

Citizenship and National Identity in Twentieth-Century Germany

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HISTORIANS HAVE HAD A DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIP with notions of citizenship and identity, each of which recently has enjoyed widespread attention in sociology, anthropology, and the political sciences. For example, political scientists began returning in the 1980s to T. H. Marshall's influential model of citizenship, somewhat to the surprise of social historians, who had subjected such ideas to extensive critique during the preceding decades.¹ Writing in 1949, Marshall observed a close relationship among civic, political, and social rights. Citizenship denoted to Marshall "full membership of the human community"; whereas civic and class equality moved in opposite directions during the early development of capitalism, an expansion of rights during the twentieth century led to an equalization of opportunity that affected social as much as civic and political rights.² Marshall's contention that social welfare was conducive to citizenship was challenged under the transformed political and economic environment of the Reagan and Thatcher eras. A number of scholars from the "New Right" argued that social rights dampened individual initiative for the community.³ Marshall's explanation that citizenship rights had developed as an interdependent corollary to modern capitalism also came under attack. Critics raised the question of agency, because it was clear neither how this apparently automatic relationship came about nor which individuals or groups were at the forefront of this expanded notion of citizenship.

A further influential concept of citizenship, that developed by Jürgen Habermas, has been challenged over the past two decades. Like Marshall, Habermas noted a close relationship between citizenship and

social welfare. However, Habermas argued that the growing state intervention that social welfare entailed made individuals unable, as citizens, to stand at a critical distance to the state. What was lacking, from his perspective, was the distinct public sphere that had existed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when citizens debated, and thus identified with and took responsibility for, the common weal. At that time, private interests were contested in the public sphere, and this formed the basis of state action. By contrast, in modern states, and particularly in the welfare democracy of the Federal Republic of Germany, the bureaucratic state directly interfered in the private sphere. The public sphere thus encouraged individuals into passivity, a passivity that was reinforced by the emergence of new discursive contexts, notably the mass media.⁴ Habermas's ideal of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century public sphere later was challenged by a range of studies that demonstrated the exclusivity of this civil society, which was predicated on the inequality of Jews and women, to name but two disadvantaged groups.⁵ The public sphere that Habermas had idealized was, in fact, heavily contested among different groups that sought to appropriate the ideal of the public sphere to register their own claims for social and political domination.⁶

The end of the Cold War provided a further and decisive catalyst in debates in the social sciences about citizenship. New states emerged, often violently, as nationalism revived in many parts of the world. At the same time, globalization and enhanced communications enabled and promoted the articulation of multiple identities across borders. The consequent ascendancy of "multiculturalism" greatly complicated any understanding of entitlements, and rendered all the more necessary clear concepts of universal as well as equal rights.⁷ Citizenship not only allowed a better understanding of questions of inclusion and exclusion or of the actual acquisition of rights and duties as it pertained to each group; its evaluation also provided a common denominator for comparing the rights and entitlements of different groups in relation to each other.

In response to the end of the Cold War, scholars began to reconsider the significance of formal citizenship. As political scientist Rogers Brubaker has pointed out, neither state institutions nor national borders could be taken for granted in the history of continental Europe; hence, the evolving nature of formal citizenship required further investigation.⁸ Only citizens enjoyed a full set of privileges. The evolution and the nature of formal citizenship rights thus were crucial, especially for

those to whom they were denied, notably immigrants.⁹ Indeed, the concept of formal citizenship underwent dramatic change. The inception of a European Union citizenship that was both distinct and yet conditional on citizenship of an EU member state introduced the prospect of multiple types of citizenship, even in a formal sense.¹⁰

Following an increasingly wide application of the citizenship concept, most social scientists have observed a distinction between "thin" and "thick" conceptions of citizenship. Scholars interested in the former have been concerned with the development and contestation of citizenship as legal status; that is, how different groups vie for recognition before the law for their ability to exercise legal and formal citizenship rights in theory and in practice. Such perspectives have been complemented by investigations into "thick" conceptions of citizenship, or what Charles Tilly has described as "citizenship as role."¹¹ The focus here has been on the constructedness of citizenship through cultural artifacts, action, and communication. Although the political, legal, and institutional agendas of individual groups have remained in focus, scholars in this area have been interested in how social groups relate to each other in the attainment of these goals and how they construct their own self-understandings and mutual ties.¹²

Citizenship has come to address questions that are central to the social sciences. The concept has been used as a framework to determine how different groups define and contest their identities in relation to each other and to the state. Citizenship has also been seen as a concept through which the changing functions of the state could be understood; for example, how the transformation of the welfare system affected the relationship between state and citizen. A further important theme in this context has been the basis that citizenship has provided for the allocation of resources and participation rights to immigrants, an issue of particular note to scholars concerned with the legitimacy of political systems and the ethical basis of political membership.¹³ Indeed, the political debates surrounding citizenship rights and immigration could present major challenges to the stability of political systems, for instance, by invigorating populist right-wing parties.¹⁴

