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RE-IMAGING NATIONHOOD: CONSOLIDATING NATIVIST AND IMMIGRANT SOCIAL BONDING

States are today defined less by the nation(s) in them and more by nationhood – a term that subsumes complex and diverse societies characteristic of an age of global migration. Nationhood involves a process in which otherwise different people share some combination of a language, set of values, faith, culture, identity and ideals. When managed successfully, immigration offers an opportunity to give a state the opportunity to expand the nation beyond utilitarian considerations such as labour needs and demographic decline. It begins with immigrant inclusion in the receiving society and the social cohesion that follows. Failed social integration policy results in unachieved, fragmented nationhood leading to different social pathologies. Derived largely from the French Republican tradition, nationhood emphasizes social bonding of a cross-cultural kind. Eurocentric bias focusing primarily on the origins of the nation is examined, non-Western critiques are assayed, and nation branding as a substitute for nationhood is questioned. When nationhood allows locals and immigrants to develop partnership, it is on the basis of an equilibrium established between minority and majority rights regimes.

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