



# Participation in national celebrations and commemorations: The role of socialization and nationalism in the Dutch context



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## ABSTRACT

National celebrations and commemorations are believed to increase national cohesion. It is unknown however who participates in these activities. In this contribution, we address to what extent socialization by the parents and school, and integration into religious intermediary groups affect participation in national celebrations and commemorations. With the strong reference to the relevance of the nation in national days, we also hypothesize about the association between nationalist attitudes and national day participation. We chose the Netherlands as test case, with its institutionalized national days to remember war victims, to celebrate freedom and to celebrate the Monarchy. Relying on a national survey (LISS; N = 4559), our findings show that the transmission of parental behaviours is crucial for taking part in national celebrations and commemorative events. Schooling and integration in religious groups only affect specific forms of national celebrations and commemorations. In line with US based research on flagging the Stars and Stripes, we find that national day participation in this European country is affected by patriotic attitudes rather than by chauvinistic attitudes.

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## 1. Introduction

Group celebrations and commemorations have taken place throughout the ages with the aim of strengthening cohesion within groups and reinforcing the “we-feeling” among members within a group (Turner, 2006). With the emergence of modern nation states in the nineteenth century, the nation itself often became the focus of such celebration. Not only the creation of national states was accompanied with the introduction of national days (Hobsbawm, 1990), also with constitutional changes, from kingdom to republic for example, national celebrations were institutionalized with the aim to strengthen national cohesion (Woods and Tsang, 2013). Accordingly, Germany celebrated the proclamation of the German Republic (1919) and Italy has since 1949 organized the ‘Festa Della Repubblica’.

Also today many nations know different national celebrations and commemorations, but research has hardly empirically addressed who is more likely to participate in these festivities and commemorations. With the focus on the nation in the national days’ literature, the question is not only whether participation stimulates national cohesion (Turner, 2006; Fox, 2006; Fox and Miller-Idriss, 2008), but also whether people with nationalist attitudes are the ones who are more likely to participate in national days in the first place. Although we acknowledge the difficulty in the causal order of the relation, social scientists who examined causes and consequences of the variance in nationalist attitudes (e.g. Hjerme and Schnabel, 2010),

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have not addressed to what extent nationalist attitudes play a role in cohesion-enhancing behaviours such as the present-day participation in national celebrations and commemorations is thought to be. Perhaps this is due to the nature of national celebrations, where it is assumed that everyone participates. Yet, *if* national days do have cohesion enhancing forces it is relevant to know who joins in celebrating and commemorating the nation in these days.

One of the few empirical studies on this topic (Skitka, 2005) departed from the notion that flagging (Stars and Stripes after 9/11) is an expression of patriotism and might strengthen both nationalist sentiments and national cohesion further by the behavioural expression of the flagging. Although different from these more spontaneous actions of flagging behaviour, this study aims to answer the question to what extent nationalist attitudes are related to flagging – as a central aspect of many institutionalized national days – in a different context.

The Netherlands – the site of our study – observes, in addition to ‘King’s Day’ (celebrating the Dutch Monarchy – before the throne change of 2013 it was Queen’s Day), a Remembrance Day and a Liberation Day. Similar to days in other countries relating to war history in general and more specifically to days in other European countries involved in the Second World War (WWII), these latter two days were to commemorate the dead that fell during WWII and to celebrate the capitulation of Nazi Germany.<sup>1</sup> Building on Renan’s work (Smith, 2014), who argues that commemorations might be more strongly related to nationalist sentiments and national cohesion than celebrative events, this study examines both. The Netherlands – knowing celebrations and commemorations that refer to war experiences and liberation as well as to the monarchy – thus offers a relevant site to get an understanding of participation in these various national days. In the country national symbols are much less part of the everyday life than in the United States and the question is whether nationalist attitudes are related to flagging and participating in national days comparable as was found for the US in the study of Skitka (2005).

Since national days might strengthen cohesion (Turner, 2006), one of the central issues in research on celebrating and commemorating the nation is how these days are kept alive amongst *all* inhabitants. Often (but not necessarily) national days refer to events in a more distant past. Why would generations that have not experienced a war commemorate in a national day? In the Netherlands, the majority of the adult Dutch population observes Remembrance Day each year but particularly younger people and non-western immigrants do so to a lesser extent (Verhue and Koenen, 2010). The question of socialization of these national days is therefore a central focus in our research and an alternative to the explanation of participation in these days based on nationalist attitudes.

In this contribution we show for the first time empirically the role of parents, schooling and religious institutions in participation in these national celebrations and commemorations, indicating how family life and institutional socialization and integration might add to national cohesion. With a focus on socialization of national days and nationalist attitudes as two alternative explanations, this study is one of the few that does not depart from an ethnic minority perspective on socialization of ethnic and nationalist attitudes but instead provides empirical evidence for such socialization patterns among majority members. We employ a national dataset from 2011 with which we study participation in Remembrance Day (by observing two minutes silence) and Liberation Day (by flagging) as well as people’s interest in celebrating Queen’s Day (watching the Queen’s public tour through the country with the royal family on that day).

