, how can they become that?

[12]It is note worthy that in Canada a majority of immigrants vote for the Liberal government. The following anecdote could also illustrate immigrants reticence to subscribe to civic republicanism: During my time as a militant for Canadian independence and for a socialist oriented economic policy, I tried to recruit one of my Hungarian colleagues to the cause. To my surprise, he rejected my proposals by saying: "I have had enough of that in the country we come from. So, I have no desire to get involved in it here where I do not have to." I was surprised to hear him say that because having shared much of our moral and cultural values, I expected him to be more receptive to my political views.

[13]There needs to be a delicate balance here. Participating in institutions linking new and original forms of life could foster a sense of belonging to a community. However, there is a danger that an excessive attention paid to memories of the past would hinder loyalty to the new nation. In short, host countries need to rely on, and even foster, healthy immigrant communities. At the same time they should fight against minority sectarianism, and oppressive relations within those communities.

ism is that it focuses on Rawls (2005) who modified his views over time: his final position turns out to be closer to Sandel's.[14] Indeed, Sandel's republicanism contains a number of important liberal democratic principles. But, like most moderate republicans, he puts more emphasis on the role of **affects** than on the role of abstract universalizing reason. The book, *Debating Democracy's Discontent* gives a useful sampling of essays seeking to bridge the gap between Sandel's civic republicanism and socially concerned liberalism. I did not wish to go into that subject in detail here, myself.

Discussing the current controversy about immigration is one way of sharpening the difference between well intentioned liberalism and civic republicanism. Typically, progressive liberals favour cosmopolitan over national citizenship. By contrast, the challenge is to retain the humanist rights-based components of liberalism and to reject their opposition to national sentiments and the need to sustain them. In view of the fact that he does not go into it in sufficient detail, I seek in this essay to supplement Sandel's account. He rejects "nativist opposition to citizenship for immigrants" (p. 318). At the same time he warns against an open borders policy since it may undermine a sense of communal identity on the part of native citizens. Also, he hesitates to accept the alternative to contestable assumptions about human identity (Allen p. 210 and p. 326). For example, as we have seen, he does not take seriously enough.

Connolly's suggestion that "multiply-constituted selves" (could) collaborate effectively with numerous others in general assemblages of democratic action' (p. 210).

6. Integrating Immigrants

The aim of civic republicanism is to produce citizens who view their freedom as a function of being embedded in a certain history, putting as much emphasis on seeking the common good as having individual rights. This process of soul-craft would begin for natives at an early age. Presumably, immigrants bring with themselves their own conception of the good. But since civic republicanism does not appeal to any specific version of the good, immigrants, as well as natives, would have to engage in political discussions about the nature of the good they could strive for. But, in the discussions between natives and new comers the political values of the former need to take precedence. This should not mean suppression, or even ignorance, of the values of other cultures. Cultures no less than individuals are heterogeneous entities, often containing, unknown to themselves, values they share with another. This is true of the culture of immigrants as well as that of the natives.

[14] Sandel's main objective is to articulate a public philosophy that is appropriate for our times. His advocacy for a civic republican formative project is an attempt to go beyond a narrow, what he calls, "procedural liberalism". In short, he believes that politics should not simply be aimed at protecting the rights of individuals without concern for their moral values and for their being embedded in a specific culture and history. What makes it difficult to evaluate Sandel' critique of liberalism is that it focuses on Rawls who modified his views over time: his final position turns out to be closer to Sandel's.

Sandel recognizes that "when the natural bent of persons can no longer be assumed, the formative project becomes more daunting". Therefore, "it invites more strenuous forms of soul-craft" (Sandel, p.319). He favours Tocqueville's indirect mode of character formation to Rousseau's more radical collectivist version of it. What he calls a "gentle tutelage" would also apply to immigrants. It would involve, in addition to fostering independent judgement, a complex mix of persuasion and habituation appropriate to the situation of new comers. The challenge is to strike a balance between instilling new habits and values without completely repressing those that immigrants bring with themselves. For example, citizens' association could invite new citizens to reflect upon their heritage in relation to values present in the host nation. This would involve some form of respect for the institutions and habits immigrants bring from their old country. In concrete terms, this would involve efforts to mediate between what is valuable in the traditions of the host and of the guests. This way, members of the host country could learn about what seems strange within themselves without compromising their loyalty to their own tradition.

