

Hong Do and Cristina Astier*

‘Not a Guest in My Country’: Immigration Background, Social Hierarchies, and the Fundamental Interest in ‘Being at Home’

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Abstract: The prevailing belief, both within the immigration literature and in current political debate, is that the cornerstone of resolving immigration issues is the attainment of citizenship. In contrast, this article delves deeper into the plight of citizens with a perceived immigration background. We argue that formal equal citizenship does not alleviate the morally objectionable patterns of social inequality experienced by these citizens. To elaborate further, we insist that citizens with a perceived immigration background are often not treated equally by social institutions or by their fellow citizens. To address this concern, we argue that these citizens have a claim against being treated as strangers, aliens, and nonmembers of society, which is grounded in the public and equal advancement of the fundamental interest in ‘being at home’.

Keywords: immigration background; nonmembership; status hierarchy; formal equal citizenship; being at home

‘You are not from here, right?’ came up with nagging regularity every time I started one of those casual conversations with strangers that seemed as harmless in the way they started as they risked turning awkward, the longer they lasted. Already then, I resented the unspoken hierarchy between those who acquired the ‘from here’ title by birth, and those who, betrayed by their accents, would have to justify their presence in the city.

– Extract from Lea Ypi’s discussion of her forthcoming book *Indignity*.

***Corresponding author: Cristina Astier**, Department of Law, Pompeu Fabra University, Calle Ramón Trias Fargas 25-27, 08005 Barcelona, Spain, E-mail: cristina.astier@upf.edu. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7385-4072>

Hong Do, Political Science Department, Central European University, Quellenstraße 51, 1100 Vienna, Austria, E-mail: do_hong@phd.ceu.edu. <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1237-736X>

1 Introduction

According to the *Longitudinal Study of the Second Generation in Spain* (ILSEG) (Portes et al. 2016), when asked ‘Which nationality do you identify with?’ 51.42 % of adolescent children born outside Spain of immigrant parents, who later acquired Spanish nationality (living in Madrid or Barcelona), said that they identified neither with Spanish nor with Catalan nationality. However, when the same question was posed to adolescent children born in Spain of immigrant parents, 75.32 % said that they identified with Spanish nationality and 7.38 % with Catalan nationality. The study reports these data as very positive in terms of the integration of second generations in the country where they live. When confronted with the question of whether they ‘felt discriminated against in the last three years’, 94.9 % of children of immigrant parents answered that they either never or seldom felt discriminated against, while this was the case for 93.9 % of the nonimmigrants who were questioned (Aparicio and Portes 2014). These data show that the issue of discrimination was generally not worrisome, neither for adolescents born in Spain of immigrant parents, nor for adolescents born in Spain of native parents. This question does not, however, separately report on the views of adolescents who were born outside Spain and became citizens there at a young age (before 12). Preliminarily published in 2013 and published again in 2017, this study constituted the first representative study focusing on second generations, that is, the children of immigrant parents who chose Spain as their host country. This report uses a broad concept of ‘second-generation’ that included both immigrants’ children who were born in the host country, and children who moved with their parents to the host country before the age of 12.

The study ran for eight years, with more than 7,000 people interviewed, first in 2008 and then again in 2012, four years later. The children were interviewed at public schools in Madrid and Barcelona. However, the apparently positive data shown by the report should be subjected to further reflection. While it seems that the perception of discrimination is a highly positive one, the answers regarding identification and belonging belie a more complex reality. In fact, some sociologists have pointed out that measuring self-reported discrimination with questionnaires faces various challenges that would be better overcome using qualitative methods such as narrative biographies, since the results strongly depend on how the inquiry is conducted and differ significantly from those of a historical-biographical analysis (Parella 2018). Identification with and belonging to a political community are influenced by complex variables, among these the process of acquiring the nationality of the country of residence. This mechanism is left to the discretion of each state. State institutions thus exercise an *expressivist* function when applying

immigration policies, which pervasively affects both the integration of people into their new society and the focus of this article, that is, the interest of second generations in ‘being at home’.

Consequently, different countries have established different procedures for becoming a citizen. For instance, the Spanish Civil Code, Article 22, modified by law 36/2002, establishes that children born in Spain can be granted Spanish nationality if either at least one parent has Spanish nationality, or the newborn resides, uninterruptedly, for one year in the country after birth. If neither parent has Spanish nationality, these children will automatically acquire their parents’ nationality, except in cases in which either both parents were stateless or their origin cannot be established. Under these conditions, the newborn will be assigned Spanish nationality. This system is thus based on what is legally established as the right to nationality by blood (*ius sanguinis*) rather than the right to nationality by place of birth (*ius soli*). The latter is nevertheless the criteria that has been followed by many countries, including the United States. Germany is an example of a transition from *ius sanguinis*, which was its process until 1999. After that, the law was changed in 2000 to use *ius solis* as the grounds for acquiring German nationality. This change has been interpreted as acknowledging the transformation of German society due to postwar migration (Schönwälder and Triadafilopoulos 2012).

As Joseph Carens argues in his seminal book *The Ethics of Immigration* (2013) – in which he explores the question of who belongs to a country, to a state, to a political community, that is, who is a citizen – the data provided above shows that although legally each democracy is free to establish its own criteria by which an individual becomes a citizen, the normative reflection on the moral duties of states *vis-à-vis* both individuals born in the state’s territory and those wishing to live there is universal. Carens’s argument is based on different considerations, but at its core is the view that babies should be granted birthright citizenship, since the connections established with the political community they are born into have moral relevance (2013, 22). Carens argues that ‘children who are born in a democratic state in which their parents have settled as legal immigrants should acquire citizenship automatically at birth because they too, have sufficient *ties to the community to merit recognition as members*’ (Carens 2013, 30, italics added).

In this article, we endorse Carens’s idea of the moral relevance of the connections established within the political community that one is born into. Specifically, we will argue that second-generation children are not only morally entitled to birthright citizenship for legal, democratic, and moral reasons; but beyond their legal rights, they have an additional claim to be treated as an equal member of the political community, both by institutions and by their fellow citizens, that is, they

have an interest in ‘being at home’ in their own countries, rather than being treated as a permanent stranger.

This article argues that citizens with a perceived immigration background who are treated as nonmembers, as strangers, as alien to the political community where they were born or have lived from a young age, suffer a distinctive moral wrong that is irreducible to other social inequalities. Citizens subjected to this social inequality are subsumed to others’ interests and judgements about how the society they live in ought to be arranged. Our proposed solution to this problem is a *dual aspect* interpretation of the metaphor ‘being at home’, as both a social and an institutional mechanism to affect and condition social norms. Accordingly, this article is divided into three sections: Section 1 focuses on what it means to say that people with a perceived immigration background are treated differently from their fellow citizens and specifies who is subjected to this differential treatment. Section 2 examines whether this differential treatment is morally objectionable, that is to say, whether this inequality is wrong and, derivatively, whether it is wrong because of the status hierarchy it generates between those who are treated as members and others who are treated as nonmembers. Finally, Section 3 analyses whether an interpretation of Thomas Christiano’s metaphor of ‘being at home’ as a dual aspect conception of the public and equal advancement of this fundamental interest, first, goes beyond formal equal citizenship and, second, might remedy the moral objectionability of being treated as a stranger or a guest in one’s own home.