## 2. Expectations

Fox and Miller-Idriss (2008) show that much of the literature on national days has taken a top-down approach, investigating the meaning and functioning of those days by focusing on the supply-side and top-down institutionalization of national days. Much less often have researchers focused on how these days are perceived by the population, let alone who actually participates in these days. To better understand who participates in this supposed national cohesion forming behaviour, we embed our research in related traditions that have empirically investigated participation in other forms of (national) cohesion forming behaviour such as social participation (e.g. contacts in the neighbourhood), community participation (e.g. volunteering, membership of associations) and civic participation (e.g. voting, demonstrations) (Putnam, 2000; Van der Meer, 2009), and formulate expectations that fit participation in national days. In this literature the role of socialization (Parsons and Bales, 1956) and integration theory (Durkheim, 1897) is highlighted. To this end we apply socialization theory by formulating expectations about national day socialization by parents and school. We consider parents and schools as socializing agents that transfer values and norms regarding national celebrations and commemorations. Since Protestantism and Catholicism have historically a different position in the Netherlands regarding how they were supported by the state and monarchy, we look at membership of religious groups as well. To this end, we apply integration theory, with expectations about norms applicable to religious groups (e.g. Lubbers et al., 2009) on participation in national celebrations and commemorations. Finally, we discuss nationalist attitudes that people support to in greater or lesser extent, and we formulate hypotheses about the influence of such attitudes towards the nation state, which may be an alternative explanation of national day participation as compared to expectations from socialization or integration.

<sup>1</sup> More recently, the Dutch Remembrance Day honours all killed – civilians and military – in the Netherlands or abroad since the outbreak of World War II, during war or peace operations (National Committee for 4 and 5 May, 2011). On May 5 of every year, the Dutch celebrate the fact that “we in the Netherlands, since 1945, live in freedom” and “we focus on the importance of freedom and the necessity to combat servitude” (National Committee for 4 and 5 May, 2011).

Unlike most forms of community and civic participation, one does not need to leave one's home to observe national celebrations and commemorations to be able to express social solidarity. Citizens are invited to join national celebrations and commemorations, which are sometimes imposed by the state, and sometimes initiated by the population (Turner, 2006). Moreover, there are few restrictions in participating in such events. To the extent that there are, we will include them in our explanations. These include financial constraints in purchasing a flag and flag hanging system for instance.

### 2.1. Socialization by the parents

It is widely found and established in different disciplines that parents influence their children (Alwin and Krosnick, 1991; Blau and Duncan, 1967; Glass et al., 1986). One important insight, related to our topic of study, is the idea that parents can function as a role model for their children. In particular, Bandura's social learning theory is of interest here (Bandura, 1986). According to that theory, children's behaviour results from observing the (consequences of the) behaviours of others and by imitating them. Therefore, this type of parental socialization can occur unintentionally. On the other hand, parents can also be more actively involved by intentional teaching and guiding. One can expect parents to talk about certain issues, educate their children, take them along with them to experience things and provide them with the necessary tools to participate in certain behaviours. Either way, be it by observing and imitating or by teaching, children can acquire various skills and competencies but also social norms and values, cultural practices and group identity from their parents, one example being national celebrations and commemorations. We therefore can expect that if parents observe every year a two-minute silence on Remembrance Day, hang the flag and show interest in the Royal Family, children get used to perform this behaviour and parents signal with the behaviour that it is relevant to do so.

Although there is little empirical research on parents' national socialization and participation in national celebrations and commemorations, previous studies have shown that parents transmit group pride, knowledge and traditions to their children and that parents' ethnic, racial or cultural socialization among minority groups is positively associated with children's favourable in-group attitudes and in-group oriented behaviours (e.g. Demo and Hughes, 1990; Hughes et al., 2006; Lee and Quintana, 2005; O'Connor et al., 2000; Quintana et al., 1999; Stevenson, 1995; Thompson, 1994; Thompson et al., 2000; Umaña-Taylor and Fine, 2004). This literature has also shown that socialization of behaviours goes beyond copying behaviour and that socialization processes are affected and moderated by various interaction processes between parents and children. Children may internalise a norm that it is important to participate in national celebrations more or less depending on the extent that parents actively address the topic in conversations, with their non-verbal communication, and by related supporting behaviour (e.g. interest in museums on the history of the nation). It might seem straightforward that with their national practices, parents provide national exemplary behaviour and socialize their children with national attitudes and behaviours (Barrett, 2007), but since (Dutch) national days refer to events in the far past for the majority of the present-day population, it is to be seen to what extent the following hypothesis holds: children whose parents observed a two-minute silence, hung a flag, or valued the Royal Family, are socialized with national celebrations and commemorations and show a stronger participation in such events.

