



## *Imagined Societies*

In many countries in Western Europe, the demand for immigrant integration has inevitably raised questions about the “societies” into which immigrants are asked to integrate. *Imagined Societies* critically intervenes in debates on immigrant integration and multiculturalism in Western Europe. Schinkel argues that the term “multiculturalism” is not used primarily to describe a type of policy or political philosophy in countries such as the Netherlands, France, Germany, or Belgium, but rather is used as a rhetorical device that promotes demands for “integration”. He analyzes the ways in which such demands are ways of imagining the very idea of a “host society” as “modern,” “secular,” and enlightened. Starting from debates in social theory on social imaginaries, and drawing on public debates on citizenship, secularism, and sexuality and on the social science of measuring immigrant integration, this book presents a highly original study of immigrant integration that challenges our understanding of the concept of society.

WILLEM SCHINKEL is Professor of Social Theory at Erasmus University Rotterdam. He is a member of The Young Academy of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and a well-known intellectual in the Dutch public sphere.

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# Imagined Societies

A Critique of Immigrant Integration  
in Western Europe

WILLEM SCHINKEL  
*Erasmus University Rotterdam*



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Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>page vi</i>
1 Immigrant Integration Imaginaries in Western Europe	1
2 Imagining Society: Social Theory and/as Social Imagination	35
3 Measuring Society: Moral Monitoring and the Social Science of “Immigrant Integration”	68
4 Transformations of Racism and the Rise of Culturism	112
5 Traditionally Modern: Contemporary Frameworks of Sexuality and Religion	156
6 The Uses of Citizenship	192
7 Social Science: Between Moral Monitoring and Public Sociology	218
<i>Bibliography</i>	236
<i>Index</i>	260

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vii

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