2 The Phenomenon: Perpetual Guests

In this section, we aim to clarify what it means to be treated as a guest in one’s own country and who is subjected to this treatment. To do so, we will develop a twofold analysis: first, we focus on what it means to be treated as a person with a perceived immigration background and how this differs from other social inequalities. Second, we distinguish between three types of minority groups that may be perceived as being of immigrant descent or suffer other forms of social inequality: national minorities, racial minorities, and the indigenous populations of settler colonies. Within this framework, we discuss why some of these individuals suffer from other social inequalities, for example, marginalization and racialization, while others do not, for example, white individuals, and how this relates to being categorized as individuals with a perceived immigration background. Finally, in order to analyse how different social inequalities might be experienced by groups with different characteristics, we discuss the case of rich individuals with a perceived immigration background.

2.1 Membership, Social Inequalities, and Visual Identities

In her 1998 book *Forever Foreigners or Honorary Whites? The Asian Ethnic Experience Today*, Mia Tuan examines from a sociological perspective the experiences of integration, for example, acceptance into the American mainstream, identification, and racialization effects in the everyday experiences of Asian Americans, or – in her terminology – Asian ethnics (and their descendants) in the United States. Throughout her book, she analyses the similarities between these stories of racialization and the stories of – in her terminology – Black Americans. One relevant aspect of this comparison, according to Tuan, is that Asian ethnics and Black Americans have experienced different racialization processes. According to Tuan, while Asian ethnics are viewed as ‘others’ and as foreigners, Black Americans are not seen as foreigners in American society. But what does it mean to say that an individual is treated as a nonmember of her society, as a foreigner? And in addition, how does this inegalitarian treatment differ from the other social inequalities that both Asian ethnics and Black Americans experience?

However, social inequalities such as discrimination, unequal opportunities of access to education and valuable social positions, and differences in social status and standing cut across different minorities within political communities. In addition, as described in Tuan’s book, experiences of racialization impact not just one specific ethnic group or minority, but a variety of them. In the United States, both Asian ethnics and Black Americans are subjected to various social inequalities, but as Tuan argues, only the former are subjected to unequal treatment as nonmembers of the political community. At this point, it seems clear that we can distinguish between being categorized as part of an ethnic group or race and being treated as a stranger.¹

Importantly, it should be noticed that although this difference can be established for the sake of clarification, stories show that the reality is more complex and there are relevant intersections within both categories that leave individuals subjected to different social inequalities. At this point, one could say that being categorized as part of a race or ethnic group pervasively determines the relationships of those labelled as belonging to a minority group within their political community. This categorization may determine, in addition, the political community of those seen as belonging to a specific minority group. This raises difficulties, both in terms of integration and avoiding segregation within a community, and also in terms of establishing whether the moral relevance of relating with others within a political community requires individuals to establish relations with members of other political communities

¹ One main example of this difference is that of national minorities, as discussed in the next section, when answering the question of who is subjected to being perceived as a permanent stranger in her own country.

within the same territory, for example, with other members of the state. As mentioned in our introduction, Carens's main justification for demanding the automatic acquisition of birthright citizenship by every baby born in a state's territory, besides reasons of equal citizenship and respect for individuals' rights, is the moral relevance of relationships to the community one is born into. Additionally, relationships within the political community should be both recognized and protected by law. However, when specifying what types of relations with one's community should be in place, Carens remains unspecific, although he admits that such connection requirements may 'legitimately involve only certain forms of connection to the community' (Carens 2013, 26).

Returning to our example of Black Americans and Asian ethnics (or Asian Americans), it has been said that while Black Americans experience discrimination in terms of being categorized as a racial group – that is, being racialized – luckily, they are not perceived as strangers by their fellow Americans. Here one could say that to be assigned to such a category, and to be discriminated on those grounds, may relevantly determine the sorts of relationships they establish with different communities within their state. Unfortunately, we do not have enough space here to do justice to this complex question. Instead, we are focusing on how being considered as part of a minority group in such a way that one is treated as a permanent guest in one's own country is distinct from and irreducible to other social inequalities experienced by racialized collectives, such as Black Americans and Asian ethnics in the United States, and individuals subjected to different types of intersecting social inequalities.

Now, following Carens's account of birthright citizenship based on the moral relevance of community connections, as a member of a political community, a newborn has an interest in being perceived as part of the community, in having her voice heard, in being recognized by others, and in receiving acknowledgement that her voice matters. To not be granted any of these fundamental interests is to be treated as a nonmember of the community, as alien to it, as a stranger. This individual's identity – for example, the identity of an Asian ethnic – is relevantly conditioned by how she is seen by others in her political community as well as how she sees herself (Carens 2013, 30). Noticeably, a distinct element which has a pervasive impact on identity construction for individuals who are treated as strangers, as aliens by their own community, is what Alcoff (2006) calls 'visual identities'.

According to Alcoff (2006, 8), 'the visible is a sign' and it determines one's relationships with the community, that is, how individuals are seen by others and by themselves, and thus how they construct their identity and identification in their new community. They need not to be seen as different from other members of the community – a white community in the case analysed by Martín Alcoff – is so

powerful that, as she describes it, individuals who are not white in a society where to be white is to be a member, change their physical traits, for example, Asian ethnics change the shape of their eyes by injecting silicon around them (Alcoff 2006, 8). In this context, Martín Alcoff puts identities at the centre, making them visible to capture how they operate in modern societies. Focusing on gender and race, she argues that identities play a fundamental role in determining self-projection, identity anxieties, and the material inscription of social violence (Alcoff 2006, 9). However, this is not all there is; importantly, she affirms that ‘identities are grounded in social locations’ (Alcoff 2006, 9), and this core feature is central to this distinctive approach to identities. Roughly, she describes social locations as a two dimensional. First, they refer to bodies, to the embodiment of identity traits, since identity cannot be separated from the body. Second, they refer to social contexts, that is, to the context of reciprocal recognition between members of the community. As Martín Alcoff argues, ‘identity necessarily involves the individual in a collective’ (2006, 114); individuals treated as nonmembers of their communities thus experience a social inequality distinct from discrimination, for example, racial discrimination in the case of racial identities. Importantly, those treated as strangers, as alien to their societies, as permanent guests, may or may not experience, in addition, discrimination in virtue of their visual identities. However, it is their inability or struggle, if we think about the best scenario, to construct both their identity and individual agency within their new society or the society they were born into, which constitutes the core difficulty experienced by those subjected to this inegalitarian treatment.

