Nationalism and Contemporary German Politics: Inclusion versus Exclusion

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Abstract

As the twentieth anniversary of the reunification of the German nation approaches, this paper seeks to investigate the role of nationalism in the new Germany and what impact it has had on the ethno-cultural minorities that came to call East or West Germany home following the Second World War. It will argue that nationalist sentiments still form the basis of the German identity, but that German nationalism has moved away from ethnocentric definitions to more cultural and civic concepts of the German national community. This demonstrates the desire of contemporary German nationalist politics to avoid the exclusion of minorities, and to include them into the civic national unit through certain levels of cultural integration. This policy of integration has made some minorities feel excluded, but it will be argued that this is not the intention of German nationalism and that integration is slowly bringing different cultural groups together in the German nation.

Introduction

Germany has had a long and difficult relationship with the forces of nationalism. There have been many attempts to define nationalism and each author on the subject often provides their own. However, most definitions have a common thread which allows us to develop a working definition of nationalism as ‘an ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential “nation”’ (Smith, 2001, p. 9). However, the term nationalism can be used to describe a wide number of differing political movements and policy directions as how the national group is defined can vary wildly. Germany was the home to some of the earliest nationalist thinkers, such as Herder and Fichte, who sought to conceptualise the nation along primordial cultural and ethnic lines. As a result, German nationalism has often been based around the romanticised idea of the Volk, a national community defined by common descent and culture, and has seen the state as a vehicle to empower and protect the Volk. This has, in the past, led to extreme nationalism in Germany with dire consequences for the inclusion and respect of ethnic
and cultural minorities within the German state. The most obvious example of this is the Nazi epoch between 1933 and 1945 when Hitler developed a fascistic racial doctrine of nationalism which used the state to protect what he saw as a pure German Volksgemeinschaft (the community arising from the Volk) from being polluted by those viewed as not belonging to the Volk, resulting in the violent exclusion of any non-Germanic ethno-cultural group within the Nazi realm. Following the Second World War the German nation was divided into West Germany, a liberal democratic state, and East Germany, a Marxist-Leninist dictatorship. For many years this led to the concept of the German nation being ignored and downplayed in both states: German nationalism was seen to be a thing of the past.

Yet on 3rd October 1990 the two halves of the German nation reunified following the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe. Many around the world, and especially in Europe, feared that there would be a resurgence of völkisch nationalism in Germany, leading to the chauvinism and exclusion that had often defined German nationalism in the past. They were hardly encouraged when a fierce public debate raged within Germany during reunification over the future of German nationalism, with two of the most vociferous camps advocating fundamentally different paths: Jürgen Habermas and his theory of Verfassungspatriotismus (constitutional patriotism) which proposed the active inclusion of minorities through purely political and civic conceptions of the nation; and on the other, more disturbing, hand the movement of the New Right which harkened back to racial conceptions of the nation and nationalism, and argued for the exclusion of any ethno-cultural minority that could pose a threat to the new German nation. Now as we approach the twentieth anniversary of the reunification of the German nation it seem pertinent to investigate what path German nationalism has taken in the new Germany, and what this has meant for the large number of immigrants who had arrived in West Germany in particular since the end of World War Two.

This dissertation will argue that German nationalism has sought to distance itself from exclusionary nationalism since reunification. In particular it has rejected any attempt to
define the German national group in racial and ethnic terms or pursued exclusionary policies to keep the German nation ethnically ‘pure’. In moving away from ethnic nationalism it has moved towards more civic conceptions of nationalism based around bringing different ethno-cultural groups together into one common national culture based on the German language and Western civic values. The emphasis on culture has led some to point to certain cultural minorities feelings of exclusion to suggest that culture has just replaced ethnicity as the medium of exclusion in German nationalism. However, it will be argued that it is wrong to assume that an emphasis on culture is purely a means of exclusion and that this is not the intention of German policy and a common civic culture is designed to include all into the German national community in the long run.

The first chapter of the dissertation will offer a theoretical discussion of the issues raised in the study. In particular it will demonstrate why it is still pertinent to investigate the issue of inclusion and identity through the nationalist paradigm and will highlight that different forms of nationalism evolve from different approaches to conceiving the national unit. It will also outline the differing approaches to German nationalism proposed during reunification.

The dissertation will then move on to a more empirical study of the path taken by contemporary German nationalism. In chapter two we will examine the debate over whether ethnicity still plays a role in German nationalism, arguing that fears of an ethno-nationalist resurgence in the new Germany were unfounded and that German politics has taken steps to distance itself from ethno-centric conceptions of the nation with the result that minorities are no longer excluded on the basis of ethnicity in Germany.

The third chapter takes the investigation further by analysing whether a move away from ethnico-centrism has led German nationalism to become defined on civic values. It will argue that it increasingly has, though cultural integration has also come to play an
important role in German nationalism. It will also refute arguments that this emphasis on culture has merely replaced ethnicity as the means for excluding minorities in Germany.

Before concluding the dissertation, chapter four will examine the impact of these changes in German nationalism from the point of view of the largest immigrant minority within Germany: the Turkish community. It will show that the presence of cultural values in defining the German national identity has led many Turks to feel excluded by German nationalism. Yet it will also argue that this is not the intended result of the emphasis of culture in German politics, and that the hope is that over time the policy of cultural integration will actually lead to a decrease in feelings of exclusion and a better inclusion of the Turkish community into the German national society.

**A Discussion of Nationalism**

As has been set out in the introduction, the aim of this dissertation is to examine the role and impact of nationalism on debates around citizenship and inclusion of ethno-cultural minorities in Germany since reunification. Yet it should no longer just be assumed that nationalism is the best paradigm through which to examine these issues, as in recent decades there has been a move by some academics away from analysing identity and inclusion in terms of nationalist ideology in favour of post-nationalist and cosmopolitan frameworks. This chapter firstly seeks to explain, in general theoretical terms, why exploring these issues in terms of nationalism and national communities is still a useful approach. Having demonstrated the continuing relevance of nationalist approaches it will then offer definitions of two different schools of nationalist theory that deal with the issues of inclusion and exclusion – ethno-cultural nationalism and civic nationalism – before relating those definitions to specific lines of arguments over the future of German nationalism advanced during the process of reunification.