The concern with citizenship has brought about some cross-disciplinary work between social scientists and historians. After all, both Habermas and Marshall founded their citizenship concepts upon a model of historical evolution that turned out to be assumed rather than proven.¹⁵ The multiplication of citizenship rights between the nation-state and the EU, for instance, has important and enlightening parallels

in the past that could contribute to an understanding of citizenship in its current dimensions.¹⁶ History is significant not just for understanding citizenship but for the construction of citizenship itself, because history and historical memory have an important impact on the formation of group identities relative to the state and to each other.¹⁷

In turn, the proliferation of debates about citizenship in the social sciences has impacted upon historical debate, and this has affected German historiography. In 1992, Rogers Brubaker published his influential contention that German and French citizenship laws were effectively created in the early nineteenth century, and that both represented diametrically opposite definitions of identity, one based on ethnicity (*ius sanguinis*), the other on culture and territorial belonging (*ius soli*). This spurred a number of important historical investigations, all of which demonstrated that Brubaker's historical trajectory failed to stand up to closer historical scrutiny. Andreas Fahrmeir was the first to provide a sustained historical investigation in this regard. He noted that individual German states defined citizenship until well into the nineteenth century. Indeed, a German citizenship law did not come into effect until 1913, and even after that date individual states retained important rights to interpret and execute the law's provisions, as Annemarie Sammartino shows in her contribution to this book. Fahrmeir argued that for much of the nineteenth century neither ethnicity nor cultural attributes were particularly important in the granting of citizenship in Germany, and that Germany was not particularly distinctive in this regard.¹⁸

The debate about Brubaker's work was continued by further examinations of Germany and France. Patrick Weil has shown that the influential Prussian citizenship law of 1842 was inspired significantly by the French Civil Code of 1803. The French changed their definition of citizenship to elevate the significance of birth in 1889, and not until 1927 did French citizenship law become relatively open to the naturalization of foreigners.¹⁹ In his magisterial study of the evolution of German citizenship law during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Dieter Gosewinkel has underlined that ethnicity was not the sole criterion for the attribution of citizenship until 1933. The importance of ethnicity in the Federal Republic of Germany was constructed (pace Brubaker) not in continuation of, but as an atonement for, the uncharacteristic use of race as the sole criterion of citizenship during the Third Reich.²⁰ Gosewinkel's rich findings have been supported by more recent work that confirms the ambiguity of German citizenship laws before 1933.²¹

If citizenship was a historical reflection of German and French identity constructions, then this identity of the national community and of how it related to outsiders was clearly much more complex than Brubaker suggested.

In addition to considering in detail the history of citizenship in its “thin” conceptions as legal status, historians have begun to examine the “thick” dimensions of citizenship in German history. As scholars explored the fluidity and complexity of concepts like class, gender, and ethnicity, citizenship became an important category through which the meanings of these constructions could be reconfigured.²² On this basis, Kathleen Canning has suggested that we can arrive at a more complex understanding of both citizenship and gender if we focus on the subjectivities of contemporary discourses and constructions of inclusion and exclusion.²³ Taking up this argument, Geoff Eley has argued that the perspective of citizenship, understood as the “set of practices—juridical, political, economic, and cultural—which define a person or through which persons define themselves as competent members of society” could provide a new paradigm for understanding the history of Wilhelmine Germany.²⁴ Such a perspective could encompass notions that otherwise seem contradictory, such as the continued, and in many respects increasing, importance both of the locality and the nation; the evolving relationship between the private and the public spheres; and the coexistence of stasis and change.²⁵

In addition to the debates concentrating on the specific dimensions of citizenship, there has been a proliferation of studies that relate closely to the citizenship concept. One is the fruitful use that scholars have made of the notion of the public sphere—or rather of a framework that emphasizes the contestation of distinct but interrelated public spheres—as a space in which cultural, denominational, and social constructions interact to produce political outcomes and enable political claims to be made. Kate Lacey has shown how German public broadcasting in its first two decades reconfigured and invigorated contestations of the public sphere and created new boundaries of exclusion between the public and the private, boundaries that responded to, and in turn helped reconstruct, gender divides.²⁶ Moreover, Madeleine Hurd has explored some of the links between cultural contestations of the public sphere and political outcomes. Her pioneering book demonstrates the pervasive influence of bourgeois cultural, behavioral, and moral norms on gender roles in Hamburg and Stockholm, as well as on the politics and culture of the working classes.²⁷ As other work has confirmed, the

public sphere can be a useful tool for reconceptualizing rivalrous political debates in relation to each other.²⁸ Analyzing political contestation in the public sphere can present a new—and, at present, surprisingly lacking—understanding of how political parties construct their actions and arguments relative to each other.²⁹

