

## **Reading/Discussion Questions for October 29**

### **17.042 Citizenship and Pluralism**

1. In reflecting on the history of the term “nation,” Habermas notes two different usages: nation as a community of people of the same descent and nation as a community of citizens. What are the main differences in these two usages of the term “nation”?
2. In distinguishing between liberal and republican models of citizenship, Habermas notes one particular advantage of the republican model. What is that advantage?
3. Habermas maintains that democratic citizenship must be rooted in a common *political* (as opposed to ethnic) culture. Why does he think this? Do you agree?
4. How does Habermas think we can justify the priority of special membership-based duties over universal obligations to all human beings? How does he think restrictions on immigration or immigrants’ rights can be justified?
5. Hollinger discusses and endorses a view he calls “liberal nationalism.” In what ways is “liberal nationalism” liberal, and in what ways is it nationalist?
6. Why, in Hollinger’s view, is it important to affirm national solidarity? What purpose does a strong sense of national solidarity serve?
7. Hollinger distinguishes between cosmopolitanism, universalism, and pluralism. What is the difference between cosmopolitanism and universalism? Between cosmopolitanism and pluralism? Is cosmopolitanism consistent with affirming national solidarity in his view?
8. Smith observes that U.S. citizenship laws have always expressed illiberal and undemocratic “ascriptive myths” of U.S. civic identity. For example, both Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson appealed to doctrines of scientific racism in defining what it meant to be an American. Why have such ascriptive views been persistently attractive throughout American history?
9. In Smith’s view, where do liberal universalist and pluralist views of citizenship fall short? What is the conception of citizenship that Smith endorses? Why does he think his conception is superior to the existing alternatives? Do you agree?