### 2.2. Socialization by schooling

One of the most relevant explanations brought forward in the research on participation in society is education (Bekkers, 2004; Flap, 1999; Gesthuizen, 2006). Schooling leads to greater social, community and civic participation (Van der Meer, 2009). In previous research, the influence of education is explained, on the one hand, by enhancing resources through participation, especially when other higher educated also participate, and on the other hand, by the exposure to social norms (Bekkers, 2004). According to Bourdieu the higher educated participate in more public, formal social groups to maintain their status position (Gesthuizen, Van der Meer en Scheepers, 2008). With this kind of participation they would sustain social contacts with other professionals, thereby accumulating relevant resources providing them larger returns in the future. From this perspective we could expect that particularly the higher educated are likely to participate in national celebrations and commemorations. Nevertheless, most national celebrations and commemorations are celebrated individually in the home (Verhue and Koenen, 2010), even though nearly all Dutch municipalities organize an annual public celebration or commemoration (Binnema and Verhue, 2008). From the resource-enhancing perspective, education would be most likely to affect public celebrations and commemorations, and not necessarily privately performed celebrations and commemorations.

From the second explanation about the exposure to social norms, we can anticipate that in countries where and in periods when national rites are more institutionalised in education (e.g. raising the flag, singing the anthem, participation of national commemorations via schools) people are more likely to participate in national days. But with regard to level of education and the association with participation in national celebrations and commemorations we anticipate that is interpreted by the longer socialization of democratic values, and that the association is dependent on the type of national celebration. Some political circles question to what extent a monarchy relates to a democratic form of government. We expect that this discussion has a greater chance of surfacing among the higher educated and therefore we anticipate that a higher education leads to a more critical attitude towards the monarchy and also to less interest in celebrations related to the Dutch Royal House, such as watching the Queen's public tour on Queen's Day. Conversely, we expect both the Remembrance Day on 4 May and Liberation Day on 5 May to be positively associated with educational level because these days are linked to the democratic value of freedom. Although the less educated are socialized with these democratic values as well, we expect the higher

educated to have received this message more often since they are more exposed to this social norm throughout their (longer) education.

### 2.3. Integration in religious organisations

The Dutch monarchy adheres to the Dutch Reformed religious denomination. For a long time, Catholics were not tolerated within the royal family, and certainly not as a partner to the heir. The marriage of Prince Willem-Alexander and the Argentinean and Catholic Maxima in 2002 launched a debate in Protestant circles about the admissibility of this marriage. Prince Willem-Alexander swore at his betrothal that the Royal House would remain Protestant, and that children born of his marriage would be raised as Protestants (Nederlands Dagblad, 2011).

Catholics were given freedom of religion only since the foundation of the Batavian Republic (1795). Through the historical position of Catholics in the Netherlands, and the close relationship between the monarchy and Protestantism, especially the Dutch Reformed Church and today's Protestant Church in the Netherlands, we expect Protestants to have a more positive attitude towards both the Dutch monarchy and nation. Consequently, we expect that Protestants are more likely to participate in national celebrations and commemorations than Catholics. The majority of people unaffiliated to any religious group will be less exposed to both a positive norm than Protestants and less exposed to an unfavourable norm than Catholics. Thus, they are expected to position themselves in between both religious groups. It is important to note here that we thus do not anticipate differences between the members of different denominations because of the religious content, but because of the (historical) different relations between the denominations and the monarchy.

### 2.4. Nationalism

Most research on participation in cohesion forming behaviour considers the influence of parents, school and church. To understand participation in national celebrations and commemorations, we specifically investigate the role of attitudes towards the Dutch nation.

Research on nationalist attitudes distinguishes between the love and pride for the nation based on a critical review of one's own group and nation, i.e. patriotism, and the blind love for one's country combined with feelings of superiority, regarded as chauvinism (Adorno et al., 1950; Blank and Schmidt, 2003; Coenders et al., 2004; Dekker et al., 2003; Kosterman and Feshbach, 1989). Patriotism and chauvinism are positively correlated, but have different implications, with chauvinism generally showing stronger consequences for different forms of inclusive (nationalist) and exclusionist forms of behaviour (Blank and Schmidt, 2003; Coenders et al., 2004). Because national celebrations and commemorations have a positive connotation of the nation, we expect both patriotism and chauvinism to positively influence participation in national celebrations and commemorations.

Since the nation has a more central position in everyday life for chauvinists, who are expected to exhibit their sense of belonging to the nation at every opportunity that arises, we expect that the association between chauvinism and participation is stronger than the association between patriotism and national days' participation. Skitka (2005) showed that in the case of flag displaying behaviour in the US, attitudes towards the nation are crucial in explaining it. Yet, she found that, in the US after 9/11, patriotism was stronger related to flag displaying behaviour than chauvinism. Although the measurements of nationalist attitudes were limited, as identified by the author, Skitka (2005, p.2009) concluded that "Americans [...] flew the flag to symbolize their commitment and connections to their fellow citizens, not to declare that the United States was superior and dominant". With that finding the hypothesis that the influence of chauvinism would be the stronger of the two found no support. We will test the hypothesis as well, in another country, for different forms of national behaviour and with better measurements of patriotism and chauvinism.