Another intimately related area is the growing interest in migration and the integration of foreigners. Migration and immigration were central to the political, cultural, and economic dynamic of the Federal Republic of Germany. Indeed, recent work on migration has been so important precisely because it analyzes how public and political debates about citizenship are linked to the cultural reception of immigrants and their successor generations in Germany. Scholars have shown how an analysis of state policies concerned with groups “at the margin” offers important insights not just on citizenship as such but also on the nature of the state more generally.³⁰ For instance, Karin Schönwälder has demonstrated that the West German reception of foreign “guest workers” from the 1960s up until 1973 cannot be considered in isolation but was integrally linked to cultural constructions of the “economic miracle” and to the political goals of Western integration.³¹ In terms of the German Democratic Republic, analyses of how the state attempted to micromanage relations between citizens and foreigners have been highly instructive in examining its understanding of citizenship and the nature of the state more generally. Relatively few foreigners were resident in East Germany, and the state did its best to keep them residentially and even culturally separate from its citizens. However, this clearly demarcated “otherness” added to the allure that many of these foreigners were considered to have by the population.³² The attempted exclusion of foreigners thus offers important insight into the ambiguities that characterized the relationship between the state and its citizens. For both East and West Germany after 1945, this work about immigration and the (lack of) integration of foreigners suggests that an exploration of the interrelationship between “thick” and “thin” conceptions of citizenship can provide a much richer and fuller understanding of the complexities of modern German history.

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There are good grounds for considering in broader terms whether, and how, citizenship can provide a framework for an understanding of modern German history, and how historians might consider citizenship in relation to the state and to the nation. This book takes up this challenge, as its contributors explore a variety of major themes of twentieth-

century German history through the lens of citizenship. The contributions can be roughly divided into three broad categories. The first takes as its starting point the historical evolution, construction, and application of the political-legal concept of citizenship, of *Staatsangehörigkeit* or *Staatsbürgerschaft*. The second begins its line of inquiry in scientific, cultural, political, and economic debates and asks how they impacted on, and were defined by, citizenship. What unites these chapters is a common concern to explore the interrelationship between political-legal and cultural constructions of citizenship. Finally, if the first two sections of this book attempt to complicate our understanding of citizenship in relation to the state and to the nation, the authors in the third section seek to place the concept of citizenship more generally in the study of modern German history. The authors draw on the work presented in the first two sections but go beyond it by reflecting on the possibilities and the limits of the concept in relation to how individuals seek to identify themselves and how the German nation tends to be constructed.

Dieter Gosewinkel opens the first part of this book by investigating more closely the interplay among cultural, social, and national debates as important factors in determining the outcome of political-legal definitions of citizenship. Through a comparison with France, which introduces the work of Patrick Weil to an English-language readership, Gosewinkel confirms that official conceptions of citizenship among German state personnel were very close to those of French bureaucrats for much of the nineteenth century. If from the late nineteenth century the two countries began to diverge in their definitions of citizenship and practices of naturalization, this was in response to different challenges of immigration and different political conditions. As Gosewinkel argues, it was the weakness of the German state, rather than any aggressive notion of ethnicity, that prompted officials to define the national community increasingly through culture rather than place of birth.

Peter C. Caldwell focuses more specifically on the constructions and challenges of citizenship in the Weimar Republic. His chapter explores the mutually reinforcing tensions between different theoretical conceptions of citizenship and the social and cultural contestations of citizenship claims to which they gave rise. Caldwell shows that definitions of citizenship, the relationship between individuals and the state, were constantly renegotiated and that this was directly reflected in the political theory of the Weimar Republic. He demonstrates that citizenship is not an ahistorical construct borrowed from the social sciences but

that contestations of identities and individual groups both against each other and in relation to the state were integrally linked to the survival of the Weimar Republic.

Annemarie Sammartino complements Peter Caldwell's analysis of the Weimar Republic and Dieter Gosewinkel's exploration of the genesis of the German citizenship law by concentrating on the citizenship debates triggered by disputed cases of naturalization. These cases represent the juncture at which citizenship was contested directly and concretely among political leaders, administrators, the individuals concerned, and their community environment. Sammartino's rich tapestry of the motivations and interests that determined the final outcomes does more than demonstrate the fluidity and openness of citizenship constructions during the Weimar Republic. It also determines more clearly which attributes of citizenship were contested and which were universally accepted among those who sought belonging through citizenship. Her chapter points in tangible ways to the importance of regional bias in terms of how citizenship was contested in Germany, at least until 1934.

Jan Palmowski considers the interface between the ideal of citizenship of state and party, and the impact of such constructions on popular practice at the local level for a very different political context, the German Democratic Republic. Citizenship became a crucial category in the self-representation of the GDR because it brought together individual belonging to the state and the ideological goal of a socialist community. At the same time, the party was fully aware that the ideal of the socialist citizen could only be realized at the grassroots, in the daily encounters of the individual with the local community and the administration. For this reason, the state instituted a variety of procedures for "socialist" conflict resolution, which were primarily local in nature. There is no evidence, however, that these procedures managed to reconcile the individual citizen and the state. In practice, Palmowski contends, socialist citizenship did promote a feeling of local togetherness and belonging but not, on the whole, in ways that solidified feelings of identification between citizens and the state.

