

## ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: CITIZENS, FOREIGNERS, OR GERMANS? THE STATE AND PERSONS OF IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND IN THE MAKING OF MEMBERSHIP IN GERMANY SINCE 1990

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This dissertation examines citizenship and nationness in contemporary Germany. It argues that citizenship and nationness represent the two forms of membership which are constituted at the level of state and at the level of prospective citizens. At the level of the state, it considers changes in German citizenship policies in 1990, 1992, and 2000. At the level of prospective citizens, it examines forty-seven persons of immigrant background and their understandings of German citizenship and their own nationness.

Though not the same, citizenship and nationness may be related in various ways. Previous scholarship shows that nationness has been a key category and criterion for who may become a citizen at the level of state, as expressed in citizenship policies. Similarly, the self-understandings of individuals as members of the nation may inform their decision to become citizens. Equally, their citizenship status may inform their sense of their own nationness. Finally, understandings of citizenship and nationness which are institutionalized in the state may inform the understandings of persons of immigrant

background.

Beginning in 1990, citizenship policies became increasingly more liberalized and accessible to persons of immigrant background without German descent. This dissertation shows that these changes after 1990 are explained by understandings of nationness, as expressed in narratives of political parties about immigrants and foreigners, Germany and the nation, and citizenship as an institution. Contrary to scholarship emphasizing nationally-specific traditions of citizenship, as well as shifts towards liberalizing access to citizenship, this dissertation shows that understandings of nationness differ mainly by political parties.

The self-understandings of persons of immigrant background reflect some, but not all, of the changes at the level of the state. In particular, most persons of immigrant background see themselves as German and as belonging in everyday life in Germany. However, their citizenship status is largely independent of their sense of national belonging. This suggests that national belonging and citizenship are largely disconnected for ordinary people. In addition, the disconnect between nationness and citizenship is more pronounced for persons who are citizens, indicating that they view their membership as citizens should be met with a sense of national membership.

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by

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**CHAPTER 1: Introduction: Citizenship, Germanness and Membership in  
Contemporary Germany**

For decades following the Second World War, and arguably well into the 1990s, German citizenship could be described as *ethnocultural*—based on descent rather than territory (Brubaker 1992; Green 2001). This ethnocultural character was expressed in policies which did not allow for citizenship by birth within the territory of the state (*jus soli* or “birthright citizenship”); difficult requirements for naturalization<sup>i</sup>; and automatic citizenship for Ethnic Germans<sup>1</sup> born and residing outside of Germany. Such policies persisted for decades in the midst of an increasing immigrant and native-born non-ethnic<sup>ii</sup> German population which began with the introduction of guestworker programs in the 1950s and continued through family reunification and natural increase (Münz et al 1997).<sup>2</sup>

In 1990, these citizenship policies began to change. A new Foreigner Law (*Ausländergesetz*) in 1990 reduced the required residence time from fifteen to eight years, and also significantly reduced fees for naturalization (Green 2000:105). In 1992, naturalization laws were again liberalized by introducing certain conditions under which naturalization *had to be* given to an applicant—thereby introducing the idea of a legal *right* to naturalize, rather than simply guidelines to be followed by particular federal states (Joppke 1999a: 203). Finally, in 1999, under a new government led by the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the first new Citizenship Law in 86 years was passed—the *Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz* (or StAG) –which introduced *jus soli*, or citizenship based on birth within the territory of the state—for the first time in the history of modern German citizenship.

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<sup>1</sup> Ethnic Germans were defined as persons living with the territorial borders of Germany as of September, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> Germany’s foreign-born population is currently 10%. The population of persons “with migration background” is 20%.

The liberalization of German citizenship represents a transformation in how the German state defines membership. This dissertation examines how this transformation in membership took place, as well as the ways in which it informs the understandings of those who would be impacted by it: persons of immigrant background<sup>3</sup> who are “non-ethnically” German.

In chapters which follow, I consider how changes in citizenship policies in Germany since 1990, at the level of the state, are explained primarily by *understandings of nationness*. These understandings differ greatly among political parties, and therefore, much of the change in citizenship policies depends on which political parties are in power. Understandings of the nation and Germany, immigrants, and citizenship itself, as expressed in parliamentary debates, were widely and consistently divergent over the period of time in question. There was little agreement at the national level about citizenship and nationness, particularly after the end of the recruitment stop and the introduction of the first path to citizenship for non-ethnic Germans in 1978. The subsequent reign of one political party for 16 years largely accounts for the policies of membership.

Political parties and their cultural understandings, however, provide only part of the explanation for transformations of citizenship. In the particular case of Germany, certain events, both prior to and after 1990, both expanded and limited the *possibility* of reforming citizenship policies, and the opening of particular paths to citizenship.

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<sup>3</sup> “Persons of immigrant background” is a translation of the German term *‘Migrationshintergrund’* (migration background) which refers to immigrants (the “first generation”) who migrated to Germany after the Second World War, and their German-born descendants. The term’s usage began in the early 2000s and replaced the usage of the term *‘Ausländer’* (“foreigner”) to refer to both non-citizens and to citizens who were “non-ethnic” Germans (Baban 2003). Importantly, those with migration background include Ethnic Germans, many of whom came to Germany in the 1990s—hence the specific mention of “non-ethnic” in defining the population being considered here. The terminology reflects part of the problem this dissertation addresses—the coincidence of ethnicity and nationness with citizenship.

Specifically, three events contributed to the *liberalization* of citizenship: the recruitment stop of guestworkers to Germany in 1973, the reunification of Germany in 1990, and the asylum crisis in 1992. An additional event—the signature campaign against dual citizenship in 1999, contributed to the *restriction* of citizenship.

These transformations in citizenship at the level of the state, however, comprise only one piece of understanding membership in Germany since 1990. Membership is constructed not only by the state, but also by ordinary people—in particular, in this case, persons of immigrant background. Still, scholarship on both citizenship and nationhood and nationalism has been overwhelmingly state-centered (cf. Brubaker 1992; Soysal 1994; Joppke 1998; Tilly 1990), leaving unaddressed what citizenship and Germanness mean to ordinary people, how they matter, and whether and how state understandings and policies of membership inform those of non-citizens and citizens of immigrant background. That ordinary people attach some meaning to citizenship and Germanness is not surprising, given that citizenship and nation have been important categories of membership in the modern state, whether tied to rights or to identities and belonging (Brubaker 1992; Joppke 1998; Joppke 2007).

Though citizenship and nationness are constructed by ordinary people as well as the state, the extent to which the state's policies and understanding inform those of ordinary people is also important to understanding membership in contemporary Germany. The changes in German citizenship during the 1990s and into the 2000s constitute a changed context in which territory assumed equal status as descent as a principle of membership. Given the way in which citizenship policies were tied to understandings of nation expressed in narratives about *immigrants*, *Germany/nation* and

*citizenship*, it could be expected that liberalizing citizenship in Germany would permit a greater identification with Germanness defined by territory. It would also conceivably lead to a greater likelihood of becoming a citizen, if in fact citizenship is based on belonging. Put differently, if the transformation of citizenship relied on a transformation of understandings of nationness, it could be expected that changing citizenship policies would not only change understandings of citizenship but also change understandings of national membership for persons of immigrant background.

### **Substantive Issues in Analyzing Citizenship and Nationness**

As forms of membership, citizenship and nationness are each fundamentally instances of boundary making and of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion (Lamont and Molnar 2002). Though they share these attributes and are both forms of membership, they also differ. Citizenship is formal membership in a state (Joppke 2007), while nationness is a form of membership in an imagined community (Anderson 1991). As a status, citizenship is based on the two principles of *descent* and *territory* (Weil 2001:17). These are the principles that states use to entitle persons to membership. These two principles are legally expressed by the state through three paths to citizenship: *Jus sanguinis* (descent), *jus soli* (“birthright”: territory) and *naturalization* (territory and residence). Importantly, citizenship is a status, which may be *linked* to rights and “identity” (Joppke 2007:38). Yet, citizenship may also be tied to neither, since citizenship status does not inherently confer any particular right or identity. Rather, it gives access to particular rights and may be the basis of making claims to a particular

identity by both states and citizens and in specific times and places. As Hammar states, “a *substantial* citizenship does not follow from a *formal* citizenship” (1990:3).

Nation is an “imagined community” of “deep, horizontal comradeship” (Anderson 1991:7). However, several other qualities of nation as a particular kind of imagined community obtain and are relevant for considering the transformation of citizenship and nationness in Germany. First, like citizenship, nation is fundamentally a “sorting device—something that [lumps] together those who are to be distinguished from those with whom they [coexist]...” (Verdery 1993:37). Second, just as citizenship may be defined through different principles such as territory and descent, definitions of the nation and nationness vary: “...*the criteria employed in this sorting* [of who belongs to the nation and who does not]...vary across time and context” (37, emphasis added). Third, nationness and membership in the nation may be imagined as apart from, preceding, or transcending state membership. Finally, nationness and nation are often imagined through other idioms and categories of difference such as ethnicity, race, religion, gender and others (Wallerstein 1991; Waters 1999; Tuan 1994). Given these features and definition of nation, I contend that *Germanness* represents an instance of *nation* and *nationness*.

Fundamentally, then, citizenship and nationness/Germanness are both subject to definition by states and ordinary people. Rather than inhering in any particular criterion (descent, territory, “ethnicity”, etc.), membership through citizenship and nationness depend on what criteria are used in defining each.

A range of scholarship is relevant to the analysis of citizenship and nationness and their transformations at both the level of the state and of ordinary people. At the level of

the state, a range of approaches explain how citizenship policies change. Though all of these explanations explain change through multiple causal factors, they each emphasize particular variables over others. I consider explanations which see state policies based on understandings shared at the national level (cf. Brubaker 1992), explanations which view the emergence of a post-national citizenship and a thinning of formal citizenship (cf. Soysal 1994, Jacobsen 2001; Hammar 1990), and explanations which emphasize political parties as decisive for restricting or liberalizing citizenship (cf. Howard 2009; Murray 1994; Joppke 2006). I also briefly consider scholarship on events (cf. Sewell 2005; Abbott 2001), and how they constrain the explanatory power of the above models.

On the citizen side, I consider the literature on citizenship and nationness “from below,” or among ordinary people. This body of scholarship includes quantitative studies on naturalization (cf. Bauböck and Cinar 1994) which illustrate the two dimensions of rights and identity to which citizenship is linked (Joppke 2007). The much more limited scholarship on the meaning of citizenship and nationness (Miller-Idriss 2006; Thompson 2001; Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008; Wallerstein 1991), as well as studies of racial and ethnic identification among immigrants (Waters 1999; Tuan 1994) illustrates several important points about citizenship and nationness among ordinary people. In particular, these studies show that there is variance in identifying in a national sense tied to group-based membership such as ethnicity and “race.”

Finally, I briefly consider scholarship from the level of the state which suggests that understandings of membership in the categories of “citizen” and “national” is informed and shaped by the state and state policies. This limited scholarship is of



importance for considering whether individuals' self-understandings and statuses are mediated or shaped by state understandings and policies.

### *Citizenship, Nationness and the State*

Christian Joppke (1999) has remarked that citizenship is essentially “an elite affair.” Citizenship is not only by definition a status, but is a status *of the national state*. Citizenship policies are proposed, debated and institutionalized through state organizations and political structures.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, it is important to recognize the power that elite political actors wield in making citizenship policies. But that states make citizenship is more obvious than what factors are constitutive of their citizenship policies. Brubaker's (1992) comparative analysis of citizenship in France and Germany in the 19th and 20th centuries, for instance, finds that citizenship policies are explained *primarily* by differing understandings of nationhood. In the French case, nationhood was understood in a territorial-civic sense, which led to policies which made most residents and persons born and present within the territory of the state citizens. In Germany, in contrast, nationhood was understood in an ethnic, descent-based sense, which led to high barriers to naturalization and an absence of birthright citizenship. In each case, how the state defined nationhood—in one case, in a territorial sense and in the other, a descent-based sense—was most constitutive of its policies of membership.

Other scholarship has shown that cultural understandings and nationhood matter in the making of citizenship, but have emphasized that citizenship policies vary less with

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<sup>4</sup> This is not to deny *any* role for civil society or non-state actors in citizenship, but analyzing that process is not the focus of this dissertation. That said, I have found little evidence in the German case that collective action *initiated* by non-state actors, or in response to state policies has had a significant effect on particular citizenship policies, proposals or debates among state actors such as political parties and government ministries.

respect to particular *national* traditions, and more with respect to actors within a single state (Hagedorn 2001; Howard 2009; Joppke 2006; Murray 1994), and in particular, political parties. Hagedorn (2001) compares France and Germany in the late Twentieth Century context. In contrast to Brubaker, she finds more similarity between the two national cases, which she argues is explained by which political party is in power in each case. Howard (2009) considers citizenship in fifteen European countries and suggests that citizenship policies vary among European nation-states and developed based on historical factors of colonialism and contact with ethnic and racial Others, as well as political systems (early or late democratizers). He also contends that contemporary changes in citizenship laws in European states depend mostly on political parties: “[on] the issue of citizenship, the political parties had a clear sense of their priorities and interests” (128). Joppke (2006) also compares citizenship across different states but argues that a non-national variable—*liberal democracy*—is common to most states and forces states to liberalize access to citizenship (64). He also, however, explains that the tendency for a particular state to be more liberal or more restrictive depends on the political party in power. Finally, Murray (1994) also finds that *political parties*, and particular individuals within parties, largely explain differences in citizenship policies (27). She critiques the study of citizenship through a national traditions approach as “addressing [citizenship] as if it sprung forth from a unified, stable belief system” (24).

Still other state-centered studies of citizenship challenge the importance of the national state and particular national idioms of membership. They argue instead that citizenship is largely ‘postnational,’ (Soysal 1994; Jacobsen 2001; Hammar 1990). Soysal (1994) has illustrated that national states no longer are guarantors of social and

economic rights: "...guestworkers without formal citizenship status have been incorporated into various aspects of the social and institutional order of their host countries" (2). This change is attributed to the postwar emergence of a discourse of human rights based on universal personhood which supersedes national citizenship. Jacobsen (2001) also emphasizes the loosening of citizenship from rights based on the emergence of international human rights discourse. He further argues, complementary to Soysal's argument, that this shift has an influence on immigrants' understandings and practices of citizenship: "[c]itizenship has been devalued in the host countries...citizens have felt no compelling need to naturalize even when it is possible" (9). Finally, Hammar (1990) also points to the blurriness of the citizen/foreigner dichotomy, emphasizing that there are non-citizens who have "full access to the labour market, business, education, social welfare,"—a group of persons he describes as 'denizens' (13). As Joppke (2006) argues, much of this postnational scholarship tends to focus only on the *rights* associated with citizenship, which constitute only one of the claims that citizenship is principally tied to. In contrast, Castles and Davidson (2000) address citizenship in both of its senses—as a claim to rights as well as nationness. Like other postnationalists, they contend that national citizenship's linkage to both rights and national belonging is deteriorating.

What all state-centered postnational critiques share is a skepticism of the importance of citizenship for migrants and non-citizens. Collectively, this scholarship suggests that citizenship either does not matter, or that it is uncertain what impetus states and state actors in national states would have to change citizenship policies. However, even in the context of *regional level* organizations, such as the European Union,

citizenship *per se*—as a status—is still determined by individual national states; and the three primary paths to citizenship—*birthright*, *naturalization*, and *descent*—are still made by individual national states (Guiradon 1998; Hansen 2009). There also remains great variation among states whose policies are supposedly being homogenized by regional organizations such as the European Union (Guiradon 1998; Howard 2009). Minimally, such variation suggests that national citizenship still matters.

Some of the above scholarship on citizenship also considers how nation, nationness and nationhood are constructed at the level of the state (cf. Brubaker 1992; Hagedorn 2001). This is unsurprising, since even if citizenship policies may not necessarily be *explained* by understandings of nation, debates about citizenship policies seldom exclude arguments about “the nation” and national “identity.” Still, though nation may be a stable category used in making of citizenship policies, it is by no means stable in its meaning. Rather, as Verdery notes, defining “the nation” is highly contentious and involves conflicting parties: “Any given nationalism has multiple meanings, offered as alternatives and competed over by different groups maneuvering to capture the [nation’s] definition” (1993: 39). That nation has multiple meanings reflects a constructivist approach to nationness and nationhood, in which nation is not a “thing in the world,” but rather a practical category whose definition is contested and argued over by actors—in this case, political parties (cf. Brubaker 2004; 1996; 1992; Thompson 2001; Fox and Miller-Idriss 2009).

### *Citizenship, Nationness and Persons of Immigrant Background*

Though often overlooked, citizenship and nationness are also constructed “from below.” Studies of citizenship among prospective citizens and immigrants include studies of understandings and meanings of citizenship as well as naturalization studies.

Virtually all naturalization studies agree that there are different reasons for becoming, or not becoming, a citizen. Most importantly, naturalization studies show that these reasons fall into two categories—rights and identity (Baubock and Cinar 1993).

The importance of rights is addressed by several studies. Dörnis’ (2001) study of naturalization in Germany shows the relevance of rights for becoming a citizen. Many of these rights are differentiated by nationality. For example, “freedom of movement within the EU” is three times more common as a reason among Turks and Ex-Yugoslavians, than for Italians and Greeks. This is most likely explained by the fact that Greece and Italy are European Union member states whose citizens already enjoy freedom of movement. “Identity” and “belonging” may also be the basis for becoming a citizen. As Baubock and Cinar note, changing citizenship can be “overcharged with symbolic meanings” and a sense of “abandoning not only rights tied to the previous citizenship but also cultural affiliations and political loyalties” (1993: 194).

Other studies show that citizenship has a diverse set of meanings. Miller-Idriss (2006) found that understandings of citizenship vary widely, a finding which counters both a claim that citizenship is understood uniformly within a national population (2006:542). Furthermore, she found that contrary to ethnocultural way that citizenship had been defined in Germany, most young adults framed citizenship and eligibility for it based on “culture, geography, birthplace, and economic criteria *over* race or ethnicity...”

(542). As such, she concluded, “a nation-state’s legal policies for citizenship and naturalization cannot be automatically extrapolated to the understandings of citizenship among ordinary citizens in their everyday lives” (542).

Another form that “identity” reasons may take is through experiences of discrimination. Anil (2007) found that among first generation immigrants who did not become citizens, they cited the fact that they would still face job discrimination and lack of acceptance in German society as a key reason for not becoming a citizen (1370). Among the second generation, in contrast, citizenship was viewed used to increase one’s acceptance, and as an expression of one’s already belonging, in Germany. In this sense, citizenship should guarantee some form of acceptance and recognition, which it does not for the first generation, but does for the German-born generation. Anil also found that only one-third of those born in Germany had chosen to naturalize. The most common reason given for not becoming a citizen was that few benefits were gained from doing so.

Ordinary people have been largely absent from the study of nationhood and nationalism (Thompson 2001; Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008). Yet, individuals often do identify with nations and as nationals, and “[invoke] ideas of nation and national identity in order to account for differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’ (Thompson 2001:29). Nation is a “sorting device” for individuals just as it is for states. Importantly, it is also distinct from the nationness of state actors: individuals’ self-identifications and group-based memberships (such as national origin, social class, religion, gender, or other kinds of “peoplehood”) situate individuals differently vis-a-vis the nation. As scholarship on national identity shows, nations are often imagined in terms of other idioms of difference such as race, ethnicity, religion and others (Waters 1999; Tuan 1994). As the

debates on citizenship show in chapter three, immigrants of different nationalities are deemed farther from or nearer to “German culture,” and more or less “able” to become part of the nation.

The nationness of individuals is different from the state in another crucial aspect. Individuals may identify with more than one nation simultaneously or in a combination of ways. Scholarship under the rubrics of transnationalism, cosmopolitanism and hybridity is especially important to considering nationness and citizenship among persons of migrant background (Vertovec 1999; Vertovec 2009; Castles and Davidson 2000). Though conceptually diverse in their usage, these terms share a critique of conventional boundaries and membership. As a type of consciousness, transnationalism is “marked by dual or multiple identifications...of being simultaneously home away from home, here and there, or, for instance, British and something else.” (450) Castles and Davidson (2000) argue that migration, as a manifestation of globalization, has put into question the idea of national belonging altogether. At the very least, it has “undermined the ideology of distinct and relatively autonomous national cultures.” (7) Nationness and citizenship as constructed by the state often deny the transnational, cosmopolitan, and hybrid subjects. Immigrants, children of immigrants, and others—who merely by the fact that they fulfill one but not both of these criteria of membership—challenge the notion of belonging to one and only one citizenry and nation.

### ***Relating the State and Citizen Sides of Citizenship and Germanness***

Scholarship on citizenship has been largely separated by analyses “from above” (the state) and those “from below.” Virtually all of the scholarship cited above, for

instance, analyzes citizenship and nationness *either* of the state, *or* of prospective citizens and ordinary people. Some of this same scholarship, however, points to a relationship between the two levels at which citizenship and nationness take place. Brubaker (1992), in his comparison of France and Germany in the 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, suggests that citizenship policies of the state construct the meaning of citizenship for the citizenry, both immigrant and non-immigrant:

The ethnocultural inflection of German self-understanding and German citizenship law makes it difficult to reconcile—in the political imagination of Germans and immigrants alike—the preservation of Turkish cultural identity and autonomy, for example, with the acquisition of German citizenship.

(1992:178)

In yet other work, Rogers Brubaker has argued that though often deemed to be an individual or non-state phenomenon, “self-identifications...always exist in dialectical interplay with ascribed identifications and categorizations, especially those employed by powerful, authoritative institutions – above all, the modern state” (Brubaker 2005:556). The understandings of ordinary persons of both categorical membership—such as citizenship—as well as group membership, such as nationness—seldom take place outside of publicly established schemas of who belongs in any particular category and the meaning of that category (Sewell 1992) As Somers and Gibson (1994) state, in their description of narrative ontology: “people are guided to act in certain ways, and not others, on the basis of things derived from...available social, public and cultural narratives.”

Others have shown that boundaries of collective identities presumed to “precede” the state are in fact strongly shaped by states. Jenkins (1994) has shown that ethnic groups are largely shaped by the state actions and classifications. Anthony Marx (1998)



has shown that the salience of race among ordinary people and in social movements is largely dependent on whether and how the state institutionalizes race as an official category.

Additionally, some naturalization studies demonstrate that becoming a citizen through naturalization is related to state policies. At a very basic level, Baubock and Cinar (1993) note that becoming a citizen for any individual depends on the contexts of time and place—the current citizenship regime, as well as the social position of the individual. Anil(2007) shows that changes in citizenship policies which eased naturalization were correlated with higher naturalization rates among Turkish nationals in Germany during the 1990s. Caglar (2004) also notes among Turkish migrants, the most important barrier to naturalization is the expatriation requirement—the necessity of giving up one’s Turkish citizenship. She also cites studies in which Turkish immigrants in other European countries that tolerate dual citizenship, such as the Netherlands, naturalize at much higher rates (277).

## **Data and Methodology**

As a formal status conferred by the state, citizenship is defined and changes through the institutions of the state. It is thus subject to the logics by which institutions emerge, evolve and change. At the same time, I contend, citizenship and nationness—as forms of membership—are fundamentally constructed and changed through cultural understandings of *immigrants*, *Germany as a nation*, and *citizenship as an institution*.

### *Culture as Categories and Narratives*

Swidler (1995) defines “culture” as a “toolkit of stories and symbols...” with which individuals and other actors use in action. Scholarship specifically about citizenship, especially that of Brubaker (1992), has also shown how culture in the form of “understandings” is a key causative factor in political and social outcomes. Postnational studies of citizenship such as Soysal (1994), and Joppke (1999) also recognize the importance of culture, to greater or lesser degrees, in the making of policies of membership in contemporary nation-states.

Of particular importance to explaining how citizenship changes are the *stories* about citizenship and nationness which are told in parliamentary debates by political parties. Such stories consist of two parts: *categories*, and *narratives* which give those categories content. These categories and narratives are constitutive and constructive of the knowledge which informs policies of membership. As Chock shows in relation to immigration policy in the case of the United States, it is necessary to consider “the *terms* in which the issue is debated...and the *meanings* that are attached to these terms in the debates” (1999:42).

Categories demarcate difference -- “Immigrants”, “foreigners”, specific groups such as “Turks”, and other categories in their enunciation claim some homogeneity and difference. The use of such categories “...bring into existence that which they merely claim to describe” (Bourdieu 1991). As Rogers Brubaker states, “the invention of modern citizenship and the modern nation-state created the modern figure of the *foreigner* that expressed a new psychopolitical charge” (1992:47). Categories form a basis for arguments about citizenship policies and changes. In their discussion of

citizenship and immigration policies in Austria, Reisigl and Wodak (2000: 273) note the use of the term or category of “foreigner” (‘Ausländer’) in discourse, which “ neither denotes diplomats or NATO units staying or being stationed in the country nor tourists or rich ‘foreigners’...It almost always denotes [guestworkers] or their children.” Persons who are talked about as “immigrants,” or in terms of their national origin are more easily subject to “othering” discourses based on that category (Riggins 2001; Said 1978). Such categories are not simply descriptive, but rather *constitutive*. They function as “principles of vision and division” that are constitutive of the social world (Bourdieu 1991: 232). Both Germanness and citizenship are informed by such categories as principles of vision at both the level of the state and the level of ordinary people.

Categories demarcate difference, but the content of those categories also reflects understandings which are critical to political outcomes. As Kastoryano argues, “[I]f left and right use the same words but give them a different content and meaning” (2002:3) For decades, the narrative of “Germany is not a country of immigration” was routinely articulated in parliamentary debates and institutional policies, in spite of the large and increasing numbers of immigrants living in the country, and had a very real outcome in setting the limits of change in citizenship policy (Chapin 1997) Somers and Gibson (1994) also argue for the importance of stories and narrative, contending that narratives are *ontological*--they are the very basis of things being what they are: “[Social] life is itself *storied*; narrative is an *ontological condition of social life*.” Such stories “...guide action...people construct identities by locating themselves or being located within a repertoire of emplotted stories.” Charland (1987) and Fisher (1984) similarly argue that understandings and definitions are largely based on familiar and dominant narratives.