Finally, an additional consideration that plays a role in determining the identification, identity construction, and integration, among other things, of second generations in the new community where their parents decided to settle is the fact that, unlike their parents, they did not get to choose this new society. Plausibly, this is the case both for children born in the new community and for children who arrived at a later age (as per the definition of second generations proposed in Section 1, before they are 12). While this decision was taken by their parents, second generations will be burdened with the tensions that having different values, religions, conceptions of the good, etc. may generate. In some cases, as pointed out by Martín Alcoff, these differences will even be perceived as conflicting with those held by other citizens. This scenario makes the case for claiming that, despite the cultural differences between second generations and the children of parents who are not new to the community – who are treated as members – children born in a community, regardless of their cultural heritage, share a fundamental interest in being recognized by other members of the community and having their voice heard. Sections 2 and 3 of this article delve deeper into this fundamental interest and, more importantly, into the obstacles that second generations specifically face.

2.2 Perceived Immigration Background, National Minorities, and Socioeconomic Advantages

Second-generation immigrants are subjected to being treated as nonmembers of the communities they are born into. Nevertheless, there are at least two more elements which render this phenomenon more complex. First, there are other collectives, which are not second generations and which are or may be subjected to this inegalitarian treatment, that is, they are treated as outsiders. And second, second-generation immigrants' position in the status hierarchy may be impacted by their being perceived as individuals with an immigration background in different ways, as a result of further social inequalities. This section aims to illustrate this complexity by focusing on different cases of collectives that are (i) subjected to being treated as aliens in their own societies, and (ii), at different positions in the status hierarchy, affected not only by their perceived immigration background but also by other socioeconomic factors. To do so, we will first describe two opposite cases: while there are minorities who are subjected to inegalitarian treatment, for example, some national minorities, there is an important distinction between those who are subjected to unequal treatment in the sense of having their interests treated with less regard, and those, such as Blacks in South Africa, who have experienced being treated as nonmembers, as outsiders to the community, in virtue of racialization. In addition, in the latter case, these individuals were not only perceived as native foreigners but were also banned from any type of political activity for years. Second, this section briefly discusses a possible counterargument to the general argument of this article: how being in a good social position contributes to mitigating unequal treatment as a permanent guest in one's own country. We will illustrate this point with two examples: first, the case of being from an affluent family and, second, how being perceived as a foreigner may secure one a higher position in the status hierarchy in certain societies.

2.3 National Minorities and Indigenous Citizens of Settler Colonies

Second generations share with other minorities experiences of marginalization within their own political communities, such as discrimination based on racialization and/or not being part of the cultural mainstream. Now, as described before, not all minorities are subjected to the same social inequalities. While second generations and some racialized minorities might experience unequal treatment as nonmembers of their communities, as alien to them (as in the case of the Asian ethnics described by

Tuan), certain national minorities and indigenous populations of settler colonies are in turn subjected to marginalization and different types of discrimination, but not to being treated as alien to the community. The latter collectives are thus positioned low in the status hierarchy, but they are neither affected nor downgraded by the nonmembership condition. Although they are perceived as having a lower status, they are treated as *their* people.

Although most contexts present their own nuances and complexities, it is fair to say that in many cases, national minorities are *de jure* members of the political community, that is, they have acquired fully formal equal citizenship, which they share with their fellow citizens. Importantly, in some contexts, citizens from different minorities within these communities do not ascribe to the cultural mainstream. National minorities have been defined in the literature as cultural groups that, while previously having both a territory and institutions of self-government, are now controlled by institutions where another culture predominates.² In Europe documented national minorities include the Corsicans and Bretons of France. Some national minorities may share this feature with second generations who retain cultural, linguistic, or social connections to their immigrant background. In this sense, one shared challenge experienced both by second generations and by other minorities who do not share the mainstream culture or language, or just look different, is that they face social stigma. This stigma is often based on differences between the mainstream culture and those minorities' cultural heritage. In addition, in some cases those minorities may experience unequal access to quality schooling and language support services tailored to their needs. Moreover, these citizens, although very different and heterogeneous, often encounter social exclusion due to cultural differences, that is, being portrayed as threats to the mainstream cultural identity.

Together with national minorities, another similar case is that of indigenous citizens of settler colonies. These collectives share subjection to social inequalities both with second generations and with national minorities. Indigenous citizens are native to a specific region where the political community is located, as in the case of aboriginals in Canada. They often struggle to maintain their own traditional ways of life and ask for respect, recognition, and the self-government of their communities. Individuals from any of these three collectives may look different and hold different values, religions, and/or conceptions of the good from the majority.

Considering this context, one could say that both national minorities and the indigenous citizens of settler colonies are treated with less concern and respect than their fellow citizens: a claim which is similar to the one advanced by second

² For a full argument and the distinction between national minorities and ethnic minorities, see Kymlicka (2008).

generations with a perceived immigration background. However, despite this shared unequal treatment, including marginalization and cultural differences, and unlike people of immigrant descent, in most cases neither national minorities nor indigenous citizens of settler colonies are perceived as nonmembers or as strangers within their societies. Although they may face shared social inequalities jointly with individuals with a perceived immigration background, neither of these collectives is treated as alien to their society, to their political community. Both national minorities and indigenous citizens of settler colonies are indeed part of the population who share a 'home' together.³ While these collectives share a common ground for relating to others as equal citizens, as equal members of the community, individuals with a perceived immigration background do not have this capacity to relate to other community members as equals.

This inability to relate to others as equal members of the political community is reflected in these individuals' position in the status hierarchy. Continuing with the examples above, both national minorities and indigenous citizens of settler colonies, especially in the case of aboriginals in Canada, would have been positioned at the bottom of the status hierarchies within their political societies, as per their socio-economic status; however, unlike people with a perceived immigration background, their position in the status hierarchy is improved due to their condition as members of the political community. In the next section, we first argue that there is a distinctive hierarchy between members and nonmembers of a political community and, second, we address possible concerns with the moral objectionability of these hierarchies for people who experience unequal treatment in virtue of their perceived immigration background and its potential effects.