The contributions to the first part of this book demonstrate that political-legal definitions of citizenship formed a critical arena in which attributes of belonging were contested. At the same time, they show in different yet complementary forms that such contestations cannot be grasped without considering the cultural, social, and political identifications and representations to which they referred. The chapters

that follow explore political and cultural contestations more directly and consider how these related to perceptions of citizenship. They examine how communities of citizens were constructed, who was to be included in them, and what rights and duties such membership would entail.

Jennifer Jenkins considers the relationship between citizenship and culture by exploring how cultural constructions of citizenship could be mediated and popularized. At the beginning of the twentieth century, influential members of the *Werkbund* sought to “thicken” the meanings of citizenship through taste, developing an interior style that was to define culturally the meaning of citizenship and belonging. Interestingly, this perception of cultural citizenship also had an important pedagogic dimension and entailed a strong commitment to the contestation and transformation of contemporary popular tastes.

Thomas Lindenberger turns the analytical focus back to the relationship between citizenship and the state. He is less concerned about the politics of citizenship as such than about the relationship between citizenship and the law, notably its application. Understanding police action, he contends, remains superficial and one-dimensional if it is considered merely in statistical, quantitative ways. The enforcement of the law responds to cultural codes both in the police force and in the public sphere. The protection and enforcement of citizenship rights thus is decisively if subtly impacted by a dialectic between evolving codes of camaraderie within the police force (which continues to limit the application of legal norms) and developing public expectations about the inviolability of the human body.

Cornelie Osborne’s work similarly demonstrates the interdependence between contested cultural norms and political-legal definitions of citizenship rights. She focuses on gendered contestations around political rights, an issue integral to any notion of citizenship. More specifically, Osborne explores the campaigns to decriminalize abortion from the late Empire to the Weimar Republic. These debates are highly revelatory of contemporary perceptions of the body politic and especially of women’s ability to impact political decisions. By discussing the political and legal debates leading up to and surrounding the abortion laws that were eventually instituted in 1927, Osborne not only throws a remarkably positive light on the implications of the new law enshrined in §218 of the Criminal Code but also shows how the debates reflected, and in turn helped shape, attitudes about sexuality, the body, and ultimately the place of female belonging to the body politic, the German commu-

nity in state and nation. Delineating important continuities emerging from Imperial Germany, her focus on evolving definitions of the female body in relation to the body politic allows Osborne to reconsider the relationship between continuity and rupture before and after World War I.

S. Jonathan Wiesen broadens the perspective of how the community of citizens could be defined and contested, focusing on company public relations during the Third Reich, when both consumption and citizenship rights were severely constrained. Wiesen embeds his detailed account of the Henkel company in a broader history of business practices to show how companies helped translate Nazi racial ideals into practice through their public relations and, in doing so, reinforced them. At the same time, companies pursued their own agendas of promoting private consumption and personal fulfillment against Nazi ideals of individuals putting the community, the *Volk*, above all else. Such individual spaces helped stabilize the regime by suggesting a sense of normality, even though, as Wiesen notes, they provided poor substitutes for political rights and legal protection.

Finally in this section, Toby Thacker expands our horizon beyond political-legal considerations of citizenship back to the cultural domain, perhaps an arena that is particularly suited to comparative perspectives on different political systems. Thacker argues that music had an important role in constructing citizenship through determining who was to be accepted into the national community. In the GDR, he shows, active and passive musical appreciation became an integral part of the socialist citizenship ideal. Culture—in this case, music—thus became an essential determinant of inclusion. Conversely, music could also provide an important context for strategies of exclusion. As the Third Reich showed with particular clarity, music added meanings and attributes to a concept that constituted the legal and cultural basis of citizenship under National Socialism, the *Volk*.

This book's first section seeks to demonstrate the fruitfulness of going beyond the straightforward relationship between the political-legal evolution of citizenship and national identity suggested so forcefully by Brubaker. Only by looking more closely at how citizenship came to be contested in political debate and at the local level can we uncover the self-identifications of Germans in relation to citizenship that Brubaker was apparently more inclined to take for granted. The book's second section builds on these findings by broadening the scope of the analysis. Identifications of Germany as a community of citizens existed even

where languages of citizenship might not have prevailed, such as in the political debates of the Weimar Republic or in the cultural constructions of what it meant to be a citizen living in the GDR. Once we begin exploring the impact of citizenship upon gendered, social, cultural, and local self-identifications, we can begin to see how it might extend beyond the narrower institutional understandings of the German nation in the latter's more familiar political and legal definitions. This has profound implications for our understanding of the relationship between citizenship and nationhood. Acknowledging the importance of that relationship, the authors contributing to the final section of this book also explore ways in which citizenship may depart from, complicate, or disobey the forms of identification that nationhood seems to require or ascribe. Understandings of citizenship may fall outside the terms of the especially powerful social, political, and cultural imaginary that the idea of the nation entails. Forms of citizenship and national belonging do not always map straightforwardly or comfortably onto one another.