## 3. Data and measurements

We use the 'Nationalism and national dimension of cultural consumption' study from the Longitudinal Internet Studies for the Social sciences (LISS) dataset from September 2011. The LISS panel is part of the project 'Measurement and Experimentation in the Social Sciences' that is funded by the Dutch Science Foundation. The panel is refreshed yearly, based on drop-outs and new cohorts. The study exists of a core module, and rotating modules that researchers can propose. The rotating module we use here is collected among a random selection of respondents who are part of an online panel that is representative for the Dutch population. Originally, a household panel was composed, with a response rate of 48% (which is quite successful for a study in the Netherlands, especially for a panel study). From these households the actively participating panel members make up 82% of the eligible persons in the panel (8026). For this study a random sample of 6717 members was drawn. The response was 71.2% in the module we analyse here (4785).

### 3.1. Dependent variables

Respondents were asked about three aspects of their behaviour on national days in the last five years. First, they were asked whether they owned a Dutch flag and how often they hung it on Liberation Day (5 May); second, how often they observed two minutes of silence on Remembrance Day (4 May); and third, how often they celebrated Queen's Day by

watching the Queen's public tour (30 April), whether in person or via television. These questions could be answered with “not once” up to and including “five times”. The correlation between different answers was significantly positive, but not strong. The strongest correlation is between observing the two-minute silence and watching the Queen's celebration ( $r = 0.35$ ). The correlation between observing the two-minute silence and hanging up the flag on 5 May is 0.34 and the correlation between watching the Queen's public tour on 30 April and hanging the flag is 0.28.

All these variables are not normally distributed. We therefore conduct a multinomial analysis to distinguish between never participating (0), sometimes participating (1, 2 and 3) and often participating (4 and 5).<sup>2</sup>

### 3.2. Independent variables

With regard to the national behaviour of parents, respondents were presented five retrospective questions on a four point scale, ranging from “not true” to “completely true” where they could report about the parents when the respondents were aged 15. Respondents were also given the option “don't know”. The measurements about the parents did not quite match the respondents' behaviour since not all parents had had the opportunity to view the Queen's public tour on television before, for example. It was asked if parents hung a flag on Liberation Day. There is no separate measurement of parents' flag possession. Subsequently, respondents were asked whether their parents always observed the two minutes of silence on Remembrance Day. Respondents were also asked whether parents used orange decoration, e.g. at Queen's day and sports events, and were questioned whether they considered their parents nationalistic and proud to be Dutch. Because we want to take into account specific parental exemplary behaviour we include the first item in the models for flag possession and flag hanging and the second item in the model for observing a two-minute silence. A factor analysis on the latter three items on parents' nationalist orientation together with items of nationalist attitudes of the respondents revealed that the item that the parents were proud to be Dutch loaded on both the parental and respondent's national attitudes. That item was therefore dropped. *Parents' national orientation* is included as the mean score on the two items of parental use of orange decoration and the evaluation that the parents were nationalistic. This measure is included only in the model on watching the Queen's public tour.

To measure socialization via schooling, respondents' educational level is measured and it consists of standard categories by Statistics Netherlands (CBS), ranging from 1 “primary education” to 6 “university”. We include this variable as an ordinal variable in our analyses.

To measure integration in religious groups with different values on the nation and the royal house, denomination was inquired gradually. Respondents were first asked whether they consider themselves as members of a church or religious community, and subsequently, to which one. We distinguish between Catholic, Protestant, another denomination and no religious denomination. Since previous research has shown that Protestants attend church more frequently than Catholics (Arts, 2009), it is relevant to control for church attendance. Church attendance is measured in categories of number of times per year and is included as an interval variable in our analyses.

Patriotism was measured with four items (“I am proud to be Dutch”; “I am glad to be Dutch”; “My Dutch identity is an important part of me” and “I feel close to other Dutch people”) (Cronbach's alpha is 0.89). Chauvinism was operationalized with the items “It would be a better world if people from other countries were more like the Dutch” and “In general, the Netherlands is a better country than other countries” (Cronbach's alpha is 0.72). Factor analysis provided evidence for the anticipated factor solution (see Table 2).

We control for age, gender, net monthly household income and whether one or both parents were born outside the Netherlands. Furthermore, we control for urbanization of the municipality respondents live. We use the classification of Statistics Netherlands, where the value 1 represents “rural” and 5 “strongly urban”. We additionally control for the cohort that experienced World War II (born before 1940).

226 respondents (4.7%) were excluded from the analysis because of missing information on the place of birth of their parents. We replaced remaining missing values for the other independent variables using the expectation-maximisation algorithm in which values were imputed on the basis of relevant variables from the dataset (dependent variables were excluded) ( $N = 4559$ ). The variables on parental socialization had relatively many missing values (8%–14%). Therefore we also include a dummy variable controlling for missing values on parental socialization. Furthermore, the percentage of missing values was 9 per cent on net monthly household income and 6 per cent on church attendance. The missing values on the other imputed variables (education, chauvinism, patriotism and urbanization) were all below 4 per cent. Finally, all interval variables were standardized.

Table 1 presents the descriptive distribution of the dependent and independent variables. It shows that 52.8% of the Dutch possesses a flag. From those possessing a flag, 52.9% hung it most of the times during the five years before the interview. The majority of the Dutch population observes two minutes of silence at Remembrance Day (73.1%); a minority of 12.8% never did so. The Queen is often watched on Queen's Day by 42.9% of the population; 19.4% never watched the Queen's public tour at Queen's Day.