Importantly, here we need to mention one counterexample to the generalization made about national minorities and indigenous citizens of settler colonies: the case of Black people in Apartheid South Africa. Briefly, during Apartheid, the Black people of South Africa were banned not only from being recognized as citizens, as members of their society, let alone equal members, but from even exercising their political rights and liberties. During the 20th century, Black South Africans were treated as noncitizens, as foreigners, as strangers, both legally and socially in their own home. They were considered outsiders, people with an alien culture and, as such, they were

³ We acknowledge that in practice the cases of national minorities and indigenous peoples in settler colonies involve greater complexity than suggested here. In settler colonial contexts, for instance, indigenous populations have often faced displacement and exclusion, and at times have been governed under separate legal systems (e.g., American Indian law), which has positioned them as internal 'others' or as governed communities outside the bounds of equal citizenship. A similar complexity arises in the case of national minorities, where the relationship to the broader political community may also be ambivalent. We thank one reviewer for highlighting these important nuances.

kept away from any type of political power or institution, influence, or political life. Like second generations in other societies, they were treated as strangers and thus did not have the capacity to relate as equals to other members of their political community.

2.4 Rich People and Superior Nonmembers

To give a more complete image of a complex phenomenon, while to be subjected to inequalitarian treatment as nonmembers of the political community may be a common denominator for individuals with a perceived immigration background, these individuals are part of a heterogenous and complex collective. Thus, not all members are subjected to the same inequalities. Now, one could imagine at least two different cases: (i) the case of an individual with a perceived immigration background who, nevertheless, is rich; and (ii) the case of an individual who experiences a higher social status precisely in virtue of her perceived immigration background.

Regarding the first case, one could argue that we do not have reasons to be concerned about those who enjoy higher socioeconomic resources, since they have much more political and economic power and influence than their fellow citizens. This is a pressing argument, as these inequalities are, most of the time, difficult to justify.⁴ They might argue that, in fact, socioeconomically advanced citizens with a perceived immigration background being treated as aliens by their fellow citizens does not make them worse off than others in terms of either economic or political power. On the contrary, the rich footballer Mesut Özil once said: 'I am German when we win, but I am an immigrant when we lose' (Bryant 2018). This case contrasts with that of marginalized members of a political community, such as national minorities, who are nevertheless considered *de facto* equal citizens and treated as equal members. However, while rich individuals with a perceived immigration background might advance their position in status hierarchies in virtue of their socioeconomic advantage, their general position is pervasively determined by their condition as nonmembers of the political community. In sum, the socioeconomic advantage of these cases, as in the example of the rich footballer, have no decisive effect on the treatment of these individuals as nonmembers of the political community or on their position in the hierarchy between members and nonmembers.

While socioeconomic advantage may mitigate or even avoid the marginalization and social discrimination experienced by disadvantaged individuals with a

⁴ See Scanlon (2018) for an enlightening debate on equality of opportunity, political influence, and social inequalities in desirable social positions and their derivative outcomes, including influence, power, and material goods.

perceived immigration background, it plays no decisive role in being treated as a nonmember of one's political community. It may be said, therefore, that some of the effects (including political influence) of not having the capacity to relate to others as equals due to being perceived as a nonmember of the political community in this case, may be limited, though not reversed, by other socioeconomic advantages.

Now, the second case is intended to be discussed as a counterexample to our main claim. While the main argument of this section holds that individuals with a perceived immigration background are treated as nonmembers of their political communities, which constitutes a distinctive type of social inequality and generates a pervasive hierarchy between members and nonmembers, this case aims to challenge the main argument by raising the opposite phenomenon. In this example, it is precisely the perceived immigration background of an individual that yields her higher position on the social ladder. Now, imagine a society that treats those perceived as aliens, as strangers to that society, much better than others. These individuals receive better treatment than those who are perceived as members of that society. A salient example is that of countries with a colonial past. In some of these countries, those perceived as members of a foreign society, for instance as citizens of the former colonial country, may receive preferential treatment over members.

This advantage for citizens of the former colony may include having better chances in the job market than members. An illustration of this case may be to hire someone who looks foreign to teach English instead of someone who is perceived as a member of the community. While this second case is not difficult to imagine, it will be an overstatement to say that these individuals, advantaged in some respects by their perceived immigration background, would also be advantaged in the political realm.

Although, in this example, these individuals may enjoy better chances of having a well-paid job, and thus may enjoy some socioeconomic advantages, it is far from clear whether they will be considered to be more, if at all, suitable for positions in political institutions or if they will exercise any type of political influence in virtue of being perceived as nonmembers. While hierarchies are reflected in individuals at the bottom or the top of the social ladder, that is, in those who are advantaged and those who are disadvantaged both socioeconomically and politically, they are also reflected in individuals who relate as superiors and inferiors within political communities. This latter characteristic of hierarchies, we submit, is what is at stake in granting equal treatment as members of society to those with a perceived immigration background.

These two cases, the case of a rich individual with an immigration background and the case of someone who is favoured precisely due to her perceived alien background, pose challenges to our hypothesis, according to which individuals with a perceived immigration background are disadvantaged in relation to other individuals who are free from this type of stigma. However, one could reply that it is

still the case that, although both scenarios describe puzzling contexts for those who commit to overall social equality, albeit for different reasons, it can be said that there is a distinctive type of egalitarian treatment, reflected by the claim that one should not be treated as alien to or a nonmember of one's own society. Below we argue that this claim remains at the core of social egalitarian concerns, once claims against other inequalities have been tempered.

3 The Problem: Nonmembership as a Moral Wrong

The main purpose of this section is to show the following. First, moral concerns raised by people with a perceived immigration background being treated as nonmembers of or alien to their society are distinct from other social determinants (education, family reputation, gender, race, etc.) and both this type of unequal treatment and various social determinants establish differences in social status. Second, unequal treatment of individuals with a perceived immigration background as nonmembers of or guests in their own societies contributes to generating status hierarchies, which in turn situate these individuals as inferior to those of their fellow citizens who are treated as members. Here, our hypothesis is twofold: on the one hand, we will argue that individuals with a perceived immigration background who experience treatment as nonmembers are both treated and relate to other individuals within their society as inferiors. On the other hand, we hold that these status inequalities and egalitarian relations expose individuals with a perceived immigration background to unwelcome consequences. These repercussions may compromise the foundational conditions required for satisfying the fundamental interest of these individuals in 'being at home': interests that individuals who are free and equal members ought to enjoy in an egalitarian society. This section will show that not being treated as a nonmember and not establishing relationships as an inferior within one's political community are two of the main interests of every citizen, but particularly of people with a perceived immigration background.

3.1 Disadvantages, Microaggressions, and 'Where Are You Really From?' Questions

In this first part of the section, we argue that citizens with a perceived immigration background are especially disadvantaged in relation to their co-citizens, with whom they share their citizenship status but no distinctive status as members. As mentioned in Section 1, this disadvantage consists in being treated as a nonmember of the community, as a permanent guest in one's own society. This unequal treatment

is manifested in status hierarchies and, derivatively, in citizens relating as inferiors and superiors within the same political community. Now, at this point someone could ask what is morally wrong with treating others as alien to one's society in virtue of their perceived immigration background. Is labelling someone on the basis of their perceived immigration background inherently harmful to them? Does this labelling define these individuals' position and standing within the status hierarchy? If so, then how? Consequently, would this contribute to situating someone with a perceived immigration background as inferior to those who do not fall into this category? If so, then how?