In the latter half of the 20th Century a trend appeared in which analyses relating the state and citizenship to national and nationalist forces were downplayed. With the rise of globalising forces, it was argued that national sentiments and attachments were limited to only certain groups and therefore obsolete, and that we should instead move to looking at
identity and citizenship in terms of broader socio-political belonging such as gender and political affiliation (Held and McGrew, 2002). In other words, the concept of national citizenship was too limited to be of any use in an era in which politics was being increasingly defined by universalistic and global human identities: identities that applied just as much to people living in Germany as Guatemala. This has resulted in it being considered fashionable to analyse issues such as citizenship and state rationale through so-called post-nationalist paradigms, in which it is argued that the nation-state and its associated attachments have become irrelevant. For instance the European Union and its citizenship have been held up as an archetypal demonstration of the withering of the nation state and the heralding of a post-national world order. Jacobson and Kilic (2003) in particular believe the way in which the EU has taken political, judicial and consumer rights provision out of the national arena shows that post-national citizenship is now the dominant force in the political analysis of state power and identity: post-national citizenship is now the ultimate guarantor of rights, superseding the nation state and rendering it useless. If this is truly the case then it would suggest that it is inappropriate to approach such a study of contemporary German politics from the point of view of nationalism as inclusion and exclusion no longer take place in the national arena. However, these arguments stating the decline of the role of the national state have been exaggerated, as will be argued below.

Contrary to the arguments put forward above by the post-nationalists, the national state and its citizenship do still remain of key importance to the lives of many people in the world and therefore to political analysis too. There are many flaws with the belief that global politics has transitioned into a post-national arena. One of the most forceful arguments against post-nationalist analysis comes from Randall Hansen (2009), who accurately points out that the European Union is not an example of post-nationalism: rather than usurping their role EU is actually the product of European national states, such as Germany, co-operating on certain economic and political issues, and that these states remain able to opt out of provisions of EU treaties. Indeed, they remain able to withdraw completely from the EU and its jurisdiction should they wish. Randall’s analysis is then strengthened by his wider examination of the continuing role of the national state, not just within the EU, arguing that 'the nation-state and its institutions are the important factors
in securing the rights of permanent residents’ (p. 7). This is the crux of the criticism of post-nationalism: there are no truly trans-national/post-national guarantors of rights and responsibilities in contemporary global politics. In other words, rights are not recognised universally: there are no courts or democratic systems that are above and independent from the nation-state. The national state framework and its citizenship/attachments are still vital in providing the institutions and arenas through which abstract political and legal rights are realised and granted. There is clearly, therefore, still a continuing relevance of the national state and national citizenship in contemporary political analysis, in particular in terms of the inclusion and exclusion of ethno-cultural minorities as it is the nationally defined community that primarily enjoys the rights and responsibilities within the state. Thus nationalism, the nation-state and national citizenship all remain important to contemporary German politics and there are grounds therefore for further investigation of their relationship.

At this point it is useful to note that nationalism is not actually one coherent ideology: rather it is a collection of different approaches to the core idea that the state and the nation should be linked as a viable political unit (Smith, 2001, p.9). These theories are often dichotomised into two separate schools depending on how they define the national community: ethno-cultural nationalism and civic nationalism. This approach arises from the work of Hans Kohn (1944) where he draws a distinction between ‘Western’ civic nationalism, and ‘Eastern’ ethnic nationalism. While there have been many criticisms of Kohn’s work, Smith points out that it contains ‘an important kernel of truth,’ that there are forms of nationalism that allow civic and voluntary membership, and others that force membership on certain ethnic groups and exclude those ethnicities it considers ‘other’ (2001, p. 40). It is logical to deduce that the definition of the national community has an impact on who is included and who is excluded from society. This chapter will now go on to offer a general definition of each approach, first ethno-cultural nationalism and then civic nationalism.

Ethnic and cultural nationalisms are some of the oldest and most enduring forms of nationalism ideology. They are based upon the core idea that the nation is a primordial
entity, antecedent of politics and based on distinct and homogenous ethno-cultural boundaries, that deserves a state in order to protect its distinctiveness and autonomy (Özkırımlı, 2000, p. 64). Some of the earliest and most influential ethno-cultural nationalist theorists, such as Johann Herder and Gottlieb Fichte, came from the German romantic tradition. Herder viewed the nation as ‘the most natural state’ in which one could exist because it gives meaning to life and provides an education in humanity: it is an organic entity of individuals bound together in a wider family, or ‘volk’, which recognises itself through cultural similarities, in particular language (Herder, 1969, p. 324). These ideas were taken up around a century later by Fichte who stated that ‘wherever a separate language is found, there a separate nation exists’ (Fichte, 1922, p. 215). However, Fichte took a more abrasive and Germano-centric approach, commenting that:

if [the nation] wishes to absorb and mingle with itself any other people of different descent and language, [it] cannot do so without itself becoming confused, in the beginning at any rate, and violently disturbing the even progress of its culture. (ibid., p. 224)