<sup>2</sup> One might argue that it is hard not to observe 2 min of silence on May 4 and not to watch the Queen on Queen's day, since both are broadcasted on almost every Dutch television channel. However, since it is often a private matter, people are able to choose to attend those events via the media. The distributions also show that there are many people that do not observe two minutes of silence and do not watch the Queen on that day.



**Table 1**

Descriptive distribution of dependent, independent and control variables.

	%	Range	Mean	SD
Flag possession		0–1	0.528	0.499
No	47.2			
Yes	52.8			
Hanging the flag <sup>a</sup>		0–2	1.266	0.850
Never	26.3			
Sometimes	20.8			
Often	52.9			
Observing silence		0–2	1.603	0.703
Never	12.8			
Sometimes	14.2			
Often	73.1			
Queen's Day		0–2	1.235	0.753
Never	19.4			
Sometimes	37.7			
Often	42.9			
Parents hanging flag		1–4	2.465	1.176
No information parents hanging flag		0–1	0.125	0.331
Parents observing silence		1–4	3.494	0.847
No information parents observing silence		0–1	0.138	0.345
Parents' national orientation		1–4	2.514	0.842
No information parents' national orientation		0–1	0.094	0.291
Educational attainment		1–6	3.492	1.498
Denomination				
Roman Catholic		0–1	0.182	0.386
Protestant		0–1	0.151	0.358
Other		0–1	0.038	0.191
None		0–1	0.629	0.483
Church attendance		0–6	1.070	1.477
Patriotism		1–5	3.654	0.770
Chauvinism		1–5	2.937	0.870
Age		17–91	51.077	16.900
Sex: Male		0–1	0.460	0.498
Monthly net household income		750–10,000	2858.8	1340.3
Ethnicity: Native		0–1	0.882	0.323
Urbanization		1–5	2.986	1.269
WWII cohort		0–1	0.106	0.308

<sup>a</sup> N Hanging flag = 2406.

(Source: LISS data 'National cultural consumption' 2011, N = 4559.)

**Table 2**

Exploratory factor analysis.

Items	Factor loadings (pattern matrix)			Communalities
	Patriotism	Chauvinism	Parents' nationalism	
I am proud to be Dutch	0.803	0.069	0.002	0.708
I am glad to be Dutch	0.863	0.001	–0.102	0.683
My Dutch identity is an important part of me	0.843	–0.039	0.040	0.705
I feel close to other Dutch people	0.679	0.005	0.133	0.556
It would be a better world if people from other countries were more like the Dutch	–0.051	0.766	0.076	0.587
In general, the Netherlands is a better country than other countries	0.063	0.728	–0.067	0.553
My parents used orange decoration at Queen's day or at sports events	–0.019	–0.019	0.540	0.278
My parents were quite nationalistic	0.078	0.061	0.694	0.567
Eigenvalue	3.710	1.159	1.099	

Note: We performed a principal factor analysis with oblique rotation.

(Source: LISS data 'National cultural consumption' 2011, N = 4559.)

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Dutch flag possession

First, we estimated the likelihood of owning a Dutch flag and then used the multinomial model for how often flag owners displayed their flag on 5 May in recent years. Table 3 lists results of the logistic regression model for flag possession. In the first model, we include all background characteristics, and nationalist attitudes are added in the second model, since these attitudes could mediate the influence of background characteristics.

**Table 3**

Logistic regression parameters (logits and standard errors in parentheses) of Dutch flag possession.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	−0.045	0.127	−0.028	0.128
Parents hanging flag (z)	0.556	0.035***	0.527	0.035***
No information parents hanging flag	0.101	0.097	0.115	0.098
Educational attainment (z)	−0.070	0.035*	−0.055	0.035
Denomination (Roman Catholic = ref)				
Protestant	0.416	0.123***	0.424	0.123***
Other	−0.374	0.197	−0.325	0.198
None	−0.238	0.097*	−0.194	0.098*
Church attendance (z)	0.148	0.046**	0.150	0.046**
Patriotism (z)			0.225	0.039***
Chauvinism (z)			−0.044	0.037
Age (z)	0.206	0.040***	0.185	0.041***
Sex: Male	0.048	0.066	0.072	0.067
Monthly net household income (z)	0.384	0.037***	0.385	0.037***
Ethnicity: Native	0.323	0.106**	0.255	0.107*
Urbanization (z)	−0.297	0.033***	−0.301	0.033***
WWII cohort	−0.302	0.127*	−0.319	0.128*
Nagelkerke R Square	0.213		0.222	

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ , (z) Standardized.(Source: LISS data 'National cultural consumption' 2011,  $N = 4559$ .)

Model 1 shows that the probability of possessing a flag strongly increases when one's parents had frequently hung one ( $B = 0.56$ ). The educational level of the respondent decreases flag ownership; the higher the education, the less likely one is to own a flag. We find significant effects from denomination. As anticipated, Protestants are more likely to own a flag than Catholics. However, Catholics are more likely to own one than people without a religious denomination, what we did not expect. The effect of denomination exists next to an effect of church attendance, showing that a higher rate of church attendance increases the chance of possessing a Dutch flag ( $B = 0.15$ ).