Specifically, two qualities determine how persuasive a particular story is: its narrative *fidelity*—how true it is to other stories have been articulated previously; and its *resonance*—how familiar it is. If such stories are constitutive of things, then citizenship and nationness have no meaning outside of such stories.

As Brubaker (1992) shows, nationhood was a key category in the making of citizenship policies in both France and Germany. At the same time, the two states differed in their understandings of nationhood, and this, in turn, led to different citizenship policies. These understandings were expressed in parliamentary debates and stories about the nation and immigrants. These different framings of nationhood reflect the importance of understandings in political outcomes. As Brubaker argues in the case of Germany and France, the “ways of thinking and talking about nationhood...framed and shaped judgments of what was politically imperative...in the interest of the state” (Brubaker 1992:16).

### ***Political Structures – Political Parties***

Though stories may be particularly resonant or important in constituting what citizenship and nationness mean, their ability to be constitutive of policies only happens through the political structures of the state. Specifically, these structures are the institutional arrangements of the contemporary German political system, and—most importantly—*political parties* and the coalitions which form the basis for government and legislation.

Importantly, political parties can, and often do, hold very different policy positions. Cross-national studies of European citizenship policy (cf. Howard 2009:59;

Hagedorn 2001) suggest that citizenship policies are subject to liberalization or restriction based on a left-center or right-center government. For instance, Joppke (2006) has shown that restrictive citizenship—that which is “ethnicized” or “ethnocultural” is maintained or more often present under right-leaning political parties, whereas liberalized citizenship—which is more accessible to immigrants and territorial residents—often is proposed or maintained under left-leaning political parties. These tendencies, one towards “de-ethnicization” and another towards “re-ethnicization” of citizenship represent a fundamental difference in understandings—one based on *being* a member of a state or group, and another of being able to *become* a member of a category or group (Joppke 2006:65). The fact that German citizenship law was changed with the election of center-left party (SPD) which had not held power for 16 years, when citizenship politics was very young, at least initially suggests that political parties matter to citizenship policies.

Narratives and stories, as well, are articulated by political party members, and often differ along party lines. In telling stories, political parties mobilize categories and narratives to argue the rightness of their position. The different categories and narratives are strategic; they are intended to obtain particular social effects (Bourdieu 1991)—or, in the case of citizenship policies, *political* effects—specifically policies of membership in Germany. They also exemplify the practical way in which categories and narratives are used by political actors (Brubaker 2004; Brubaker and Cooper 2000). Many debates about citizenship and its connection to nation, Germanness, and other categories also exemplify constitutive narratives; they are arguments about both the state of things, as well as what things are—citizenship, the nation, immigrants, foreigners, among others. In this sense, debates are nothing less than arguments about reality. As stories, such

debates take place through categories and narratives: opposing parties argue over either the categorical integrity of categories deployed by opposing parties, and/or the narratives which accompany a category when that category is agreed upon. Finally, arguing for the importance of political parties calls into questions how dominant particular understandings of the nation are. As Thelen argues, one of the shortcomings of the traditional cultural institutionalist approach has been the tendency to "...emphasize and *assume* shared scripts, [obscuring] strategy and conflict among groups." (2003:217).

In the formal state, parliamentary debates are the key site in where culture is articulated in the form of stories. Political debates are in fact arguments over where boundaries fall, and therefore, who groups of people are. Debates are comprised of categories and narratives which are instances of "groupmaking" (Brubaker 2004) and "peoplemaking" (Charland 1987). Immigrants, non-citizens, and persons of migrant background are especially susceptible to the "othering" discourses which call into question their belonging in terms of both nationness and citizenship (Riggins 2001; Said 1978). However, the fact that different criteria for membership are used in the making of citizenship policies means that arguments about persons are involved. Though such arguments are constructions, they take the form of "knowledge" which is in turn used in the making of policies of membership (Foucault 1980).

### ***Citizens, Citizenship and Nationness***

Unlike the state side of citizenship and nationness, this dissertation considers the citizenship and nationness from the citizen side at one moment in time. Like the analysis

of the state side, the explanatory variable is the meanings of and understandings about citizenship and nationness of individuals of immigrant background.

Studies of both citizenship and nationness have tended to obscure the variation among persons of migrant background in relation to both deciding to become a citizen, as well as self-identifying in terms of nationness. Studies of ethnic identity, for instance, have focused on two aspects of ethnic and national identities: their “naming” and their salience. The first aspect concerns what individuals as well as institutions call persons. The second aspect, more common in the U.S. ethnic identity literature, is the salience of ethnic identities, or identification with an ethnic group (cf. Waters 1990; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). What both of these aspects miss, however, is the specific *meaning* of ethnicity and national origin. Knowing *that* individuals call themselves something, and *what* they choose to call themselves, falls short of knowing what those identities mean to individuals and others in particular contexts. Without considering content, identification itself is meaningless, since the meaning of categories and classifications is crucial to boundaries between categories, and therefore, the categories themselves. Like ethnic identities, it is crucial to not only recognize the significance of whether people claim national identities or not, and which ones they claim, but also what criteria of membership they articulate for being a national—the stories which articulate nationness. Just as nationhood is understood differently, and that difference is crucial to who is and is not a member of the state, how Germanness is understood is crucial to how individuals negotiate their identification as German. In contrast to a focus on salience, I emphasize on self-understandings articulated in interviews by individuals as the basis for decision to become citizens, as well as their sense of national belonging. Interview questions focus

on individuals' own understandings of citizenship and nationness, and their elaborations about each (see Appendix II).

The interviewee sample for this dissertation consists of forty-eight individuals. Thirteen of the interviewees are first-generation adults, with an average age of 35 (see Appendix I). The remaining interviewees are German-born young adults, ages 18-24. All but four of the interviewees are of non-European Union national origin. This is important, as later chapters show, because of the benefits of European Union membership. Additionally, most (twenty-eight) of the German-born interviewees are *Gymnasiasten*, or college-preparatory secondary school students, while the other six completed a vocational secondary school. This imbalance may obscure differences by educational attainment or class in the citizenship or nationness of interviewees. I address the importance of these sample issues in the conclusion of the dissertation.

## **Chapter Outline**

In the first half of the dissertation, I consider how the state constructed membership through citizenship policies. In Chapter 2, I look at the pre-1990 era as a period of very little change in citizenship policy, but in which the origins of a citizenship-nationness “problem” begin. Specifically, I show that the guestworker program, begun in the 1960s, and its impromptu and flexible changes in response to industry needs, ultimately and unintentionally led to the creation of a resident population of non-citizens non-Germans. Once permanent residents, a claim to citizenship would become possible, and in fact a path to citizenship is created in 1978. I contend that once this path to citizenship has been created, a *citizenship politics* emerges in which contentious



understandings of membership emerge. I also show that other state interests prior to 1990, especially the division of Germany during the Cold War Era into two opposing states—East and West—still limited debate about citizenship in Germany until 1990. These various factors, I argue, explain the non-transformation of the path to citizenship established in 1978.

In Chapter 3, I look at the gradual liberalization of citizenship policies beginning in 1990. Here, I specifically look at the role the understandings of Germany and nation, immigrants, and citizens articulated by political parties in position statements and parliamentary debates. I find that these understandings differ dramatically, and thus suggest that whichever political party holds power will institutionalize more or less restrictive citizenship policies based on their understandings of nation, immigrants, and citizenship. However, political parties by no means act alone in the making of citizenship policy. First, they are bound by the multi-party nature of German politics, which in practice requires coalitions with other parties. Though strongly opposed parties are seldom in coalitions, centrist and other parties at times both limit and enable the possibilities of transforming citizenship policies. Additionally, *events*—both unforeseen and unplanned, and planned—can intervene limit the ability of political parties to transform citizenship policies. Two such events take place during the 1990s: the Asylum crisis of 1992, and the Signature Campaign of 1999. The Asylum Crisis, unforeseen and unplanned, leads to a liberalization of citizenship; the Signature Campaign, in contrast, eliminates the possibility of a dual citizenship proposed by a newly-elected coalition in 1999. Importantly, however, a *jus soli*, or birthright citizenship, becomes a part of the new German Citizenship Law of 2000, making territorial presence a sufficient criterion

for membership for the first time in more than eighty years. I conclude that all of the transformations after 1990 are largely explained by *culture*—understandings of immigrants, nation, and citizenship which are articulated through stories and narrative. The diversity of such understandings also illustrates the mistaken notion of “national traditions” of nation and citizenship suggested by earlier scholarship.

In the second half of the dissertation, I turn attention to how persons of immigrant background—both first-generation immigrants as well as German-born children of immigrants—understand their membership in Germany through their stories about citizenship and Germanness. I consider the first and second generations separately. I show that such understandings indeed vary, though some understandings are clearly dominant.

I also make several comparisons among the interviewees of both first and second generation. Most importantly, I compare them on the basis of their citizenship status—whether or not they are a citizen. I do this to test a theoretical proposition: that being a citizen itself may change how one sees citizenship as well as Germanness. For the German-born second generation group, I separate the interviewees into citizens and non-citizens for the purpose of seeing whether citizenship status informs or shapes understandings.

I also compare interviewees based on their national origin, and whether or not the state to which they can also claim membership is a European Union member state. This comparison is also informed by the legal fact that non-citizens are not equally situated in relation to citizenship in Germany, and also may not be equally situated in relation to Germanness.



## **CHAPTER 2: From Immigrants to Residents to Citizens; Origins of the Citizenship-Germanness Problem**

*“Ihr habt Gastarbeiter angeworben und es sind Menschen gekommen.”* - Max Frisch

“You asked for guestworkers but *people* came.”

## Historical Factors in the Making of Citizenship and Germanness before 1990

### *Immigrants into Residents*

Prior to the late 1970s, no path to citizenship existed for persons living in Germany who were not ethnically German as defined by the state.<sup>5</sup> This “ethnocultural” legacy of German citizenship enshrined in a 1913 Imperial-era Citizenship Law in which *jus sanguinis* was the basis of citizenship (Brubaker 1992). However, this mattered little prior to 1955, since Germany had virtually little to no immigration, with the exception of returning refugees who had been German citizens based on geographical boundaries which changed at the end of the Second World War. Under these circumstances, there was no population confronted with a descent-based or territorially-based citizenship law, since most individuals met both criteria of citizenship. Put simply, how citizenship is defined only began to matter when a category of persons emerge which did not fulfill either the criteria of descent or territory.

Such a category of persons was created with beginning of labor migration through the guestworker programs beginning in 1955. Over the course of the next several years, Germany signed labor agreements with mainly Mediterranean countries—Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Portugal, Turkey, Morocco and Tunisia—to recruit labor migrants for a limited period of time. As the term “guestworker” denotes, immigrants were intended to be temporary rather than permanent. It was specifically stated that guestworkers only had the right to work in Germany as long as that work “served the interest of the Federal Republic” (Chapin 1997; Green 2004:35); thus, the guestworker

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<sup>5</sup> The state defines ethnicity *as* German descent, which in turn is based on presence of oneself or one’s parentage in the territorial boundaries of Germany as of 1937.

program could be changed or discontinued by the state. The “interest” of the state was defined in strictly economic terms. Accordingly, the specific conditions of the guestworker program changed over the eighteen year period that it was in place, adjusting to industry needs. However, the status of guestworkers as guests and as a flexible labor pool was not a matter of political debate or partisan politics, if for no other reason than that both labor and business benefited from the guestworker programs (Hollifield 1992; Freeman 1979).

That settlement, permanent residence and incorporation were not desirable goals for Germany implied that any alteration to German citizenship or Germanness in any other sense was out of the question. Any criticisms of this guestworker policy and its implications for citizenship were virtually silenced by the dominant narrative that “Germany is not a country of immigration” (Chapin 1997). In response to economic interests, which the guestworker program ostensibly served exclusively, policies and programs changed over time, mostly having an impromptu character intended to maintain this espoused “non-immigration country” status.

In the economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s, labor was in high demand. As Chapin points out, even if immigration and guestworker policy had been subject to contestation between political parties, it would have been the same—conservatives supported business, and Social Democrats opposed economic slowdowns and unemployment (1997:10). Changes in the guestworker program ensued, following labor market demands and industry’s interest in maintaining lower labor costs. Specifically, two policy changes took place which changed the residency and settlement of guestworkers. First, in 1971, the “principle of rotation” was ended. Under this policy,

guestworkers were on limited contracts of two years, thus they were “rotated” out after a brief period of employment and other guestworkers were rotated in. However, industry and business found it increasingly inefficient to train new workers, and therefore pressured the state to extend labor contracts, thus increasing the maximum amount of time a particular worker could remain in Germany (Chapin 1997:15).

Second, the guestworker program itself was ended in 1973. This “recruitment stop” (or *Anwerbestopp*) had the effect of creating a population that could not leave Germany with any guarantee of returning. The slogan that “Germany is not a country of immigration” and the institutionalization of that idea through the absence of either an immigration or citizenship policy, in fact created a new kind of population: a population of non-citizen, once-guestworkers and their families. The federal government responded to this new, unintended population by putting in place policies to incentivize remigration to countries of origin. Yet, guestworkers and their families overwhelmingly chose to remain in Germany. Importantly, however, they were never coerced into leaving, only “incentivized” to do so (Joppke 1998:64). Furthermore, family reunification policies were routinely liberalized, especially in the decade of the 1970s, the very period when guestworker programs had ended (Guiraudon 2000; Soysal 1994:121). Though these rights were examples of “universal” rights discussed by postnational scholars, their establishment was not inevitable, but based on the Courts of the time and their tendency to rule in favor of such rights. A once temporary immigrant population thus became a predominantly permanent resident population.

In 1978, five years after the *recruitment stop* and for the first time in the twenty-two years that guestworkers had been living in Germany, a policy was established for

them to attain citizenship. Naturalization guidelines were introduced for the first time, under an SPD-led government. With these guidelines, however, it was again emphasized that Germany was “not a country of immigration.” (Green 2004:40; 2001:30).

Requirements for becoming a citizen were correspondingly high—15-year residency, a fee of DM 5000, German language proficiency—and naturalization rates were less than 1%, miniscule in comparison to European countries with comparable immigrant populations in terms of years of residency. But a path to citizenship based on territory had been established.

### *Postwar Peculiarities*

Two other peculiarities of the postwar period informed German citizenship up until the reunification of Germany in 1990: the creation of German refugees during and immediately after the Second World War; and the division of Germany into two separate and ideologically opposed states, East and West, within the larger geopolitical development of the Cold War (Brubaker 1992:168-69; Hogwood 2000). After the collapse of the Nazi Regime, expulsions and reprisals against Germans were pursued throughout Eastern Europe. Millions of Germans, or persons who had been defined as German by the territorial boundaries of 1937, were subjected to expulsion and persecution. Germany accepted these refugees as rightful citizens.

The second development—the division of Germany into two ideologically opposed states—led to a contentious politics of claiming to be the legitimate state for the German nation. Citizenship was one site where this contest took place. Specifically, the Federal Republic--West Germany—adopted a policy of *Alleinvertretungsanspruch*, or the



“sole right of representation” of all German citizens, defined as residents of the territorial Germany as of 1937 and their descendants (Hogwood 2000). Under this policy all Germans, based on the territorial definitions of 1937—regardless of state membership, but pointedly membership in the German Democratic Republic—were deemed citizens of the Federal Republic of Germany. The political imperatives and symbolic consequences of this contest “[inhibited] a free political debate on related issues of citizenship, immigration and asylum” (Hogwood 2000:130). These territorial, geopolitical conflicts led to a reinforcement of *jus sanguinis* principles in citizenship law (Joppke 1999). With the reunification of Germany in 1990, descent-based citizenship would lose these external supports and political conditions (Green 2003).

The historical developments beginning with the guestworker programs of the 1950s illustrate the importance of contingent events and critical junctures in the emergence of a path to citizenship for non-ethnic Germans. Specifically, two events from this pre-1990 period were decisive: the initial recruitment of guestworkers in 1955 and the 1973 *recruitment stop*. In the first instance, the mere presence of guestworkers led to the later conditions and developments of deciding on the status of residents who lived in Germany but were not of German descent—a new condition in modern German history. Following this, the *recruitment stop*, though in principle expressive of the labor market logic of German immigration policy, and consonant with the “not a country of immigration” maxim, in fact had an unintended effect—it solidified the transformation of immigrants into residents. As residents in the postwar German state, non-citizens enjoyed a range of rights, including family reunification rights, which were further incentives to their remaining in Germany. Once guestworkers became residents, the

postwar hegemonic discourse of democracy and territorial population would be brought to bear on the status of these persons. These events led thus lead to the emergence of a path to citizenship through naturalization guidelines. As restrictive as such guidelines were, they set a historical first step by acknowledging that residents who are within the territory of the state have some claim to membership in that state. In doing so, a *citizenship politics* was created, though unintentionally. The widely varying definitions and understandings of citizenship and Germanness, both of which can be based to varying degrees on territory and descent, meant that *any* path to citizenship could now be subject to the contentious politics of membership.

### **Political Parties and Citizenship before 1990**

The guestworkers programs had inadvertently led to a path to citizenship. Once guests became residents, and the claim of territorial membership as a basis for inclusion in the political community of citizens made citizenship possible. Once erstwhile immigrants could potentially, become Germans, a politics of citizenship emerged. Citizenship was now within the universe of discourse of policies related to non-ethnically German residents of the state.

The emergence of a citizenship politics in essence meant that citizenship was subject to debate by state actors and the legislative process, and specifically, political parties. Here I briefly consider what understandings of citizenship were in the earliest parliamentary debates and discussions on citizenship, in the early 1980s. Central to any comparative and historical explanation is the consideration of how factors become important at critical junctures, particularly in interaction with other factors. Here, then, I

want to consider the understandings of citizenship in historical perspective, beginning with the era in which a citizenship politics first emerged.

### *The Christian Democratic Union (CDU)*

CDU positions on citizenship policy referred to concepts of belonging which both relied on ethnocultural understandings of Germanness—that one could only be culturally German by descent, as well as the notion that one can only belong to one nation. In the campaigns of 1981, the new chancellor, Helmut Kohl, had as a key campaign promise reducing the number of foreigners in Germany by 1 Million (Green 2004:54). The parliamentary party also argued that the existing naturalization guidelines were sufficient. The CDU also typically, throughout the 1980s, emphasized the absolute and clear distinction between “Germans” and “foreigners.” In an early debate on citizenship, in 1982, a CDU party member stated that sensible citizenship policy could only be made “if the legitimate interests of Germans are considered alongside the legitimate interests of foreigners.”<sup>6</sup> They furthermore talked about national identity as a basic element of human nature:

*It's always wrong to misjudge human nature and mentality when making political decisions. Every people, not just the Germans, value the protection of their **national identity**. This allows for accepting a limited number of foreigners...*<sup>7</sup>

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, at different times, the CDU was quite specific about what Germany's national identity was. In this first parliamentary debate on citizenship, for instance, one CDU party member defined national identity by making

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<sup>6</sup> PIPr 9/83: 4894

<sup>7</sup> PIPr 9/83: 4892

distinctions among foreigners, while self-congratulatingly emphasizing that “dividing the world into foreigners and citizens is too simple.”<sup>8</sup> Rather there was, in his opinion, a hierarchy of foreigners with those with foreign citizenship but of German descent closest to Germans, followed by those in the “European cultural circle” with “Christian roots”, followed by Turks who were “shaped by Islam, not Christianity”, and a “different culture and mentality.”<sup>9</sup> In particular, this CSU party member criticized Turks and their unwillingness to fit into German society or accept German culture.

Turks were not only targeted in terms of their supposed cultural distance from Germans. They were also talked about in demographic terms, through numbers discourse. For instance, the same CSU party member stated:

*Of 4.6 Million foreigners about 1.5 Million are Turks – almost a third. Of foreigners under 16, Turks are almost half. The proportion of all foreigners who are Turks is increasing even more from the high birth rate and immigration...at the same time Turks had an unemployment rate of 11.2%, the highest, more than double the average.*<sup>10</sup>

Another common way in which the CDU justified its citizenship policies was by framing Germany as a country that was no different than any other country—particularly in terms of immigration. In an early 1980s debate, CDU member Dregger made a comparison between Germany and another immigration country, the United States:

*The official number of immigrants to the USA is 290,000. In 1970, Germany took in three times that number—900,000...*  
(PIPr 9/83: 4892)

In other words, Germany was a “tolerant” country as far as immigration was concerned, since it took more immigrants in than the immigrant country par excellence, the USA.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid: 4892

<sup>9</sup> ibid: 4893

<sup>10</sup> PI Pr 9/83: 4893

In early 1982, in response to an SPD proposal to bring to debate the issue of Foreigner policy, which governed the naturalization law, the CDU also specifically invoked the *sole right to representation* characteristic of the Cold War, in their position statement:

*The federal republic of Germany as a part of a divided Germany, carries the historical and constitutional responsibility of the German nation. In accordance with its history and self-understanding, Germany cannot be nor become a country of immigration.*<sup>11</sup>

The CDU party similarly stated that the existing naturalization laws were sufficient, even for the second generation born in Germany. Finally, they argued that naturalization is not a means to integration, but rather comes as a result of integration.<sup>12</sup>

Following a commission's report on citizenship in 1983, the federal government, and chancellor Helmut Kohl of the CDU, issued a statement on citizenship policy. Kohl noted three guiding goals for the promised reformed citizenship policy: 1) the integration of long-resident foreign workers and their families; 2) the limitation of immigration; and 3) the promotion of return migration.<sup>13</sup> Only the first of these positions made any claim to inclusion, and it said nothing explicitly about citizenship. Kohl then proceeded to articulate what would come to be standard narratives of the CDU about immigrants and citizenship throughout the 1980s, 90s and 2000s, specifically, narratives of *criminality*, *abuse of asylum*, *unemployment*, and the *lack of integration* of foreigners. Kohl's pronouncements echoed the understandings of the guestworker era:

*The Federal Republic of Germany is not a country of immigration, in spite of the Past decades of successful recruitment of foreign workers.*

(DS 10/2071: 3)

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<sup>11</sup> Dr 9/1288: 2

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

<sup>13</sup> DS10/2071: 1

*A Foreigner law which puts the personal concerns of foreigners before the public interest of the Federal Republic, especially in terms of jobs and security, is one which is out of step with every other country in the world.*

(ibid: 5)

The statement also responded to a specific question posed by the opposition about citizenship and naturalization: whether or not the federal government was considering easing the naturalization process and requirements. The response which followed from the CDU government would be echoed for several years to come:

*Naturalization is not a means of promoting integration, but rather a **reward for being integrated**. Therefore, the federal government has no general intention to ease naturalization.*

(ibid: 12)

The CDU/ CSU also defended critiques that Germany's citizenship laws were anti-foreigner and xenophobic, and that the guestworker programs had been only self-interested—both narratives often raised by the opposing SPD, and occasionally the FDP parties. CSU member Dregger, again, used the example of Germany's absorption of refugees after the war, and their subsequent successful integration into German society, as a way of fending off critiques of Germany as anti-foreigner and exploitative:

*We achieved the greatest integration in the history of the world. So we have no reason to respond to critiques, domestic or foreign, of being xenophobic, when we insist that the Federal Republic should not become an immigration country. Ladies and Gentleman, whoever opposes this natural and justifiable feeling of citizens, is enabling a new right-wing extremism to emerge.<sup>14</sup>*

In the same speech, he went on to state that foreign workers came to Germany “in their own interest...for the attractive work and social benefits.” And that for their home countries, monetary remittances were a key source of income.

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<sup>14</sup> Pl Pr 9/83:4894.

Given these statements by the early CDU government essentially echoing the consensus of the guestworker era, it would seem unlikely that any change at all could occur during their tenure. Yet, in the same position statement, Chancellor Kohl stated the following:

*Those foreigners who are born in Germany are in a special situation. This group is far removed from the country in which they have citizenship... No state can accept a significant part of its population outside of the political community.*

(ibid: 12).

In stating this, the government was making not only a factual but also normative statement: Germany not only has a resident non-citizen population—this population must be included in the polity. By the end of the 1980s, there was agreement among most CDU members that citizenship policy was in need of some liberalization.<sup>15</sup> However, what form liberalization would take remained to be seen.

Overall, the CDU/CSU articulated a vision of foreigners as wholly distinct from Germans, and if not so, incapable and unwilling to “integrate” and become a part of German society.