Thus ethno-nationalism places great emphasis on the idea of the national community as an ethnically and culturally unique and homogenous group that must be protected. These views of ethnic and cultural nationalism were later taken on by so-called ‘integral’ nationalists and developed further along ethnic lines by theorists such as Charles Maurras and Maurice Barrès, for whom the idea of the nation was intimately related to ‘la terre et les mortes’ or ‘earth and the dead’ and so the nation was determined by all that had come before it, i.e. blood lines (Davies, 2002). Thus integral nationalism became increasingly focused on racial purity and its maintenance. The expression of this extreme racial nationalism reached its unfortunate zenith in the ideology of the Nazis, consumed by hate for ‘outsiders’ that they viewed as being responsible for a perceived decline in German national culture and pride. Hitler’s Nazi doctrine combined an explicit and extreme ethnic conception of the German nationalism based on the myth of the Aryan race with plans for the violent removal of any ethnic minority group (Heywood, 2007, p. 215). Here we can see the extreme extent to which ethnic nationalist exclusion can be taken.
The other school of nationalism, civic nationalism, takes a very different approach to national identity compared with the ethno-cultural nationalist view outlined above. Echoing the argument put forward by Randall above, civic nationalists do see a value in the continuing presence of states based on ‘national’ lines as they provide clear arenas for justice and democracy by creating a public space in which citizens can come together to deliberate and act (Schwartzmantel, 2003). But, unlike ethno-cultural nationalism, civic nationalism concerns itself with purely political conceptions of the nation, eschewing any role of culture or ethnicity in fostering national bonds. Rather, the nation should be a voluntary and rational attachment to a state that respects human rights. One of the earliest civic nationalist arguments came from Immanuel Kant, who acknowledged that in reality national groups are ethnically and culturally heterogeneous and believed that attachments to the then German Empire arose, not from being ethno-culturally Germanic, but from appreciation for its legal qualities such as its constitutional – rather than arbitrary – rule of law and its clear lines for recourse (Cavallar, 1999). This view that it is up to the individual to form a connection to the state, rather than be forced to accept membership based on their birth or cultural traits, was then taken forward by Ernest Renan who emphasised that the nation is a ‘daily plebiscite’ of requesting sacrifice of all those wishing to be part of the national group for national ends. He stressed his scepticism that race or culture had anything to do with national identity by pointing out that Switzerland ‘has three languages … and three or four races, [but] is a nation’ (Renan, 1882). Thus civic nationalism can be seen to be concerned primarily with the idea of the self determination of a unit of people marked by voluntary association. This is in marked contrast to the ethnic conceptions of nationalism outlined above, which assumed preordained membership only along ethnic lines. During the twentieth century these civic formulations of nationalism gained in popularity, especially after the horrors of fascism of the 1930s and 1940s in Europe, and influenced many of the contemporary analyses of nationalism by those such as Habermas (as will be outlined below). Therefore we can see civic nationalism as rejecting many of the core beliefs of ethno-cultural nationalism and basing itself on rationality and respect for the rule of law rather than predetermined and closed ethno-national traits.
Having now outlined the differences between the two main approaches to defining the national unit, it is useful to outline the specific background to the subsequent chapters of this dissertation by examining the ideological debate over the future of nationalism that took place within Germany during reunification.

The most infamous proponents of a return to ethno-cultural nationalism in post-reunification Germany were the New Right. The New Right was not a coherent body of thought, and even less a unified political force, yet they achieved a high profile in the late 1980s and early 1990s and attempted to provide an ideological framework to the right wing of German politics (Brinks, 2000). One of the core recurring points in much of the New Right’s philosophical output was a desire to move back to a more ‘traditional’, ethnic and völkisch conception of German identity; theirs was primarily a reaction against the perceived lack of national pride in post-war Germany and the view that German traditions had been wiped out by too close a relationship with America and its liberal democratic values in the West and the communists in the East (Woods, 2007). This echoed the Nazi critique of the ‘decadent’ Weimar republic, to closely tied to America and ‘western’ values. The views of the New Right appear to go further than just defining the German nation in ethnic terms, and move towards Nazi rhetoric of German chauvinism: Müller (2003), in particular, points out that the views of the New Right were based on the belief that Germany is culturally and racially unique and superior. The New Right emphasised the need for cultural homogeny in Germany based on anti-Western and anti-liberal ideas and a return to the natural German culture and values that had once made Germany great in the past (ibid.). Indeed, one prominent New Right thinker Pierre Krebs argued in the early 1990s that reunification was the chance for Germany to regain its traditional values and that it provided the perfect opportunity for Germany’s ‘cultural rebirth’ (1994, pp. 26-27), deploying language similar to the idea of the national rebirth deployed by the Nazis sixty years previously. On another occasion, Krebs stressed the importance for cultural homogeny to the New Right by linking a decline in the values he believed were needed to make Germany great again with the increase in immigration and a ‘multi-racial society’ (cited in Woods, 2007, p. 59). Historical sensitivities often preclude discussions of the German nation in racial terms, but the sentiment put forward by those such as Krebs arguably contain a belief in a German identity based on descent
and common ancestry, as well as a distinct and superior German culture. This is clearly in accordance with the ethno-nationalist framework outlined above and led them to advocate policies designed to maintain a state defined on homogenous German national identity in order to preserve a pure *Volksgemeinschaft* and provide a vehicle for national self-determination and assertion. As a result they saw non-Germans as an external threat that would undermine the homogeneity, and thus the security, of the German nation (Woods, 2007). For instance, at a New Right conference Stefan Maninger described immigrants arriving in Germany as having a ‘*Brückenkopfmentalität*’ (bridgehead mentality) and that their high birth rate combined with Germany’s declining birth rate would inevitably lead to ethnic conflict (2001). Many New Right ideologues, such as Karlheinz Weißmann, called for an end to Germany accepting immigrants (1992), while others from the Thule Seminar believed that different races could not live peacefully together and advocated policies to induce non-German residents to leave Germany (Woods, 2007). Thus the New Right went further than just defining the German nation in benign ethnic terms and explicitly called for the exclusion of ethnic and cultural minority groups in order to promote German supremacy in the new Germany.

The views of the New Right were contrasted with arguments put forward by civic nationalists such as Jürgen Habermas and his theory of constitutional patriotism (*Verfassungspatriotismus*). Rejecting the ethno-cultural *völkisch* view of German nationalism put forward by the New Right, Habermas called for the construction of a German identity based around the western liberal democratic values that had fostered in West Germany since 1945, enshrined in a new constitution that granted all equal rights and respect (Williams et al., 2000). He stressed that attempts to base a national identity on ethnic and cultural distinctiveness was necessarily a modern and artificial phenomenon, arguing that ‘the nations which support nation-states are highly artificial constructions … fictitious units … the result of violent processes of homogenisation’ (cited in Williams et al., 2000, p. 49). Yet he still implicitly supported the concept of a German national state by arguing for the reunification of Germany in order to provide an arena for democracy (Yack, 1999, p. 107-108). Instead of privileging a blood line or a culture that could be claimed to be unique, constitutional patriots sought to construct a political community based on people being given the same opportunities by virtue of their status as a human
being (Müller, 2008). Constitutional patriotism was therefore a form of civic nationalism concerned with fostering a voluntary German national community based solely on upholding universal human rights and rejecting any link of constructed ‘pure’ völkisch identity and the state, be it ethnic or cultural. This led supporters of constitutional patriotism to rally against any form of policy put forward to exclude non-Germans through German nationalism and instead they sought to use Verfassungspatriotismus to offer a means to bring the increasing numbers of immigrants in Germany into German society by including them in the national unit if they felt an attachment to Germany’s rule of law and values.