So, once again, why should the values and tradition of the host country take precedence? To deny that it should is the position of procedural liberalism.[15] According to that perspective, politics should be neutral in relation to values. What counts for it is only the rights of human beings, and it holds that political debates should be limited to that. Undeniably, protecting human rights is fundamental to politics on all levels. Nevertheless, humans are not abstract rational beings. They are ruled by strong emotions and strong attachments to ideals about the good life. The need for community and the need for common loyalty to ones country could, if they were protected, channel these emotions and attachments towards enabling citizens and new residents to become vital members of a democratic community.[16] Regrettably, human emotions and attachments can lead to intolerance and fanat-

[15]Note that the essay, "The Contested Concept of Integration", (in Scholter, 2022), argues that the concept of integration is problematic both conceptually and politically. The author's main points are, 1) that integration presumes that nations are homogeneous entities, 2) that it treats the immigrants as absolute strangers, others, and 3) that it ignores the possibility of a fruitful reciprocal interaction between natives and immigrants. In my view, immigrants **are** strangers but a progressive policy of integrating them would recognize that neither they nor the receiving nations are homogeneous, and, for that reason, a fruitful dialogue between them is possible, even if the cultural and linguistic values of the receiving nation receive priority.

[16]In much of liberal leaning literature nationalism and loyalty to ones nation is viewed negatively. This view is defended on the grounds that nationalism is at best an artificial construct and at worst an excuse for excluding new comers. Those like Sandel who oppose open borders would have to allow for a reasonably motivated policy of restricting the number of those who can enter. But for reasons I gave earlier, without such policy the loyalty of natives to their nation would be threatened. However, exclusion should not be based on race or religion. And, once established in their new country, legal residents should enjoy the benefits of citizenship. Balibar, in his "De la Preference National" (Balibar, 2002) criticizes the right wing French political party, *Front National*, for their advocacy of "national preference". He focuses on the view that resident foreign non-citizens should not enjoy the same social and economic privileges that are due to legal citizens. His main attack is on exclusion based on racial grounds. In my view, legal residents should be integrated as soon as possible into the social, economic and political life of the host nation. But this should be done with respect for maintaining solidarity among the host citizens. In concrete terms, this means that the linguistic and cultural values of the host nation should receive preference.

icism. Host nations need to be aware of the risks involved in attachment to their history and their culture. But the same goes for immigrants. They, too, should be made aware of the risks involved in their own original national commitments, however painful or edifying it has been for them. The alternative to narrow nationalism should not be an all exclusive attachment to abstract cosmopolitan humanitarianism. Affects, and attachments cannot be excluded from politics. Any attempt to do so can only lead to their return in perverse and destructive form.

7. Conclusion

In recent decades there has been much discussion about immigration. Those on Right claim that immigrants harm the economic, political and cultural life of host nations. Those on the Left, mainly in response to the Right's attacks on immigration policies, focus on the rights of immigrants to fair treatment and for equal access to the basic necessities needed for a decent existence. Both put the emphasis on immigrants. By contrast, in this paper I put the emphasis on the cultural/political challenges facing nations in the modern world of massive immigration. I want to show that a moderate civic republicanism, as Sandel conceives it, is capable of both: accommodating new comers and, at the same time enhance the communal virtues of natives. A key aspect of my argument, distinguishing it from both right and left approaches, is that, in my view, in the encounter between natives and immigrants both have the opportunity to develop their power to be, and to act effectively. This is possible because they are both products of histories that make them relatively stable entities in the process of becoming who they are. In addition, I believe that in the context of immigration the maintenance of inner cohesion of the receiving country should take precedence over maintenance of the language and culture of the guest group. This belief is based on my view that modern nation states, however fragile they may be, are the best direct or indirect means for achieving self governance, and for building characters most suitable to democratic politics.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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