3. SETTING THE STAGE: BACKGROUND FOR THINKING ABOUT CITIZENSHIP

In this part of the book I provide an outline of political philosophical traditions and discuss interpretations of citizenship in Dutch policy. For both perspectives, I analyse the extent to which these interpretations of the notion of citizenship have implications for thinking about the role of religion in society. I will also investigate how these interpretations have implications for thinking about the role of religion in society. In Chapter 4, I discuss four dominant traditions in political philosophy. With this theoretical framework in mind, I analyse integration policy documents and an integration film in Chapter 5. The philosophical traditions serve as an analytical framework to situate the policies in and to evaluate the changes that have taken place in government rhetoric. I have positioned these changes in the contemporary context to gain a better understanding of the underlying patterns of thought in Dutch society and in government policies. Advisory reports from several (scientific) councils will also be taken into account in order to see the extent to which the government has relied on academic advice in the issue of integration. In the concluding Chapter 6, I argue that political policy developments in thinking about citizenship are asynchronous with developments in political philosophy. The Dutch government has set the agenda for integration policies in a very specific way, which does not reflect the developments in normative theory.

3.1 Contemporary Thinking on Citizenship

Although Van Gunsteren claimed in 1978 that the notion of citizenship had gone ‘out of fashion’ (1978, 9), the past thirty years has shown a remarkable renewed interest in the topic among political thinkers. From as early as 1990, Heater had concluded that citizenship had become the ‘buzzword’ in political thinking (Heater 1990, 293). This surge of interest in the notion of citizenship can be explained by a number of factors. At a theoretical level, the notion of citizenship seems to bridge the debates on justice and community membership that have been central in political philosophy in the 1970s and ‘80s (Kymlicka and Norman 1994, 352). The publication of John Rawls’s *A Theory of Justice* in 1971 has been generally regarded as the starting point of contemporary political philosophy (Kymlicka 2002, 10; Mulhall and Swift 1996, 1). In his work, Rawls presents a political theory for a just, modern, and democratic society (Lehning 2006, 27). Society is seen as a collection of free, equal and autonomous individuals, who all try to pursue their own conception of the good. Rawls’s
theory has dominated political philosophical debates ever since, but was heavily critiqued in the 1980s by communitarian thinkers. These thinkers accused Rawls’s work of presenting a ‘conception of the person as antecedently individuated’, where they themselves perceived the person as communally oriented (Mulhall and Swift 1996, 162–163). In their view, community membership is essential for the shaping of individual identities (MacIntyre 1981; Sandel 1982). This fundamental difference between the two philosophies has led to a focus on the notion of citizenship in contemporary debates, and invites discussions on issues of autonomy, identity and community membership. Beiner summarises this point as follows:

Theorising citizenship requires that one take up questions having to do with membership, national identity, civic allegiance, and all the commonalities of sentiment and obligation that prompt one to feel that one belongs to this political community rather than that political community.\(^\text{12}\) (Beiner 1995, 19)

Besides this theoretical explanation, several political and social trends have contributed to the renewed interest in citizenship as a topic. Not only have these trends triggered debates in political philosophy, they have also thrown the notion of citizenship back into play in the Netherlands. The traditional boundaries of the nation-state have been challenged by the interrelated processes of globalisation, migration, and multiculturalism. These processes demand a reformulation of the notion of citizenship (Turner 1993, 1; Fermin 2009, 14; Bellamy 2008, 2; Dronkers 2012, 8). Globalisation calls for a rethinking of the national dimension of citizenship. One example of this is the development of the European Union, which has put the question of the relation between identity, solidarity, national citizenship and transnational commitments firmly on national political agendas (Habermas 1995, 2012; Bader 2007).

Moreover, globalisation has led several cosmopolitan thinkers to suggest that national citizenship holds intrinsic tendencies towards exclusion, which may be mitigated by a focus on universal human rights (Held 1995, 2004; Benhabib 2007). These calls for global interpretations of citizenship have, perhaps surprisingly, also triggered renewed emphases on local citizenship (Linklater 1996; Miller 2000, 2; Habermas 1995, 255–6). Scholars within this strand argue that solidarity and trust can only be realised in communities with a collective identity and loyalty; thus in smaller and homogeneous groups (Bader 2007). The alleged erosion of the nation-state may have contributed to this process. Warren claims that, ‘if the state becomes less significant as a site of collective action, then individuals … are likely to be organised around work, family and friends, schools, clubs, recreation and other kinds of associations’ (Warren 2002, 682). This leads us to question how far one needs to embrace a national identity in order to be a good citizen. It will become clear in the next chapters

\(^\text{12}\) Emphasis in original. When I use italics in citations, they are taken from the original text, unless otherwise indicated.
that this is a big issue in contemporary thinking on citizenship.