Concerns with the unequal treatment and social marginalization of immigrant citizens are neither new nor exclusive to normative analysis. Sociology, political science, and interdisciplinary studies have addressed these concerns. Some of these studies have examined integration strategies as expressions of unequal treatment, derivatively generating first- and second-class citizens (de Waal 2020). As discussed in Section 1, individuals with a perceived immigration background may not share a mainstream culture, religious beliefs, or even their ethnicity with other citizens. These differences are seen as a problem for some states, generating tensions, and this perspective is thus duly reflected in institutional integration policies. This negative attitude towards diversity and the corresponding tendency towards homogeneity might be interpreted as reflected in naturalization policies and their bureaucratic processes. Long, tedious bureaucratic processes express the value of acquiring this basic right. For example, these policies may, in some cases, contribute to the stigmatization of those subjected to them, expressing first- and second-class citizenship, even though both types of individuals will enjoy legal and formal equality as citizens.⁵ In this context, formal equal citizenship which fails to recognize citizens' distinctive status as members, including the failure to provide the means for the public and equal advancement of their fundamental interests, would be insufficient to advance social equality. In addition, to the extent that it might be perceived as satisfying what equal citizenship requires, one could argue that the term conveys a poor idea of equality between fellow citizens.⁶

Additionally, integration policies that reward affiliation with the mainstream culture, language, religion, etc. convey the message that those citizens who were born into a family that historically had that culture, language, and religion are natural members of the community, while others, whose family had a different culture, language, or religion, need to earn membership of their society. In this context, although formally both types of citizens share the same legal status, they

5 For an argument that develops this idea in the case of citizenship tests, see Sharp (2022), in response to Blake (2019).

6 For another criticism of formal equal citizenship along these lines, see Sharp (2024).

may be regarded as different by the community and by those who share the mainstream elements, and thus treated unequally (de Waal 2020, 240).

This disadvantage, experienced by individuals with a perceived immigration background, that is, by those categorized as having an immigration background, has different consequences in different contexts. According to empirically informed sociological studies, in some countries, such as the Netherlands and France, a requirement of having one's voice heard is to look Dutch, to look French, to *be* Dutch, to *be* French. In addition, in order to be heard and considered for public debate, people with a perceived immigration background need to be categorized as *ideal* citizens, not just as any citizens.⁷ As a result, individuals with a perceived immigration background who do not comply with these requirements will have significant difficulties in participating in public debates, in being taken seriously, and in having their interests advanced and considered with equal regard. However, at this point it is important to highlight that the wrongness experienced by these individuals is bidirectional; that is to say, it is also experienced both by institutions and by the community, as both will be prevented from extending public debate to all *de facto* members, thus limiting the due promotion of open debate and the commitment of individuals living in the political community.

A second unwelcome situation experienced by people with a perceived immigration background is that they are exposed to microaggressions or even to banal compliments, which may or may not offend them, but which in any case show that they are not considered by their fellow citizens to be equal members of the community. Now, one could say that persistently asking where someone is from might be considered merely an innocent form of initiating a conversation. In addition, those who receive the banal compliment that they speak the local language very well, even though it is in fact their mother tongue, may or may not feel that they are being perceived as nonmembers of their society. These subtly wrong situations have been analysed by the literature on microaggressions.

The term 'microaggression', coined by Chester Pierce in 1970 to describe the subtle everyday discrimination against Black people by their white counterparts, has been used in the literature to talk about the 'degradations and put-downs experienced by members of oppressed, systematically disadvantaged or marginalized groups' (McTernan 2018, 261), which are caused by the perpetrator's unconsciously prejudiced motivation (Rini 2020, ch. 2). Now, as depicted in our example of banal compliments, one main difficulty in the analysis of microaggressions is to clearly identify what type of act qualifies as a microaggression. This ambiguity may make

7 For an empirically informed debate, see de Waal (2020, 242–3). Importantly, this author echoes the sociological literature by pointing out that this requirement for public debate is labelled as the *culturalization of citizenship*.

the case for reducing someone's experiences to mere misunderstandings or innocent mistakes by the perpetrator. Yet, according to Rini (2020, ch. 2), microaggressions are acts of degradation and put-downs when a person from an oppressed, marginalized group experiences them as such. In addition, how microaggressions are accounted for reflects our understanding of oppression.

Now, in the case above, according to this account of microaggressions, individuals with a perceived immigration background who experience either banal compliments or persistent 'Where are you from?' questions do have a claim against them, that is, against being treated unequally, and in the case at stake, as non-members of their political communities. Importantly, microaggressions structure relationships within communities and contribute not only to perpetuating the already unequal status of individuals but, when systematic, generate structures of oppression and marginalization (McTernan 2018, 269). These structures may be especially harmful for citizens who experience unequal treatment and are situated as inferiors in the status hierarchy, which in turn will be perpetuated. Finally, there are two main reasons to object to microaggressions so understood: first, their unifying condition, and second, the fact that this is a category that accompanies one for life. Additionally, according to McTernan (2018, 269–70), these acts are especially pervasive when they permeate other spheres of the individual's life. This, we submit, is the case of being treated as alien to the community, as a permanent guest in one's own country.

3.2 Status Differences, Hierarchies, and the Fundamental Interest in 'Being at Home'

Individuals with a perceived immigration background have a claim against being treated as nonmembers of their political community. They have a fundamental interest in avoiding not only stigmatization and systematic marginalization, but also less consideration and regard for their views and concerns, as well as associated difficulties in participating in public debates. People with a perceived immigration background are treated differently, and this unequal treatment as alien to their communities, as permanent guests, determines status hierarchies within the community. Differences in status are understood as categorizations for situating someone in a social ranking. However, beyond the consequences associated with inequalitarian treatment, what is morally objectionable, if anything, with these status hierarchies experienced by individuals with a perceived immigration background?

Unequal social status is typically defined as a form of social inequality that generates humiliating and stigmatizing differences in status (Scanlon 2018). The most obvious examples in the literature and in history are caste systems and relations of

bondage such as feudal relations. But, at this point, one could ask what is morally wrong with these social inequalities. From a *tout court* social egalitarian perspective, it may be said that a society where people are genuinely treated as equals is one that abolishes hierarchies of worth.⁸ Taking the case of people with a perceived immigration background, regardless of their acquisition and possession of valuable distributive goods such as income and wealth, their treatment as nonmembers, as alien to their political communities, gives us reason to argue that these individuals are considered less worthy by their fellow citizens.