### ***The Social Democratic Party (SPD)***

Since the emergence of a citizenship politics in the late 1970s, the Social Democratic Party had advocated for liberalizing citizenship. In the 1980s, for example, they emphasized that the number of foreign residents was continually increasing (Murray 1994:37). In doing so, they emphasized the presence of immigrants in Germany—implicitly countering the idea that “Germany is not a country of immigration.” In one of

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<sup>15</sup> Murray 1994:30

the first parliamentary debates since the inception of citizenship politics in the early 1980s, representative Urbaniak of the SPD noted that the foreigner population had grown “by more than 600,000 in the last three years.”<sup>16</sup> He also emphasized that the foreigner population was a *young* population. He also singled out Turkish nationals, among foreigners, as both a group whose numbers had increased in recent years, as well as a group that had the highest rates of unemployment. In the same debate, however, he noted the indispensability of Turks to the specific industries in the German economy, using dramatic statistics—87%, 80%--to emphasize his point, and concluding with the statement, “...we cannot do without the work and cooperation of these foreigners.”<sup>17</sup>

Consistently in the 1980s and 1990s, the SPD emphasized both the *permanence* and *nativity* of the foreigner population. They routinely referred to foreigners “born and raised in Germany”, as well as the fact that there were not only second, but third and fourth generation foreigners.<sup>18</sup>

Another defining theme used by the SPD in framing citizenship was also Germany’s past as a kind of national debt. This theme was articulated through two specific narratives. The first narrative concerned the guestworker recruitment program itself. SPD party members emphasized often that the German state had recruited foreigners to Germany, rather than foreigners asking to come to Germany. As they stated in a 1982 debate: “Which government made all the recruitment treaties with the foreigners’ countries of origin?”<sup>19</sup> The implication was that Germany now must deal with the consequences of its own actions. The second narrative emphasized the Nazi

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<sup>16</sup> Pl Pr 9/83: 4888

<sup>17</sup> Ibid: 4889

<sup>18</sup> Pl Pr 9/83 (1982);

<sup>19</sup> PIPr 9/83:4891



past—a controversial issue unto itself on which political parties and the electorate was already divided.<sup>20</sup> SPD party members overwhelmingly viewed the Nazi past as a burden, a national sin that must not only never happen again, but for which the present-day, modern German state must atone (Chapin 1997).

The SPD positions on citizenship clearly opposed the notion of descent-based citizenship. During the 1980s, their positions emphasized a range of liberalization efforts, including a *right* to naturalization (Murray 1994:33), as well as “double” *jus soli*—birthright citizenship for children who have one German-born, citizen or non-citizen, parent. They even proposed the acceptance of dual citizenship (*Bundestagdrucksache* 12/4533). In the early 1980s, they specifically argued—contrary to the ruling CDU coalition—that the naturalization guidelines were inadequate, in particular for second-generation young people. They also argued against the CDU’s claims about foreigners’ *national identities* being incompatible with German citizenship, criticizing in particular the idea of national identity as “whatever that’s supposed to mean.”<sup>21</sup>

### ***The Free Liberal Democrats (FDP)***

Before the election of 1982, the FDP had been a coalition partner of the SPD. They shared many of their positions, including citizenship, though some differences were evident. But most clearly, they framed immigrants and the nation in ways that were consonant with a liberalization of citizenship policy.

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<sup>20</sup> This issue was so large for a time that it earned a name—the *Historikerstreit*—or “historians’ quarrel.” Central to the debate was whether or not Nazi Germany was a unique, anomalous case in history, or whether it was no worse than other states of the past.

<sup>21</sup> Pl Pr 9/83:4891.

*Framing Foreigners.* An example of the FDP's framing of citizenship is articulated in their opening statement in a 1982 citizenship debate by FDP member Hölscher:

*...we would like to reinforce our view that foreign workers have made, and continue to make, a very significant contribution to the economic development of the Federal Republic of Germany. In doing so they have contributed to improving our standard of living. The Federal Republic, even in politically difficult times, has a responsibility to foreigners who live here.*<sup>22</sup>

He continued to emphasize Germany's vacillating guestworker policy, and its flexible demands for labor—specifically the ending of the *principle of rotation*—and its benefits to German industry. The FDP also, already at this time, emphasized that among the foreign population, many had been born in Germany:

*Out of [1.3 Million children and youth] 630,000 were born here in Germany. With a foreign population of 7%, we do not compare with other Western countries. Switzerland has 14%, Belgium has 9%, France 7.7%. But still the problem seems to be more serious with us than anywhere else.*<sup>23</sup>

The FDP also, already in this early debate argued against the mantra that Germany was not a country of immigration, specifically opposing the Christian Democrats claim that foreigners did not want to become German and would be happier returning to their countries of origin:

*For those foreigners who have lived here for many, many years with their families, Germany is in fact a country of immigration. We're fooling ourselves by turning a prayer wheel to make it otherwise. Maybe even foreigners are deceiving themselves, if they've lived here for a long time but still believe they will go back. They probably won't, but not by choice.*<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *ibid*: 4895.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*: 4899.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid*: 4899.

### *The Green Party (Grünen)*

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Greens advocated for shorter residence periods for naturalization—five years compared to fifteen years—as well as *jus soli*. They were most distinguished, however, by their proposals in favor of dual citizenship—a position which set them apart from the Social Democrats (Murray 1994:43-45). They also challenged prevailing ethnocultural understandings of membership, citizenship, and the nation. Their proposals of the 1990s illustrate a consistent understanding of “citizenship”, “foreigners” and “the nation”, which is greatly at odds with CDU-dominated government of the decade.

A 1995 proposal to change the citizenship law by the Greens, demonstrates their understanding of citizenship and the policies which follow from it:

*Germany has long been a country of immigration. Yet, high barriers of citizenship hinder the naturalization of immigrants who live here. Even those of the second, third and fourth generation are not German by law. This has led to a hierarchy of status, which in turn questions the democratic and republican character of the Federal Republic. Citizenship laws in almost all European countries contain elements of 'jus soli', as well as tolerate dual citizenship...  
If this reform doesn't succeed, the undesirable condition of having multiple generations of immigrants without rights will worsen. And finally, this will disrupt domestic peace.*

(Drucksache 13/423:1)

This proposal constructs a particular vision of foreigners, the nation and citizenship. First, it challenges the narrative which dominated citizenship policies and their absence for decades—“Germany is not a country of immigration”. It also emphasizes the duration of time that immigrants have been territorially present in Germany. It not only asserts that there are those who are born in Germany, but also that there is a third and fourth generation, a contention seldom made by any other party or in public discourse or parliamentary debates, and absent in center-right and right-wing parties’ discourse, which

refers simply to “immigrants”. As an idealized and identity category, “nation” works with the categories “immigrant” and “natives”, presumed to be discrete and opposite quasi-statuses. The dominance of this cognitive scheme is most expressed in language which continues to qualify German citizens of “non-German origin” as “Persons of *immigrant background*.”

All of these efforts are ways of making immigrants seem less foreign. Presence is expected to lead to at most, assimilation, or acculturation, and at least, familiarity with German society. The proposal statement also, however, displays a universalistic conception of the German nation-state. Specifically, Germany is described as a republican, democratic state, rather than a particularistic ethnic nation. This universalistic conception of Germany is further articulated by the comparison with other European Union states—the assumption being that Germany’s reference group are other European states. Lastly, this proposal problem statement suggests that Germany will face negative social consequences if citizenship is not made more accessible to immigrants.

### **Chapter Summary**

As these earliest debates, proposals and statements show, political parties held very different understandings of the nation and Germany and non-citizen immigrants, all of which mattered to the kinds of citizenship policies they proposed, or if they proposed any policy changes at all. Such arguments appeared to be only articulated once a politics of citizenship emerged, an unintended consequence of state-led guestworker programs of the 1960s.

Citizenship as an institution was fundamentally changed by two critical events—the recruitment stop of 1973 and the end of the Cold War. Both of these events were contingent and path-dependent; they were largely unforeseen and fundamentally changed the configurations of policies governing who could be a citizen and who could be considered German. In the first instance, the recruitment stop effectively created a permanent resident population. The latter development was largely an outcome of court decisions argued using a human rights discourse. Though, while this discourse was available, it was not inevitable. Moreover, the statement by the conservative Christian Democrat party—that no state could tolerate a resident population that were outside of the political community—further suggested territorial presence was a legitimate claim to membership. Thus, the recruitment stop, in combination with a postwar human rights and liberal-democratic discourse, decisively changed the possibilities of citizenship and Germanness. The second critical event—the end of the Cold War and the reunification of Germany—also changed the future possibilities of Germanness and citizenship. At least one of the purposes of citizenship—to reunify a divided nation—no longer existed.

Finally, the Nazi era and the collapse of the Third Reich had implications for laws that were written into the Constitution. Specifically, the Asylum law—article 16 of the German Constitution—which guaranteed the right to asylum for politically persecuted persons. This article of the Constitution specifically was created in reaction to the Holocaust and the policies of the Nazi Regime. Though its importance in 1990 was still unforeseen, the Asylum Law would become significant for the later transformation of citizenship policies.

Thus, three events shaped the future possibilities for German citizenship after 1990: the Nazi past and its consequences for the German Constitution, the Cold War and a divided Germany, and the end of the recruitment of guestworkers. Given this changing of circumstances prior to 1990, the institution of citizenship was structured and largely determined by different factors at different points in time.

## **CHAPTER 3: Transforming Citizenship Laws and Policies, 1990-2009**

As the last chapter showed, citizenship prior to 1990 was largely informed by contingent events which limited the degree to which cultural understandings could shape citizenship policies. Only with the end of the Cold War and the sole right to representation, as well as the transformation of immigrants into residents, was a path to citizenship based on territory created. Most significantly, however, these events led to the emergence of a *citizenship politics*—in which membership was now a matter of argumentation and debate. In the post-1990 era, *culture*—in the form of understandings expressed through stories—would be the primary explanatory factor in changes in citizenship policy. Still, culture would not solely account for changes during the 1990s. New events during the 1990s would also be decisive in the transformation of citizenship policies.

In this chapter, I consider the citizenship-nationness link through the liberalization of citizenship policies in Germany since 1990. I seek to explain both the successful and failed attempts at change in German citizenship policies during this period. Specifically, I consider changes in naturalization requirements at two different points in time during the 1990s, and the new Citizenship Law of 2000 which introduced *jus soli* for the first time in modern German history, as well as the failure of a dual citizenship law proposed by the SPD-Green coalition government.

### **Political Parties, Citizenship and Nationness**

Political debates, as cultural and discursive phenomena, are best understood by looking at *categories* and *narratives*. As I show below, in citizenship proposals and debates, political parties constructed the categories of *immigrants*, *Germany* and *nation*,



and *citizenship* itself, in arguing for who should be able to become German. The category of foreigner and immigrant—whether as a non-citizen or in some other sense—has been largely indispensable to citizenship. As an institution of social closure, and inclusion and exclusion, the foreigner is a “modern figure” that is born of modern citizenship (Brubaker 1992:47). As recent theories of nations and nationalism argue, nation must be understood as a category of practice (Brubaker 2004; 1996; Bourdieu 1991; Verdery 1993). In parliamentary debates, nation is used in both an abstract, universalist sense—as a thing in the world which has inherent qualities—and in reference to Germany as a particular nation. Finally, though citizenship is largely the institution which these other categories are used to construct, it is itself constructed as well, primarily in terms of some purpose which it serves and what relationship between the state and the citizen it expresses. Here, too, wide differences can exist between political parties. Though different political parties all use the categories of *immigrants*, *nation/Germany*, and *citizenship*, the narratives about those categories vary widely. As Kastoryano notes, “right and left use the same terms but give them different meaning” (2002:3).

### **1990 Reforms: Simplified Naturalization under the CDU**

The Naturalization Guidelines established in 1978 presented some of the highest barriers to naturalization among European states. They included a 15-year residence period in Germany, 5000 German mark fee (equivalent to three times the median monthly salary), language proficiency, and a complete orientation to German culture. Moreover, as their name suggests, they were only “guidelines”—not rules or laws—to be used by

individual federal states. This meant that individual states held complete discretion over the actual requirements of becoming a citizen, and could ultimately reject even an applicant who had fulfilled the guidelines. Becoming a citizen through naturalization was thus under no circumstances guaranteed prior to 1990.

While the CDU did maintain its emphasis on descent, and on citizenship as a reward for integrated foreign residents, the 1984 declaration by Chancellor Kohl, as well as other party statements, conceded that citizenship was in need of reform, and that the low naturalization rates among foreigners were a cause for concern to which the state should respond.<sup>25</sup> Such acknowledgements, however, were not followed by any actual proposals or legislation, until the late 1980s, when the Ministry of Interior—responsible for citizenship policy—finally announced it would be proposing a change to the Foreigner Law which governed naturalization for foreigners.

### *1990 Policy Proposals*

The first major change in citizenship policy happened in 1990 with the reform of the Foreigner Law (*Ausländergesetz*), the law which governed naturalization. 1990 was also a crucial year for the Federal Republic of Germany. In November of 1989, the German Democratic Republic effectively collapsed with the falling of the Berlin Wall, one of many similar events marking the end of the Cold War in 1989. As in the 1980s, the CDU favored a descent-based citizenship. A purely descent-based citizenship would have restricted citizenship *entirely*—making it impossible to attain without German ancestry. Virtually no changes were made to existing citizenship policies from the CDU's election in 1982 and 1990. Just before the first changes of 1990 were proposed,

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<sup>25</sup> BT 10/2071

two things were clear. The CDU had no interest in instituting a *jus soli* policy, and they did not support any kind of dual citizenship.<sup>26</sup>

In their proposal explanation, the CDU articulated their positions on *jus soli*, naturalization for German-born foreigners, and dual citizenship. In defending the simplified naturalization aimed at second-generation foreigners, they argued that it was necessary for the government to appeal to long-term residents to become citizens, citing at the same time that many noncitizens who in fact fulfilled existing criteria for citizenship were in fact *not* becoming citizens.<sup>27</sup> However, their definition of “long-term” residents was restricted to the second generation. They argued that the first generation, by implication, guestworkers, were still more tied to their homeland and would have no need for citizenship as much as those who had grown up in Germany.

Their sense of making citizenship easier avoided birthright citizenship altogether:

*We remain firm on the requirement that a foreigner has to apply for citizenship. The application is an expression of his readiness to completely integrate in the German state organization. Any kind of an automatic legal ascription of German citizenship, without consideration of the actual will of the affected foreigner or his legal representatives, would go against this goal.*<sup>28</sup>

This defense of the non-implementation of *jus soli* illustrated the CDU’s view that non-citizens were both unwilling and not ready to become citizens. They also defended their opposition to dual citizenship in terms of a conflict of loyalties that that argued would ensue:

*Moreover a general acceptance of multiple nationality would not serve the goal of loyalty to our state. German naturalization law is fundamentally*

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<sup>26</sup> Individual party members did hold contrary views but they were in the minority and in individual states rather than in federal ministries or government.

<sup>27</sup> DS 11/6321: 47.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

*grounded in an avoidance of multiple nationalities. Multiple nationality is still seen domestically and internationally, that should be avoided in the interest of the state as well as the citizen. It is also an internationally observed law, as expressed in the European Council of 1963.*

Here, the CDU clearly frames citizenship in terms of loyalty to the state, and thus makes dual citizenship a contradiction. It is also one of the rare occasions on which they make universalistic claims—in this case, international norms and laws—in support of their positions on citizenship.

As the major opposition not in power at the time, the SPD itself did not propose to change citizenship laws, under the assumption that they would not pass, but they did propose a liberalization in the Foreigner Law, which governed rights of non-citizens particularly in terms of residency, and specifically residency permits. Residency permits ultimately would have much to do with eligibility for citizenship under the still restrictive naturalization guidelines of 1978. They began their policy proposal statement by declaring that “the existing Foreigner Law did not express the original conception of a liberal and cosmopolitan policy towards persons of different ethnic and cultural background.”<sup>29</sup> They also argued that a new Citizenship Law was necessary for the long-time life planning of non-citizen residents. They grounded their defense of a liberalization of residence first and foremost by framing the nation as culturally heterogeneous:

*The countries of the world are more than ever in history intertwined and interdependent...in all sovereign countries, especially the industrialized ones, there are more persons of different ethnicities and cultures, than who are nationals.*

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<sup>29</sup> DS 11/5637: 1.

*European history of the 20th Century has been shaped by the failure of the idea of the nation-state. Germany experienced this with the results of the Second World War.*<sup>30</sup>

Here, the SPD also frames Germany, not only as a typical contemporary nation, but also in terms of its Nazi past. The SPD proposal also emphasized that the very presence of foreigners in Germany was a result of German industry's recruitment and demands, such as extending the time periods of work permits and the "rotation" system, thus helping guestworkers become increasingly settled.

### ***The Citizenship Debates – February and April, 1990***

Debates on the reforms to the Foreigner Law proposed by the CDU—namely, a simplified naturalization option—elicited clearly divergent understandings of immigrants, Germany and citizenship. The CDU emphasized maintenance of current citizenship policies as a protection of a national identity. Their framing of national identity had several features. First, they made claims about national identity as a "human need" and the contemporary events around 1990, especially the ending of the Cold War and the independence movements emerging in the name of "nation" as evidence for this need:

*...recent developments in Europe and Germany show that **national identity as a securing and stabilizing element is needed**...the developments in [East Germany] would not have been possible, if we had not held on to the single German citizenship.*<sup>31</sup>

*The multi-ethnic state is experiencing an impressive failure...whoever dismisses the developments in China, the USSR, Yugoslavia, but also in democratic states ...as mere nationalism...does not understand that **people need more than food and shelter**.*<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid: 17

<sup>31</sup> Pl Pr 11/195: 15024

<sup>32</sup> Ibid: 15035

A second feature of their understanding of national identities was that such identities were distinct and mutually exclusive. This understanding was articulated in both their opposition to dual citizenship, and in general statements made throughout the debate, where they urged that their proposals would lend themselves to a “peaceful co-existence of Germans and foreigners.” This latter narrative, in particular, cast ‘Germans’ and ‘foreigners’ in dichotomous, opposing and groupist terms, as groups with different and potentially conflicting interests. In the April 1990 debate, they stated that any good citizenship law had to reassure Germans that their national identity would be protected, and that citizenship should still be open to those who are German by descent and not by territory:

*The more we can assure German citizens that they can protect their own identity, the more open they will behave towards foreign citizens.*

*The new foreigner law creates a balance between the hopes and legitimate expectations of foreigners who live with us on the one hand, and the interests of the German population, on the other.*

*...we have to observe the special responsibility established by our constitution for Aussiedler and Uebersiedler.<sup>33</sup>*

The CDU also framed foreigners in defending its positions on citizenship, by calling into question the readiness and interest on the part of non-citizens to naturalize and integrate:

*...we cannot disregard the limited readiness of those persons of other countries and cultural backgrounds to become citizens.<sup>34</sup>*

*...peaceful co-existence with mutual understanding between Germans and Foreigners is only achievable through integration. This is not a one-sided*

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<sup>33</sup> Pl Pr 11/207: 16274, 16281

<sup>34</sup> Pl Pr 11/195: 15025

*action, but something both sides, Germans as well as foreigners, must contribute to accomplish.*<sup>35</sup>

The SPD likewise framed citizenship in terms of Germany and immigrants, but the stories which they articulated were entirely different from those of the CDU. Specifically, they reiterated the contributions of guestworkers to Germany, and the economy specifically:

*...Over 4 Million foreigners live here, the majority for more than a decade. Over 70% of youth are born here. Foreign workers, as we know, support entire sectors - mining, iron and steel, gastronomy. Those are not people that we can continue to treat as if they are here on a visit.*<sup>36</sup>

In talking about non-citizens, they emphasized their presence as a “social reality” that Germany must deal with as a result of its own actions, citing that 4 Million non-citizens lived in Germany as a result of guestworker programs. The SPD also suggested that immigrants belonged more in Germany than in their countries of origin. This latter point was articulated in their defense of more restrictive deportation rights of the German state:

*We want to limit the possibility of **deportation**... whoever is born and grows up here, must not be sent off to a country which is foreign to them, even when he owns their passport. Every country must deal with the problems which it has itself made.*<sup>37</sup>

At the same time, they argued that immigrants were tied to their countries of origin, and that citizenship was an expression of that tie that they should not have to be forced to break.

In their opening statement, the FDP called the CDU proposal unjust and unfair.

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<sup>35</sup> Pl Pr 11/195: 15027

<sup>36</sup> 11/207: 16270.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*: 15030

They also emphasized the second generation more than any other political party, and how something must be done for them in particular: “If we don’t give them a secure perspective on life, we shouldn’t be surprised if they drop out of society and some of them become criminal.”

They also addressed this stereotype of the criminal foreigner as inaccurate:

*The number of crimes committed by foreigners are actually less than the number committed by comparable German groups, and the victims of these crimes are often other foreigners. It would be nice to investigate not only how many perpetrators, but also how many victims, are foreigners.*<sup>38</sup>

### ***Political Parties and the 1990 Reform***

The time period in which the legislation actually took place was especially significant to the process of debating the citizenship proposals themselves. Specifically, the waning popularity of the Christian Democrats, and an imminent *Land* election in 1990 was likely to upset the balance in the *Bundesrat*—the upper house of parliament which would have to ratify any legislation passed in the *Bundestag*. Specifically, the Social Democrats were likely to gain the majority through the upcoming election. This would mean that any CDU proposal would have to take SPD preferences into account. Under this condition, any citizenship proposal would have to become more liberal, or the entire issue would have to be abandoned; the latter case would represent a failure to follow through on a promise made in the early 1980s, and the former would mean a citizenship policy largely at odds with the CDU’s politics of nationhood. CDU party members were fully aware of this condition, and thus they hastened the passage of a citizenship law.

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<sup>38</sup> *ibid*: 15031



The reform of 1990 took place in the least controversial area of citizenship policy, and most agreed upon by political parties—naturalization. Specifically, a second type of naturalization—“simplified naturalization” (*erleichterte Einbuengerung*) was introduced—but only for certain some individuals: young persons born in Germany between 16 and 23 years of age with six or more years of schooling; and first-generation adult migrants with 15 years of residency in Germany. In addition, the naturalization fee was reduced to a maximum of 100 German marks from the regular fee of 5000. Finally, these simplified naturalizations were expected to be approved as a rule (*Regelanspruch*), rather than at the discretion (*Ermessenseinbuengerung*) of individual federal states. Though importantly this rule-based naturalization stopped short of having the force of law, thus remaining arguably still more a guideline. In contrast, *jus soli*, which was enshrined in the Citizenship Law, was never proposed by the CDU. Finally, dual citizenship was expressly opposed by the ruling party.<sup>39</sup>

### **1993 Reforms: Crises and Compromises**

#### *The Asylum Crisis*

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the German constitution institutionalized one of Europe’s most liberal asylum laws. The impetus was undoubtedly the recently defeated Nazi Regime and the Holocaust which elevated the exclusion of those deemed foreign to unprecedented levels. Like the citizenship policies, this law remained in place for decades of the postwar period, including after reunification

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<sup>39</sup> DR 11/6321:29.

in 1990, though its significance was minimal in the postwar, Cold War political environment.

However, the End of the Cold War rapidly elevated the importance of the largely dormant Asylum law. With the opening of Eastern Bloc countries in particular, an exodus of refugees was created. Germany's geographical location and liberal asylum law combined to create a massive migration of asylum seekers in Germany, reaching a peak in 1992 of over 400,000 entrants (Chapin 1997:20). Polls from the period show the rapid increase in concern among the electorate about the number of asylum seekers. It was named the most important problem facing Germany by between 20 and 40 percent of population over the course of 1992, more important than other pressing issues of that year such as the costs of reunification and the presence of Ethnic Germans. Furthermore, about two-thirds of the population, while in general support of the principle of asylum, also believed that asylum seekers were really economic refugees and not seeking political asylum. Finally, when asked if they felt the Constitution should be amended to limit the entrance of asylum seekers, a majority agreed.<sup>40</sup>

The Asylum law had only seldom arisen as an issue since its inception with the Constitution of 1949. When it had, political parties' positions revealed that it was largely seen as an immigration issue. The CDU had been restrictive on citizenship and immigration policy, and this included the asylum law. In the one debate on the asylum issue, they proudly claimed to have wanted to amend the asylum law twelve years earlier—in 1980, when the number of asylum seekers had exceeded 100,000. Their support for changing the law was based on both the sheer numbers of asylum seekers, as

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<sup>40</sup>*Politbarometer West* 1992: 19, 128

well as the narrative that most of those immigrating through the law were not legitimately seeking asylum:

*[The Asylum Law] has led to a crisis, specifically because increasingly foreigners are abusing the claim to political persecution to avoid the restrictions on regular immigration, even though this is humanly understandable. You know the numbers. In the last four years the number has quadrupled. We have almost 450,000 asylum seekers.<sup>41</sup>*

The CDU furthermore found it unfair that Germany, within the European community, bore the brunt of the burden as far as asylum was concerned, receiving some 60 percent of all asylees in 1992. In his statement of the rightness of the Asylum Law, the Minister of the Interior, Rudolf Seiters, articulated the CDU's position and the party's defense against the accusation that it was effectively dismantling the Asylum Law:

*70% of all asylum seekers in Europe come to the Federal Republic of Germany. No other European country faces such a challenge, and no other country would stand by and watch such an inflow happen without doing anything. France, Switzerland, the Netherlands – all of them have changed their asylum laws, or made them harsher, or given them new stipulations, and Britain anyway, since they had 20,000 asylum seekers... we had 440,000 and with an especially low rate of recognition of 4%.<sup>42</sup>*

At the same time as the asylum issue was of great importance, there was also concern over the increase in the number of xenophobic violence incidents in 1992. The CDU claimed that these incidents were to a significant extent caused by the liberal asylum law allowing in too many foreigners.

The Social Democrats believed that the Asylum law should not be amended. One of their core narratives supporting this position was that Germany must atone for its Nazi past through policies of the present, a narrative they also used in support of liberalizing citizenship: "We are dealing with a very weighty and important fundamental right, which

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<sup>41</sup> Pl Pr 12/134: 11595

<sup>42</sup> Pl Pr 12/134: 11605-6

the authors of the Basic Law wrote into the Constitution after the bitter experience of our history...”<sup>43</sup> The SPD also stressed that several notable postwar German politicians—mayors of cities, the former chancellor Willy Brandt, and others—had themselves been granted asylum in the Nazi period elsewhere and would not have survived were it not for political asylum. In this debate, the SPD largely discussed its opposition to changing the Asylum Law.

The FDP’s position on asylum was much the same as that of the CDU. They also accused the majority of asylum seekers—who were overwhelmingly from Eastern Bloc countries which had recently collapsed—of being economic migrants and not legitimate asylum seekers. They also made comparisons between Germany and other European states, stating that Germany had taken in more than half of all asylees, and that Britain had recently limited the number of asylee entrants to twenty thousand.<sup>44</sup>

Beyond these major parties, the far left parties—the Democratic Socialist Party and the Greens—were entirely opposed to the measure to change the Asylum Law, declaring it equivalent to nullifying the right to asylum.