This chapter has sought to prove the continuing relevance of studying the inclusion and exclusion of ethnic and cultural minorities from the approach of nationalism, and how this debate played out in Germany after reunification. It has demonstrated that nationalism is still an important analytical paradigm as the national state continues to be the guarantor of democratic and legal rights, and that these rights are only extended to those whom it defines as being members of the national community. Therefore how the national identity is conceived is of key importance when approaching the issue of inclusion and exclusion of minority groups. In particular nationalist doctrines divide into two different approaches to defining the national community, often with differing outcomes for inclusion and exclusion: ethno-cultural approaches see the national group identified by distinct ethnic and cultural attributes and can develop into extreme forms that call for the ethnic group to be protected by the state, often requiring the exclusion of ‘outsiders’ in order to do so. Civic nationalism, on the other hand, seeks to open up the national community to anyone who wishes to join and respect the state’s approach to rights and democracy. Since reunification, these approaches have been represented in Germany in particular by the New Right and Verfassungspatriotismus respectively. The subsequent chapters of the dissertation will now seek to examine what roles these two approaches to nationalism play in contemporary German politics and what that has meant for immigrant minorities within the country.
Ethnocentric German Nationalism Since Reunification

Having explored the theoretical background to nationalism in Germany in the previous chapter this chapter will examine the extent to which the ethnic and racial forms of nationalism proposed by the New Right have enjoyed support in contemporary German politics. There has been a long history of a preference for ethnic concepts in Germany, even before the rise of the National Socialists and their emphasis on the idea of the Völksgemeinschaft in the 1930s and 1940s. Since the early twentieth century there has often been the presence of political forces in Germany determined to promote policies to make Germany an exclusively German nation-state. One of the most enduring examples of this tradition is the 1913 Wilhelmine Nationality Law which bestowed German citizenship solely on being born to German parents and remained in force until attempts to reform it away from purely ethnic to more open criteria for citizenships in the late 1990s. There are many who have argued that since reunification Germany has failed to distance itself from its ethno-nationalist past and has even taken steps back to exclusionary forms of nationalism. However, this chapter will argue that, while vestiges do remain, German politics has largely moved away from the ethno-nationalism advocated by the New Right since reunification with far right political parties failing to gain widespread support and formally ethno-centric constructions of citizenship being dismantled and replaced by more liberal approaches. Firstly it will examine the arguments put forward by those who say that ethno-nationalism is still at the core of German nationalism with the German far-right is making a return and that citizenship laws have not been truly reformed, before demonstrating the flaws of these arguments and explaining that German politics has largely moved away from ethno-centrism.

The argument that Germany is still wedded to ideas of the ethnic nation is put forward by those who suggest attempts to reform German citizenship laws away from their exclusive emphasis on ethnicity since reunification have failed. In the years immediately after reunification a comprehensive analysis of German approaches to citizenship by Roget Brubaker (1992) clearly demonstrated that German citizenship was still conferred according to the ethno-nationalist Wilhelmine Citizenship Law of 1913, which defined German citizenship solely in accordance with the ethnic principle of jus sanguinis (right
of blood). This meant that the law that determined who was a German citizen, and thus an official member of the German national community, was based on lineage. Even if they wanted to become a German citizen, the hurdles for someone ethnically non-German to pass in order to gain citizenship were often prohibitive (Palmowski, 2008, pp. 553-555). Thus it was argued that the fact that this law was still in place well into the 1990s suggests that Germany was intent on remaining an ethnically defined national group.

Following the election of Gerhard Schröder and the SPD in 1998 there was an attempt to change the law away from its closed *jus sanguinis* rationale to a more open *jus soli* (right of soil) approach based on granting citizenship to those not necessarily of German descent who wanted to join the German national group after living in Germany for a certain number of years through naturalisation. This process of opening up citizenship had begun in the early 1990s and in 1999 the law was changed to allow a clearer and more open framework for immigrants and their children to become German citizens, should they wish; the government ultimately declared success in its liberalising efforts (Howard, 2008). Yet many analysts were not convinced, and were concerned that the new law and how it passed was actually further evidence that Germany was still took an ethno-centric approach to national identity. In particular there was concern that during the national debate over the proposed direction of the new law, a considerable backlash against dual citizenship developed and was harnessed by the opposition CDU, who ran a petition campaign against the principle of dual citizenship that received over five million signatures and won the regional election in the traditionally SPD supporting state of Hessen on the back of the issue (ibid., p. 52). Ultimately this public backlash caused a u-turn in government policy and the abandoning of attempts to formally incorporate dual nationality into the reform. This led Simon Green (2005) to conclude that the reform failed to truly liberalise German approaches to citizenship, as the ability to hold dual citizenship is seen to be one of the core principles of non-ethnic approaches to citizenship (p.922). Green also points out that many who are viewed as ‘Aussiedler’ (people who are deemed ‘ethnically’ German but born abroad) are able to gain dual citizenship through legal loopholes that are not open to non-ethnic Germans, and that this ‘double standard’ is a clear example of the German approach to citizenship being ‘based principally on the individual’s ethno-cultural membership’ (p.947). Therefore we can see that some believed
citizenship reform, rather than ending Germany’s link to ethno-centric nationalism, actually threw a spotlight on a continuing preference for only including those deemed ethnically German in the German nation.