Although differences in worth in a social hierarchy are complex to describe, we can affirm that, in some cases, they are partly independent from some level of valuable material goods and advantages. This idea was depicted in our example of the individual with a perceived immigration background who is rich as well as in the example in which being treated as a nonmember, as someone with immigration background, has good consequences in terms of status and social position. At this point, one could argue that what is morally objectionable about such status hierarchies is thus associated not with being treated badly, but rather with not being treated as an equal (Fourie 2012). Although not every asymmetry of power, authority, or regard constitutes a relationship of inferiority (Kolodny 2023), being perceived as a nonmember of the community, as someone low in the status hierarchy, is a violation of equal status. This violation affects egalitarian treatment, including attitudes and dispositions towards those agents, as well as their shared institutional status as equals.

Not being treated as equal members of the political community with equal civic status thus implies disregard for those individuals' interests and views, but also pervasively conditions their participation in political life and public debates within their communities, partly due to how they are perceived by others. In addition, differences in status might thus generate situations in which those treated as inferiors are unable to contribute to making collective political decisions, thus living in a community shaped by the judgements of others and hence subordinated to others.⁹ Now, one could argue that to live in a political community that fails to advance those citizens' interests, thus complying more readily with some citizens' directives than with others, absent public justification, gives those treated as less worthy a claim on others not to treat them as nonmembers.

Despite how evident, minimal, and undemanding this claim might look, the difficulty with it lies in the justification of intervening in citizens' personal lives, in

⁸ See Anderson (1999) and Scheffler (2015) for similar arguments.

⁹ For an enlightening discussion on the role that equality of power or authority between fellow citizens plays as a constitutive element of egalitarian relationships, see Miklosi 'Social Equality and Democratic Authority' (unpublished article).

individuals' conduct with their fellow citizens. It may seem too demanding to expect citizens to behave and interact with each other in certain ways. In this sense, one could argue that interactions in individuals' private lives are not a subject of normative concern. Even citizens' duty to participate politically is only an imperfect one (Mason 2012, 5). Additionally, many still assume that citizenship status, although potentially unequal, does not prevent citizens from refusing to interact with one another. It is regrettable but acceptable that certain citizens follow the law and show no interest in the affairs of society at large, as do, for example, the Amish community (Kymlicka and Norman 2000, 11). However, the claims of individuals with a perceived immigration background for being treated as members, for having their interests equally regarded, and for having an equal opportunity to have their voice heard and participate in public debates within their political community may be understood as being captured by accounts of the duties of egalitarian citizenship.

According to these accounts, one's citizenship status legally determines the rights, duties, and obligations that one owes to other co-citizens who are free and equal (Mason 2012). Thus, citizens with an immigration background are entitled to the same rights, duties, and obligations, and the same access to advantages as their peers who share the same citizenship status (Leydet 2023). Importantly, although these accounts assign duties to individuals in virtue of their citizenship – that is, in virtue of their civic status – they remain silent on what both the institutions of the political community and fellow citizens should do in cases in which individuals of the community who pertain to different social groups do not interact with each other; that is, in cases in which a group of citizens shows no regard or concern for other groups' interests and views. In this case, while citizens formally comply with the egalitarian duties they have to others in virtue of their civic status – sharing a political community and minimally recognizing other citizens' interests – they are not required to change their attitudes or dispositions towards those who are treated as nonmembers.

Now, one could say that accounts of the duties of egalitarian citizenship are not enough to address concerns with what is morally objectionable about status hierarchies in the case of individuals with a perceived immigration background. At this point, we suggest that a plausible alternative way of addressing this concern about disregard for one's interests – due to a lack of fit in the political community and a lack of connection with other members – is captured by Thomas Christiano's description of what he calls the interest in 'being at home'. Now, Christiano's account is not defined by negative claims, but rather by the proposal of a positive egalitarian condition, to wit: 'To the extent that a person sees himself as being treated as an equal, he has that sense of being properly at home in an egalitarian world' (2008, 63). Along these lines, the next section develops, first, the idea that accounts of egalitarian citizenship are not enough to account for morally objectionable status hierarchies,

and second, the idea that claims against being treated as a nonmember are instead better addressed through the metaphor of the fundamental interest in ‘being at home’. In the next section we reflect on Christiano’s metaphor, which we interpret as a claim for the institutional provision of a dual interest.

4 The Solution: The Fundamental Interest in ‘Being at Home’

In this section, we seek to expand the grounds for duties of citizenship through an interpretation of the concept of the fundamental interest in ‘being at home’. Our hypothesis is that treating others as equals in virtue of being co-citizens requires public and equal advancement of their fundamental interests, one of which is that of ‘being at home’. This interest is well grounded in the well-being of those who are in lower and higher positions in the social ranking. Accordingly, we depart from the idea, central to theories of citizenship status, that citizens have a general duty to treat each other as equals in a political community. We will argue that this framework fails to include a concern with protecting those who have a claim to live as equals in a political community and be protected against unjustified status hierarchies. Secondly, we will argue that this claim is better addressed by developing an account of ‘being at home’, which is understood as requiring a restructuring of social norms, arguing that it is not for individuals to decide whether this fundamental interest imposes duties on their peers or on the state’s institutions,¹⁰ thus involving the whole of society.

4.1 Formal Equal Citizenship Is Not Enough

It is not very controversial to say that citizens have a duty to treat their fellow citizens as equals within their political community. On some views, this minimally egalitarian requirement may be even interpreted as traditional and conservative, especially in cases in which the domain for egalitarian concerns is limited or prioritized to citizens of one’s community. However, this egalitarian requirement may be interpreted as too demanding when it concerns personal conduct and informal relations.¹¹ Therefore, one could ask: are accounts of formal equal citizenship well equipped to offer a satisfactory solution to this challenge?

¹⁰ This is in line with Schemmel’s (2021) argument for imposing duties on the state to encourage modes of association that are more conducive to equality.

¹¹ For an insightful discussion of informal hierarchies, see Threet (2022).

Being a citizen in a particular country entails rights, duties, and obligations that one owes to other co-citizens who are free and equal. There is a wide consensus in affirming that citizens, regardless of their background, should be treated as equals in political processes, before the law, and in social interactions. In this sense, one could argue that the core commitment of having equal citizenship status encompasses the equal status of citizens for sharing and influencing the political, legal, and social spheres; in other words, to not be shunned from the community. The moral wrongness experienced by individuals who are perceived as having an immigration background includes the inability to contribute to making collective political decisions, resulting in one's subordination to others, and living in a community which disregards the interests of its members, who are thus shaped by the judgements of others. While having formal voting rights, joining political parties, running for office, and expressing political views is crucial, these alone do not guarantee political equality (Mandle, forthcoming).