### *Compromise through Citizenship Law*

As the party in power, the CDU government was under pressure to do something about the number of asylum seekers. However, polls also showed that the electorate was overwhelmingly unsatisfied with all political parties on the asylum issue, and therefore both stood to lose if no action was taken.<sup>45</sup> Standing in the way of changing the Asylum law was that it was enshrined in the Constitution, which to be amended required a two-

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<sup>43</sup> Pl Pr 12/134: 11597

<sup>44</sup> Pl Pr 12/143: 11599

<sup>45</sup> *Politbarometer West* 1992

thirds vote, and thus the cooperation of the minority Social Democratic party. The initial negotiations took place between the heads of the two largest political parties—Wolfgang Schäuble (CDU) and Hans-Ulrich Klose (SPD), and within a weekend, a compromise was reached on 6 December 1992. The changes to the Asylum Law were added to the Constitution under Article 16a, and included a third-country provision as well as an accelerated asylum review process, thus limiting the ability of asylum seekers to enter Germany from European Union countries, and neighboring countries which observed the Geneva human rights convention.<sup>46</sup>

The Social Democrats, in particular, were highly divided on the compromise. Following the initial agreement—which had taken place between party heads rather than brought as a legislative proposal—a series of internal conflicts with the party ensued. Eight members of the Social Democratic Party publicly rejected the proposed changes with a written public statement. However, in a party meeting ten days after the compromise was reached, the majority of SPD party members voted to support the asylum compromise, while several still opposed the measure suggesting that it represented a de facto elimination of the basic right to Asylum.<sup>47</sup>

In exchange for changing the Asylum Law, the Social Democrats demanded a liberalization of citizenship policies. In March of 1993, they put forward a proposal to change both paths to citizenship: naturalization, as well as birthright. They also proposed the acceptance of dual citizenship. In terms of birthright citizenship, they proposed that *third-generation* non-citizens—those whose parents had been born in Germany—receive citizenship by birth within Germany. They further proposed that naturalization should

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<sup>46</sup> German Constitution; *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 12 Dec 1992

<sup>47</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 16 Dec 1992

be a *right*, rather than merely granted as a *rule*. They proposed that the residence time should be reduced to eight, from 15 years. They proposed that dual citizenship should be granted in any case, not only in exceptional cases. Finally, they proposed that the fees for naturalization be reduced.<sup>48</sup>

Up to this point, naturalization applications were still largely based on the discretion model of individual federal states. An applicant for citizenship could still be rejected under the regular or simplified naturalization procedure. With the compromise, naturalization was changed to a law of principle to a law of “rights”: non-citizens who wanted to naturalize had a legal *right* to be naturalized if they fulfilled all the requirements. Both German-born and foreign-born non-citizens, who had resided for 15 years or more, were eligible for the new *right*-based citizenship. The fees for naturalization for ordinary naturalization were reduced to 500 German Marks—approximately one-fourth the median monthly salary.<sup>49</sup>

There was virtually no debate on the liberalizing of naturalization requirements. With Asylum a pressing issue for the electorate, and a preference of the ruling CDU, any blockage by the SPD would likely have consequences for upcoming elections. It could also make the SPD appear to be placing the interests of foreigners and particularly, asylum seekers—who in the minds of about half of the electorate was believed to be economic refugees—above the interests of citizens and Germans. The Asylum crisis was by all measures a contingent event. It was an unforeseen occurrence and outcome of the convergence of other happenings: the recent ending of the Cold War, civil war conflicts

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<sup>48</sup> DS 12/4533

<sup>49</sup> *Süddeutsche Zeitung* 28 Jan 1993, “Naturalization made easier.”

creating the high refugee flows globally interacted with an institutionalized structure of the postwar German state—a liberal Asylum Law.

### **A New Citizenship Law: The 1998 Elections and the Transformation of Citizenship**

Leading up to the September 1998 elections, political parties' campaigns included promises and positions on citizenship specifically. The CDU/CSU stated that if elected they would reduce the residency time for naturalization from 15 to 10 years, but that they would not propose a birthright or a dual citizenship. The Social Democrats declared Germany “a country of immigrants.” In terms of policies, they stated that they planned to introduce birthright citizenship for children who had at least one parent who had resided in Germany since age 14; they also intended to reduce the naturalization time from 15 to 8 years. But most controversially, they proposed extending dual citizenship to all naturalizing and German-born persons of immigrant background.<sup>50</sup>

The 1998 Elections saw the victory of the SPD, and the first defeat at the national level of the Christian Democratic Union in 16 years. They gained control of both houses of parliament—the *Bundestag* and *Bundesrat*, as well as the Chancellery, and, as promised, one of their top priorities was the reformation of citizenship policies. They publicly announced their intention to change the existing, and from their perspective—unjust—citizenship law. In early 1999, the minister of the interior, Otto Schily, had been very public about the soon to be proposed citizenship reforms. By October, the SPD had announced plans to forge a coalition with the Greens. This coalition was the most left-leaning in postwar German politics. On citizenship issues, Social Democrats and Greens

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<sup>50</sup>*Migration News* 5/11

shared nearly identical positions, though the Greens unequivocally supported dual citizenship for both German-born and first-generation immigrants (see Table 2 at end of chapter). In contrast, Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of the SPD stated that he did not *want* dual citizenship, but that he “would accept it to serve the goal of integration.”<sup>51</sup> This suggested that dual citizenship was still either unpopular among the electorate or that the SPD had no commitment to it as a policy. Interior Minister Schily also openly accused the CDU/CSU parties of having lost all touch with reality, and stated that a citizenship reform was long overdue. In October, the coalition publicly stated that their proposed citizenship reforms would make about 3 Million foreign residents—about 40% of all resident foreigners—into citizens.<sup>52</sup> Meanwhile, the Bavarian state governor, Edmund Stoiber of the CSU, said of dual citizenship that it would threaten the security situation in Germany more than during the time of the Red Army Faction, linking the naturalization of immigrant with violent terrorists.<sup>53</sup> A CDU spokesperson stated that citizenship would mean that foreigners would have an advantage over Germans, and that Germany would be transformed into a land of unlimited immigration.<sup>54</sup>

### ***Dual Citizenship and the Liberalization of Citizenship***

Dual citizenship represented the most contentious and controversial issue within citizenship since the inception of the naturalization guidelines in 1978. It is linked to

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<sup>51</sup>*Migration News* 6/2

<sup>52</sup>*New York Times* 16 Oct 1998

<sup>53</sup>*Süddeutsche Zeitung* 7 Jan 1999. The Red Army Faction was a 1970s radical left-wing organization which targeted high-level politicians and successfully carried out assassinations.

<sup>54</sup>*New York Times* 16 Oct 1998; interestingly and importantly, both of these statements of consequences were exaggerated in their respective directions, according to policy experts and administrators (*Migration News* 6/1)



both naturalization and *jus soli*. Most importantly, dual citizenship had been rejected by the Federal Constitutional Court in 1974 which considered multiple nationalities “evil” (Green 2004:41). Still in place into the 1990s, the crucial point about this ruling was that anyone who naturalized would be required to give up any other citizenship if they became a German citizen. Or, if there was a *jus soli* policy, they would be forced to choose between a citizenship of descent and one of territory.

Dual citizenship, however, was not as quite what it seemed. As Green (2005) shows, a number of exceptions to the official non-acceptance of dual citizenship, as well as regional variation and administrative leeway, meant that in fact, dual citizenship was in reality being tolerated to a much greater extent than was commonly known.

Exceptions such as, for instance, the unwillingness of immigrants’ countries of origin to release them from their citizenship (Iran, Afghanistan), or exorbitant penalties and fees for release from citizenship (as with some former Yugoslavian countries) meant that for some national origin groups, most who became German citizens were dual citizens.

Equally important, however, was the fact that dual citizenship was not an issue for all non-citizens, but rather only non-citizens of non-European Union countries (Green 2005: 922; Hansen 1998). These administrative and practical realities, however, stood in stark contrast to the political meaning of dual citizenship.

The bold declaration by the SPD to change citizenship after winning the elections prompted the opposition CDU/CSU to undertake an unprecedented move in citizenship politics. They brought citizenship—specifically dual citizenship—into the public sphere. In January of 1999, they began a national “signature campaign” against dual citizenship. The petition itself was a one-line statement, titled “Yes to integration, no to dual

nationality.”<sup>55</sup> The signature campaign began as an idea of Wolfgang Schäuble, the CDU party leader. It quickly gained support in several federal states and eventually from the majority of CDU elected officials, though with some dissenting members, particularly younger members of the party, opposed to it.<sup>56</sup> In one state in particular—Hessen—an ascending candidate for state minister (governor), Roland Koch, made opposition to dual citizenship a centerpiece of his campaign and party platform.<sup>57</sup> When the campaign began, he confidently asserted that while campaigning he had spoken with many citizens who would sign a petition against dual citizenship, and suggesting that 95 percent of the German population, even the majority of SPD supporters, would be against dual citizenship.<sup>58</sup> Within the first month of the campaign, the CDU had collected more than 300,000 signatures.<sup>59</sup> Polls showed that opposition to dual citizenship increased from 57 percent in December 1998 to 63 percent in January 1999, and further to 70 percent in February of 1999.<sup>60</sup>

In Hesse, Roland Koch argued that allowing for dual citizenship would lead to more and more dual citizens, which was “not a strategy for integration in a modern society, but rather a dangerous path to long-term social conflict and unease,”<sup>61</sup> and “would create a parallel society and lead to insoluble social problems.”<sup>62</sup> The petition itself was also somewhat controversial within the CDU/CSU party fraction, among a small group of the more liberal party members, such as Rita Süßmuth, who would later become the Federal Commissioner for Foreigners’ Affairs, and be largely ostracized by

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<sup>55</sup>*The Guardian* 7 Feb 1999

<sup>56</sup>*FAZ* 9 Jan 1999

<sup>57</sup>*The Guardian* 7 Feb 1999

<sup>58</sup>*FAZ* 7 Jan 1999

<sup>59</sup>*The Guardian* 7 Feb 1999

<sup>60</sup>*Politbarometer West* 1998: 111

<sup>61</sup>*The Guardian* 7 Feb 1999

<sup>62</sup>*The Guardian* 7 Feb 1999

her own party. In particular, these CDU members thought that the petition could be “dangerously misunderstood” as a mobilization against foreigners.<sup>63</sup> Roland Koch and others clearly framed dual citizenship as divisive and as exacerbating social conflict.

The elections in Hesse on February 7 resulted in a major victory for the Christian Democrats, with them winning 44 percent of the vote. In doing so, they upset the SPD-Green coalition in that particular state, thus leading to a loss of 5 seats in the upper house of Parliament—the *Bundesrat*. Significantly, it was the first time in eight years that a Red-Green coalition lost its domination in the state of Hesse.<sup>64</sup> The CDU had collected 500,000 signatures against dual citizenship, from a population of 4.3 million eligible voters in the state of Hesse. Exit polls showed that 36 percent of voters cited proposed changes to citizenship laws as their major worry, following unemployment.<sup>65</sup> Such numbers indicate that dual citizenship had become a major issue for voters by the time of the elections.

The SPD-Green coalition had brought dual citizenship into the public sphere by announcing their plans to introduce dual citizenship for non-European guestworkers and their children. In doing so, they made little mention of the fact that dual citizenship was already enjoyed by EU non-citizens and others in Germany, a narrative they did articulate in the formal setting of parliamentary debates. The signature campaign, I contend, was an example of a “nationhood event” (Brubaker 1996), a moment in which an understanding of “foreigners” as a threat was mobilized against a state policy of membership. The narratives about dual citizenship—that it represented a privileging of “immigrants” over “natives” was resonant in the population, and that it was “for” non-EU

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<sup>63</sup>FAZ 9 Jan 1999

<sup>64</sup>*New York Times* 8 Feb 1999

<sup>65</sup>*Migration News* 6(3)

citizens, seen as the most different and least able to be integrated into German society, all worked in favor of the opposition to it. The signature campaign was also a *contingent event* in an institutionalist sense. Had the SPD expected a populist campaign against dual citizenship, they may not have announced their intentions to propose it publicly, though they could have still done so within the formal legislative process. Instead, the CDU capitalized on the popular understandings of dual citizenship and in turn transformed the political party structure, by forcing an expansion of the SPD-Green coalition to include a third party, the FDP, with different policy preferences. The signature campaign had transformed the possibilities for citizenship reform even before the first debates took place or any official legislative proposals were made.

### ***Proposals and Debates on a new Citizenship Law***

The FDP, the new coalition partner, shared many of the understandings of immigrants, Germany and the nation and citizenship as the SPD and, to some extent, the Greens. They emphasized this in their *statement of the problem* which a new citizenship law would address:

*The children of foreign parents born in Germany are considered foreigners, according to the current Citizenship Law. Yet they **grow up** almost entirely in Germany and will **live here** for the long term. Their **integration** is therefore a basic condition for social peace. Their exclusion can have a negative effect on their sense of belonging to Germany, and lead, in the long run, to serious conflict. It is therefore in the **interest** of the Federal Republic, that the children born here, and who will live here, become accepted and integrated into society.<sup>66</sup>*

However, while the FDP was in favor of birthright citizenship, they had always been against a general dual citizenship. They nonetheless stated that those born in Germany to

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<sup>66</sup> Dr 14/296, p. 1

non-citizen parents should be offered the option of being German citizens, or citizens of their parents' countries of origin. They believed this decision was one that could only be made as an adult, and so they proposed a kind of temporary dual citizenship, which became known as the *Option Plan* (“*Optionsmodell*”). Under this policy, minors who would be citizens by birthright would be entitled to be dual citizens until the age of 23. Between the age of 18 and 23, they would be expected to choose German or their other citizenship. In defending this position, they reaffirmed that citizenship was not superficial or unimportant, but did in fact represent a sense of belonging to Germany:

*We were clearly against the original plan of the coalition, to implement long-term dual citizenship. Whoever wants to become a German citizen, should fundamentally acknowledge our country by giving up his former citizenship. The German passport is not some piece of paper, that one wouldn't mind having in addition, rather it requires a conscious orientation to the German state.<sup>67</sup>*

Following their joining the SPD-Green Coalition, after the signature campaign, the three parties put forth a proposal for birthright citizenship, a reduction in residency time from 15 to 8 years. Their justification for the policy was articulated largely through their construction of non-citizens as worthy of citizenship:

*...At the end of 1998, 7.3 Million foreigners lived in Germany, about 50% for at least 10, more than 35% for at least 15 and over 29% for at least 20 years. More than 1.6 Million of the foreigners in Germany were born here. Of the 1.6 Million foreign youth, it's more than 1 Million, or 67%. These long-term, law-abiding foreigners have their lives in Germany and are unfamiliar and alienated from the ways of life of the country whose citizenship they hold. The giving of citizenship to long-term residents is in the public interest at the very least, because no state can tolerate a significant portion of its population outside of the political community.<sup>68</sup>*

As the text shows, these parties construct foreigners as long-term residents and law-abiding. Importantly, they also reiterate the statement first made by CDU Chancellor

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<sup>67</sup> *ibid*: 2294

<sup>68</sup> DS 14/533: 11

Helmut Kohl, that “no state can tolerate a large portion of its population outside the political community.”

In their counter-proposal, the CDU did not propose an introduction of *jus soli*, but reduced residency times for naturalization. In their justification, they construct a different narrative about immigrants, as well as Germany and citizenship:

*We want to reform the citizenship law, which eases naturalization for those foreigners, who have adjusted to the German way of life, and who have chosen to lead their lives in Germany. Naturalization is an expression of a successful integration and socialization in Germany...a testable integration and socialization of the applicant must be guaranteed. Mastering the German language is fundamental for naturalization.*<sup>69</sup>

Unlike the coalition’s proposal, the CDU here presents immigrants as only potentially part of and at home in, Germany. They also emphasize German “culture”—in terms of a ‘way of life’, as well as language, as opposed the coalition’s more general reference to place and territorial presence.

### ***Debate – March 1999***

The first debate on citizenship took place in March of 1999. The SPD opened the debate with a declaration that all political parties were in agreement about two things—that a reform of the 1913 Law was in order and second, that long-term residents need to be provided a path to political participation in Germany. Though the issue of dual citizenship had largely been dropped from any policy proposal, the debate surprisingly largely centered on it. Many of the same arguments raised in regard to dual citizenship were the same in debates on citizenship generally.

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<sup>69</sup> DS 14/535: 15

In talking about dual citizenship, the SPD constructed a particular narrative of foreigners, citizenship and the nation:

*It's especially important for the first generation of immigrants, who we recruited here and who have been integrated for several years, to give them full citizenship rights and make naturalization easier for them... For many long-term residents giving up citizenship represents a separation from one's own culture, a loosening of familiar and personal connections. Such emotional and psychological aspects have to be considered.<sup>70</sup>*

Here, as in many other debates before and after, the SPD emphasized the contributions of guestworkers, and the German state's recruitment of them. It also, importantly, defined citizenship in an identitarian sense—as an expression of “one's culture” which represented emotional and psychological ties to one's country of origin. This was their initial justification for advocating for dual citizenship.

The SPD also heavily criticized the opposition to dual citizenship, by criticizing the opposing narrative offered by the CDU of dual citizens as bad citizens in terms of loyalty and societal contributions. As SPD member Bürsch articulates this position, he is interrupted by a CDU party member, illustrating the way in which dual citizenship is differently construed by these political parties:

*Bursch (SPD): ... Around one-third of those who naturalize are able to keep their former citizenship. What we also never talk about is the 2 million dual citizens in Germany, among whom are venerable teachers, administrators and police officers...*

*Beck (Greens): Congressmen! (adding to the list of dual citizens)*

*Marschewski (CDU): 2 Million is wrong! 500,000, not 2 Million! That's nonsense!*

*Bursch (SPD): ...who live and manage multiple nationalities without any problems. The fact that dual citizenship is overdramatized in Germany can be seen quite clearly when we look at other countries. If we look at France, the United Kingdom, or the Netherlands. Look at Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands.*

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<sup>70</sup> Pl Pr 14/28: 2283

*She doesn't have one, two, or three, but four citizenships...No Dutch person has ever doubted that the Queen is loyal. Nor has anyone, Mr. Zeitmann, ever thought that a Bavarian couldn't be a good German and a good European.*<sup>71</sup>

This exchange between parties exemplifies the general differences in the way that parties frame citizenship. The SPD party member's statement is a "reality" narrative—a story which tells of something is already taking place usually in spite of a lack of debate or policy accurately addressing it as reality. As the interjections demonstrate, what is more important is the strategic way in which dual citizenship is constructed—by the SPD as a much more common occurrence, than the debate on dual citizenship suggests. Dual citizens, moreover, in the SPD frame are "good citizens"—civil servants and others who work in highly regarded occupations. Third, the SPD frames Germany as a peculiar nation-state among European states, and by implication, "backward", rather than universal and humane—a narrative which would cut across all paths to citizenship in future debates. Finally, the SPD party member points out how some persons and some identities are never questioned in relation to loyalty and Germanness—specifically, other Europeans, as well as regional identities such as Bavarian—and thereby illuminating that the question of loyalty applies to certain other groups—non-Europeans and lower class individuals.

*CDU*

In the same debate, the CDU/CSU articulated a very different story about dual citizenship:

*...I didn't say every dual citizen is bad. Nobody said that...but you said that because there are good examples, let's let everyone have dual citizenship...  
**You want to give every young foreigner dual citizenship. I calculated how many***

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 2283



*that is. In Germany, there are 100,000 foreign children born every year. Based on conservative numbers, about 60,000 of those will become citizens... I ask you, according to crime statistics, how many foreigners...*

*(Loud objections by opposing party)*

*Yes of course now I'm evil...what bothers you about discussing crime in relation to [citizenship]?...I'd like to know if you have thought about the fact that you will have to keep all future little **Mehmets** here, who don't fit into this society and have done everything to stay on the fringe of it.<sup>72</sup>*

Here, the CDU/CSU paints a very different picture of foreigners and citizenship. Most significantly, they tie foreigners to crime. The reference to “Mehmet” was a specific reference to a real person—Muhlis A.—a 14-year old Turkish youth who committed a series of violent crimes in the state of Bavaria. When apprehended in 1998, he was deported. More significantly, he was used as an example of the young, foreign, male criminal by the conservative interior minister Edmund Stoiber. The *Mehmet incident* personifies and makes real the character of the young, criminal, and male foreigner, who is presumed to be both deviant and violent. Numbers also are used rhetorically and particularly in relation to births, thus creating a biologicistic, population narrative (Chavez 2008) meant to suggest the growing number of foreigners as threatening. In the same debate, the same party member used another character—the Islamic fanatic—to criticize the automatic attribution of citizenship:

*...[You] make them into Germans whether they like it or not; **even the Islamic fanatic** gets a passport sent express mail to his house, whether he wants it or not.<sup>73</sup>*

*FDP*

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid: 2286

<sup>73</sup> ibid

The Free Liberal Party adopted a number of strategies in expressing their support for a liberal citizenship law. Most distinctly they framed a new citizenship law as both good for Germany, and framed immigrants and their children as long-term and lawful residents:

*With this law we will, after long years of discussion, finally get a **modern** citizenship law. The new law will lead to the improved integration of persons of foreign background who are lawfully residing in Germany. Better integration of these persons is urgently in the interest of our society.*

*What we do today, serves not only the children born here, but also our **national interest**. What we leave undone, will come back to haunt us in the form of a rejection of society.<sup>74</sup>*

They further emphasized that they were referring to lawfully residing residents by noting the conditional aspect of *jus soli*:

*Whoever tries to make the impression that we're talking about a pregnant woman in her eighth or ninth month coming to Germany so that her child could automatically become German, is bringing in a completely misdirected polemic. We are talking about the children of long-term, lawful foreigners. It serves society to integrate these children. They should know right from the beginning they belong and are a part of our society. They should not grow up with the understanding that they are foreigners.<sup>75</sup>*

The FDP added to their description of foreigners as lawful and long-term residents, their Germanness in a cultural sense:

*These kids speak German as their native language. They win speech contests in school. They speak their parents' language with a German accent. It makes no sense to artificially separate these children from others their age, and then have to integrate them with a lot of effort and uncertain possibilities for success.<sup>76</sup>*

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<sup>74</sup> Pl Pr 14/28 (19 March 1999): 2292C

<sup>75</sup> *ibid*: 2293B

<sup>76</sup> *ibid*: 2293

*The Turkish grandmother scolded the child in Turkish, and the grandchild talked back in German. It's these children we're talking about.*<sup>77</sup>

In talking about citizenship as a tool for integration, the FDP also used representative stories about violent, male youth, particularly in the context of fundamentalism; but in contrast to the CDU, they saw the lack of citizenship—as a lack of integration—as a *cause* of such behavior and tendencies:

*It's unacceptable...for you to suggest that German-born foreign children are all little Mehmetts. As if that's what this is about! Of course we should not let Mr. Öcalan become a citizen or not deport the Mehmetts of society. But the decisive thing is for us to create an integration policy that allows children not become fanatics, or join fundamentalist groups, or get lumped together in the ghettos of the city. If you want to prevent ghettoizing in the cities, you have to stop the ghettoizing in the minds of children born here.*<sup>78</sup>

*The passport does not replace integration, it expands it.*

### *Greens*

Much like the Social Democrats, the Green party framed foreigners in terms of their contributions to and de facto integration and belonging in German society:

*7 Million so-called foreigners live in Germany, almost two-thirds have for over 10 years, more than 30 percent have over 20 years. 100,000 children of foreign parents are born every year here. But according to the Foreigner Law, they are still strangers in their own country. After 86 years, we're ending this exclusion. We're going to make these so-called foreigners into natives.*

*Member of the CDU/CSU: these are people who helped to build this country, who made invaluable contributions to the economic success of Germany, who made friends, who have served in organizations, and who have shaped and enriched our society.*

*The introduction of birthright citizenship is truly historic. With this reform, the Federal Republic finally is connected with the rest of Europe.*<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> *ibid*: 2295

<sup>78</sup> *ibid*, 2293D

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*: 2288B, C

The Greens not only emphasize non-citizens contributions to Germany, but also create an image of foreigners as an integral part of German culture and society—through friendships and enrichment of German society. They also construe Germany’s Citizenship Law as backward and out of step with other European countries. This narrative of Germany as backward would become one of the key narratives of the Social Democrats and the Green party.

***Debate – May 1999***

The second debate on the Citizenship Law centered on similar themes about nation and immigrants, specifically in relation to crime and the numbers of immigrants who would become citizens under various citizenship policies. As the government in power, Interior Minister Schily of the SPD opened the debate. He began by reiterating the permanence of the non-citizen population:

*We are dealing with a large segment of the resident population, that has been with us for a long time and will continue to be. You can’t change that and hopefully you don’t want to...Because you can’t change it, we have to do what the federal court commanded us to: to make the members of the state and the residents of the state one. That is necessary for the social cohesion of our society.<sup>80</sup>*

The emphasis here again is on the long-term residency of foreigners and immigrants. The Interior Minister also refers to a decision by the Constitutional Court of 1990, in which it was decided that non-citizens could not have voting rights. In the same decision,

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<sup>80</sup> Pl Pr 14/40: 3417

the Court urged political parties to make citizens and residents one and the same. He goes on to talk about the consequences of *not* changing the citizenship policies in place:

*I believe, if we leave things as they are, we will have an increasing alienation of immigrants, a rejection from young people, who grow up in such families, and we'll have more and more ghettoization, we'll have more and more a parallel society.*<sup>81</sup>

In their opening response to the Interior Ministry's statement, the CDU/CSU stated: "The proposal that you have brought to vote on today, has nothing to do with integration."