Furthermore, in the years immediately following reunification fears grew both within Germany and abroad that German politics was building on this ethnic sentiment and moving towards a perspective involving extreme ethno-nationalist policies of excluding those deemed ‘non-German’. For instance, Panikos Panayi (2001) argues that increases in incidents of racially motivated crime and the rise of parties influenced by extreme exclusionary nationalist ideologies, such as the NPD (Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands) and Die Republikaner, in Germany in the 1990s show that Germany was returning to exclusionary ethno-nationalism. Drawing on figures released by the German government he shows that the number of racial attacks increased reached 2,584 in 1992, increasing from 1,483 in 1991 (the 1991 figure had also increased from several hundred incidents the year before) (p. 139). Furthermore, he notes that parties of the New Right such as the NPD and Die Republikaner, are ‘much more openly nationalistic than any of the mainstream parties… [and] support the collective over the individual, the collective consisting of a homogenous nation’, with this resulting in them calling for exclusionary measures to deal with the perceived threat of the presence of anyone not ethnically German and also have a hand in stoking racial violence (p.141). In the years following reunification these parties enjoyed perhaps surprising levels of electoral support, with Die Republikaner picking up 10.2% of the vote in Baden-Württemberg in 1992 and achieving at least 5% in several other regions at the same time (p.142). In light of the increases of racial attacks and far-right political support, Panayi appears to conclude that Germany is returning to ethno-centric nationalism, writing that ‘there is little doubt that everyday exclusionism will continue’ (p. 145). Thus it is clear that there was great concern that racist violence and the presence of extreme nationalist political parties in Germany after reunification demonstrated support for the kind of exclusionary nationalism argued for by the New Right.
Indeed, at first glance Panayi’s conclusion would appear to have been supported by events since he wrote his paper. There has been little doubt over the approach to nationalism the parties influenced by the New Right have taken. In recent years the NPD has published election materials brandishing slogans such as ‘Ausländer Raus!’ (foreigners out) and another poster with a picture of Muslim women above the slogan ‘Heimreise statt Einreise!’ (go home instead of coming here). In the Hesse state election of 2008 the NPD released a poster with the tagline ‘Wir räumen auf in Hessen!’ (we’re cleaning up Hesse) above the image of a white sheep kicking a black sheep out of the way. The message put forward by the NPD is clear: Germany is for the German people alone and non-Germans must leave. Since the early 2000s the NPD has also enjoyed electoral success, not least in the 2004 Saxon State Parliamentary elections when it achieved 9.2% of the vote and picked up 12 seats (Roberts, 2009). Thus, since the start of the 2000s far-right political forces have been explicit in campaigning for ethno-centric and exclusionary forms of nationalism, and have been able to gain electoral success. In the light of such events it is perhaps understandable why those such as Panayi argue that Germany is returning to ethnic-nationalism.

As we have seen above, since unification there have been a number of analysts who have argued that Germany remains wedded to ethnic and exclusionary conceptions of nationalism. Yet a more careful examination of recent developments in German politics suggests a different reality, as will now be discussed.

Contrary to the arguments of those who viewed German citizenship law as still wedded to ethno-centricism, we can see that there is actually a further move away from ethnic conceptions of the German nation since reunification. While Green is right to point out that dual citizenship is an important part of less ethno-centric approaches to citizenship, Germany’s failure to implement it does not mean it has not distanced itself from ethno-centricism. The main 1999 reform resulted in a large scale opening up of naturalisation, the process by which non-ethnic Germans could become German citizens: the residency requirement for naturalisation was reduced from 15 years to 8; for the first time the jus soli principle of somebody having been born in Germany being automatically eligible for
German citizenship if one of their parents holds a residence permit; and those who gain citizenship through *jus soli* are able to hold dual citizenship until the age of 18 (Howard, 2008). Even without the formal inclusion of dual citizenship this reform represents a clear break with the exclusive ethno-nationalist basis of the 1913 law with ‘a reduced residency requirement and the right to citizenship by *jus soli* facilitating the process by which foreigners can gain the full rights of German citizenship’ presenting a ‘remarkable change after decades of exclusive reliance on *jus sanguinis*’ (ibid., p. 54). Further evidence in this shift in approach is evidenced by the fact that since 2000 there have been several moves to include dual citizenship in German citizenship law, such as the 2007 law on granting dual citizenship to citizens from other EU countries, which have passed without public opprobrium (Palmowski, 2008). There have also been moves to limit the immigration of the ethnically German Aussiedler with the imposition of quotas, and 80% of those coming in under these quotas are not ethnically German but the dependents of the Aussiedler (Migration Information Source, 2004). This is hardly congruent with the argument that Germany continues to focus only on ethnic ideas of German identity. Therefore, again we can see that German politics has moved away from purely ethnic conceptions of national identity and begun the process of opening up citizenship to those wishing to opt into the German nation.

Furthermore, in contrast to the argument put forward by Panayi that German politics has returned to far-right tendencies, it is not clear that more extreme New Right and ethno-nationalist forces have gained much support in post-reunification Germany. While it is clear that racially motivated crime did indeed increase after reunification, the trend has not continued. The number of such crimes in 2007 was 980, down from over 2,500 in 1992 (Human Rights First, 2008). Similar to the decline in hate crimes, the political fortunes of some of the political parties that those like Payani had feared as symbolic of resurgent German ethno-nationalism have been in severe decline in recent years. *Die Republikaner* has all but disappeared as a political force in Germany: in contrast to their 10.2% vote in Baden-Württemberg in 1992, in the 2006 state election *die Republikaner* gained only 2.5% and have not held any seat since 2001 (Gabriel, 2006, p. 319). While the NPD continue to have a level of political support in Germany, they have completely
failed to break into the mainstream of German politics: in the 2009 federal election the NPD gained only 1.8% of the national vote (Bundeswhalleiter, 2009). Thus fears of an ethno-nationalist force gaining the power to implement exclusionary nationalist policies appear not to have been realised.