Pascal Grosse takes a radically different approach to citizenship by analyzing how ideals of citizenship and agency were framed through biopolitical assumptions. Grosse shows how, from the eighteenth century, the brain was regarded as the core of the human being. It determined volition and self-control, notions that underwrote nineteenth-century bourgeois perceptions of the citizenship ideal. The brain also became central to the contentious interplay of race, gender, and sexuality, issues that became central to constructions and challenges of citizenship. Exploring citizenship from this biopolitical vantage point provides a broad and complex perspective through which constructions of state, entitlement, and public spheres can be analyzed and understood beyond the nation-state, a finding of crucial relevance for our grasp of how citizenship might be related to the Third Reich.

Adelheid von Saldern reflects on the conference debates preceding these articles, as well as on the articles themselves, in order to present her own evaluation of the relationship between citizenship and German history. She underlines that the analytical value of citizenship is relational, and this allows citizenship to provide a common vocabulary for conceptualizing the relationship of different kinds of agents, different geographical spheres, and different historical fields. This is a point that has often been made in the political sciences but that historians have scarcely begun to address. Von Saldern reinforces a central argument of this book: citizenship provides a common denominator that

complicates our understanding of the interdependent relationship between politics and culture while enabling a transcendence of hitherto distinct historical fields and perspectives.

Kathleen Canning's commentary reaffirms a central thesis of her own work on citizenship—although long assumed to coincide with each other or possess an equivalence, national identity and participatory citizenship need to be uncoupled and clearly distinguished. Examinations of citizenship in its meanings across political, legal, institutional, and cultural spheres, she suggests, invite us to reconsider citizenship as a relational category, whose effectivities and consequences require a range of differing analytical approaches. Beyond its more familiar relationship to national identity and the nation, citizenship makes possible a much more complex understanding of the "disparate spaces and sites of citizenship, but also its temporal framing."

In his concluding contribution, Geoff Eley seeks to move the debate about citizenship beyond the terms established by Brubaker to yet a further perspective, by challenging the analytical value of considering "thick" and "thin" conceptions of citizenship side by side. One of the central problems of Brubaker's argument was not his lack of awareness of the cultural tenets of citizenship but his failure to analyze closely the cultural contestations of community on which legal definitions were based. Noting the essential interconnectedness between political-legal debates and the indeterminacy and constructedness of the social, cultural, and political context to which they referred, Eley proposes that citizenship can inform a new understanding of German history. By exploring how citizenship was continuously constructed and challenged, he suggests, we can obtain a new understanding of the meanings of continuity and rupture in the German past. Citizenship provides a lens through which we might sharpen our attentiveness to the elements of indeterminacy and contestedness in German history while recovering our appreciation of the complexities of the processes by which inclusion in the nation was competed for and claimed.

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This book offers a new perspective on twentieth-century Germany history, as its different investigations seek to break down what tend to be still relatively fixed dividing lines among cultural, political, social, and legal history. The articles presented here collectively provide new perspectives on how and by whom citizenship was defined, and how citizenship impacted upon individuals and groups. They point to the complexity of the relationship between citizenship and the nation, pre-

cisely because citizenship gives rise to such very complex identifications. Indeed, these identifications can even set themselves apart from or against the nation. The contributors also suggest a new perspective for thinking about the continuities and ruptures of German history. Many contributors present an analysis that cuts across or runs counter to the traditionally conceived turning points of 1914, 1918, and 1945. Citizenship, it turns out, provides a particular framework through which the German dictatorships, the Third Reich, and the GDR can be compared against each other and against other periods and political contexts.

This book's major ambition is not to present hard-and-fast conclusions but to complicate and open up lines of investigation. Collectively, the essays presented here not only demonstrate the fruitfulness of analyzing German history through the lens of citizenship but also enable a response to four major issues that arise from considering the scholarly literature on citizenship, which were also raised and discussed at the conference on which this book is based.³³

At a methodological level, it should be noted that the relevance of citizenship as a formal category in the context of German history is less than immediately clear. Germans have used terms such as *Staatsbürgerschaft* and *Staatsangehörigkeit* to denote citizenship, but neither term captures the full legal and cultural richness of the Anglo-American *citizen* or the French *citoyen*. Indeed, the very absence in Germany of a U.S.-type citizen who could be spurred into action by an identification and contestation with the constitution was at the heart of Habermas's critiques of the West German polity before 1989. This quickly raises the question, familiar to German historians, of how far the concept of citizenship legitimately can be used for periods and contexts in which the term may have been barely developed.