They also reminded the Social Democrats that they had collected 5 Million signatures nationally against dual citizenship, which the *Option model* was still an example of. The CDU called this dual citizenship "through the back door," by introducing a dual citizenship for *millions* of foreigners.<sup>82</sup> In response to these accusations, the Interior Minister replied that he believed that dual citizenship should in fact be avoided, but that "integration for us is more important than avoiding multiple nationality."<sup>83</sup>

The *Mehmet Incident* was also once again raised by the CDU, this time in connection with the new *jus soli* Citizenship:

*...the criminal statistics showed the deporting of a criminal—Mehmet—had the effect of scaring young foreigner criminals... what can we say to parents of children who will be victims of crime, who could have been protected, but in the future, after this new law, cannot be deported?*<sup>84</sup>

In response, the SPD once again tried to thin the line between citizens and foreigners, "immigrants" and "Germans":

*...There are people all over the world who don't obey the rules. We simply have to tolerate this abnormal behavior. Whether it is Mehmet, or any boy or girl in*

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<sup>81</sup> Pl Pr 14/40: *ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Die Welt* 16 Mar 1999; Emphasis added.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*: 3423

<sup>84</sup> Pl Pr 14/40:3443

*our society, whether they have German citizenship, some other citizenship or dual citizenship...So you can say to the parents: there are such deviants.*<sup>85</sup>

The FDP also clearly reiterated their strong support for German-born non-citizens, and that citizenship should be the basis, not the reward, for integration:

*Foreign children who are born in Germany, should grow up integrated, with a sense of themselves as natives and not as foreigners...we can only stop ghettoization of the cities by stopping ghettoization in the mind.*<sup>86</sup>

*Whoever wants to keep the next generation of German-born children away from the influence of **foreign fanatics**, has to integrate them as much as possible—by passing on our culture and the German language, but also specifically the German passport.*<sup>87</sup>

The Greens emphasized their disappointment with the lack of dual citizenship for first-generation immigrants. Speaking on behalf of the party was Cem Özdemir, one of a handful of naturalized citizens of migrant background, whose parents had been guestworkers:

*I regret that we weren't able to guarantee dual citizenship for the **first generation**, those who have **grown old** in this society, who **don't pose a threat** to anyone, and **commit fewer offenses** than comparable Germans, and who have always been **loyal** to this country... we would have lost nothing, it would have involved a manageable and limited group of individuals. And I think most of the population would have followed and supported us.*<sup>88</sup>

He went on to articulate a civic sense of citizenship typical of the Green party:

*...For us, a German citizen is not someone who has had a blood transfusion, or who has certain tastes in music, dress, cuisine, or other habits which he calls his own. For us, a **German citizen**, who belongs to this society is **someone who recognizes the constitution and shares the values** of this society, such as the*

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<sup>85</sup>Ibid

<sup>86</sup> Ibid: 3433

<sup>87</sup> Ibid: 3436

<sup>88</sup> 14/40: 3426

*equality of men and women. We tolerate no exceptions. No one can say for himself 'in my culture it's different.' We won't accept that.*<sup>89</sup>

As both debates in 1999 show, parties positions on citizenship were fairly distinct, with more subtle differences among the coalition partners – SPD, Greens and FDP.

On May 7, 1999, the proposed Citizenship Law (*Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz* or StAG) passed in the *Bundestag* and was approved in the *Bundesrat* (the upper house of parliament) two weeks later. It would go into effect on January 1, 2000. *Jus soli* was part of the new law. But importantly, it was not an *unconditional* *jus soli*, where birth alone would confer citizenship. Rather, two conditions applied: 1) children born in Germany are required to have at least one parent with a permanent residence permit; and 2) that parent must have a minimum length of eight years of residence in Germany. As Green (2005) notes, these conditions left only 40% of children born to Turkish nationals eligible for *jus soli* citizenship. Naturalization requirements were also reduced to 8 from 15 years. However, other new requirements for naturalization were added—an oath to the German Constitution and language proficiency. Finally, welfare recipients were ineligible for citizenship.

## **Chapter Summary**

Changes in citizenship policy during the 1990s were the outcome of multiple factors. One of the critical factors explaining citizenship change was culture—in the form of stories about immigrants, Germany and the nation, and citizenship. Critically, as parliamentary debates show, different political parties had very different understandings

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

of each. Such stark differences demonstrate that understandings of nation, immigrants and citizenship are as diverse within the same nation-state as between nation-states, in contrast to the arguments which show national differences and tend to “addresses citizenship as if it sprung forth from a unified, stable belief system” (Murray 1994:24).

Which understandings and stories about immigrants became the basis for policies, however, depended on political parties and coalitions. The dominance of the center-right Christian Democratic party for more than 15 years, assumed three years after the introduction of the first path to citizenship for non-ethnic Germans, largely explains the very minor reforms in citizenship, and that they happened in the most restrictive path to citizenship—naturalization. In an alternative scenario of a ruling SPD party during the same period, *a jus soli* policy, and perhaps dual citizenship—if in coalition with a left-wing party such as the Greens—could have been established by 1990 at the latest. This is most clearly shown by the consistency of political parties’ positions on citizenship over the course of the 1990s and 1980s, and going back even further. The two minor parties—the FDP and the Greens—have always been junior partners in other coalitions, so a general dual citizenship, consistently supported by the Greens, would not have come to be. At the same time that political parties matter, their members are not always in agreement on major issues. In fact, on citizenship issues particularly, there were often small opposing factions within the major parties—CDU, SPD and FDP. Most of the members of these factions leaned further to the left of their respective parties. But in no case in citizenship policy were parties truly divided such that citizenship policy proposals changed or any outcomes changed. In the final analysis, members of the same political party tended to vote alike.



Coalitions between political parties, as a basic feature of the German political system, were also crucial. The diversity on citizenship issues among political parties meant that in many cases of citizenship reform, ruling parties were forced to work with coalition partners, and even third parties. The particular instances of citizenship policy reform throughout the 1990s showed this. The FDP in particular was pivotal in virtually every citizenship policy change, when all other causal factors were taken into account. As the same 1998 proposal showed, the FDP voted with the CDU, whom they were in coalition with, against the introduction of *jus soli*. One year later, under the newly-elected SPD-Greens coalition, and following the electoral fallout from the signature campaign, the Social Democrats' citizenship policy proposal was amended to be made palatable to the FDP, and only then was able to pass. Had the FDP's *Optionsmodell* not been adopted, or had they opposed *jus soli*, possibly nothing about citizenship policy would have changed, even with the Social Democratic party in power.

Coalitions themselves, however, were at least partly event-driven. Specifically, contingent events changed the parameters within which political parties act. In Germany in the 1990s, two such events were the asylum crisis of 1992 and the signature campaign of 1999. The entrance of more than 400,000 asylum seekers in 1992 to Germany was represented a critical juncture of both processes and events outside of Germany itself—the ending of the Cold War and civil wars in other countries as well as an existing liberal Asylum law—brought pressure on the current government to change its asylum law. The signature campaign was a very different kind of event, since it was not unforeseen but rather was planned and lead by a political party. Nonetheless, it effectively mobilized popular support against dual citizenship. Here again, the politics of nation figures into

changes in citizenship policies. The signature campaign represented an instance of what Rogers Brubaker has called “nationhood as event”, in which nationhood is mobilized in a particular moment as a category of practice—a cognitive frame through which an issue is defined. The signature campaign represents a clear example of how both nationhood and the category of “foreigner” were mobilized in opposition to dual citizenship policy proposals. The CDU presented a reductive and simplistic version of dual citizenship as a policy innovation for certain groups of immigrants. While political parties are defined actors who contentiously define nation in an official venue, the signature campaign calls into question whether a particular understanding of nationness dominates in public discourse. When nation was put into public discourse in Germany, it was defined in its most exclusive sense—based on stories and understandings of persons of migrant background as opportunistic, culturally foreign, threatening and as *immigrants*. The resonance of such narratives (Fisher 1984) led to changes in which party was in power, and in turn, to those parties’ particular understandings of nation, citizenship and Germanness being institutionalized.

Finally, though political parties are most important to citizenship policy changes, such differences ultimately matter only after a citizenship politics emerges, which in Germany only happened with the introduction of naturalization guidelines in 1978. A path to citizenship did in fact exist—but it was exclusively a *jus sanguinis*, descent-based path. This exclusiveness made German descent and German citizenship synonymous. While a non-debated, unarticulated and unchanging policy is indeed political, the possibility of becoming a citizen at all for those not of German descent must precede arguments over the criteria or meaning of becoming a citizen.

Though citizenship and Germanness are constructed by both states and prospective citizens, citizenship is fundamentally a state status; it is conferred by the state and institutionalized in policies and laws that are debated and made through state institutions. It is therefore imperative to consider how citizenship is made at the level of the state. Further, state understandings and definitions are important to consider because they do not necessarily remain insulated within the state or state actors' discourses, but often matter and inform how ordinary people understand, construct and negotiate their self-understandings. This may apply equally to both the categories and memberships of citizen and German.

**Table 3.1 Changes in Citizenship Laws since 1990**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Name of Legislation</i>	<i>Policy Changes</i>	<i>Prior policy</i>
<b>1990</b>	Simplified naturalization ( <i>'Erleichterte Einbürgerung'</i> )	Changed naturalization law: Permitted naturalization for a lower fee of <i>100 German marks</i>	Naturalization possible for <i>DM 5000 German mark fee; 15 year residency</i>
<b>1992</b>	As of right naturalization ( <i>'Rechtsanspruch'</i> )	Changed naturalization to a <i>right</i> if applicants qualified	Naturalization based on <i>discretion</i> of federal states
<b>2000</b>	<i>Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz (StAG)</i> Citizenship Law (2000)	1) Introduced <b>birthright citizenship</b> ( <i>jus soli</i> ) for German-born children with at least one parent with a permanent resident status. Made retroactive to children born starting in 1990. 2) Introduced <b>Option model</b> of dual citizenship which permitted dual citizenship up until age 23 for children of non-citizen parents.	<i>Reichs- und Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz (RuStaG)</i> Citizenship Law (1913)

**Table 3.2 Positions of Political Parties on Liberalization of Citizenship**

<b>Political Party/ Citizenship Policy</b>	<i>Naturalization</i>	<i>Jus Soli (Birthright)</i>	<i>Dual Citizenship</i>
<i>CDU/CSU</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>SPD</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>FDP</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>GREENS</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>

1= strongly in favor  
 2= generally in favor  
 3= generally against  
 4= strongly against

## **PART II. Membership and Persons of Migrant Background since 1990**

As shown in previous chapters, the transformation of citizenship policies in the 1990s depended less on understandings of nationhood particular to Germany—as argued by many comparative and cross-national studies, and more on political parties and their coalitions. Understandings of membership—constructed through the categories of *nation*, *immigrants*, and *citizenship* itself, figured prominently in the transformations that took place. Different political parties used such categories, but told very different stories about each that became constitutive of citizenship policies. Furthermore, at a critical juncture—the election of the first left-wing coalition in 16 years—dominant narratives about nation and immigrants were mobilized by the opposition party to limit transformations in citizenship policies—specifically, to block the passing of dual citizenship. These events clearly illustrate how nation has mattered to the transformation of citizenship by state actors. But how have Germanness and citizenship been used in the making of membership by ordinary people? If nation is a powerful category in the ‘tool kit’ of the state and state actors in the making of policies of membership, is it as well for individuals?

As forms of membership, citizenship and Germanness have been extensively studied at the level of the state. What membership means to persons of migrant background, however, and how it has been constructed through nationness and citizenship has been given very little scholarly attention. Naturalization rates have often been cited as proof of a restrictive or liberal citizenship, and as an indication of membership in terms of rights and identities. However, such citations obscure what membership actually means, and how those meanings vary among non-members. The

exact same naturalization rates may reflect very different understandings of citizenship. In contrast, individuals' own stories about citizenship offer more nuanced accounts of membership. The fact that understandings of citizenship and Germanness are multiple suggest that a narrative approach better illuminates what membership means to ordinary people.

Membership, citizenship and Germanness at the level of immigrants and their descendants differs from the state in a crucial aspect. Individuals, unlike states, are *differently situated* in relation to the both citizenship and Germanness. For instance, not all non-citizenships are legally equal in Germany. Noncitizens who are citizens of European Union member states have both some political rights, as well as rights of dual citizenship, which non-European Union citizens do not. How these rights constrain becoming a German citizen, however, depends on how citizenship is understood by prospective and actual citizens. The possibility of dual citizenship, for example, could mean that those EU citizens who see citizenship in terms of nationness are *not* forced to negotiate becoming German citizens, given that they could keep their other citizenship, especially when they view their own nationness as a kind of hybrid, rather than as singular. Similarly, when citizenship is understood in terms of rights, the right to vote in some elections, and the right to travel freely could mean that there are few reasons for those who see citizenship in terms of rights. For non-EU citizens who see citizenship in nationness terms, becoming a German citizen means effectively becoming a German, and the lack of tolerance for dual citizenship means discarding one's national identity, however defined. For non-EU citizens who see citizenship mainly in terms of rights,

however, becoming a citizen may be either a matter of access to rights of German citizens or those of non-German, European Union citizens.

In the same way that non-citizens are differently situated in relation to German citizenship based on their particular citizenship, non-citizens may also be differently situated in relation to Germanness and nationness. As I argued in Chapter 1, a critical feature of nation is its ability and even tendency to stand in for other categories of difference such as ethnicity, race, religion and others. Importantly, non-citizens belong to specific groups of difference; being Christian or Muslim, Turkish, Polish, or Italian, as well as phenotypical differences all may matter to how a particular individual or category of individuals understands Germanness, and based on that understanding does or does not imagine themselves as German. As Thompson states, it cannot be “[presupposed] that *all* members feel constrained in similar kinds of ways by their membership to the nation” (2001: 25).

Finally, citizenship and Germanness may also vary by one’s status as a citizen or non-citizen. That is, being or not being a citizen may inform how one views one’s membership, one’s citizenship and one’s Germanness, and how one links the two. Though a traditionally culturalist perspective emphasizes how different understandings lead to particular outcomes, it may also be that what are thought of as “outcomes”—in this case the status of citizen and the identity as German—shape one’s understandings of those two memberships.

In the following chapters, I consider how understandings of membership vary among first-generation immigrants and German-born (“second generation”) persons of



migrant background, and the understandings of both Germanness as nationness and citizenship and how each of these is related to a sense of membership.

## **CHAPTER 4: First Generation Immigrants, Citizenship and Germanness**

Most studies of citizenship among immigrants are quantitative or survey-based studies which present aggregated data about immigrants' reasons for becoming citizens. Statistics about naturalizations alone tell very little about the meaning of membership. Few qualitative studies about the meaning of both citizenship and nationness in Germany exist. Becoming a citizen, or identifying as German or *not* identifying as German, only make sense in a particular context of meanings of citizenship and Germanness. As shown in previous chapters, within the same nation-state and time period, understandings of citizenship and Germanness varied. In fact, multiple understandings of citizenship and nationness co-exist and are articulated by state actors. Given the various understandings that underlie citizenship policies—as well as the way in which citizenship was constructed with reference to disparate narratives about Germany, immigrants and nationality—how immigrants understand their own membership in Germany is of particular importance.

In this chapter, I consider 9 first-generation adult immigrants and how they construct their membership in Germany. Eight of the nine interviewees came to Germany after age 18, most in their 20s. For all interviewees of the sample, citizenship was an option. I compare non-citizens and citizens' understandings of membership, in terms of both citizenship and Germanness.

## Non-Citizens and Membership

One 32-year old Italian owner of a small ethnic business, C., who had lived in Germany for twelve years, described how being a German citizen would change little in terms of being German:

*I: What does it mean for you to have a passport, to have citizenship?*

*C: It's hard to say. Let's say I was German, on paper or documents. Still nobody would see me as German. It's just like that for mixed race people here too. They will never be seen as German, even though they are born here, grow up here, and speak perfect German. They feel German but are never accepted as German. So what is on paper and what is reality? Ok, on paper you have more chances, for work, for school, to travel, and so on. But in everyday life, nobody sees that paper. You can't run around with your passport showing. **It should also change the attitudes of people [but it doesn't].***

*(Ita./Ita.,#17,152-162)<sup>90</sup>*

Her definition of Germanness is also largely racial. She makes the point that even when individuals speak the language, and are socialized into German culture, they still will never be able to become German due to their appearance. She also argues having a passport should confirm a person as German, but it in fact does not. At the same time, for C., citizenship conferred few rights that mattered to her. She was not a citizen, and had no intentions of becoming one, based on the fact that she had by her own account, little to gain by becoming a German citizen:

*I: So you never thought about becoming a citizen?*

*C: No, I don't see it as necessary. And I think I was born in Italy, and I'll always be Italian. [laughter]*

*I: Are there reasons why you wouldn't want to become a citizen?*

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<sup>90</sup> Notation for Interviewees: [National Origin/Citizenship]

C: *Well, I just think I'd have no benefits with it. As long as I'm living in Europe at least. And besides that, well, you still feel like you are Italian.*  
(#17, 131-140)

Here it seems that either being in Europe, or her European citizenship—as an Italian—are reason enough for her *not* to become a citizen.

Even though she thought that citizenship would not give her Germanness, she also did not see herself as German in any strong sense:

I: *So, can you say that you feel German in any way?*

C: *I don't feel Italian anymore but I don't feel German either. That's just how it is. Yeah, some things I've taken on here. Small things. For example, in Italy we don't really have breakfast, but here they do. Not a quick espresso but sitting down for a long coffee. Little things like that.*

(#17, 71-77)

Much like C., S., a woman from Turkey, who worked as an assistant cook and had lived for 30 years in Munich, emphasized the fact that citizenship would bring neither specific rights that she was interested in, nor any more legitimate claim on Germanness:

I: *Why have you not applied for citizenship?*

S: *Whether I have a passport...a German passport or not, I'm not a German. I'm still a foreigner here. Appearance, name, and so on. Having rights gives you some advantages, but I haven't applied yet.*

(#48, Turk./Turk. 27-

31)

At the same time as she was “not German”, she did not see herself as entirely Turkish either:

I: *How do I feel? I'm not sure...I'm a foreigner here, and in Turkey too! I'm Turkish-German*

S: *Do you think you will stay here, after you retire, or...?*

- I: *Forever? I don't think so.*
- S: *You want to go back?*
- I: *One day we will have to go back. I don't know. **But whether or not we will feel at home there, that's the question. Because we don't know anything about living there either.** Nothing. As soon as we get there, when we buy something that costs one lira, for us it's two lira.*  
(47-56)

She also saw citizenship as tied to rights, and specifically, political rights, one of the few rights still tied to national citizenship:

- I: *So you never thought about getting German citizenship?*
- S: ***So far I haven't had any problems, so I never thought about it. Maybe for voting or something like that, but so far I didn't think about it.***
- I: *Is it not important for you?*
- S: *It should be important! Voting is important for some people. For example, if I had a German passport, I would vote Green probably. But I can't!*
- I: *It's not important for you? Not important enough for you to get citizenship?*
- S: *(pause) I guess not! (laughs)*  
(#48, 101-114)

For other non-citizens, not choosing German citizenship was based on a desire to maintain another citizenship. The denial of dual citizenship following the campaign of the CDU meant that dual citizenship would not be a possibility—at least for non-European Union citizens. E., a 37-year old architect from Cameroon, viewed his citizenship in identitarian terms—as an expression of, and connection to an African identity:

I: *Have you thought about [becoming a citizen]?*

E: *Yeah, it comes up now and then with acquaintances, and through the changes in Germany, it's a hot topic. But I don't want to become a citizen. I personally don't want it. **It's [a] very ideological [choice]. I think that I belong to the people that still believe in Africa and that Africa needs its people. That's also why I run this organization. You can do things from far away, too...** For me to feel that I am staying African is important to me. Of course, a passport doesn't prevent me from helping Africa. But so far I don't see it as necessary.*

*(Cam./Cam., #18, 93-104)*

Importantly, choosing citizenship is based more on the citizenship he must give up, then on the German one he would acquire. At the same time, his statement that citizenship is not “necessary” suggests that were more rights tied to citizenship, this might change which citizenship he would choose. While at the same time, it is clear that the citizenship policies—in this case the relatively thin line between citizens and noncitizens—matter to how he frames citizenship. His identification with Africa was reflective of a cosmopolitan orientation, which became clear when he talked about his membership in Germany:

I: *Ok. And, how would you describe yourself? How do you identify yourself?*

E: *That's a tough question. I've never thought about it. I feel like a citizen of the world, I'd have to say. Just because **I don't relate to only one country**, which is based on something—how I grew up. **I grew up in different places, different cities in Cameroon, in France, Holland, Portugal, now here in Germany. My wife is Italian, my children were born here in Germany. I think I'm pretty open-minded, and I just don't relate to a specific place.***

*(#18, Cam., 27-35)*

I: *And how is it here? In Germany is it different because you've lived here longer? Do you also not relate to this place? Are you at home here?*

E: *Ever since my children were born here – yes. **I think my children give me a strong relationship to Berlin – I wouldn't say Germany – I would say,***

*Berlin, Kreuzberg...before I had children I didn't have this relationship at all...but not Germany but Berlin, and especially Kreuzberg.*  
(#18, 46-58)

When asked if he would like dual citizenship, E.'s understanding of German citizenship became very clear:

*I: How would it be different, if you could have both passports? Would it be different, if you could have both the German and the Cameroonian passport?*

*E: I would take it. Under the condition of not losing my Cameroonian passport. There are certain advantages to a German passport...**I like to travel. That would actually be the only advantage.** When you go to Britain, you need a visa. As a German, you can travel much more easily to the US.*  
(#18, 240-250)

Though he did not specifically mention why he would go to these other countries, mentioning them at all resembles similar statements by Turkish immigrants in Germany, whose families are often spread out across different European countries.

Unlike other non-citizens, W., a Palestinian refugee from Lebanon who had come to Berlin twenty-years earlier, did not mention any of the rights associated with citizenship. Rather, he was not choosing citizenship because, in his view, the German state was demanding that he change his identity to German. Indirectly, he claims a sense of membership in Germany, while articulated that the Germanness associated with citizenship is highly exclusive:

*W: [Germany] is my home. But that doesn't mean that I have to give up my culture, my religion, my traditions, just so that the Germans are happy with me. **I respect the laws. I've lived here twenty-two years and I have only one ticket. I live clean.** But some personal things of myself I have to keep. I don't have German citizenship. I could if I wanted, but...even if I did, that still would not make me German...**If there is some mutual respect, then I have nothing against being a citizen. But***



*unfortunately that's not the case. For Germany, or for the German government, to be German, you have to be German in body and soul.*  
(Pal./Pal., #3, 98-111)

W. also felt that becoming a German citizen would change little about his sense of Germanness:

W: *Look. When I have a German passport in my pocket, when you see me, the way I look, do you think I'm German? Because you are from the US, yes of course. But a German will not see me as German. Absolutely not. Because I have black hair, different eyes, even though I actually have green eyes, dark skin. This (gesturing to imaginary passport) they don't see. This is hidden. As long as you are judged as an immigrant, by your skin color, your hair color, nothing will change. It can't help you much, this piece of paper.*  
(236-245)

## **Citizens and Membership**

A., who worked at a community organization, had grown up mainly in Turkey but had come to Germany throughout her teens. She had naturalized in 1995:

I: *So what does this passport mean for you?*

A: *Basically advantages. Not that I am German. Everyone knows when I'm on the street. And when I say I don't have a passport -- why do you want to see my passport?-- they are embarrassed. Most think I'm not German. Why do you want to see my passport? I have an ID<sup>91</sup>. Then others made trouble, 'we know you're not German.' Then I got mad. When people approach me like this, then I can get mean! But if someone apologizes or something, it's ok. I definitely have a German passport in my pocket, but nobody on the street thinks I am German! I'm NOT German. Only on paper. Not in content, or superficially! (laughter). I'm not blonde, I don't have light skin. Germans see me the same way they did thirty years ago. As a foreigner. They still say 'Foreigner', they don't even say 'Immigrant'!*

(#19, T./D, 300-315)

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<sup>91</sup> Germany employs identity cards (Ausweise) only for citizens, so questions about passports rather than ID cards imply someone is not a citizen.