Of particular reassurance to those who worried about the rise of New Right ideas in post-reunification should be the fact that the failure of these parties to gain widespread electoral support appears to be a result of a lack of desire for their policy positions. For instance, Berger (2004) notes that there continued to be a disdain for the ideology of the NPD as it was often interpreted as neo-Nazi owing to its focus on exclusive racial nationalism and arguments that German pride was being undermined by Western values, and there have been several attempts to ban the party under Germany’s anti-fascism laws (pp. 233-234). While these actions have been unsuccessful, they arguably demonstrate that there are many in Germany who want nothing to do with the NPD and its extreme ethno-nationalism. Further evidence of the lack of support for the NPD and its views come from the results of the 2008 Hesse regional election. As was demonstrated above the NPD ran a clearly ethno-nationalist campaign, yet they gained only 0.9% of the vote (World Elections, 2009): hardly a ringing endorsement. In the same election, the mainstream CDU drew much criticism for exploiting a murder perpetrated by an immigrant, which was perceived as xenophobic and anti-immigrant (Deutsche Welle, 2008), further suggesting that Germans have little appetite for ethno-nationalism. And even on those rare occasions when the NPD do enjoy increases in electoral success, it does not appear to be purely the result of their emphasis on exclusionary ethno-nationalism. An analysis of the success of the NPD in gaining over 9% of the vote in Saxony in 2004 by Uwe Backes (2006) shows that this was achieved as a result of a number of complex factors. He found that while it is clear that a fear of the increasing number of immigrants in the former East German state did play a minor role in support for the NPD, by far the biggest and most decisive factor was resentment of government welfare and employment reforms in the face of the continuing economic woes plaguing the former GDR states. According to Backes, almost 60% of those who voted NPD gave this as the most important reason for determining their vote (p. 134). Therefore economic
concerns exploited by the NPD rather than just their exclusionary policy stances led to their increase in the share of the vote. All this evidence runs counter to the arguments put forward by those seeking to suggest that Germany is clinging to exclusionary ethno-nationalist political tendencies. Indeed, it shows quite the opposite: that since reunification Germany appears to be moving further away from such political stand points.

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated that, contrary to the visions of the New Right, ethno-centric nationalism has failed to become a central part of German nationalist politics since reunification. Initially there were concerns that far-right political parties with beliefs that Germany should remain an ethnically pure national unit were gaining political ground and could reach a position from which they could implement policies based on their exclusionary nationalism. Yet ultimately these fears were unfounded and since the 2000s far-right parties have failed to gain any form of widespread popular support as many Germans disdain such beliefs. Even when parties like the NPD make electoral gains it emerges that most of their voters did not justify their vote on the grounds of the party’s nationalist stance. A more subtle, but important, example of there being little interest in exclusionary ethno-nationalism in contemporary German nationalism is the recent reforms of German citizenship law. While these changes drew criticism for not going far enough, the reality is that the liberalisation and opening up of naturalisation for non-ethnic Germans wishing to formally join the German national group does mark a fundamental shift in German policy away from closed and ethno-centric conceptions of national identity. The impact of these developments in German politics since reunification on immigrant groups within the country is clear: they need not fear being excluded due to the fact that they are not of German descent. Having demonstrated the failure of the New Rights and its views on ethnic particularism in German nationalism, the next chapter will go on to examine whether Verfassungspatriotismus has been more successful.
The Relationship Between Culture & Civic Nationalism in Germany

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the New Right’s hopes that German nationalism post-reunification would concern itself primarily with protecting the ‘purity’ of the German ethnic unit did not come into fruition. But does this mean that civic nationalism has become the dominant nationalist discourse in contemporary Germany? There are those who point to the inclusion of culture in German nationalism since reunification to put the case that Germany is still intent on developing particularist views of the national identity leading to exclusion of those not from German cultural backgrounds. Others, however, argue that culture is an important means of fostering inclusive civic bonds within the German national community. This chapter is concerned with examining and evaluating the different sides of this debate. It is an important issue to investigate as a move away from a focus on ethnic nationalism does not necessarily mean that immigrant minorities are free from exclusion. Including culture in nationalism, in particular the view of maintaining cultural supremacy and homogeneity as per the arguments of the New Right, can be a potential bar to inclusion. This chapter will argue that the continuing role of culture in post-reunification German nationalism does mean that Verfassungspatriotismus has not become the dominant force, but that the presence of culture does not mean that German society seeks to exclude those not from a German cultural background: rather it emphasises certain aspects of culture in order to help foster civic bonds with immigrants and integrate them into society. Firstly it will outline the arguments that German nationalism is still intent on excluding minority groups through emphasis on German culture, before looking at the impact of culture neutral Verfassungspatriotismus on German nationalism and then what positive roles culture plays in the fostering of civic nationalism.

The last chapter demonstrated that the New Right’s arguments that Germany must use nationalism to remain ethnically homogenous failed to gain popular support. If the New Right has failed then perhaps Verfassungspatriotismus and more civic nationalism have become dominant? Some commentators reject the idea that nationalism in Germany does now allow for the inclusion of ethnic and cultural minorities and argue that civic nationalism is being obstructed by the continuing presence of culture in German
approaches to nationalism. As outlined in chapter one, Habermas and *Verfassungspatriotismus* reject any role for culture in national identity as it provides an aspect of society that can be used to set people apart. Indeed, one of the arguments put forward by the New Right to pursue an exclusionary policy of nationalism was based on the rationale of protecting a superior and unique conception of German culture, such as those put forward above by Maninger. There have been efforts by the German state since reunification to support German cultural endeavors (Wood, 1999), for example with the Schröder governments seemingly wanting to engage in ‘a politics of national symbols’ in order to develop a concept of national ‘normality’ in Germany (Berger, 2004, p. 237). While Berger notes that many of these cultural projects have in reality been relatively benign, in some cases even seeking to highlight unpleasant chapters of Germany such as with the holocaust memorial, there have also been forays into more dubious areas of culture: for instance there were private attempts to rebuild the Garnionskirche which had been a ‘military temple’ and was closely tied to Prussian authoritarianism and the rise of the Nazis (ibid., p. 238). This could be construed as German nationalism wanting to reconstruct a discourse of cultural distinctiveness and is hardly a ringing cultural endorsement of Germany’s move towards open liberal and civic values, and those who view the combination of culture and nationalism as toxic are even more damning in their analyses.