Now, theories of formal equal citizenship, including Andrew Mason's, situate membership of a political community at the centre of the concept of citizenship. In addition, according to Mason (2012), to be a member of a political community entails 'giving at least some weight – generally equal weight – to their interests when deliberating about what policies should be implemented or what laws should be enacted' (Mason 2012, 36).

Now, one could say that what makes a difference in Mason's account of citizenship as equal membership is that he establishes high-quality contact between citizens as a requirement for realizing the sense of belonging to the polity, besides the fair value of political liberty. To address claims against being treated as a nonmember of one's community, we should analyse interpersonal exchanges among the community members; however, it seems neither clear nor necessary to consider their quality. For instance, some may have very low-quality interpersonal exchanges with another member of her community, while recognizing them as a member with the help of institutional directives. However, this account is troubled by the situation where different social groups neither substantially interact with each other nor live parallel lives (Mason 2012, 171). Two citizens who share a political community together but have conflicting values may have cordial interactions in public and even engage with each other's views, but disregard them as unworthy of consideration, as not valuable, thus not giving them appropriate consideration, in line with what has been called the culturalization of citizenship.

To illustrate this critique, imagine the following scenario: a citizen with a perceived immigration background, an Asian ethnic, as in Mia Tuan's book, and a citizen without a perceived immigration background, an Anglo-American, live in the same neighbourhood. They are fellow citizens and members of the same political community. The Asian ethnic and the Anglo-American are each well acquainted with

the other's social group. They have a cordial and somewhat informal relationship, but not a personal one. They have conflicting values, nevertheless. They have opposing viewpoints on various topics. They support the political institutions of their community, vote, and follow the law. Although the Anglo-American gives due weight to the Asian ethnic's political interests, in subtle ways he does not treat the Asian ethnic as an equal. When the Anglo-American greets the Asian ethnic in their neighbourhood, he compliments her accent, which he does not do when greeting someone who he treats as an equal. The Anglo-American may talk to the Asian ethnic during public political deliberation but withdraws himself from engaging in a discussion with the Asian ethnic about her values, refusing to give the Asian ethnic a chance to change his mind. This case will be acceptable according to the quality-contact account of formal equal citizenship, since in this scenario, the Anglo-American does not live a parallel life to the Asian ethnic. However, one could still find this case morally objectionable, as the Anglo-American fails to give proper concern to the interests, views, and concerns of the Asian ethnic.¹²

This disregard can be understood as failing to treat the Asian ethnic as a political equal, as an equal member of their political community. In this sense, the Anglo-American feels that the Asian ethnic is somehow different from those who are part of what he calls his community. This difference, according to the Anglo-American, justifies less concern for the other's interests and controversial views, and while granting public minimal recognition, private disregard may eventually contribute to justifying overall unequal treatment, and thus treatment as a nonmember of the community.¹³ Thus, at this point, we argue that accounts of formal equal citizenship do not successfully accommodate concerns with inequalitarian treatment, with treatment as a nonmember, which may contribute to

12 In *The Imperative of Integration*, Anderson (2010, 21–22) argues: 'Group inequality thus arises from the relations or systematic interactions between social groups. The advantaged group may oppress outside groups by reducing them to a marginalized, exploited, powerless, or stigmatized class, vulnerable to group-based violence or denied cultural freedoms. Or it may impose less extreme disadvantages on them: subjecting them to systematic discrimination, denying them equal political influence, and depriving them of the resources they need to stand as equals with others and of opportunities to develop their talents or qualify for positions of authority. Oppressive social relations are unjust because they deprive members of the disadvantage group of their basic human rights.' While Anderson's account of integration is an ideal of intergroup relations in democratic societies rather than mere interpersonal relations, it shares with our proposed dual interpretation of the fundamental interest of being at home in the world the concern that democratic governance, democratic systems, should 'serve all citizens equally.'

13 This phenomenon can also be understood through the concept of 'migrantizing the citizen' – a socio-legal process by which certain individuals, despite formal citizenship, are treated as foreign or as outsiders (see Anderson 2019). We thank a reviewer for this insightful suggestion.

objectionable status hierarchies which pervasively affect citizens with a perceived immigration background.

Making personal choices involves giving due weight to others' interests, while striving for an egalitarian interpersonal relationship may require following certain standards of behaviour or at least revising problematic social norms. It is an open question how far egalitarian claims can intervene in informal personal relations. As mentioned, not all differences in status, power, and authority give rise to unjustified inequalities. Not all status hierarchies are unjustified or morally objectionable. Status hierarchies which result from informal exchanges may, nevertheless, be problematic when they reproduce – as in the case of microaggressions – systematic marginalization and stigmatization, perpetuating existing morally objectionable inequalities among members of the community. We submit that citizens who are treated as nonmembers retain their claim against this inequality even when the interactions that contribute to it are informal or are part of what might be called the personal sphere.

4.2 The Dual Aspect of the Fundamental Interest in 'Being at Home'

The ideal of 'the sense of belonging to a polity and feeling at home in it' has been used by many authors in different formulations. Friedrich Hegel in the *Philosophy of Rights* refers to this idea as 'being at home in the social world'.¹⁴ Raz (n.d.) describes this idea as 'an important element in the success of human life ... we all have a great interest in being able to relate to the groups that we are part of, in a certain constructive way, and to express our relations to those groups publicly, without having to hide it'. One specific formulation of this idea is 'the fundamental interest in being at home'. As presented by Christiano, egalitarian relations within one's political community involve both seeing oneself and being perceived by others as a member of the community, as belonging to the community; and, more broadly, paraphrasing Christiano, as being 'at home in the world'.

The original discussion of 'being at home' stems from the recognition of personal needs to belong with others and be recognized by others in order to satisfy one's sense of self-worth, since men are self-conscious beings (Hegel 1910). It is widely accepted that individuals have an interest in being part of a group, in belonging, and more generally, and for further reasons, in not being stateless. This interest has been illustrated by the case of international relocation. Now, to be able to relocate internationally, to choose to live in a country or community that better fits one's

¹⁴ For further discussion, see Hardimon (1994).

values, appeals to the interest of pursuing a particular way of life. Minor as it may seem, to be able to pursue a particular way of life – a particular set of norms, beliefs, and values – entails a set of opportunities, including labour opportunities. The claim for international relocation, to have the opportunity to be able to pursue one's preferred plan of life, the value of one's choice, and its effect on the development of one's identity, thus relies on the political community (Akhtar 2016). According to these considerations, to be perceived as a member of the community, to be treated as an equal, is motivated by the relevance of becoming part of a community whose members are able to develop their plan of life, and where the set of norms, values, and beliefs match one's own values and beliefs.