To add to the complexity of the matter, migration has led to the formation of increasingly multicultural populations in Western Europe. With this growing diversity, the call for a political theory on the notion of citizenship has strengthened (Kymlicka and Norman 2000, 5; Miller 2000; Isin and Turner 2002, 4). It is, however, not easy to define what citizenship entails in these plural societies, as Miller so keenly points out: ‘the problem of citizenship and pluralism is easy to state but very difficult to solve’ (1995a, 432). When defining the notion of citizenship in multicultural societies, the focus of attention is no longer aimed at the rights and responsibilities of citizens, but also encompasses issues of identity, belonging and matters of inclusion and exclusion (Kymlicka and Norman 2000; Bader 1995, 212). In the changing environment of Western Europe, both majorities and minorities feel insecure about their sense of belonging and identification (Bartels et al. 2010). Interestingly, one of the most significant consequences of recent migration flows ‘has been a dramatic growth in religious diversity’ (Casanova 2009, 140).

Since religion is generally perceived as an important identity marker (Dronkers 2012), this growing religious diversity has brought the issue of the relationship between religion, identity and citizenship to the fore.

### 3.2 Four Approaches to Citizenship

In order to situate this relationship in a broader philosophical perspective, I shall present the main ideas of various philosophical traditions that have dominated contemporary political philosophical debates in the next chapter. My focus will be on how these different traditions formulate a concept of citizenship. I will look at the traditions through the lens of the Big Five model of citizenship. The Big Five model of citizenship contains the key elements of Dutch citizenship: social engagement, political engagement, law-abidingness, tolerance and shared identity. Needless to say that within the scope of this study I can only give a sketch of the highlights and trends that have dominated the political philosophical debates on citizenship in the past decades.

Four philosophical perspectives are pivotal for my research: liberalism, communitarianism, neo-republicanism and liberal nationalism. The first three theories are arguably key perspectives in political philosophical thinking on citizenship, both in international and Dutch citizenship literature (Beiner 1995, 13–14; Isin and Turner 2002, 3–4; Lister and Pia 2008, 8–31; Van Gunsteren 1998, 16–24; Fermin 1999, 5–12; Dekker and De Hart 2002, 2–3). Liberal theory emphasises the freedom and equality of every individual. Rawls’s interpretation of liberalism in his work, *A Theory of Justice*, has become a cornerstone of contemporary political philosophical debate. Many philosophers have presented their ideas in response to Rawls’s liberalism (Kymlicka 2002, 10). As indicated above, one of the most prominent reactions to Rawls’s liberalism has been the rise of communitarianism and the ensuing debate between liberals and communitarians has focused on central issues relating to citizenship (Kymlicka and Norman 1994; Mulhall and Swift 1996). Although
there are many different strands within this tradition, communitarianism can be regarded as ‘a tendency of thought, characterised by the view that liberalism, for various reasons, overestimates the individual as the bearer of value at the expense of goods inherent in community’ (Matravers and Pike 2003, 137).

Another important theory that critiqued this liberal approach to citizenship is neo-republicanism. Neo-republicanism is a modern version of republicanism. In citizenship literature, republicanism has traditionally been opposed to liberalism due to their difference in focus. While liberals emphasise civic rights, republicans emphasise civic duties and political participation (Bellamy 2000; 2008; Heater 1999). In the modern context, this emphasis remains a major point of difference between the two. However, other issues in contemporary republican thinking distinguish it even more from liberalism. Within the scope of my research, it is particularly interesting that neo-republicanism claims that its philosophical perspective better suits the current situation of multiculturalism than liberalism (Miller 2000; Van Gunsteren 1998; Honohan 2007).

At this point, one might wonder why I have chosen to include a fourth theory. If these three are the dominant theories in political philosophy and together they cover all aspects of citizenship, why include a fourth perspective? What is the added value of liberal nationalism? I have two related arguments for the inclusion of liberal nationalism as a separate perspective in my research. First, the theory of liberal nationalism has increasingly gained importance in the past ten to fifteen years, and second, this theory gives a political philosophical voice to undercurrents felt in Dutch society. Both can be traced back to socio-political developments that have changed Dutch society after the turn of the millennium. The larger social and political developments of globalisation and multiculturalism have obviously played an important role in the Dutch context, as well as the attacks of 9/11 and the international issues concerning Islam and the war on terrorism (Casanova 2009).

On top of these changes, the Netherlands has witnessed several specific events that have given rise to the development of nationalistic and anti-Islamic attitudes (Scheffer 2010; Casanova 2009; Dronkers 2012). The assassinations of Pim Fortuyn in 2002 and Theo van Gogh in 2004 have fuelled a renewed debate in Dutch politics on matters of national identity and inclusion (Dronkers 2012, 210). Fortuyn had, in the years prior to his assassination, radically changed the focus of Dutch politics, by opening up a (for the Dutch context — relatively new) conservative-nationalist space in Dutch politics (Van Kersbergen and Krouwel 2008, 404). Furthermore, the assassination of filmmaker Theo van Gogh can be understood as ‘part of a cultural trauma in which the collective identity is being re-narrated as lines of inclusion and exclusion are redrawn’ (Eyerman 2008, 140). These events have set the stage for a nationalist interpretation of citizenship, which finds its political philosophical counterpart in the theory of liberal nationalism. Therefore, I have decided to include liberal nationalism as a fourth perspective in my book.