These commentators seek to link any presence of culture in nationalism to efforts to exclude cultural minorities within Germany. One such analyst is Can Ünver (2006) who draws on German integration policy to argue that Germany is pursuing a path of ‘cultural essentialism’ (p. 10): German society is stuck in the view that minorities, in particular the Turkish minority, are unable to integrate into German society and must be forced to assimilate completely into German culture or face exclusion. He argues that many of the contributions to the so-called *Integrationsdebatte* (integration debate) that has been taking place in recent years in Germany are loaded with racist undertones; in particular he references the works of Necla Kelek who argues that the cultural incompatibilities between Turks and Germans give rise to a security threat to German society (cited in ibid., p. 8). Indeed, such comments do echo the sentiments put forward by the New Right above in an effort to propose the exclusion of minority groups. A part of the *Integrationsdebatte*
that draws even closer parallels with the arguments of the New Right concerns discussions of a German *Leitkultur* (leading culture). Since the early 2000s there has been a push by some in the right-wing CDU party such as Jörg Schönbohm to emphasise a *Leitkultur* based on German national cultural values that immigrants should be expected to adapt to; in 2007 the CDU officially introduced a conception of a *Leitkultur* based on language, historical awareness and national symbols into government policy that immigrants are expected to integrate into (Palmowski, 2008, pp. 557-558). At a party conference in 2007 the SPD, Germany’s other major political party, quickly criticised the CDU’s adoption of a *Leitkultur*, arguing that it failed to recognise and respect differences in cultures and instead called for a ‘dialogue between cultures’ (*Der Spiegel*, 2007). In other words, the SPD feared that the imposition of a *Leitkultur* would force immigrant communities to turn away from their original cultural background towards a dominating German culture or face being ostracised, again with echoes of the arguments of the New Right. Therefore, one can see that there has been a large amount of criticism of the presence of culture in German nationalism and that it could be being used to exclude minority groups. In their eyes, such an approach to nationalism is ultimately the same as an emphasis on ethnicity as it suggests a homogenous national unit that needs protecting, forcing those not from a cultural background to assimilate or face exclusion. Thus, according to this line of argument instead of Germany finding itself in a new era of civic and inclusive nationalism, ethnicity has merely been replaced by culture as the rationale to exclude.

In reality, much of this attack on the presence of culture in German nationalism and its use to exclude minorities is overblown. The reality of the situation is much more complex, as will be examined below.

In fact several aspects of German nationalism since reunification *have* shifted towards the political and rational basis Habermas’s theory of *Verfassungspatriotismus*. At this point it is worth briefly once again mentioning the citizenship reform outlined above as an example of a step, not just away from ethno-centric nationalism in Germany, but specifically towards the voluntaristic and constitutional conception of citizenship.
envisioned by Habermas. The introduction of *jus soli* for the first time sent the signal that people who chose to live within the German system could attain citizenship irrespective of whether they were of German lineage, and the emphasis on political allegiance being the core of Germany’s new approach to citizenship is further demonstrated by the inclusion of an oath of allegiance to the German constitution and political system as part of the naturalisation process (Palmowski, 2008). Such modifications clearly link to civic conceptions of citizenship defined by voluntary and rational political choice. Evidence of a further policy shift within Germany away from closed and exclusive views of the national community is outlined by David Abraham (2008). He notes that Germany has opened up its large welfare state to all those resident in the state and that foreign residents have access to ‘the same labour market regulations as Germans and the same social benefits as well’ (p. 149). This is an important observation because Germany has a long history of being committed to the idea of the *Sozialwirtschaft* – that is, a mixed economy allowing growth through the free market, but with a strong emphasis on using taxation to provide a robust welfare state – and there is a clear ethos of the state being there to ‘look after its own’ (p. 151). It is indicative of a shift towards civic conceptions of the national community that Germany seeks to include those who are joining in German society in the welfare state, irrespective of whether they are formally citizens. Therefore there is evidence that, even with the presence of culture, there have been steps to orientate German nationalism more towards *Verfassungspatriotismus* and the inclusion of non-Germans into German society in particular in recent years.

Yet, even in the light of these moves towards civic nationalism, *Verfassungspatriotismus* itself has failed to become the dominant force in German nationalism due to the continuing focus on culture, which *Verfassungspatriotismus* explicitly rules out. However, contrary to the arguments put forward above, this presence of culture in nationalism does not mean that Germany is pursuing exclusionary policies. It would appear that the works of those such as Ünver and the criticisms of the SPD fall into a common analytical trap: critics of nationalism often rush to argue that any inclusion of culture in nationalism is an attempt to define lines along which outsiders can be excluded (Yack, 1999; Brown, 1999). In reality, the fact that culture is a highly subjective, fluid and malleable concept and, unlike ethnicity, can be adopted by those originally outside the community, means that
culture itself does not necessarily have to mean exclusion (Nielsen, 1999). Indeed, there are very many examples of nationalist movements around the world that are based on culture but are not xenophobic and have no desire to exclude, the Scottish National Party and Bloc Quebecois to name but two.

In the specific context of the German debate over the future of nationalism, it appears Ünver’s analysis is somewhat disingenuous in its claim that much of the input from commentators has xenophobic undertones by focusing on the fringes of the debate over culture. Certainly there are those such as Kelek who base their views on seeing other cultures as a threat and advocate exclusion as a result, but many contributors in favour of the inclusion of culture in Germany’s approach to nationalism do not hold such views. For instance, the respected President of the Bundestag Norbert Lammert has written high profile defences of building a national identity around culture; but rather than enforcing a strict German culture on immigrants, Germany should develop a common culture based on German as well as wider European and Western values that is contributed to and accessible to all in Germany (Deutsche Welle, 2007a). A similar desire to avoid culture being used to exclude those from foreign cultural backgrounds was clear in 2009 when Germany’s neighbour Switzerland voted to constitutionally ban the construction of minarets as they were viewed as a symbol of a threatening other. Editorials in many of Germany’s leading national newspapers, while not proposing that culture had no place in nationalist discussions, were unequivocal in their condemnation of the Swiss and their specific cultural argument, and urged Germany to reject any such exclusionary application of cultural nationalism (Der Spiegel, 2009a; Der Spiegel, 2009b). This is clearly an implicit rejection of the New Right’s arguments that immigrants would destabilise Germany’s culture and therefore they should be excluded. Therefore it is reasonable to say that many of the contributions to the discussions over the role of culture in German nationalism are not racist and do not prescribe the exclusion of immigrant minorities within Germany.