Regarding the control characteristics, older people are more likely to possess a flag ( $B = 0.21$ ), though the WWII cohort has a somewhat smaller likelihood to own one. Also a higher income leads to a higher likelihood of owning a flag ( $B = 0.38$ ). Furthermore, it appears that native respondents are more likely to own a Dutch flag, as one would expect ( $B = 0.32$ ). Finally, the urbanization level of the place where one lives has an effect. Possessing a flag is apparently not something for the city: the bigger the place of residence, the lesser the chance of owning a flag ( $B = -0.30$ ).

In Model 2, patriotism and chauvinism are added. The parameters of the other variables hardly change; except for education that now turned insignificant, and ethnicity. Patriotism increases the chance of flag possession ( $B = 0.23$ ), while chauvinism has no effect. Because the following models with other dependent variables showed that including nationalist attitudes led to minor changes in the parameter estimates, we consider only the second model that already includes nationalist attitudes.

#### 4.2. Hanging the Dutch flag

Table 4 shows the results of the multinomial logistic regression on hanging the flag (among those respondents who own a flag), on observing the two-minute silence on 4 May, and watching the Queen's public tour on Queen's Day. The columns indicate the likelihood of frequent participation to celebration or commemorative events versus no participation in the last five years. In the analyses, we also examined the probability of sometimes participating versus the probability of no participation in the last five years. Generally, all significant effects on the probability of sometimes participating versus not participating have a stronger effect on the probability of often versus not participating in celebrations and commemorations. We report only the likelihood of frequent participation of people in national celebrations and commemorative events, versus no participation at all.

First, we describe the findings for Dutch flag hanging on Liberation Day. It appears that parents who hung the Dutch flag not only affect the likelihood of respondents owning a flag, but the parents behaviour also affects the likelihood of the frequency of hanging the flag on Liberation Day ( $B = 0.76$ ). The educational level not only has a negative influence on owning a flag, it also negatively affects hanging the national flag. This is in contrast to our expectations. Again, denomination has an effect on flag hanging also when controlled for church attendance, comparable to the flag owning model. Protestants (and people of other denominations) are more likely than Catholics to hang the flag, which is in accordance with the formulated hypothesis. However, Catholics and people with no religious denomination do not differ from each other in the likelihood to hang the flag on Liberation Day in the Netherlands. We find patriotism to influence the hanging of the flag ( $B = 0.18$ ). A chauvinistic attitude does not lead to more flag display on Liberation Day.

**Table 4**

Multinomial logistic regression parameters (logits) for often hanging the flag on 5 May, often observing the two-minute silence on 4 May and often watching the Queen's public tour on Queen's Day, versus not doing any of these.<sup>a,b</sup>

Ref = Never	Hanging the flag on liberation day		Observing silence on Remembrance Day		Watching the Queen's public tour	
	Often		Often		Often	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Intercept	0.062	0.218	2.536	0.207***	1.542	0.173***
Parents behaviour	0.761	0.057***	1.178	0.051***	0.328	0.050***
No information parents' behaviour	−0.376	0.150*	−1.000	0.126***	−0.392	0.142**
Educational attainment (z)	−0.153	0.058**	0.150	0.056**	0.071	0.047
Denomination ( <i>Roman Catholic = ref</i> )						
Protestant	0.750	0.184***	1.032	0.232***	0.476	0.184*
Other	0.812	0.356*	−0.498	0.271	−0.371	0.259
None	0.106	0.155	0.456	0.149**	−0.345	0.137*
Church attendance (z)	0.094	0.072	0.301	0.075***	0.236	0.064***
Patriotism (z)	0.183	0.065**	0.244	0.059***	0.556	0.052***
Chauvinism (z)	−0.015	0.061	−0.224	0.059***	−0.085	0.050
Age (z)	0.207	0.067**	−0.018	0.064	0.358	0.054***
Sex: Male	0.285	0.109**	−0.437	0.106***	−0.932	0.090***
Monthly net household income (z)	−0.002	0.057	0.065	0.058	−0.045	0.046
Ethnicity: Native	0.210	0.187	−0.523	0.168**	−0.019	0.138
Urbanization (z)	−0.034	0.056	0.117	0.054*	0.095	0.045*
WWII cohort	−0.378	0.202	0.847	0.218***	0.000	0.182
Nagelkerke R Square	0.175		0.300		0.177	

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ , (z) Standardized.

<sup>a</sup> N Hanging flag = 2406.

<sup>b</sup> The contrast between 'Sometimes' and 'Never' adopting the above mentioned behaviours is also estimated. 'Sometimes' is a subcategory, and the results are largely similar, yet weaker, to the results for 'Often' versus 'Never' adopting the behaviours.

(Source: LISS data 'National cultural consumption' 2011, N = 4559.)

Of the control characteristics, only age and gender appear to have an impact. As people age, the probability of hanging the flag more often versus not doing so on 5 May increases ( $B = 0.21$ ). Men are more likely to hang a flag than women do.