As an ideal of the active, involved individual with a share in the state in the French sense, the idea of citizenship was very weakly developed in Germany until the twentieth century. It might be concluded on that basis that, for Germany, citizenship should only be used as a meaningful analytical category from 1918.³⁴ Yet the relationships among the individual, the state, and the wider community of German states and the question of how these relationships might be encoded can be shown to have played an important part in the governing of populations over many centuries of German history. Indeed, since the Reformation, individual territories were not just defined by attributes like sovereign power and the law;³⁵ they also obtained a crucial religious, cultural definition that tangibly impacted everyday life. Moreover, from the

early nineteenth century at the very latest, such cultural expressions of territorial belonging became important issues at the level of the everyday, as manifested in public debates, festivals, public representations, and even individual dress codes.³⁶ Questions about citizenship, notably the interaction among individuals, groups, and the state, and the ways in which groups define inclusion and exclusion in relation to territorial belonging, have been crucial questions of German history. Such concerns do not necessitate the use of *citizenship* as a formal term of analysis and might just as easily be discussed in nineteenth-century terms such as *individuality* and *community*.³⁷ However, by providing a common framework of reference across periods and between states, the citizenship concept can clearly facilitate comparative debate. This book focuses on citizenship in twentieth-century Germany, yet some of its contributions demonstrate the usefulness of applying the analytical category of citizenship to debates going back to the nineteenth and even to the eighteenth century, as most notably in the chapters from Dieter Gosewinkel and Pascal Grosse.

The importance of T. H. Marshall's work remains undeniable, but for German historians his categorization seems unhelpful at best, and misleading at worst. Marshall delivered his lecture on citizenship and social class as a statement at a particular moment in British history (in 1949, just after the inauguration of the welfare state). He did so with exclusive reference to British history, even while articulating many of his inferences in quite general ways. It is not at all clear how any sequencing between these types of citizenship could work for Germany. As Kathleen Canning has pointed out, Bismarck's social insurance laws alone make it difficult to distinguish between social and political dimensions of German citizenship.³⁸ Furthermore, Marshall's categories speak not at all to our contemporary understandings of "cultural citizenship"; indeed, they remain innocent of everything we now associate with the "new cultural history" and with the broader "cultural turn" in the human sciences. As this book documents in all its contributions, citizenship can no longer be understood apart from its cultural contexts, which are of vital use in determining its meanings. Contentions about social, civic, or political entitlement have been closely related to how groups and individuals have seen themselves—and have been defined from the outside—in relation to music, entertainment, consumer behavior, and taste. The question, then, is not so much *whether* culture possesses significance for a consideration of citizenship, but *how*. From a vantage point of citizenship, what forms exactly did that relationship between culture and politics take?

Historians fortunately remain free from reliance on the formal models whose prescriptions political scientists are more constrained to observe. By using the category of citizenship to investigate the interrelationships among cultural, social, political, and legal factors, historians may explore how those interrelations evolved with unevenness and complexity across different junctures and periods. For instance, by examining the ways in which the law and its disputation in colonial societies related to collective identifications and individual subjectivities, we can see how our analysis breaks up and reconfigures notions of race.³⁹ By exploring how women sought to contest received understandings of rights and duties and how the resulting histories impacted upon their subjectivities, we can break up and reconfigure notions of gender.⁴⁰ And, by examining ways in which political and legal rights were defined in relation to the individual, we can develop new categories for understanding how membership in the political and legal community came to be defined. For instance, Pascal Grosse's highly original argument in this book about the cerebral nature of citizenship raises issues about the relationship between the brain and the body, whose importance to the contestation of rights and self-representation is further underlined by Cornelia Osborne's contribution. Citizenship, therefore, can open up new understandings and connections in German history inasmuch as it allows the complexity and interconnectedness of personal, public, and official relationships to be freshly addressed. Put differently, rather than beginning with a set of already finished categories whose purpose is to fix the definition of citizenship in history, we favor the use of citizenship as an analytical tool that certainly determines the lines of inquiry, but whose meanings and expressions may shift and evolve over time and for any given situation. Our purposes are avowedly exploratory in that sense.

In considering the idea of citizenship for German history, a second problem emerges. If citizenship is intimately—though, as this volume argues, not exclusively—related to the state and the nation, this raises the question of precisely how this relationship works in a federal state like Germany (and, by implication, in countries further to the south and east, such as Poland) whose borders have frequently been revised and where a central state has existed for only a relatively short time. As Andreas Fahrmeir has shown, if at a formal level the rights and meanings attaching to citizenship were indeed weakly developed in Germany before the middle of the nineteenth century, then this was equally true for Britain, a state with particularly clear external borders.⁴¹ Thus the relationships among citizenship, the state, and the nation should

not be assumed to be given. Citizenship can be used instead to examine anew how individual and collective identifications with state and nation became constructed.

Indeed, citizenship becomes a particularly important category for unpacking the meanings of cultural and legal constructions of community and the setting of internal and external boundaries. We argue that it can be helpful in exploring how such boundaries became constructed and reconstructed, contested and fixed. More concretely, in areas that were forced to adopt new legal systems and accept different political rulers, there was likely to be a much higher level of public and individual contestation related to these issues.⁴² Precisely because political boundaries were constantly shifting, it becomes relevant and important to ask how individuals positioned themselves vis-à-vis the community where they lived, and to ask which coordinates determined individual formulations of rights and belonging. Once we use citizenship to determine our lines of inquiry, without setting its reference points in stone, we can discover how individuals saw themselves in relation to the locality, the region, the state, and the nation.