I: *And what was the main motivation for you to do it? [become a citizen]*

A: *Well...it's basically this. **We live here. I had decided that I will live here.** Even if not for my entire life. So of course I would like to benefit from these rights. **If I live in this country, I want to vote here. As well as have other advantages. That was the only reason I got citizenship, there was no other. And my sister lives in London, so I would have to always get a visa, so now I can just go whenever I want.** Otherwise as a Turkish citizen I have to get a visa and that takes a longtime. It's more practical when you live here. You can of course influence politics. Even if not that much, a vote is a vote. And because I actually vote, that's important for me...*

(285-296)

In addition to articulating a strong sense of territorial citizenship—that one should be a citizen of the country where one lives—as well as rights-based citizenship, A.'s status as a Turkish citizen becomes important as she talks about the difficulty of traveling as a non-EU citizen. She also talked about regretting not being a dual citizen:

A: *Back then [when we naturalized], we had to give up our Turkish passport. We could have filled out an application to keep it. But I didn't do that, now I regret it. I could have had dual citizenship, but I don't, I just have the German one now.*

I: *Why?*

A: *My sister and my brother have both. I'll probably live in Turkey later. So that's better. Two are better than one, I think! **Then I could have voted there. A vote is a vote, right? I can't vote there now.***

( 273-283)

While she was one of the few who mentioned dual citizenship as important, it would have been important for the *rights* it would afford her, and less as an expression of her nationness—in this case, as Turkish. Her separation of citizenship from Germanness becomes clear as she hardly identifies as German:

I: *And, you were starting to say...do you feel German in any way?*

A: *No, I don't feel German at all. Turkish culture is very strong in myself, through language, and other things. I'm in Turkey almost every year, in Istanbul. I went to school there, I have good friends there. And here I've lived more than 20 years, in Berlin, and really only have two real friends who are German. All the others are other nationalities. It's funny but that's how it is, unfortunately.*

(#19, 179-187)

P., a research associate at a university in Berlin, came to Germany in the early 1980s from Turkey to study at the university. She had naturalized in 1993, but had been able to keep her Turkish citizenship. Like A. above, she mentions the ability to keep two citizenships prior to the 1990s, saying that “you could give up your citizenship and get it back again, before 2000.” When asked what German citizenship meant for her, P. talked about freedom of movement but then later mentioned political rights as the main reasons why she became a citizen. Like A. above, she thought of citizenship in terms of rights and in the place where one lives:

I: *What does a passport mean for you?*

P: *I like the German passport more than the Turkish one. **Because with the German I have access everywhere, without a visa. And I saw with my brother, he had to prove why he was coming here, how much money he has in his bank account, how many mortgages he has, where he works, etc. That's tiresome. When you want to go somewhere, take a few days vacation, you have to jump through all of these bureaucratic hoops. Otherwise, [it doesn't mean] much.***

I: *So what was the main reason that you naturalized back then?*

P: *I wanted to lend my voice to this decision-making, this democratic voting. And because I am a part of this society, and secondly, this practical aspect, access to other countries. **But first and foremost I wanted to have the right to a voice, because I work here, pay my taxes. My Turkish passport doesn't do anything for me, I don't live there I live here, and that's why it was really important for me. And that's why I participate in every election, I don't let one pass me by.***

(#29, T/D, 165-183)

She furthered articulated her understanding of citizenship as rights, and not as Germanness, by articulating her continued 'foreign' status in everyday life:

*I: Do you find that the passport symbolizes something for people? Do people ask you what passport you have? Does it matter among your friends?*

*P: Not at all. **But even when you have a passport you never lose this foreigner status, because they always ask, "Where are you really from?"** I knew an American, who taught English and put an ad in a magazine to offer language instruction. And she told me, every time when Germans came to her, they asked are you really American? Because she looked Asian, they couldn't imagine she was American... Because I've lived here 29 years, strangely enough, I ask the question too. You don't notice until you go somewhere else, and you suddenly say 'where are your parents from?', or 'do you speak another language?' When I was in England visiting a school, and I asked, 'where all are you from?' They told me 'These are not foreigners, they're all British citizens.' When you are in another country you see how silly it is to constantly ask that question.*

(205-225)

P.'s sense of membership was tied less to the nation and more to the particular place of Berlin, where she had always lived in Germany:

*I: Do you feel German? Do you feel Turkish?*

*P: **The question is whether you have to feel that you belong to a nation, after you've lived abroad for a long time.** I can say, my home is Germany, or Berlin. More like Berlin, I'd say, the city, which I spent the most important times of my life in. But my roots, my parents, my siblings, live in Turkey and that is my old home. That's what I always say, I'm flying to my old home and coming back to my new home. I feel good in both places, but I love this city and feel best here. Vacation, sure, but I don't know how it would be if I worked there, since I've lived here for 29 years. It's just too long... I always get angry when I am in Turkey and things work differently than they do here.*

(#29, Tur./Ger./Tur., 82-95)

J., a 38-year old student originally from Poland, was also a dual citizen. The circumstance of his immigration to Germany, in 1991 were distinct from all other immigrants, because of his “Ethnic German” (*Aussiedler*) status. Under the then active Citizenship Law, any person who resided within the territorial boundaries of 1937 in Germany was a citizen. In the case of J., his family lived in a part of Poland which had been Germany in the 1930s. Though J. himself had not been born in Germany, the principle of *jus sanguinis* – citizenship through descent—entitled him to German citizenship automatically and immediately.

*I: Can you tell me a bit about why and how you came to Germany in 1991?*

*J: It was after the Wende. As a young man I wanted to be independent, leave home. And that was the right time, and with a passport, a visa for Germany, the opportunity offered itself.*

*I: Um hm. Did you have that before you arrived here actually?*

*J: Yes...I'm actually of German descent. I'm from Schlesia and there you could, even before the opening of the East, get papers and a visa. You have to fill out some forms and then you could come to the Federal Republic.*

*I: So you could request this without being in the country?*

*J: Yes.*

*(#16, Ger.,Pol./Ger., 23-42)*

This narrative of opportunity and rights was the exclusive way in which he understood citizenship:

*I: What would you say citizenship means for you?*

*J: Freedom.*

*I: What kind of freedom?*

*J: Well I went to the USA in 1993 with this passport. I might not have been able to with the Polish one. So, the world was open, and still is. It's true that your passport opens doors everywhere in the world.*

*I: And the Polish passport, what does it mean for you?*

*J: I could have turned in my Polish passport, but it would have cost me something. No normal person pays to give up their citizenship. So I got one and kept the other.*

*(152-179)*

Finally, when considering the hypothetical scenario of not being a dual citizen, J. further illustrates his understanding of citizenship:

*I: How would it be different if you had to give up one or the other citizenship? Which would you choose?*

*J: ...a lot of my friends gave up their Polish one. I probably would have too. Otherwise you need a work permit. It's important for all of the bureaucratic stuff.*

*(#16, 181-188)*

Though J. had been ascribed citizenship based on his Germanness, he disliked the idea of nation as a dominant category of membership. When I asked if he felt German in any way, he laughed and paused for a long period of time. And after my attempt to explain that he could answer in any way he liked, said:

*J: I grew up in upper Schlesia. And actually I am connected and have ties there. But I have a Polish national consciousness, or a German one.*

*I: How would you describe yourself?*

*J: In the small scheme of things, a Schlesian, and in the big scheme of things, a European. That's what I'm most comfortable with.*

*(#16, 60-67)*

## Chapter Summary

Among first-generation immigrants, citizenship was largely seen as a vehicle for gaining rights. It was defined as such by both non-citizens as well as citizens. For non-citizens, the rights to be gained from German citizenship were seen as not important enough to change citizenship. In most cases, this was based on what they would not gain from citizenship, rather than what they would lose by becoming citizens. For those who were citizens, rights—especially political rights—were the main reason for becoming a citizen. For those who defined citizenship in a rights-based fashion, ease of travel was another reason given for becoming a citizen. This privilege, however, is based on one being a citizen of a member state of the European Union. Not surprisingly, the Turkish immigrants who had naturalized mentioned intimate examples of the difficulties of family and friends getting visas—since as non-EU citizens they are unable to travel freely in the EU. In addition, the creation of a Turkish diaspora in Europe has meant that the need for Turkish-Germans to have citizenship to maintain family ties is even greater. The one interviewee, C., who had Italian citizenship, vaguely mentioned that “in Europe” she had little reason to change her citizenship. The convenience and ease associated with German citizenship is really about European membership rather than German membership.

Among those who were citizens, the political rights they mentioned were tied to their territorial presence in Germany, but to them, this did not make them German. Both citizens and non-citizens described an “in-between” identity of place and territory. Specifically, both citizens and non-citizens articulated this sense of belonging by talking about how they did not identify fully with their countries of origin, sometimes explaining

that they are not “at home” in their “home” countries “either.” Several emphasized their familiarity and comfort in everyday life in Germany. In some other cases, they identified with particular places in Germany, such as immigrant neighborhoods. Put simply, their sense of membership was place-based.

One notable difference between citizens and non-citizens, however, was in the way they talked about Germanness. Specifically, non-citizens *immediately* and *emphatically* made clear that citizenship would not make them more accepted, less foreign, or German. In contrast, citizens had emphasized that they lived in Germany and for that reason they wanted to participate in the society through political rights. This difference between citizens and non-citizens may in part, lead to different senses of citizenship. Identifying unequivocally with the country they migrate to would be unusual for any first-generation immigrant (cf. Waters 1999), and a civic-territorial membership, though not framed as “German”, is a different kind of membership than one which denies any membership at all.



**CHAPTER 5: German-Born *Citizens* and Membership**

Narratives of Germany as “not a country of immigration” were expressive of an understanding of belonging to Germany that greatly limited the possibility of imagining oneself as German without German descent (Brubaker 1992).<sup>92</sup> However, the successful addition of *jus soli* and the emergence of civic-territorial arguments about Germanness in late 1990s may have transformed and changed understandings of Germanness among persons of immigrant background. The state—its institutions and political parties—was characterized by multiple and competing understandings of both citizenship and Germanness, without the clear dominance of a territorial or descent-based narrative of either.

The term “immigrant” has been used in public discourse in reference not only to actual *migrants*, but also to the children of migrants—often called the “second generation.” This belies several important differences between these two groups. The second generation can imagine itself into citizenship and nationness based on birth in Germany.

In this chapter, I consider how German-born *citizens* of migrant background make membership through their understandings of what it means to be a citizen, as well as to be German. I consider nine individuals of migrant background, including one older second generation adult.

### **Citizenship as State Membership**

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92 Many ethnic organizations and some political parties still see German citizenship, as well as immigration and integration policies as exclusionary and even racist. Moreover, the change in citizenship policies is only ten years old; most of the “migrant background” population are long-term residents and lived through earlier citizenship regimes and discourses, including the notion that “Germany is not a country of immigration”.

Though often framed in terms of ethnicity and national origin, “identity” is not limited to being framed as such. Some informants saw citizenship as a confirmation and recognition of their membership in the German state. In their articulations, they often talked about an acceptance, recognition and a guarantee that citizenship afforded them.

B., whose parents were from Pakistan, talked about the meaning of being a German citizen for her:

*D: And what does it mean for you to have a German passport? Or German citizenship?*

*I: On the one hand, it...identifies me. **It says you are part German. And when I have a passport, I have something. I have security. No one can kick me out of the country or something. And I'm German for them actually.** I just don't look German, but generally on the inside and in terms of my character, how I talk, I am. It gives me identity, on the one hand, and security on the other. And I am happy to have this passport, because I can do a lot with it. For example, I can travel everywhere, in Europe at least. I can see some of the world that others can't.*

*(#11, Pakistani/Germ., 141-150)*

Another *Gymnasium* student, S., states that citizenship is not particularly important to her, or to how she sees herself, but that it confers “recognition” and “acceptance” that might not be had otherwise:

*I: What does citizenship mean for you? Not the laws from the government, but for you, what does it mean to have a German passport?*

*S: Not that much. But I think, **when you have a German passport you feel recognized. You have the feeling you are accepted by the country and that is an insurance, that really guarantees and confirms that you are, and are recognized as, German.** But it doesn't play a huge role for me—whether I have a German passport or an Afghani passport. It's only important for me what I think of myself and what others think of me. Just to have on a piece of paper that I am accepted as German, doesn't mean that much to me. Maybe for others it does.*

*(#6, Afg./Germ., 49-60)*

U., who parents emigrated from Turkey, and was studying at a vocational school, described how his parents had chosen German citizenship for him five years earlier, when he was 18:

*U: I actually didn't do it, my parents took care of it. And they say, it's better, you don't always need a visa. You can go everywhere in the EU, Berlin is close to Poland, for example. And it just has more advantages. **It's a kind of insurance, too, that gives you security. A stable member of society, so to speak.***

(#23, Tur./Ger., 19-24)

These three young adults spoke of citizenship as a guarantee. They were the only three respondents of 27 second-generation individuals who articulated such an understanding of citizenship. Their understanding of it suggests that not having a German passport is a kind of risk—that one could be excluded from a claim to legitimate membership. One of the main rights that citizenship guarantees is the right not to be deported. As the *Mehmet incident* showed, non-citizens can be deported under particular circumstances. Though none of these young adults mentioned a specific incident of deportation, their stories of security suggest that they see such actions as possibilities.

### ***State Membership and Germanness***

As Brettel (2009) and others have argued, membership in the state can be synonymous with membership in the nation. These three young adults all seemed to talk about the importance of being a part of German society or the German state, but how did they understand themselves in terms of Germanness?

B., of Pakistani national origin, talked about citizenship as saying one was “part German.” However, she also saw herself as German beyond the fact that she had citizenship:

*I: Can you say that you feel German in any way?*

*B: Well, somehow yes, I do say I am German because you have to realize I live here. And, I speak the language. I know what makes people tick here, and it's the same as what makes me tick. But at the same time, I have my own culture. That's the thing. I say I'm not really German, not a real German...but that I have some part of me that is German. I don't know how...what's going to happen if I have kids later on? I can say I'm a little German and a little Pakistani. But the Pakistani part is more the culture, the religion. That's what I think of with it. And the German part, well how I dress when I go to school. I don't dress traditionally at all. How I speak. I usually speak German. I speak better German than Pakistani, right? I have friends, German friends. I live in Germany. Why should I say I'm Pakistani when I live in Germany? And that's what I don't understand some people say “no, I'm not German”, well, why do you live here then?*

*(#11, Pakistan/Germ.\* 45-59)*

Particularly telling in her narrative of Germanness is the way that she asserts that living in a country means Germanness. In this way, she strongly affirms the importance of territory, against the principle of descent, in making someone German. She also talks about herself as *culturally* German. Her sense of culture as constitutive of Germanness was also expressed when she was asked about if some groups were more German than others:

*I: Do you feel more or less German than others of migrant background?*

*B: Others of migrant background? For example here in this school there are a lot of Turks. Maybe almost 90%. And I do notice, that they are really Turkish. They speak Turkish and listen to only Turkish music.*

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\* Notation for interviewees: National Origin/Citizenship; e.g. Turk/Germ is a person of Turkish background who has German citizenship.

(#11, Pak/Ger. 75-81)

She also, though, qualifies her Germanness as not “real”, in spite of her cultural Germanness, being a citizen, and seeing citizenship as recognition of her membership in the state as a German. Rather, she describes herself in hybrid terms—of being Pakistani in some parts of her life and German in others. That she overwhelmingly defined nationness in terms of territory and descent emerged even more clearly when she talked about her recent trip to Pakistan with her family:

*I: You were saying, that you felt much better when you came back to Germany?*

*B: Exactly. I felt much, much better. I thought I'm really at home now. While I was in Pakistan, I really thought a lot about it, and I realized how attached I am to Germany, and my home—Berlin...I would say my home is now Germany-Berlin. Just that I'm of Pakistani descent...somehow I can't say that I'm a German and I also can't say I'm Pakistani. I'm an in-between person.*

(#11, 4-15)

In addition to stressing her sense of belonging and home as Germany, however, in her own words her home is Germany-Berlin. It turned out that when she was asked about her everyday life this identification with Berlin, and the predominantly immigrant neighborhood of Kreuzberg, was critical to her sense of belonging.

*I: Have you always felt German?*

*B: I've never felt attacked or anything, because of where I live. I live in Kreuzberg. A lot of Turks and others live here, and somehow it's become normal. And not too many Germans live here. But if I was in Zellendorf, or Wilmersdorf, or someplace like that, I would probably not feel the same.*

(#11, 62-74)

S., both of whose parents were from Afghanistan, saw herself similarly, and like B., understood Germanness in a cultural-territorial sense:

*S: I do [feel German]. I don't think of it in terms of 'I would rather be this than that'...I am half Afghani, half German. But I was born here, I am integrated, I feel at home here. I don't have a problem with German culture or whatever. I accept both cultures.*

*I: So you feel like you are Afghani also?*

*S: Exactly. It just depends. For example, when I go to an Afghani event, then I conform to Afghan culture...I try to speak Afghani to people, et cetera, and when I am at a German event, I do the same with German. **It all depends on the situation.***

(#6, Afghan/Germ., 9-19)

She further affirmed the territorial understanding of Germanness when asked about who is less and more German:

*I: Do you feel less or more German than others of migrant background?*

*S: Yes, I do. Well, I don't know. There are a lot of kids in our school who kind of prefer their native language...Turks and Arabs. Then it does occur to me, I think, **they really should speak German, they are here in Germany.** They should accept German when they are in a German school. Then I do think, I am more German than them.*

(#6, Afghan/German, 35-39)

U. had a different view of Germanness. As a 23-year old who had attended a *Realschule*—a vocationally-oriented secondary school—he differed in both age and social class, as well as gender, from both B. and S.:

*I: And, would you say that you feel German in any way?*

*U: Hm... difficult to say. Feel? What does feel mean? How can you know? **I couldn't ever say I am German.***

*I: Why not? What's wrong with that, in your opinion?*

*U: Well, just being accepted. From outside and inside. It's a totally different mentality. That's why. I can definitely say I'm a German citizen. But I can't say I am German. I won't let myself say that.*

*I: Because of your experiences?*

*U: No... I didn't have any negative experiences. It's just my attitude, how I feel. I don't feel anything more than being a German citizen.*

*(#23, Turk./Germ., 11-27)*

Though his reasons for not identifying as German remain largely ambiguous, U. clearly distinguishes between Germanness and German citizenship.

### **Citizenship as Rights**

As the previous individuals illustrate, citizenship is one means of gaining recognition as German, though a specific kind of Germanness—state membership. But citizenship may not necessarily be tied to identity at all, but rather to rights. Yet, the postnational critique and the substantive status of denizens—or persons with rights but without nationality (Hammar 1990), also suggest that becoming a citizen for the access to rights it affords is unlikely. More importantly, given that non-citizens are not equally situated in relation to rights in Germany, two individuals who want the same rights may be very differently constrained in terms of citizenship.

D., a *Gymnasium* student who became a citizen in her teens talked about the difficulties in general terms of not having a German passport, while downplaying the importance of citizenship in general:

*I: And what does it mean for you to have a German passport?*



D: *To be honest, on the one hand, not much. Because it's not very important to me what is on a piece of paper, if I am German, Turkish...I don't place much value on that. But I'd say, **it's not totally unimportant. Because you won't get very far if you don't...for example if I had a Turkish passport, I'd have more problems.** And based on that I can't say it's totally unimportant. But...if I have a German passport, for example, if I want to go to the USA later, it's easier, I think, when you apply for a visa.*

(#9, Turk./Germ., 85-93)

When asked to elaborate on the “problems” one encounters and has when one does not have German citizenship, she explains that not only is it easier to travel with a German passport, but it is easier to travel to her parents' home country, Turkey:

I: *And that's what you mean by problems? You just mentioned problems...*

D: *Yes, exactly. If I go to Turkey, with the embassies, on the border. That's just been my experience. **They used to always make us wait longer.** They look for problems. Make endless calls to Germany, how it is in Turkey or something...so, yeah it's pretty bad.*

(#9, 94-100)

D.'s right-oriented citizenship was also expressed in her lack of interest in dual citizenship. As she articulated, having Turkish citizenship in fact made her ability to *travel* in Turkey more rather than less difficult. She generally thought dual citizenship was unnecessary:

I: *There are some people who are dual citizens and have two passports. What do you think of that?*

D: *On the one hand, I think it's ok if someone has a Turkish and a German passport, and chooses one later on... but I also think, having two passports your whole life, what do you get from that? Ok, at 16 or 17 you don't know what you want. But **when you know at some age that you're going to live in Germany, you can choose one or the other citizenship.** And when you have both passports you feel pulled towards both countries. And that's not good somehow. But it shouldn't be important what's on paper.*

I: *What do you mean?*

D: *Well, to feel that you're German because you have a German passport. I had a Turkish passport before, and I didn't care. I have a German one now. It doesn't change whether I feel Turkish or German. But when I want to travel or something, it matters, because it could make problems for me.*

(#9, 187-208)

Rights were also the basis for T., a *Gymnasium* student in Munich who had recently naturalized. While she articulates the importance of rights associated with German citizenship, she also illustrates that her Turkish citizenship meant something very different:

T: *I have German citizenship. And I had to give up my Turkish citizenship. But I did it only for bureaucratic reasons. Not because I thought 'I'm German' or something. But just because I thought I might study abroad. And if I do, and decide to come back, there will be problems if I have a Turkish passport. And then, on top of that, when we go to Turkey, we have to wait for so long.*

I: *Really? It's easier with a German passport?*

T: *Yes. My uncle had a German passport once when we went to Turkey with him, and he went right through the border. We had to be checked and verified!*

(#37, Turk./Ger., 132-146)

F., who was a German citizen, described both the convenience of having a German passport, but it's clear separation from Germanness:

F: *If people say 'ok, you're German', then you can feel German. But when you're immediately called a foreigner then you are a foreigner. Even if you have a German passport. When people see you no one looks to see if you are German on paper, they see you as a person. And then say you're a foreigner. Then you can't feel German.*

I: *I see. So what does this passport mean for you in the end? This citizenship or this passport?*

F: ***It's just a piece of paper. For me, it's good...I can...if you have a Palestinian passport, you can't go to Palestine, Jordan, the USA, you can't go anywhere. With a German passport you can go everywhere! It's positive. But it's just a piece of paper that lets you travel everywhere.***

(#8, Pal./Ger., 155-68)

Another student, K., who was not yet a citizen but intended to naturalize, articulated a strict difference between German citizenship and being German while describing how citizenship was only useful to him in terms of the economic rights he would gain:

I: *Do you have German citizenship?*

K: *I have Bosnian citizenship. But I'm planning in one or two years to apply for German citizenship, when I'm eligible.*

I: *Why?*

K: ***I have more advantages with a German passport. For example, this summer I'm going to Canada for three weeks, but it's really difficult with my Bosnian passport because of the visa, etc. With a German passport I get a visa immediately and there are no problems. And things are just easier with a German passport.***

(#14, Bos./Bos.#, 23-37)

He further emphasized his *rights-based* understanding of citizenship, and, like many others, talked about the benefits that come with higher-status citizenships of which German is one example:

I: *What does citizenship, and having a passport mean for you?*

K: ***Well, I wouldn't attach anything emotional to it. I wouldn't say "wow, I'm a citizen". I would just say, "great, advantage for my career, and***

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# Intends to naturalize.

***I can't be deported. I'll only have more advantages with the [German] passport here.***

*I: Do you find anything special or different about German citizenship? Let's say you would have gone to the USA as a kid, not to Germany, or to France, or somewhere else, and got your citizenship there. Would it be different than how you plan to get your German citizenship now?*

*K: No, not really. **I think French, American, and German passports all belong to the same category. With all them you have the easiest time traveling. You have no visa problems, you get visas right away. You just have to buy a ticket and you can go wherever. That's actually all the same category for me. It really wouldn't matter to me, if I had a German, American or French passport.***

(#14, Bos./Bos., 143-158)

As discussed in previous chapters, the new Citizenship Law of 2000 was made retroactive to those persons born starting in 1990, who had at least one permanent resident parent. These same individuals could be dual citizens up until the age of 23. O., a *Gymnasium* student who was part of this first generation of *jus soli* citizens described his reason for choosing German over Turkish citizenship:

*I: How did it happen? Did the German authorities notify you and say "you have to give up one of your two citizenships", or...?*

*O: We got a letter in the mail saying I was at the age where I should decide. I talked about it with my parents and it was clear right away, German [citizenship]. As I was saying, **traveling in and out is just easier with a European passport.***

(#13, Turk/Ger, 37-45)

*I: Did you talk about which citizenship you would choose? Or was it pretty clear you would take the German one? Did you discuss it at home?*

*O: Well, I have to say. Until recently, it wasn't really an issue for us. **My father told me he thought I should take German citizenship, I asked him why. And he named the advantages, for the future, for travelling abroad. And then I asked my mother. German is probably better, she***

*said. When you get older, or retire, or spend the last years of your life, whether in Germany or Turkey, you can change it again, she said. So I said, ok, take the German passport, since it can also make things easier for my parents. I have a younger sister, who has a German citizenship and my mother and father do as well.*

(188-202)

Like many others, this individual talks first and foremost about travel as a key reason for choosing one citizenship over another, but importantly he uses the term “European.”

### ***Rights-based Citizenship and Germanness***

The individuals above all frame citizenship in terms of rights. Though citizenship is linked by states and some individuals to rights as well as identity, identity appears to play no role in the decision to become or not become a citizen for this group. Given this, how do they see themselves in terms of Germanness? By considering the rights-based group, the meaning of Germanness apart from citizenship may come more clearly into relief.