#### 4.3. Two-minute silence on Remembrance Day

With regard to observing the two-minute silence during Remembrance Day, the behaviour of the parents – as with displaying the flag on Liberation Day – sets the example ( $B = 1.18$ ). In line with our expectations, a higher education has an effect on frequently observing two minutes of silence, although that effect is not very large ( $B = 0.15$ ). Both denomination and church attendance are significantly related to observing the two-minute silence on 4 May. Again, Protestants are more likely to observe two minutes of silence than Catholics on Remembrance Day. People with no denomination are now in between Catholics and Protestants in their likelihood to observe this silence, in line with the hypothesis.

As with flag display, patriotism has the expected positive effect ( $B = 0.24$ ). Chauvinism, however, has a negative effect on the observance of the two-minute silence on 4 May ( $B = -0.22$ ). Of the control characteristics, in particular the WWII cohort is more likely to observe two minutes of silence. We also find a positive effect of urbanization. The effect of ethnicity is unexpected; once controlled for the other characteristics, natives are *less* likely to observe two minutes of silence. However, in a model without parents' behaviour, natives are more likely than non-natives to observe two minutes of silence.

#### 4.4. Queen's day

When we look at the likelihood of people having watched the Queen's public tour on Queen's Day versus the likelihood of them not having done so, once again, parents are of decisive importance. The stronger parents' inclination towards nationalism, the greater the chance of watching the royal tour on April 30 ( $B = 0.33$ ). Contrary to our hypothesis, education has no (negative) effect on watching the event (even without the nationalist attitudes in the model). Denomination does, with Protestants more likely to follow the Queen on Queen's Day than Catholics, who are more likely to do so than people with no religious denomination. Moreover, people who attend church more often are more likely to watch the Queen. Only patriotism stimulates watching the royal public tour on April 30 ( $B = 0.56$ ), chauvinism not. The effects of control characteristics show that as people age, they are more likely to watch the Queen's public tour on Queen's Day ( $B = 0.36$ ). Also, this likelihood is smaller for men than for women ( $B = -0.93$ ). Finally, urbanization has a positive effect. For an overview of the results and formulated hypotheses, we refer to Table 5.



**Table 5**

Overview of the results and hypotheses.

	Flag possession	Hanging the flag on liberation day	Observing silence on Remembrance Day	Watching the Queen on Queen's day
Parental socialization	+	+	+	+
	( <i>H supported</i> )	( <i>H supported</i> )	( <i>H supported</i> )	( <i>H supported</i> )
Educational socialization	0	–	+	0
	( <i>H not formulated</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )	( <i>H supported</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )
Religious socialization				
<i>Denomination</i>	Protestant > Catholic, None < Catholic ( <i>H supported for Prot./Cath., H rejected for None/Cath.</i> )	Protestant > Catholic, None = Catholic ( <i>H supported for Prot./Cath., H rejected for None/Cath.</i> )	Protestant > Catholic, None > Catholic ( <i>H supported</i> )	Protestant > Catholic, None < Catholic ( <i>H supported for Prot./Cath., H rejected for None/Cath.</i> )
<i>Controlled for Church Attendance</i>	+	0	+	+
Nationalist attitudes				
<i>Patriotism</i>	+	+	+	+
	( <i>H supported</i> )	( <i>H supported</i> )	( <i>H supported</i> )	( <i>H supported</i> )
<i>Chauvinism</i>	0	0	–	0
	( <i>H rejected</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )
<i>Chauvinism stronger</i>	( <i>H rejected</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )	( <i>H rejected</i> )

Note: + positive association; – negative association; 0 no significant association; H Hypothesis.

(Source: LISS data 'National cultural consumption' 2011, N = 4559.)

## 5. Conclusion and discussion

Notwithstanding that national celebrations and commemorations might refer to days in the far past, this study has shown that current populations largely follow examples from their parents. Most of those parents have not witnessed the Second World War in the Netherlands, but still their national day participation in the past by hanging the Dutch flag or observing two minutes of silence is strongly associated with their children's participation in national celebrations and commemorations. While previous research has shown that parents' ethnic socialization is positively related to children's favourable in-group attitudes and in-group oriented ethnic behaviours among ethnic minorities, this study demonstrated that similar processes are at play among the majority population. National socialization among majority members has received little academic attention, but our findings suggest that also in this case parental socialization is crucial. This finding adds to the overall socialization literature showing that parental examples are crucial, like for example in voting behaviour, volunteering, religiosity or a wide range of attitudes (Alwin, 1984; Glass et al., 1986; Kelley and De Graaf, 1997; Achen, 2002; Jaspers et al., 2008; Hooghe and Boonen, 2015). We have interpreted our findings mainly in light of exemplary behaviour of the parents, but the effects may also include, amongst others, passing of norms, the extent of conversations about the topic and nonverbal communication. This also implies that the findings here are only a small or perhaps minimum level of parental socialization. Given the general finding on parental socialization, it becomes important to answer the question for who the parents may have a larger or smaller effect. Is it for example smaller when schooling is more successful? In this contribution, socialization through school has a much less apparent effect than the parents. Although a higher education is associated with more frequent observance of the two-minute silence on Remembrance Day, it is not associated to increased flag display on Liberation Day or less interest for the Queen, what we had anticipated. The positive relationship between education and observing two minutes of silence is explained by a longer socialization through democratic values. The absence of the relation between education and hanging a flag on Liberation Day may be due to the perception among the higher educated that hanging the Dutch flag is as an act of displaying nationalist attitudes too strongly, with a risk of signalling the exclusion of out-groups, instead of showing support for core values of Liberation Day. However, the finding that higher educated do follow the Queen as often as the lower educated implies that our proposition that higher educated are more critical of the monarchy than lower educated has to be reconsidered. It is highly interesting to study cross-nationally to what extent such an educational divide is absent in other monarchies as well. That said, our finding that national parental socialization has stronger effects than school socialization is in line with research on ethnic minority's ethnic or racial socialization (e.g. Hughes et al., 2006; Lee and Quintana, 2005). It is unfortunate that we cannot separate private and public celebrations in this study, and therefore we cannot accurately distinguish the resource-enhancing explanation from the exposure to social norms explanation of schooling. We do note that most studies do not disentangle these two mechanisms, but it would be highly interesting to focus on this in future research (and not only in the field of national day research). Following that path of research would also make it feasible to study to what extent the effects of education can be explained by the theoretical idea that public participation in particular is a form of high culture among the higher educated.