Conversely, as James Retallack has pointed out, the local and regional levels contribute to a much better and more focused understanding of the meanings of citizenship.⁴³ Annemarie Sammartino and Jan Palmowski show from very different vantage points how the local context shaped and was informed by individual experiences of citizenship. As Adelheid von Saldern summarizes in this volume, the more we want to find out about the meanings of citizenship for the individual, the more important the local context becomes in our analysis.

A third difficulty is that in history, as in the social sciences, the more widely we seek to apply the concept of citizenship as an analytical category and the more loosely we thus define it, the more difficult finding a distinctive meaning becomes. At the conference on which this book is based, this issue was easily the most contentious. If, at one extreme, citizenship were simply and solely defined as a cultural construct, then it would not be clear why one would call one's object of observation "citizenship" (as opposed to, say, "national identity"). If one pleaded, as we do, for a concept of citizenship without fixed and predetermined meanings in any given period, might this tend to divest citizenship of any distinctive meaning at all?

The potential meanings of citizenship (and their limits) are not subject to general agreement. In their contributions, Peter C. Caldwell and Kathleen Canning agree on three definitions. Citizenship first denotes

the individual's formal belonging to a state. Second, it refers to the objective rights and duties enjoyed by the citizen; and, third, citizenship denotes the subjective use of those rights, the "meanings" ascribed by individuals to the rights that they enjoy as citizens. These three definitions describe a use of the citizenship concept with which all historians might well agree. Caldwell then makes a further point that is perhaps a little more contentious, namely, that citizenship refers to the collective experience of the state, which he describes as a "category of identity." What may be debated are the implications of these categories as we encounter them in twentieth-century German history. If citizenship is about rights that individuals enjoy as citizens, how did the possession and contestation of these rights affect the larger communities of citizens and notions of belonging? In turn, what is the relationship between contestations of citizenship between historical actors and individual subjectivities? What remains subject to intense debate is the question of how far the citizenship concept can help us in analyzing modern German history beyond the relatively clearly defined boundaries of legal and political contestations. In other words, exactly what more do we gain by exploring aspects of modern German political and legal history as well as cultural, social, and institutional history through the lens of citizenship?

It may be useful at this point to recall one of the principal aims of citizenship debates in the political sciences. What citizenship helps determine for political scientists is how borders are constructed and how those borders then determine the relationship between inclusion and exclusion.⁴⁴ Such borders are constantly shifting, not least because of the perennial gap between the legal constructions of citizenship and its practices. Of course, this returns us again to the broader arguments about citizenship's indeterminacies. The analytical problem that arises is that very often citizenship is contested without direct reference to the law or the state, even if the terms of political and legal citizenship emerge as being ultimately at stake. In Frankfurt am Main at the turn of the nineteenth century, for instance, citizens contested the nature of the local educational system from primary school to university. The liberal majority among the enfranchised citizens pursued, through the local secondary schools as well as the university, an ideal of the individual who was educated (*gebildet*), rational, and equipped to embrace modernity and change. All students, including those at primary schools, were to develop a strong sense of belonging to the locality (the *Heimat*), as well as a religious tolerance. A majority of Frankfurt liberals thus

crafted an educational system that would shape the ideal Frankfurt citizen, a model for the city as well as for the fatherland. At issue, in other words, was a fundamental vision of what constituted a “good” citizen based on religious toleration, a vision linking the local and the national levels.⁴⁵ This was not a debate about legal codes, about codified rights and duties; it was about contesting visions of citizenship, about how the ideal of equality before the law could be realized on the ground, and how it could become an underlying principle for social, economic, and cultural action. This reminds us once more of how important it is to bring a generously multifaceted understanding of citizenship to our work.⁴⁶

But if citizenship refers to more than contestations of nationality and the law, where do we draw the line? What kinds of debates pertain to citizenship, and where are the limits of applying the citizenship concept? We do not claim that citizenship is a new catch-all concept that solves every problem. This book shows that many of the issues that can be considered from the point of view of citizenship also can be investigated with other questions in mind. S. Jonathan Wiesen’s contribution, for instance, is as significant for our understanding of consumerism and corporate history as of citizenship itself. Toby Thacker’s findings on music are explored through the concept of citizenship, even though they say as much (if not more) about cultural representations of Germanness.

What links these papers is not just that they deal with debates about collective identifications and individual subjectivities but that they also address the manifestations of those debates in practice. Citizenship, in other words, offers a framework of analysis that asks not how a community is defined per se, but how individuals, different collectivities, or the state seeks to realize a self-identification and a vision of community in practice. Especially in the German context, the community in question can be the local community, the region, the federal state, or the national state. Or, as Pascal Grosse argues here and as Kathleen Canning has argued elsewhere, this community can be defined through individual subjectivities such as race or gender. And as German historians know only too well, the Third Reich sought to concentrate all these lines of affiliation into a single totalizing, unmediated, and exclusionary version of the national community in the form of the coercively unitary *Volksgemeinschaft*. In each case, studies of citizenship ask how individuals relate to these entities, either directly or in relation to each other. What is at stake are concrete negotiations and contestations about the

limits of this community, how its borders can be defined, what the basis for inclusion and exclusion should be, and ultimately how these practical contestations relate to the political-legal definitions of citizenship through constitutions and the law.