D., a German citizen whose parents are from Turkey but are ethnically Persian emphasized her cultural and territorial Germanness as a basis for being German:

*I: Would you say that you feel German in any way?*

*D: Of course. I was born here. I live here and I'd like to keep living here. I have German friends, I am integrated here. I don't know, sometimes I say I am "German with migration background." That I have Persian roots, I speak two other languages plus German... somehow it's a part of me... it just is. I belong to many cultures, and I'm also part of the German one somehow. I'm a mix.*

*I: And you also feel Turkish? Or Persian? How would you... describe yourself?*

*D: I couldn't say that I am only German, only Persian, it doesn't work. I also have a connection to Turkey... I travel there, my relatives live there... I also speak Turkish, it's my native language. But I also speak Persian,*

*because for my parents it's their native language...and I speak German best. It's a mix. I can't put it into one word somehow.*

(#9, Turk/Germ,25-42)

T., a *Gymnasium* student from Munich, understood herself similarly:

I: *I wanted to ask you, how do you feel? Do you feel German in any way, and which way?*

T: *I actually don't feel like anything. It's weird. I either feel like both or neither. Because when I go to Turkey, I feel foreign too. It's...they have a completely different culture, and sometimes I'm surprised by their behavior or the way they do things. And here it's that I can't quite assimilate to German culture, because that's foreign too. For example there are things that are completely unacceptable in Turkish culture that are totally fine in German culture, which I also don't personally accept. And then there are things that are unacceptable in Turkish culture but are in German culture that I do accept. So you can either say 'both' or 'neither'. Half and half.*

(#37, Turk./Ger., 64-75)

At the same time as she saw herself in hybrid terms, she also felt that she was consistently confronted as 'foreign' in Germany, and in spite of her asserted higher status as middle-class and speaking "standard" German:

T: *I don't feel German, let's just say. I always know that I'm a foreigner, even though I am born here. You always confront that. For example, I was on the phone looking for an apartment recently. And I actually speak fluent German, have no accent, so you don't know it, if you don't hear my name. But when I call the real estate agent, I had to spell my name. When I spelled it, she wanted to know where I'm from. And actually it's a law that you are not allowed to ask. So, then I said, "I'm German, I was born here." You're automatically German when you're born here, or in America, you're automatically American when you're born there. "Yes but originally?" "Yes, Turkish if you really need to know." And then there was suddenly some problem. [I: Really?] Yeah, just this questioning. You don't ask such things. Because if I'm, yeah so then she asked me what my citizenship was. And I said, "German". You really have problems, I think, even though I'm educated, go to a higher-ranked school, still you always have problems because of how you look and this migration*

**background. It's not that simple, when you don't look German, to be German.**

(#37, Turk./Ger., 77-94)

This combined understanding—of oneself as having a hybrid nationness but still somehow not German—was quite prevalent among those who had framed citizenship in rights-based terms. O., for instance, disagreed with the idea that Germans and Turks were fundamentally different:

O: ***You can't say 'every German is like this', 'every Turk is like this'. For example, if you talk about freedom in the family. A father might say to his daughter, 'you're only 16, you can't have a boyfriend', for example in a Turkish family. But some German families also say 'No, my daughter is only 16 and I do not want her to have a boyfriend.'***

(#13, Turk./Ger, 75-81)

Though he attempts to articulate that cultures are not fundamentally different, he proceeds to describe his inability to become German, and the disconnect between Germanness and German citizenship, using a racial analogy:

O: ***I mean, we are foreigners here. That doesn't change with a passport. Just like you can't change skin color or other things... religion for example. You can't cash it in. In the end you don't belong 100% to this country. You aren't Germanic or really German. Yeah you have the German passport, formally, German. Maybe you feel (German) culturally a little. But, you are not really German. At the very least in an argument with a German suddenly he will say 'what do you want you stupid foreigner'? So you get back into that situation and say 'ok I don't completely belong here.'***

I: *And why not? Why do you say you can't be completely Germanic?*

O: ***The problem is simple. When you see me, I don't look very German, as people imagine German to be.***

(54-71)

Several others told similar stories of exclusion. F., a young Palestinian-German woman, described the fact that she would never be German to others, regardless of what she would do:

*I: So specifically, I want to ask, do you feel German in any way?*

*F: Hm...no. Actually not at all. Maybe a little bit... what does 'German' even mean? I mean... **I feel Arab, not German. German is just what is on the piece of paper. How I really feel is Arab. Not even a little German!***  
*(laughs)*

*I: Is there any special reason why? Can you explain...or...*

*F: Ok, for example. I just know a few Germans. I know nice Germans and not so nice ones. I live in Treptow, which is a German neighborhood. And when you go to East [Berlin], Koenigswald or places like that, people look at you strangely, it's not very nice. For instance, when a German comes to our country, we look at them nicely. But here you notice, that people don't like having you here. So you really feel like a foreigner. **I can't feel German because I'm not shown that I am German, that's it.***

*(#8, Pal./Ger., 7-29)*

She went on to be very specific about who was and was not labeled a foreigner:

*I: Why do you think people see you immediately as a foreigner?*

*F: (Pointing to head scarf) **The way I look. But even so my friend, who has black hair but dresses normally, they still say 'oh look at that foreigner'.***  
*Why? Because she has black hair, that's it. It's really too bad.*

*(50-55)*

Importantly, she states that it is not the head scarf or way of dressing that makes a person German, but it is phenotype and how one looks—"race" in some sense—that makes the difference.

Another interviewee, K., who was born in Bosnia but had lived in Germany since age three and was planning to get his German citizenship in the next year articulated his non-Germanness also in terms of being excluded by others, however he also asserted his



difference from Germans based on his “ethnicity” which he defined in racial and cultural terms:

*I: Do you feel German in any way?*

*K: Not at all. I'm not German.*

*I: Why not?*

*K: Because I'm not German ethnically.*

*I: What do you mean ethnically?*

*K: **If I have a German passport, I'm only a member, according to my definition, of the Federal Republic of Germany. I belong to this state but not to the population.***

*I: Why not? Can you tell me more about this ethnic...*

*K: **I can't identify with Germans. I don't have blond hair, I'm not Christian, nor is German my native language. And I have a completely different culture. That's the point. I don't feel German at all. And I'm also not seen as German by the Germans.***

*I: Have you experienced that?*

*K: **Mm hm... when I go anywhere here, they say, “where are you from?” When I say Kreuzberg, Berlin, then they say, ‘No, what country are you from originally?’...they never mean what part of Berlin are you from. It doesn't matter if you were born there or have lived here for three generations, like most Turks, they only ask what country you are from.***

*(#14, Bos/Ger<sup>#</sup>, 62-85)*

In spite of this narrative about exclusion from Germanness, this informant goes on to talk about how this exclusion does not change his sense of belonging in Germany:

*I: Do you think that you are more or less German than others here of immigrant background?*

*K: **I do have a relationship to this country. It's my home, I can definitely say. I'm from another country originally, but I am happy here. And I want to spend the rest of my life here. So, it's my state... I just don't feel connected to the people. Maybe you can compare it to the USA. Because African-Americans don't feel connected to White Americans either.***

*(117-126)*

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# Intends to naturalize.

It is noteworthy that though he is excluded from Germanness, he still is happy in Germany and sees himself living in Germany in the future.

Many of the German-born talked about an externally-based racial Germanness, which prevented them from being German. Their accounts suggest that “race”—phenotype, appearance and skin color—marked them as other. However, one German-born individual’s experience suggests that race, rather than being solely the basis of Germanness, works in concert with migration background.

J. was the only interviewee who had only *one* parent with a migration background. Her mother was German by descent and her father was Jamaican. She only had German citizenship, which she viewed as mainly as an advantage for rights. But importantly, and more strongly than anyone else interviewed, she felt that she could not imagine being anything but a German citizen, since she was German by territory, descent, and in her view, culturally as well:

*I: What does the German passport mean for you?*

*J: I think it’s an advantage. You can travel more easily than with a Jamaican passport. I see that with my mom’s friend who has to always wait so long to go anywhere. So it’s just easier with a German passport...sometimes you are pigeon-holed as a foreigner, **but I actually feel German. I don’t feel like a foreigner. So I find it fitting that I have a German passport. I mean, I’m German!***

*(#43, Jam./Ger., 19-28)*

Her claim to Germanness was unlike those of others. She was in fact the only one to identify as German without any qualification:

*I: Do you feel German in any way?*

*J: I would say I feel very German, because I grew up with a German mother, and the whole family that is here, are really Bavarian, actually! But I do notice that things about Jamaica or Africa interest me.*

*(3-8)*

When asked whether she was seen as German in her everyday life, her answer still attests to a racialized public Germanness that is typically articulated in the question, “where are you from”:

*I: Do you often get asked the question, “where are you from?”*

*J: Absolutely. **They see that I’m from another country** and so they ask, but not negatively or in a derogatory way. Just out of curiosity.*

*(35-39)*

Most telling in her answer is that she unawarely slips into the language of a racial nationness, and even says she is “from another country”, contradicting her earlier statements that she was unquestionably German. She stated that such questions did not bother her, and that they were made “out of curiosity” rather than maliciously. But the very question itself presupposes that who is foreigner can be determined by appearance.

Perhaps most significantly, however, her strong claim to being German suggests that descent offers a claim to Germanness that any other kind of Germanness—territorial or cultural—cannot claim.

## **Second Generation Adults**

All of the above interviewees were between the ages of 18 and 23. This may matter greatly to their sense of membership in terms of both citizenship and Germanness. In terms of citizenship, many of them were naturalized as children in families—they did not necessarily make the choice to become, or not become a citizen. Second, as students at the end of secondary or in higher education, they are not yet fully in adulthood—in the job market, or forming families. As Waters (1990) points out, ethnic identification varies with age and over the life course.

M., a working-class clerical worker in his early 30s, had just recently become a citizen, and vehemently argued against any notion that his change of citizenship had anything to do with his sense of national membership, but his explanation shows that he in fact struggles to convince others of this:

*M: Look, a lot of people say, why did you become German? I mean, when you become a German citizen, you just turn in your passport and get a new one. I'm not giving up my past, or my religion, or my name. I'm not giving up any part of myself. **I am still me. I don't have to change my past. I don't have to say I'm converted. Know what I mean?** I'm still me, just my passport is different. But a lot of people say 'German'. But when you think about it, the Turkish passport itself, just brings problems. You know? We were born here, we grew up here, we learned trades here, worked here our whole lives. And still do. It's my right, I can do it and I want to. [pause]And when you have a German passport, it is really an advantage compared to the Turkish one.*

*(#51, Tur./Ger., 108-117)*

He went on to talk about the fact that not only did German citizenship allow for more rights, losing his Turkish citizenship also meant giving up very few rights. Postnational scholars have pointed out that there are a variety of non-citizen statuses in which residents are not full citizens but enjoy certain rights conventionally thought to be definitive of citizenship. In the particular case of Turkey, at least two such statuses for ex-Turkish citizens were created in the 1990s and early 2000s by the Turkish state: the *pemba kart*—or “pink card”, and later, the “blue card”. Without violating dual citizenship laws, these can be important to individuals’ decisions to naturalize:

*I: Are there real advantages for you now? You said travel...*

*M: Travel, you have advantage...I also don't have any disadvantage when I'm in Turkey, you know, because of this blue card.*

*I: And if you didn't have that, would things have been different for you?*

*M: Then I might not have changed my nationality. I wouldn't have done it.*

*(122-35)*

When asked about how he felt in terms of Germanness, he offers a hybrid self-description:

*M: I can't say, Turkey is my home, you know? It's just a vacation spot...But I'm there and nowhere else every year. Just because our roots are there. Because it is my home. But I'm not really connected to anything there, just my roots. It's my home and it's not my home. We grew up here in a multicultural environment. And you just go with that because you are comfortable with it. You mix the Turkish and the German.*

*(171-177)*

## **Chapter Summary**

Citizenship is overwhelmingly rights-based for the majority of German-born individuals. Many of those interviewed talked about past and present experiences—especially travel—where not being a German citizen was a disadvantage or inconvenience. They also imagined themselves as having future opportunities outside of Germany, but most often elsewhere in Europe or in the United States, all of which are more accessible with German citizenship. However, such rights—travel and employment—were not specifically tied to German citizenship, but rather to citizenship of a European Union member state. This is significant, mainly because citizenship is a national institution: it has been tied to rights and identities within the national state and is institutionalized by national states. But in fact, most of the rights of interest to those born in German pertain to opportunities elsewhere. Significantly, if most of the individuals considered here were citizens of European Union member states, they may not have become citizens.

There were others, however, who viewed their citizenship as a recognition of their membership in the state. That they framed citizenship in this way illustrated that membership is not necessarily based on either nationness or interest in rights, but can also be based on being a member and being protected by the state. Additionally, that more than one individual saw their citizenship in this way suggested that being a citizen in fact matters to one's definition as a foreigner, and that a foreigner on paper, though seeing herself as German in a national sense, still may not be seen as German by the state. The highly visible *Mehmet incident*, though it took place more than ten years prior to these individuals' interviews, illustrated the power that the state can wield with the category of "citizen," even if it does so seldom.

Though all of these individuals are citizens, they in fact had a broad range of self-understandings in relation to national membership. In fact, three of the interviewees who understood citizenship in terms of rights also felt that they were excluded from Germanness, irrespective of who they were or what they did. They described a kind of "racial" Germanness in which their descent and appearance were the basis of their inability to be seen as German in everyday life. Those who defined themselves as German—often in hybridity terms—saw themselves as culturally German. In this case, two of the three saw themselves as German beyond their membership as citizens, though they did not see themselves as "only" German. That Germanness itself was often claimed but in combination with other national memberships is also noteworthy. Specifically, it challenges the way that the category nation is used by states and state actors—as exclusive from other nations. At that same time, that none of these German-born citizens claims themselves as *only* German and nothing else also shows that though one can be

German *and* something else, but that one cannot be *only* German and still be of migrant background. The one interviewee who could claim German descent is further testament to this idea that Germanness still is partially defined by descent. Though this is not surprising, given the way that nation often overlaps and is interchangeable with ethnicity, race and other differences, a “raceless” nationalism and understanding of nation is not inconceivable. Such nationalisms have been constructed and promoted by states, at times effectively submerging differences and subnationalisms (Loveman 1999; Marx 1995).

Finally, the accounts of citizens strongly suggests that Germanness and citizenship are often disconnected. The most important consequence of this disconnection is that a sense of oneself as German may just as well exist or not exist among those who are citizens, since citizenship is defined most often in terms of rights.

**CHAPTER6: German-born *Noncitizens* and Membership**



Non-citizens of migration background, as kinds of persons, were central to parliamentary debates by political parties in the making of citizenship policies. As shown in Chapter 3, the conservative CDU and CSU parties construed non-Germans as both foreigners and immigrants. The use of these particular terms—as categories of difference—already constructed a particular vision of the membership of persons of migrant background. The term “foreigner” suggested that these persons were not German in a nationness or citizenship sense, and the term “migrant”—a technical misnomer—reinforced the notion that these individuals were foreign and had no territorial claim to Germanness. The Social Democratic and Green parties challenged these claims through the use of categories and narratives which both emphasized the multigenerational presence of persons of migrant background, and problematized the meaning of ‘foreigner’ and the German nation.

In this chapter, I consider German-born individuals who are not citizens. Importantly, all of these individuals have the option to become citizens. The decision *not* to become a citizen, like the decision to become one, can vary based on what citizenship means, and what it means to differently-situated individuals.

### **Citizenship as Ethnonational Membership**

The legacy of German citizenship was its “ethnocultural” character. Ethnocultural citizenship was comprised of two important ideas. The first was that citizenship is an expression of identity and membership in the nation, and the second was that the nation is *descent-based*. Thus, Turkish-Germans who have grown up in Germany, for instance, are assumed to be Turkish and also presumed to not want to become citizens. As studies of citizenship and nationness, parliamentary debates, and the

previous chapter all show, these are very particular claims. Citizenship is not always or necessarily tied to national membership, and national membership—in this case, Germanness—is not necessarily descent-based. However, this ethnocultural understanding of membership was expressed by two *Gymnasium* students, M. and G.

M., who was born in Italy but had grown up mostly in Munich, talked about how his decision to keep his Italian citizenship was about who he felt he was:

*I: So you only have Italian citizenship. Have you ever thought about getting German citizenship?*

*M: I don't want to.*

*I: Can you tell me more?*

*M: **My parents are both Italian.** Yes, I was born here, but when I was little I was always in Italy for half a year or so. And then starting in Kindergarten I was really here, but always in Italy for vacation. I speak Italian at home. I don't want to be a German citizen.*

*I: Why not?*

*M: **Because my parents are Italian. And I consider myself Italian. I don't want to lose my roots.***

(#44, Ita/Ita, 20-35)

His unequivocal certainty of being Italian was unusual among all second-generations young adults, citizens as well as non-citizens. When pressed on the question of Germanness, he talked about his experience of *not* being Italian when in Italy, but this seemed to have little effect on his self-understanding as Italian:

*I: So for you it's pretty clear that you don't feel even a little German?*

*M: Yeah, it's funny because... as an Italian in Germany, you're Italian for the Germans. But when you're in Italy, you're German for the Italians. (laughs) **Even if you speak the language perfectly... maybe a little German, but I don't like being it...I don't dislike it, but...I like being Italian better.***

(45-51)

G., who had the option of becoming a German citizen but was choosing to keep his Turkish citizenship, described how his citizenship was tied to his Turkish heritage and his desire to do the required Turkish military service:

*I: What does citizenship mean for you? You said you will keep your Turkish passport. What does that mean for you?*

*G: For me, first of all, **I want to do my military service in Turkey**, though it's not clear if I will do just one month or the full 18 months. It depends. But that's one of the most important reasons for me to keep my Turkish citizenship. **I would be happy to serve my fatherland and make my mother and father proud by doing so.***

*(#10, Turk/Turk 63-71)*

At the same time, he recognizes the advantages that German citizenship affords, and states that it could affect his choice of citizenship in an extreme case:

*I: Did you ever think you would not keep [your Turkish citizenship], or were you pretty sure?*

*G: I'll keep the Turkish one, the only reason why I would change for a German one would be **if I wanted a job for which I needed to be a German citizen**. But that would only be in an extreme case, if I couldn't get the job any other way.*

*(3-15)*

G. was the only respondent who explicitly talked about military service and its connection to citizenship and national identity. His explanation makes clear that, in spite of his having been born and growing up in Germany, that his “home” and “country” is Turkey, not Germany. G. stated that he could not understand how people of Turkish national origin could feel more German than Turkish, “just because they lived in Germany.” He also expressed the importance of remembering where one “came from.”

Those who framed Germanness in ethnocultural terms also tended to oppose different nations as culturally distinct, or reinforce this difference by talking about several criteria of difference: “culture”, religion, appearance, or other categories of comparison. After talking about how those who cannot speak Turkish as being more German, G. also talked about how different German and Turkish culture were:

*I: So language is the most important thing? You were just talking a lot about language.*

*G: The language and the culture. **We Turks are really different. With Muslims a lot is different, Islam, from Christianity.** A lot of things are different. I'm 18 right now. For us, at that age, you are still your father's child. Only when you are independent, have a career, your own place to live, started a family, are you seen as independent. It's totally different.*  
(54-61)

*G: Well, for me...I know how Turkey is. It's a better life for sure. Much more easygoing. You know so many people. No language difficulties. The culture and traditions are the same.*

*The Turks who live here, I'd say, keep the traditions of their ancestors, but they change a lot of them. A lot of them have been modernized. For example, nowadays at weddings, there are dances, Turkish folk dances, but not everyone knows them. But here there are other dances that are, I won't say “invented” but changed and modernized. And if you did them in Turkey people would say they don't know them, they are from Germany.*

(103-114)

His understanding of nationness as descent-based was made even more explicit when he talked about whether he felt German:

*I: And do you feel German in any way at all?*

*G: Well, I'd say not because I'm of Turkish descent. **I like being in Turkey. And, I have more Turkish friends, most of them are Turkish.** I did go to high school in Steglitz where there are a lot of Germans. But even there I never thought of myself as German. **I live here but I'm still really connected to my home.***

Unlike most of the German-born, G. does not describe a sense of being “the German” in Turkey.

Interestingly, both G. and M. talk about family as a defining aspect of nationness. Importantly, they mention their parents’ in terms of descent—that they are what their parents are in terms of nationness. However, their decision to keep their citizenship was in fact also reinforced by family members. G., for example, talked about the fact that both of his parents, as well as his siblings, were all Turkish citizens. M. talked about how his siblings also were all Italian citizens and how his parents strongly urged them to keep their Italian citizenship:

*M: [My siblings] also only have an Italian passport. My older brother almost got the German one, but then my parents didn’t want him to.*

*I: Really? They told him not to do that?*

*M: Yeah, he wanted to. But he thought about it and in the end didn’t do it.*  
(109-115)

Importantly, their identification of nationness with descent was largely self-asserted rather than externally ascribed. For instance, neither of them talked about particular experiences of being defined by others as “not German.” Racial appearance, for instance, was not mentioned by either as a basis for why they did not feel German. M., in fact was blond-haired and blue-eyed and was aware that this mattered, but that it had a positive rather than negative effect:

*I: How would you compare yourself to others of migrant background?*

*M: Well, because I look German it’s probably easier for me. People don’t notice any difference. It might be different for others who are Black or Asian.*

*I: Are people surprised when they find out that you are Italian?*

*M: Not necessarily. Sometimes, sometimes not.*

*I: How are you treated in everyday life?*

*M: Normally. There's not much discrimination against foreigners in Germany, maybe there is in England or somewhere else. But it's nicer here.*

(#44, 63-78)

It is also significant that their sense of nationness as clearly not German did not pertain to any future plans to live in those countries with which they identified. G., for instance, stated that he would consider moving to Turkey, "If [he] didn't have any job prospects." Likewise, M. talks about staying in Munich, and if going other places besides Italy:

*I: Do you think you'll continue to live in Germany? Will you look for a career here and so on?*

*M: Probably. **It's a good place to live, actually, Germany.** Munich is the best place of all in Germany, actually. But I don't know, I'd like to go somewhere else too.*

(116-120)

### **Citizenship as Rights**

As the previous chapter showed, rights were the dominant frame of citizenship among those who were citizens and of migrant background in Germany. This finding challenges the postnational critique which argues that the line between citizen and non-citizen in contemporary states is relatively thin and unimportant (cf. Jacobsen 1996; Soysal 1994). For *non-citizens* who view citizenship mainly as rights, it would seem that becoming a citizen is simply not necessary or desirable because it changes little for them. R., who was a Greek citizen, described such an understanding of citizenship:

*I: What does citizenship mean to you? Not what the German state says or what the laws are, but for you what does it mean, or should it mean?*

*R: **I think one only needs citizenship in order to get rights** in a country. For example, you can only vote here if you are 18 and a citizen, that's the norm. But I can't vote here because I have Greek citizenship. Ok, EU, but still. **That's really the only thing about citizenship that is important for me, for which I would actually change my citizenship...everything else is not important.** Also because I'm an EU citizen. The boundaries are not that high for me as they are for others. **At the moment, I'm not in a rush to become a citizen.***

*(#5, Greek/Greek, 95-106)*

That citizenship was tied to rights for her became clear when she was asked how her parents and family might react to her becoming a German citizen:

*I: What do your parents think? Do they believe that you should keep your Greek citizenship and get German citizenship if possible? Did they say anything about that?*

*R: It doesn't make a difference to them...**if I would say, 'Dad I would like to have German citizenship', he would say, 'Ok, go ahead. It will definitely help your career.'** Of course he is happy that I can get the Greek ID\* as well...I live here. And I will continue to live here. He will go back (to Greece) sometime.*

*(130-135)*

Though she states that her parents would not oppose her getting Greek citizenship, she is differently situated as an EU citizen, since she can have dual citizenship and would not be forced to choose.

F., who was studying for a degree in hotel administration, also describes the inconvenience of not having a German passport, and therefore a rights-based citizenship:

*I: What advantages would there be for you, that you can think of?*

*F: Hm, well, I can say when I was travelling in Italy, in Poland, in the Czech Republic, with my school, I was the only Turk in the class, and **when the border police came I was always the problem. They have to scrutinize***

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\* By 'Greek ID,' she is in fact referring to keeping her Greek citizenship, which she would be entitled to do as a citizen of an EU member state.

*my passport, to make sure all the right stamps were on it, if it's authentic, and so on. That was just silly which is why I think it would be nice to have a German passport.*

(#21, Tur./Tur., 109-115 )

That citizenship was based on rights for her became even clearer when she was asked about whether she would get any resistance from her family about becoming a German citizen:

*I: Are your parents okay with (you getting German citizenship)? What do they say about that?*

*F: Well, it's a little bit complicated. I don't live with my parents, they live in Turkey. Um... my grandmother says, 'It's no problem, that is your business.' If you want to keep the Turkish one, no problem. If you want the German one, I'll help you with that.*

(117-127)

E., a clerical worker in her early 20s in a Turkish organization, was born and grew up in Germany, and was married to a German citizen of Turkish descent. She found citizenship largely unimportant for her:

*I: Have you thought about getting German citizenship?*

*E: No, not at all. I never even thought about it.*

*I: What does the passport mean to you? Is it important?*

*E: Not that important. Regardless of whether I have a German ID or a Turkish passport, it doesn't matter. **Mainly you can travel with a German ID. That's the only thing it matters for. Otherwise it's not important.***

(#52, Turk./Turk. 31-39)

The relative unimportance of her citizenship was articulated when she was asked about whether she would like to have dual citizenship:

*I: Would anything be different if you could have dual citizenship?*



*E: I don't know what advantages I'd have, if I applied for German citizenship. My husband has it, but he needed it to study overseas. So he has that advantage. I just don't know what advantages I'd have.*  
(#52, 51-59)

E. articulates that if she in fact would become a citizen, it would be for the rights that citizenship would afford her. Her need for a passport is also affected by her marital status and possibly gender: her husband does have German citizenship, and travels, while she apparently does not need German citizenship in her everyday life.

Still others talked about rights but additionally had the impression that they would have better educational and job prospects with German rather than some other citizenship:

*I: So do you think anything will change for you after you get your German passport?*

*M: I can travel more easily in the EU. I don't need a visa like I do with a Turkish passport...Maybe it depends on the job. If I have to travel a lot, it's practical. And, of course, you can vote. You also get preference for university. You get into certain classes more easily.*

*I: Really?*

*M: If two students have the same grades, and one has a German passport, and the other, a Turkish passport, the German will get in. That's how it is. I have no idea why.*

(#7, Tur./Tur. 260-70)

N., a student in Munich whose parents came from Serbia to work in Germany thirty years earlier, had no immediate intention of becoming a citizen, but thought that he would soon. He emphasized that citizenship had little to do with "who he was":

*I: So as of now you have a Serbian passport. What will you do? Do you think you will become a citizen?*

*N: Well, I don't see any problem with that. It's kind of too bad, I have to say. But if it does something for me, you know, I know who I am, a piece of paper doesn't say anything. I'm not going to change my name or something to 'Hans Dieter'. It's just citizenship, no big thing.*

*(#34, Serb/Serb, 86-92)*

### ***Right-based Citizenship and Germanness***

Though citizenship was defined as rights by these non-citizens, they had either decided against citizenship, or postponed the decision because it was not pressing. If citizenship has anything to do with their membership in Germany, however, it could be expected that their sense of Germanness might be less than that of citizens.