The *dual* aspect of our proposed interpretation of 'being at home' is based on an understanding of the relevance of the community as a determinant of individuals' identity: as enabling the development of one's plan and way of life. These functions, jointly with the set of norms, values, and beliefs of the political community, constitute what is at stake both in being recognized as a member of the community and in choosing between communities in cases of relocation. Additionally, all citizens alike have a fundamental interest in understanding, identifying with, and affirming the joint political project of their political community. Now, when treated as non-members, citizens of a community are prevented from developing their identity, and from aligning with the values, norms, and beliefs of the community. Understood in this way, the dual aspect of 'being at home' is formed by two main characteristics: first, to have an equal opportunity to understand, identify, and affirm the norms, beliefs, and values of the community; and second, to feel protected, and not humiliated, in one's political community. In view of this dual-aspect account, an individual with a perceived immigration background who has the equal opportunity to align with the community's values, norms, and beliefs, who is engaged in public discussion, and whose voice and nonmainstream views are heard and considered with equal regard would be able to develop her preferred plan and way of life. In this scenario, this individual is not subjected to status hierarchies, since she is seen, perceived, and treated as a member of the community and not as an inferior. As a result, she will not relate to others as an inferior, since neither her identity nor her social interactions would suffer from status inequalities.

In this sense, according to our interpretation of the dual aspect of 'being at home', a community should first satisfy two conditions: (i) preventing a misalignment between rules and citizens' views (especially those with a perceived immigration background) and (ii) ensuring that citizens' interests are considered on an egalitarian footing and, second, in meeting these conditions, citizens within the community should relate to one another nonhierarchically. The public and equal advancement of citizens' fundamental interests is not reducible to a concern with lower status hierarchy, it also depends on mutual recognition and shared

membership. Thus, fostering egalitarian relations requires going beyond formal citizenship, which may necessitate the restructuring of social norms.¹⁵

According to the first characteristic of our account of 'being at home', there must be an equal opportunity for the political participation of citizens with a perceived immigration status which aims to prevent a disconnection between the justification of the rules, of the law, and citizens' considered opinions. In this case, citizens with a perceived immigration status would be able to understand the rules governing the society that profoundly affect their lives in order to experience a sense of collective action and, then, to rationally pursue their personal goals. However, this first aspect of the fundamental interest in 'being at home' cannot apply if citizens with a perceived immigration background are forced to obey rules that were agreed by a society which justifies a membership-based status hierarchy, a community that systematically disregards some citizens' opinions and plans of life.

In this case, citizens find themselves living in a political community that is shaped by the judgements of others and, as such, a community that subordinates them. Resuming the case of the Asian ethnic discussed above, a citizen who is ethnically Asian, and thus perceived as having an immigration background, can communicate with other members of her own social group in order to make sense of the rules that govern them without being an active political member. However, according to our interpretation of Christiano's metaphor of 'being at home', without the understanding, identification, and affirmation of society at large, this citizen is not at home. Without such alignment, these citizens align instead with other members' interpretation and justification of the rules, which might result in their feeling like 'being at someone else's home'.

Regarding the second aspect of our account of the dual aspect of being at home, we submit that this aspect is grounded in citizens' capacity for a conception of the good which insists that citizens should be able to form, revise, and rationally pursue a rational conception of the good that is associated with comprehensive doctrines, but within the limits of justice (Rawls 1996, 30). A conception of the good consists 'of a more or less determinate scheme of final ends, that is, ends we want to realize for their own sake, as well as attachments to other persons and loyalties to various groups and associations' (Rawls 1996, 19). Consequently, free and equal citizens are entitled to 'make claims on their institutions so as to advance their conceptions of the good' (Rawls 1996, 32). They also 'see themselves as self-authenticating sources of valid claims, that is, their interest in the pursuit of the good life (as they understand it) entitles them to press claims on others and for others to press claims on them, thus making them subject to duties and obligations'

¹⁵ We thank the reviewer for prompting us to better clarify the precise connection between the idea of being at home in the world and social hierarchy.

(Quong 2011, 39). Accordingly, this mutual consideration of valid claims and conceptions of the good both act as an egalitarian restriction of interests and imply treating the Asian ethnic citizen as an equal citizen, respectfully engaging with her personal comprehensive values, including her immigration background. At this point it is important to note that seriously considering one another's opinions might imply criticizing each other's conception of the good, especially in cases in which this is based on wrongful beliefs or inequalitarian attitudes. Nevertheless, the Asian ethnic should be exposed to all possible opportunities to revise and accept constraints on her conception of the good, which in turn might contribute to developing her plan and way of life.

According to our interpretation of the metaphor of 'being at home', and more precisely, its second aspect, the advancement of the fundamental interest in 'being at home' requires more than merely arguing against citizens living parallel lives. To illustrate this conclusion, let us look again into our hypothetical case of the Asian ethnic and the Anglo-American. Clearly, the Anglo-American should not distance himself by treating the Asian ethnic as if she were a nonmember of the community and refuse to engage further with her conception of the good, while instrumentally maintaining contact with her for political gain. In doing so, the Anglo-American treats the Asian ethnic as an inferior and thinks that this citizen's fundamental interest in 'being at home', which is at the heart of the Asian ethnic's well-being, is not worthy of equal regard and consideration. The moral objectionability of this conduct is bidirectional: while the Asian ethnic will be deprived of a fundamental element of her well-being, the Anglo-American loses out, since he fails to recognize the fact that he is living in a diverse and multicultural society. In this sense, the Anglo-American loses opportunities to form, revise, and rationally pursue his own conception of the good within the limits of justice. He bars himself from 'being at home', which is in itself a serious setback for his own fundamental interest and well-being.

5 Conclusions

This article has aimed to provide an account of the special moral objectionability of relations of inferiority between members and nonmembers of a political community. To do so, we have debated the case of second-generation immigrants and individuals with a perceived immigration background. First, we argued that these individuals have a claim against being treated as a nonmember of the community, as alien to it, as a stranger, which differs from claims against other social inequalities. Second, and derivatively, we held that unequal treatment of individuals with a perceived immigration background determines status hierarchies within political communities. Humiliating and stigmatizing differences in status, as well as the difficulties

that these individuals experience when participating in public debates, including less consideration and regard for their views, reflects the moral objectionability of hierarchies of worth. Third, we maintained that accounts of equal citizenship status should be able to accommodate such cases, and we proposed to expand the equal citizenship status account to include the fundamental interest in ‘being at home’. Finally, we provided a dual-aspect interpretation of this metaphor, arguing, first, that treating others as equals in virtue of being co-citizens requires the public and equal advancement of their fundamental interests and, second, that this may require the restructuring of social norms. These decisions should not be individual, but rather institutional, involving the whole of society. Finally, one might ask whether claims against being treated as a nonmember could be extended beyond national borders. In theory, we would be sympathetic to this view, but this is a question for another article.

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