A fourth issue concerns the relationship between citizenship and identity. Both often are integrally linked in the political sciences. Charles Tilly, for instance, posits that identities consist of shared understandings among actors that are constantly subject to contestation. Identities refer to individuals in their relationship to each other, but they are also constructed through the multitude of actions and relations that emerge out of the individual's relation to the state.⁴⁷ "Citizenship," writes William A. Barbieri, "serves as a primary basis of identity," because it forms the basis of interpersonal relationships, social and economic group relations, and political participation. In the case of Germany, citizenship sought to express a sense of ethnic and cultural "national" identity that had predated it.⁴⁸ From this perspective, identities have been constructed through cultural boundaries, boundaries that determine the public sphere linking the individual and the state that is so crucial to citizenship.⁴⁹

Yet the prevalence of *identity* as an analytical term has vehement critics. In the social sciences, Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper have argued that the concept of identity is either too rigid or, if it takes into account the shifting and complex self-definitions of individuals, too ill-defined to be helpful.⁵⁰ Among historians, Lutz Niethammer has warned against the use of *identity* as an analytical term, arguing that it overshadows the complex differences among individuals. From a historical perspective, he argues, the identity concept has been most commonly used to cover up the absence of real identifications, notably the identity of the *Volk* (and its *Führer*) during the Third Reich.⁵¹

Niethammer's point, however, does make it legitimate to talk about identity in certain contexts. As Caldwell, Wiesen, and Palmowski show in this volume, citizenship was closely related to formulations of identity in political thought, whether under the Third Reich or in the GDR. If state and party in the GDR postulated the identity between state and citizen, then the term can hardly be avoided in any analysis of the citizenship ideal and its reality in that context. In fact, citizenship is closely related to the concept of identity, even if we accept Brubaker and Cooper's claim that it may be possible, and desirable, to replace the notion of identity with more precise categories. For if citizenship is about the manifestation of community and about the negotiations concern-

ing rights, duties, and other citizenship attributes, then it is integrally linked to many components of identity, such as self-representation and individual identification with the community and the state.

There is one remaining difficulty we would like to flag. Discussions of citizenship, not least in the ascendant liberal democratic contexts of the 1990s under which those scholarly and political discussions have been so vigorously and elaborately revived, possess or entail a normative dimension. Accordingly, we need to consider very carefully whether there might be contexts and times when the category of citizenship becomes inoperative. Among our contributors, S. Jonathan Wiesen considers cultural and commercial constructions of citizenship under the Third Reich, while Pascal Grosse's discussion of citizenship as a bio-political category clearly has important implications for the ways in which citizenship was "racialized" during the same period. These insights should not preclude a wider debate about the concrete possibility that during the Nazi period citizenship as a category lost much, if not all, of its core meanings, as its contexts of rights, entitlements, validations, and claims become voided, negated, or in important degrees compromised and hollowed out. In other words, are there types of polity or political conjuncture—like the Third Reich, for example—for which terms like *citizenship*, *civil society*, and *public sphere*, loaded as they are with priorities and values of an avowedly liberal or democratic kind, simply become inappropriate? Of course, the GDR was an authoritarian polity, whose centralist and bureaucratic machineries of policing and administrative power specifically subordinated the population, severely constrained their possibilities of self-assertion and self-recognition, both individually and collectively, and disallowed all sorts of ideas and activities. Yet in the forms of its coercive power, the overtness and extremes of its violence, and the recourse to killing, mass murder, and genocide, the Nazi state remains vitally different.⁵² Among all the recent turning by historians to the study of popular consent under the Third Reich, these distinctions must never be effaced.

If we have not yet established a commonly accepted definition of *citizenship* for analytical purposes, we would stop short of the verdict of one of our contributors, who sees it as one "of the most porous concepts in contemporary academic parlance."⁵³ We find it a concept particularly well-suited to link the cultural and the political and to provide a basis for bringing together an increasingly disparate historical field in the pursuit of a common range of questions. If some historians prefer to pursue the concept in its more political-legal sense, this is all to be

welcomed, as we still know very little about how citizenship was experienced and negotiated on the ground. If others instead choose to investigate the cultural constructions to which perceptions and entitlements of citizenship gave rise, this allows us to reconfigure our thinking about German history. It might then be possible to relate these sets of findings to each other, as we have tried to do in this book. We might further consider how the diversity of meanings pertaining to citizenship could travel across different spheres and different periods of the German past. Citizenship, we would argue, provides a concreteness to the fields of interaction among individuals, their public relationships, and their communities, which notably eludes notions like identity or even national identity. Citizenship gives a specificity to communal relations vis-à-vis the state and the individual because it involves hard choices, the setting of boundaries, and, even if implicitly, the allocation of rights and resources.