R. who was a Greek citizen and expressed little interest in gaining the political rights offered by citizenship, described a hybrid sense of nationness:

*I: First I'd like to ask, do you feel German in any way?*

*R: I think how I grew up is very German. As it is for all of us. Because we were brought up in this society. **But that's the only way I feel German. Otherwise, I way I act, is not really German, I'd say. But growing up in society is.** Although most would not want to admit it.*

*(#5, Greek/Greek, 3-8)*

*I: So do you feel Greek then?*

*R: Yes, I definitely think so. I like telling people I am Greek as well. You differentiate yourself that way. I might not look Greek, but I am.*

*(27-30)*

It is unclear whether being Greek actually organizes aspects of her life—she never talks about who her friends are or what she does. But she suggest that how she “acts” is not German.

F. positively identified as German, though importantly, she had a particular understanding of being Turkish, which she did not want to be identified with:

I: *Do you feel German in any way?*

F: *I do actually. I have to say I don't have any Turkish friends, **I have a lot of German friends and am happy here**, I don't have any problems here.*

(#21, Tur./Tur., 26-30)

I: *Do you feel, or do you sometimes think that you are more or less German than others with immigrant background?*

F: *That's a good question. **I'm a little different than the Turks here. I'm used to life here. I'm completely happy here. I don't think I'm typically Turkish. I'd say I'm more German.** I don't know. I have Turkish citizenship, but... I think more, I feel in my gut more German.*

(46-53)

I: *Can you tell me more about **how you are not "really" Turkish?** You were saying you went to a different school and that that was really important.*

F: *Here in Berlin it's a problem... most, really **most Turkish kids, they don't think about things. They steal, they make trouble. They've broken a lot of laws, and so on. With me, it's different.** I haven't broken any laws, I haven't done anything wrong. And, maybe it sounds silly, but it's because, as I was saying, **I've been around Germans since seventh grade.** You really see that it is different to be around and friends with Germans, than with Turks... Turkish kids just don't behave well. And I don't like that.*

(172-190)

E., after telling the typical story of being called 'foreign' in her country of descent, described how she would rather live in Germany, though she was of Turkish descent and still had a Turkish passport:

I: *Do you feel German in any way?*

E: *Well, let's put it in a way that Turks say: 'when we're in Turkey, we are called German, and when we are here, we're called foreigner. Of course it's that way. **If someone asks me whether I'd rather live here or in Turkey, I'd choose here, because I've also grown up here. I don't know if I could spend the rest of my life in Turkey, because where you are born and grow up is the most important thing, I'd say.***

(#52, Turk./Turk., 12-19)

M., after describing how he was not compatible with German culture, circumvented nationness altogether:

*M: I'd say I feel like a Berliner.*

*I: Really? Ok...What does that mean?*

*M: I feel at home here. And I don't want to move anywhere else. I don't want to go back to Turkey or anything else...I grew up here. I know things here...so I'm a Berliner I guess.*

*I: So what is a Berliner? Can you tell me more?*

*M: Multicultural. A lot of different cultures. A lot. British, Americans, Russians, Kurds, Turks, everyone together, a lot of Germans too.*

*(#7, Turk./Turk., 53-66)*

Like several others, he describes his sense of home as being Berlin, and that he is most “at home” there.

N. who was ambivalent about becoming a citizen, also saw himself as “not German”, but also saw himself living only in Germany in the future:

*I: And, do you feel German in any way?*

*N: Well, it's kind of strange. Here in Germany you're basically labeled Serbian; but over there in Serbia you are basically “the German.” I personally feel Serbian. During the Eurocup, I was a fan for Serbia. (laughter)*

*I: How are you labeled Serbian here?*

*N: Well, not exactly labeled. But no one would say I'm German or something like that.*

*I: Ok. Why not?*

*N: I don't really look like it, first of all... and I don't consider myself German. I feel more Serbian, and more identify that way than as German.*

I: *Do you feel more or less German than others of immigrant background?*

N: *Probably more German than others. I'm kind of a mix, I guess, mostly in my mentality.*

I: *So you feel more German than most others?*

N: *Than others, yes, probably.*

I: *Why?*

N: *Well, it just kind of rubs off on you here, the mentality. And I speak the language well. I couldn't imagine living down there in Serbia. That I know.*

*(#34, Serb/Serb, 38-59)*

Though their senses of Germanness are diverse, there is a common understanding among the rights-based non-citizens: they are comfortable and familiar with living in Germany. Virtually none, however, describe themselves as unequivocally German. Rather, the majority understand themselves in hybridity terms, as German and something else, or as non-Germans but members of a multicultural place-based identity—especially Berlin.

## **Second Generation Adults**

All of the above interviewees were between the ages of 18 and 23. This may matter greatly to their sense of membership in terms of both Citizenship and Germanness. As students at the end of secondary or in higher education, they are not yet fully in adulthood—in the job market, or forming families.

A., a middle-class businessman in his 30s from Munich, expressed a much more tense negotiation than any of the second generation younger adults:

A: *I'm integrated. But this burden of having the Turkish passport, it proves that you don't really belong here. You don't have a voice, and*

*whenever you have to fill out any forms, it's more complicated, because you're a foreigner. At the university, there's a special office for foreigners, only for foreigners.*

I: *Does that affect what you can study?*<sup>93</sup>

A: *It's about enrolling. Even though we finished our Abitur in a German secondary school and have a German Abitur<sup>94</sup>, we still had to go to the foreigners' office, with other students that come from abroad, not where the normal German students enroll. We were treated differently. And that proves to you again and again that you don't belong. Day to day you don't notice it, but when you deal with authorities you always do. It's just disappointing. At that moment, you feel you don't belong, not German but Turkish, and they show that to you.*

(#35, Turk./Turk., 46-61)

While he was eligible to become a German citizen, he had reservations related to giving up his Turkish citizenship—for reasons of both identity and rights:

A: *...I still have the Turkish passport. I haven't applied for the German one yet but...I'm thinking about it, the pros and cons. There are certain things for example if I don't have the Turkish passport, I lose inheritance rights. I can't inherit anything in Turkey. And, that's...the disadvantage [of keeping Turkish citizenship] is that I can't vote, I don't have a voice, even though I pay taxes. That does make me a little...that I can pay taxes, but have no voice. That was the same a few hundred years ago in the USA! Boston Tea Party! Then I think to myself, 'hm, should I organize the Munich Tea Party?' [laughter]. I find it unfair. **That we can pay but have no voice. They could do things differently, like the Netherlands, where there's dual citizenship. Or England, there it's no problem to have two passports.***

( 24-34)

I: *And you're the only one [of your siblings] who doesn't have German citizenship?*

A: *I'm the only one...and the youngest one. Why am I taking so long? It just kind of bothers me, and **there is definitely some pride involved, that I don't want to completely give up my ancestry. Because the German government hasn't gotten it together so that I don't basically have to***

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<sup>93</sup> In the German educational system there are quotas – known as *numerus clausus* -- on the number of people admitted to study certain highly-demanded fields such as medicine and law. One's nationality can affect this.

<sup>94</sup> The *Abitur* is the college entrance exam.

*give up my origins. Even if it's just a piece of paper. They demand that of me, as a sacrifice, that I'm integrated on paper. That's too big a sacrifice for me, because I know it's different in other countries, so I'll wait for now, and see how long I have to wait.*

(102-112)

A. sees becoming a German citizen as a kind of proof demanded by the state for his Germanness, though he sees himself as already German—as someone who is fully “integrated” in everyday life, who pays taxes and so on. Unlike for many others, dual citizenship would make a difference to his decision to become a German citizen.

D., a university student in her mid-20s who was born in Serbia but moved to Germany at age 5, also had a tense negotiation with citizenship and Germanness. Like many others, she states that she sees herself as fitting into German society in everyday life, but that she cannot quite identify as German:

*I: Can you say that you feel German in any way?*

*D: It's difficult. Not just German, for sure. I can speak German better than Serbo-Croatian, I grew up here, went to school here, so it would be next to impossible to go back to Serbia. Every country has works in its own way. So I feel more at home here than I do in Serbia, but to go so far as to say I'm German, I don't know. That's hard.*

*I: Why's that?*

*D: No idea, I can't...I think it's because of my family, even though they live here, they not very sympathetic to Germany. As a country they don't like it much and they are still resentful of the Germans, because of the NATO bombing of '99. Soto call yourself German, Serbs wouldn't really do that, even if they're German citizens, they'd still describe themselves as citizens.*

(#12, Serb./Serb, 17-34)

D. was the only interviewee of any generation for whom a recent event involving her country of origin and her present country of residence significantly informed her identification as German. Still, her tendency to not identify as German, reinforced by

family and perhaps other Serbs living in Germany, does not change her sense of being “at home” in Germany.

### **Chapter Summary**

Second-generation, non-citizen young adults’ understandings of membership largely mirrored those of second generation who were citizens: rights were the dominant way that citizenship was understood and nationness was understood in hybridity terms. The two non-citizens who identified citizenship as national membership were exceptional. Importantly, their sense of national membership was more based on assertion than ascription—their self-understandings had not come out of exclusion or how they were treated or seen by others. European Union citizenship made a difference between the two ethnoculturally-oriented interviewees, however. While M. seemed unconcerned with the limited occupational and job prospects associated with being a foreign citizen—even as an EU citizen—G. was very aware that he might have to become a German citizen if he pursued certain careers.

Though both citizens and non-citizens identified citizenship with rights, there was a significant difference between the two groups: the rights conferred by German citizenship actually matter to those who are citizens—they are aware of, and articulate, the benefits and significance of having German citizenship rather than another citizenship. Many non-citizens, on the other hand, appear much more ambivalent about staying non-citizens, and may be simply postponing their decision to become a citizen.

That there is little difference between citizens and non-citizens in terms of Germanness is also significant. Put simply, one may see oneself as a member in



Germany regardless of one's status as a citizen. With the exception of the two young adults whose citizenship was expressive of their nationness—which they define based on descent—all of the non-citizens felt that they were at home in Germany in everyday life situations. In fact, even the two ethnoculturally-oriented individuals did not express any intention to live in the countries they so strongly identified with. This suggests that nationness can exist apart from territorial presence.

**CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION: Membership, Germanness and Citizenship**

Simon Green (2001) has questioned whether or not the transformation of German citizenship has meant that Germany has moved “beyond ethnoculturalism.” In fact, it appears that arguments about nation and nationness will continue to shape citizenship politics and policies, as for instance, in the signature campaign of CDU resulting in the striking of dual citizenship. Claims based on either the nationness of immigrants or Germany as a kind of nation are unlikely to disappear from how the state makes citizenship policies. Complimenting this trend is the fact that, as postnationalists rightly point out, many social and economic rights are held by non-citizens, leaving no “rights basis” for claims to liberalizing or restricting access to citizenship. Conceivably, the only remaining meaning of citizenship at the level of the state is one of national belonging.

As was shown, certain events of the pre-1990 and postwar period set the parameters for political parties to argue about who should be able to become a citizen and who belonged to the nation. The permanence of an immigrant population, in connection with a state that was no longer divided, posed the new question of what was to be done with the permanent “non-ethnic” Germans. After 1990, this question was answered in a way common to other European liberal democracies with recent immigrant populations—through a contentious politics of membership and inclusion (Hagedorn 2001). In this sense, Germany has begun to resemble other states with longer-term immigrant populations, rather than a unique national case and state with a particular understanding of nationhood. Parliamentary debates and the new Citizenship Law and policies confirmed that nation and citizenship were in fact understood differently, for a much longer period of time, than a nationally-specific argument suggests (cf. Brubaker 1992).

The lack of reform in German citizenship after 1990 appeared to be mainly a consequence of which political party was in power. This is most clearly demonstrated by the policy positions articulated political parties, which were remarkably robust and consistent over the course of two or more decades. Importantly, this also demonstrates that how political parties define nation matters to citizenship policies. Though other case comparisons, especially that of Brubaker (1992), also point to understandings of nationhood and how they were important for citizenship, they suggest that these differences more pronounced between different nation-states than within a single nation-state. Other arguments that suggest a “convergence” of citizenship policies between states based on liberal democratic principles (cf. Joppke 1998) do not explain the changes in German citizenship laws during the 1990s adequately. Though the CDU, for instance, addressed the importance of political inclusion in their 1984 declaration as an espousal of Germany’s liberal democracy, this was not followed by any immediate legislation or proposals to express that norm. Similarly, other institutions which arguably represent the universalization of policies of membership—especially the European Union—have virtually no authority on citizenship policies, though they may for related policy areas such as immigration (Hansen 2009).

Still, political parties were not the only basis of changes in citizenship policies. Events of the 1990s—the Asylum crisis and the signature campaign—also limited political parties’ ability to institutionalize particular policies of membership. Regarding the asylum crisis, Germany was a truly unique case with its Asylum law born out of the end of the Nazi Regime. Anything resembling the Asylum crisis—in sheer numbers—has not taken place in Europe since the crisis of 1992. Moreover, it led to a

transformation of the asylum law, but not of citizenship and membership. In contrast, the signature campaign may represent a new form in Germany's politics of citizenship. With the decline of the "not an immigration country" narrative, new tactics and venues for restricting citizenship may be sought, especially such populist campaigns that rely on the categories of "foreigners" and "immigrants" (Hansen and Kohler 2005). As argued in Chapter 3, tactics such as populist campaigns rely heavily on symbols and particular meanings of categories. They represent what Brubaker (1996) calls "nationhood events." If they become a part of the staple of tactics used in the making of citizenship policies, the cultural basis for citizenship policies—the use of understandings of membership—may become even greater.

Membership on the citizen sides showed that citizenship and nationness were largely decoupled for first generation migrants. First-generation immigrants were mostly not citizens. While some of them expressed an interest in becoming a citizen, they stated, their everyday lives were largely unchanged by being *only* residents. In terms of membership through nationness, first-generation immigrants did not identify strongly as German. Though this can in part be explained through ethnic identity theories (Waters 1999) of the first generation, studies of other "immigrant countries" such as the United States show that the self-identification as a national can be common even for first-generation immigrants, though how this is explained is less clear (Brettell 2006). Though they did not identify as German in a nationness sense, what first-generation migrants did mention is a sense of not fully being a part of their countries of origin any longer, and also, a sense of being familiar and comfortable with the way German society "worked."

For German-born individuals, citizenship and nationness were both much more important, and related in interesting ways. Citizenship was primarily framed in terms of *rights* rather than *identity* among persons with immigrant background. This was true for citizens as well as non-citizens. For most, the specific right of travel within the European Union and elsewhere was of particular importance. For most individuals, these rights were important enough that they became citizens, or preferred being a citizen over being a non-citizen. The transformations in German citizenship during the 1990s for the citizenship of individuals, then, is of importance insofar as it made rights more accessible. Importantly, the particular right of travel is available to a category of non-citizens: citizens of European Union member states. Therefore, transforming *national* citizenship represents only one of several possibilities for explaining the acquisition of citizenship for individuals of immigrant background. A change in the member state status of a country which has a large number of nationals in Germany—such as Turkey—could conceivably lead to a decreasing importance in becoming a German citizen, since the right of travel would be accessible without German citizenship.

Many individuals identified with Germanness in a nationness sense. They identify as German, based largely on the principle of *territory*—that they were born, grew up, and feel at home in Germany. It is also noteworthy that most individuals of the second-generation their Germanness through language, friendships and everyday life in Germany—all of which they acquired through having been born and growing up in Germany. Many individuals, however, also defined Germanness *externally*—based on how they were excluded from being considered German, on the basis of a phenotypical or otherwise marked non-Germanness. Many of the second generation, for instance, talked

about not “looking German.” Another way in which the Germanness of German-born persons was qualified was through other kinds of identification. In a few cases, individuals saw themselves in local terms, as “Berliners” or “Kreuzbergers.” The meaning of this identification was not entirely clear in terms of whether it was related to a kind of local Germanness. On the one hand, Berlin and the neighborhood of Kreuzberg represent multiculturalism, and hence individuals who claim those places are saying they are more at home in places where a descent-based Germanness is not dominant. On the other hand, identifying with a neighborhood may be in response to a foreclosed possibility of identifying with the nation. If “German” and “Germany” cannot be identified with for persons of non-German descent, but those persons still feel at home in Germany, a local identification may be an alternative collective identity with which one can identify.

Other findings address transnationalism and its importance to nationness. Almost all second generation individuals had the experience of traveling to their parents’ country of origin each year, often for several weeks or longer. Among those who did, and those who did not, make trips to parents’ home countries, there were no notable difference in understandings of membership, citizenship or Germanness. For instance, one interviewee whose parents were Italian and understood himself as Italian, talked about being called German when in Italy, but this apparently had little to no effect on his ethnocultural understanding of citizenship and nationness. Rather than a diversity of experiences with trips home, virtually all of these young adult, irrespective of national origin, citizenship status, or understanding of membership, had the same experience: being called and treated as “German” in their countries of origin, and of being “not German” in Germany.

This finding vividly illustrates the situated, relativist and contextual basis of Germanness. It suggests that national membership is situational, while also fixed as particular things in different places. Such transnational ties and experiences did not conflict with citizenship status. German citizenship, in fact, often gave individuals *greater* access to their countries of origin. One individual of Turkish descent described how having a German passport in fact makes her travel to her parents' home country, a kind of transnational tie, easier, than if were a Turkish citizen. This same explanation was offered by some first-generation migrants and others who carried citizenships that were particularly difficult—such as Palestinians.

Importantly, these general patterns varied along one other axis of difference among persons of immigrant background: citizenship status. Those who were citizens tended to feel *less* German than those who were not citizens. This suggests at least two important things about membership in Germany. Most importantly, it suggests that citizenship status alone does not confer nationness or Germanness; citizenship is therefore not a means by which *most* persons of immigrant background gain acceptance as members of the imagined community of the nation. Second, it also, though less obviously, suggests that citizenship *should* have this function. If those who are *citizens* emphatically claim they are *not German*, it suggests that they are expected to feel more German, by either the state, their communities of national origin, or even themselves. In contrast to this difference between citizens and non-citizens concerning Germanness, the importance of rights, and the tendency to identify rights as significant, was common to both citizens and non-citizens.



Considering the particular sample of interviewees, whether a more diverse sample would change the overall picture of citizenship and nationness is unclear. Despite the fairly homogenous educational level of most interviewees, there was a diversity of understandings of nationness and citizenship statuses. Though more interviewees who had completed vocational school only, or were out of the school system entirely could articulate different narratives of membership, the diversity of narratives among even the college-preparatory school young adults suggests that understandings are very diverse for this age group. Still, a more representative sample would elicit a firmer conclusion about how class, and not only national origin, gender or other differences, might matter to citizenship and nationness.

Finally, to what extent might transformations in citizenship policies—and specifically the gradual liberalization of citizenship—explain individuals’ understandings of citizenship and Germanness? Many interviewees articulated the narrative of having been born, grown up, and being at home in Germany. Such narratives echo those articulated by the Social Democratic and other left-leaning parties who used them to institutionalize the 2000 Citizenship Law and its *jus soli* (birthright) provision. Under the pre-1990 citizenship regime, citizenship privileged descent over territory, entitling individuals to citizenship who were neither born nor grew up in Germany. Under such conditions, as Brubaker (1992) argues, being a citizen was unimaginable without being German in a national sense, where the nation was defined through descent rather than territory.

Germany is not only a country of immigrants, but a country of the children of immigrants. It is also one in which the benefits of German citizenship remain for the majority of persons of immigrant background, and in which they consider themselves German, if not *exclusively*. At the level of the state, citizenship will likely continue to invoke the contending definitions of who is German, what kind of country Germany is, and who immigrants are.

**APPENDIX I. INTERVIEWEES**

<b>Int. #</b>	<b>Citizenship</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Gen./ (age migr.)</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Education level</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>City</b>
1	Turkish	Turkish	1 (20 y.o.)	40	F	Grundschule (7. Kl)	800	Berlin
2	Polish	Polish	1 (21 y.o.)	42	F	Associate degr.	800	Berlin
3	Palestinian	Palestinian/Lebanese	1 (20 y.o.)	42	M	Abitur	<800	Berlin
4	German	Turkish	2	23	F	Fachhochschule		Berlin
5	Greek	Greek	2	19	F	Gymnasium		Berlin
6	German	Afghan	2	17	F	Gymnasium		Berlin
7	Turkish	Turkish	2	18	M	Gymnasium		Berlin
8	German	Palestinian	2	17	F	Gymnasium		Berlin
9	German	Turkish	2	18	F	Gymnasium		Berlin
10	Turkish	Turkish	2	18	M	Gymnasium		Berlin
11	German	Pakistani	2	18	F	Gymnasium		Berlin
12	Serbian	Serbian	2	24	F	Magister		Berlin
13	German	Turkish	2	18	M	Gymnasium		Berlin
14	Bosnian	Bosnian	2	18	M	Gymnasium		Berlin
15	German	Jordanien/German	1 (37 y.o.)	53	F	Magister	800	Berlin
16	German/Polish	German/Polish	1 (21 y.o.)	38	M	Diploma	800	Berlin
17	Italian	Italian	1 (20 y.o.)	32	F	Tech. college	high	Berlin
18	Cameroon	Cameroon	1 (26 y.o.)	37	M	Doctorate	3000	Berlin
19	German	Turkish	1 (13 y.o.)	43	F	Diploma	1300	Berlin
21	Turkish	Turkish	2	19	F	Private school	-	Berlin
22	German	Palastine/Syrian	2	21	M	Hauptschule	-	Berlin
23	German	Turkish	2	23	F	Hauptschule	-	Berlin
24	German	Turkish	2	22	F	Realschule	-	Berlin
25	German	Turkish	2	19	M	Real/Gesamt	-	Berlin
26	Turkish	Turkish	2	18	F	Realschule	-	Berlin
29	German/Turkish	Turkish	1 (18 y.o.)	47	F	Master's degree	3000	Berlin
30	Turkish	Turkish	1 (back and forth migration)	38	F	Master's degree	1800	Berlin
31	German/Turkish	Iranian/Turkish	2	15	M	Realschule	-	Munich
32	Turkish	Turkish	2	16	F	Realschule	-	Munich
33	German/Turkish	Turkish	2	14	F	Realschule	-	Munich
34	Serbian	Serbian	2	18	M	Gymnasium	-	Munich
35	Turkish	Turkish	2	34	M	Abitur	2300	Munich
36	German	Turkish	2	19	M	Gymnasium	-	Munich

37	German	Turkish	2	20	M	Gymnasium	-	Munich
38	German	Afghan	1 (10 y.o.)	19	F	Gymnasium	-	Munich
39	German	Ethiopian	2	18	F	Gymnasium	-	Munich
40	German	Turkish	2	18	F	Gymnasium	-	Munich
41	German	Vietnamese	2	17	F	Gymnasium	-	Munich
42	German*	Turkish	2	20	M	Gymnasium	-	Munich
43	German	Jamaican/Germ	2	18	F	Gymnasium	-	Munich
44	Italian	Italian	2	20	M	Gymnasium	-	Munich
46	German/Russ	Russian	1 (11 y.o.)	19	F	Gymnasium	-	Munich
47	German	Ethiopian	2	19	F	Gymnasium	-	Munich
48	Turkish	Turkish	1 (13 y.o.)	43	M	Hauptschule	600	Munich

## APPENDIX II. INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL A: Adults Who Have Naturalized

- 1) **Fuehlen Sie Sich als Deutsche(r) in irgendeine Weise? Fuehlen Sie Sich als \_\_\_\_\_? Haben Sie Sich immer so gefuehlt? Wann hat das sich geaendert? Fuehlen Sie Sich mehr Deutsch oder (*National Origin*)?**

(Do you feel German in *any way*? Do you feel [*national origin*]? Have you always felt this way? When did it change? Do you feel more German or [*national origin*]?)

- 2) **Fuehlen Sie Sich mehr oder weniger Deutsch als andere mit Migrationshintergrund? Welche?Wer? Warum?**

(Do you feel more or less German than others with a migration background? Who? Why?)

- 3) **Was bedeutet Staatsbuergerschaft fuer Sie?**

(What does citizenship mean to you?)

- 4) **Gibt es irgendwas anderes, das ich nicht gefragt habe, das in Bezug auf Staatsangehörigkeit wichtig ist?**

(Is there anything else that is important about citizenship that you want to tell me about?)

## INTERVIEW PROTOCOL B – German-Born Young Adults

*Erst will ich Ihnen einige Fragen stellen darueber, wie das ist in Deutschland als Person mit Migrationshintergrund zu leben.*

*(First I want to ask you about living in Germany as a person with a migrant background).*

- 1) Fuehlen du dich in irgendeiner Weise als Deutsche(r)? Fuehlst du dich als \_\_\_\_\_? Hast du dich immer so gefuehlt? Wann hat es sich veraendert? Fuehlst du dich mehr Deutsch oder \_\_\_\_\_?**

*(Do you feel German in any way? Do you feel \_\_\_\_\_? Have you always felt that way? When did it change? Do you feel more German or \_\_\_\_\_?)*

- 2) Fuehlen Sie Sich mehr oder weniger Deutsch als Andere mit Migrationshintergrund? Wer? Warum?**

*(Do you feel that you are more or less German than others with immigrant background? Who? Why?)*

- 3) Was bedeutet Staatsbuergerschaft fuer Sie?**

*(Was does citizenship mean to you?)*

- 4) Gibt es irgendwas anderes, das ich nicht gefragt habe, das in Bezug auf Staatsangehoerigkeit wichtig ist?**

*(Is there anything else that is important about citizenship that you I didn't ask you that you want to tell me about?)*

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<sup>i</sup> Naturalization requirements until 1990 were: 15-year residency in Germany; a fee equal to one month's average salary; renunciation of former citizenship (no dual citizenship); and subject to the discretion of individual state governments.

<sup>ii</sup> By referring to persons who are “non-ethnically German”, I am referring to these groups as they are defined and dominant discourse—which is not necessarily how they define themselves.