Religious integration turns out to be relevant for the extent that people participate in the national commemorations and celebrations. The role of integration in religious groups manifests itself in all three celebrations and commemoration we studied here, with Protestants participating strongest in the national days, in accordance with the positive values in Dutch Protestantism about the nation and the monarchy. Moreover, we found that the more often one attends church, the more

often one possesses a flag, observes two minutes of silence of Remembrance Day, and watches the Queen on Queen's Day. Further investigation would be required to examine not only the integrating function of religion, but also the extent of its socializing role. For this purpose, it would be particularly interesting to study the degree of participation in national celebration and commemorations of people who have left the church.

With regard to the role of nationalist attitudes, mainly patriotic attitudes have an effect on participation in national celebrations and commemorations. The probability of owning and hanging a flag rises considerably when one is more patriotic. Also, people with patriotic attitudes are more likely to participate in the national days. Chauvinism had no positive effect on either of the behaviours of the study. In fact, chauvinism decreased the likelihood of observing two minutes of silence. In line with the findings from Skitka (2005) on US flag displaying behaviour, we conclude that current celebrations and commemorations in the Netherlands are more characterized by their appeal to patriotic people, and not necessarily to chauvinists, regarded as 'hard core' nationalists. These days then seem to offer a stimulus for inclusive solidarity with no place for exclusionism of out-groups in order to strengthen in-group solidarity. With that remark we return to the first sentences of this article that national celebrations and commemorations are often thought of to be able to increase national cohesion. In this article, we assumed the reversed causal order and examined what explanations are empirically associated to participation in the national days. A crucial question that remains is whether participation in these national celebrations and commemorations actually increases national pride, patriotism and national cohesion. A recent study on the role of sports successes in national pride shows that more frequent watching of Olympic games is associated with more national pride, around these games (Billings et al., 2013), but also here the causality is inconclusive. Elling, Van Hilvoorde, and Van den Dool (2012) have used a longitudinal design and showed that international sports successes increase temporarily pride in sports achievements, but did not affect national pride that was found to be relatively stable over the period. Van Hilvoorde et al. (2010: 87) concluded that "a national sense of belonging is a necessary condition that precedes rather than results from sport-related pride". As we have examined behaviours that can be done individually in one's own home, it seems less likely that this would increase people's attitudes towards the nation. Rather, it seems that people display these behaviours because they already identify with and are proud of their nation. For future research it would be interesting to disentangle this better and to examine in particular differences between private and public behaviours.

We anticipate that our key findings on the role of socialization and nationalist attitudes will also apply in other countries. Elgenius (2011) showed recently that national days are not easily exported to other countries. For example, liberation days are not so strongly institutionalized in other countries as it is in the Netherlands, but it is of interest to find to what extent participation in e.g. Memorial Day in the US knows comparable explanations. In many other countries, national days relate to establishing independence (Independence Day in the US (July, 4)) or a revolution (Bastille Day in France, July 14). We think that for understanding the likelihood of commemorating or celebrating these days, the model tested here can be applied as well. It would be especially interesting to create an opportunity to compare between countries the participation in national days, comparing between countries the relevance of socialization versus nationalist attitudes, making these relations conditional on, for example, the political nationalist discourse. Moreover, it would offer an interesting opportunity to study the relevance of differences between countries in school socialization via rites as flag raising or singing the national anthem. A cross-national comparison would also be relevant with a focus on national days remembering a more past event versus days relating to more recent events, such as the Restored Independence Day that was introduced in the 1990s in the Baltic states Estonia and Latvia. Slovakia has the 'Day of the Establishment of the Slovak Republic' to celebrate the recent dissolution of Czechoslovakia. Germany celebrates since the fall of the Berlin wall on November 9 the German reunification. These would all be relevant examples to test the model we developed here.

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