If there is a widespread belief that culture should play a role in German nationalism but not in the interests of preserving German cultural purity or to rationalise the exclusion of
minorities, then it is pertinent to investigate why culture is still viewed as important. Many of the arguments for basing contemporary German national identity on cultural values actually emphasise culture’s ability to work as part of civic nationalism and include rather than exclude. The desire for a role for culture alongside civic nationalism arises from a belief that pure constitutional patriotism is too abstract and often purely political links to liberal democratic values is not enough to engender the community feeling and public arena essential to facilitate constitutional democracy and legal rights (Schwarzmantel, 2003). Specifically within Germany Verfassungspatriotismus came to be seen in the 1990s as ’ahistorical, proceduralist, formalistic and cold’ and a feeling that ‘national belonging needs … more’ (Abraham, 2008, pp. 148-149). This is evidenced by the rationale of many of the arguments put forward in defence of cultural nationalism in Germany. For instance, Norbert Lammert explains why he supports emphasising a common culture as part of the German national identity in terms of finding common bindings to which everyone, both German and immigrant, can attach: the most important being a common language owing to the role it plays in bringing people together (Deutsche Welle, 2007a). This is echoed in the official, perhaps unfortunately named, Leitkultur mentioned above that immigrants are expected to integrate into. Furthermore, Abraham (2008) points out that integrating different groups into one joint national culture can break down barriers between native and immigrant groups and avoid backlashes against minorities that could arise from resentment and misunderstanding (p. 151). The main emphasis of this is not levelling out of cultural differences as the SPD accused, but on bringing people together through common language and recognition and acceptance of common political symbols and their values (Deutsche Welle, 2007b). Indeed, it is hard to conceive of a civic nationalism succeeding in bringing people together if sections of the population are unable to access civic engagement owing to not being able to speak the common language, given the key importance of communication and debate in democracy and legal procedure, or if members of the community fail to grasp the importance and logic behind the civic community and its institution. Furthermore, culture can help emphasise civic values: for instance the return of the German government to Berlin with the Bundestag being housed in the former Reichstag sent a powerful symbol that openness and democracy had replaced former German values of authoritarianism and exclusion (Berger, 2004). While it does to an extent require the preference of a particular
language and set of beliefs in the public sphere, efforts to base national identity in part around cultural values such as language and national symbols and beliefs are not in order to demarcate ‘outsiders’ in order to exclude. Rather it attempts to provide a means by which everyone in Germany can access the civic arenas and values that are at the centre of civic nationalism’s attempts at including everyone into a national community defined by rational attachments to rights and responsibilities.

In conclusion, culture has come to play an important role in contemporary German nationalism through state support of cultural endeavours and the implementation of a policy of cultural integration for immigrants. This has led some to argue that German politics therefore continue to seek to exclude immigrants as outsiders, but now using cultural, rather than ethnic, particularism as the reason. Yet this misses the fundamental point of the inclusion of culture in German nationalism. While steps have been taken to implement aspects of Verfassungspatriotismus, since reunification many Germans have found it to be too weak and abstract to engender bonds to the national community. Thus an open culture based around the German language and Western liberal democratic principles has been incorporated into German nationalism that all members of the national society are expected to integrate into in an effort to bring people together. Most importantly this attempt to develop a common national culture is seen as essential for opening up the contemporary German society based on constitutional democracy and civic rights to all incomers, and through this civic community they can be included into the national unit. Therefore it is not the case that German nationalism draws on culture to exclude immigrant minorities, indeed it is quite the opposite: an emphasis on culture is seen as the best way to include everyone in German civic society. Thus Germany has developed a form of civic nationalism, but one that is based on common and open cultural engagement rather than just abstract political beliefs. The next chapter will seek to determine whether this belief in cultural integration truly does include minorities, seen from the point of view of immigrants themselves.
German Turkish Views of German Nationalism

The previous chapters have sought to examine the way German politics approaches nationalism and the impact that has had on policies of inclusion and exclusion. Yet in order to effectively draw conclusions on the impact of German nationalism on immigrant minorities it is necessary to investigate how these groups themselves view the issue and the impact they feel it has on their lives. In the years following the Second World War Germany became an *Einwanderungsland* (a country of immigration), resulting in non-ethnic Germans composing around 10% of the current population of Germany; the largest group being those of Turkish descent at 3% of the entire population (Central Intelligence Agency, 2010). While many immigrants enjoy relatively easy integration into the German national community, there is an awareness among both Germans and Turkish groups that the Turkish population in Germany often feel that they are not included (Palmowski, 2008). Indeed this appears to be supported by a recent study which found only 21% of Turks in Germany consider Germany to be their home (INFO/Liljeberg, 2009, p. 2). This chapter seeks to examine why so few of the Turkish population in Germany should feel at home there. It will draw primarily on a recent study comparing and contrasting the values of Germans and Turks in Germany, yet overall there is a lack of contemporary data on this issue and there is great potential for further primary research. It will argue that many Turks do not feel ethnically excluded, but they do feel excluded on the grounds of their cultural background. Yet this is not a result of German nationalism seeking to exclude the Turks as a cultural minority, but because Turkish culture and its values often lead to antagonisms between Turks and the civic political culture German nationalism seeks to develop in order to help include them into the German national community. Thus, although some level of exclusion is felt this does not mean that German nationalism is trying to exclude ‘outsiders’ as threats to the German nation, and it is primarily a problem for the Turks due to their conservatism. Firstly it will look at Turkish views of ethnicity and citizenship in Germany, then at the antagonisms between Turkish and German cultural communities and their values before explaining what this means for civic nationalism in Germany.
In an the second chapter of this dissertation we saw that there were fears that post-reunification Germany would return to exclusionary nationalism based on the belief that it was necessary to maintain the German national community ethnically ‘pure’. It appeared that the lack of support for far-right political parties and reforms of German citizenship towards the civic principle of *jus soli* suggested that ethnic nationalist exclusion did not become a part of German nationalist politics, but do ethnic minorities such as Germany’s Turkish population agree with this view? At first glance it is perhaps not an encouraging response, with some from the community being on record with statements like ‘being German means ethnicity, that’s why I can’t be German’ (cited in Open Society Institute, 2009, p. 77). Yet a closer investigation shows a different reality. A recent and comprehensive study into the views of Turks living in Germany shows that, while around 45% of the community feels unwelcome in Germany, over 80% of them say that Germany is open to the world and that ethnicity plays no factor in how successful one in Germany (INFO/Liljeberg, 2009, p. 4). Thus ethnicity would appear to play little role in the feelings of exclusion experienced by the Turks in Germany. Indeed, since the liberalisation of German citizenship in 2000 many, though not all, Turks in Germany eligible for German citizenship under the new approach applied for naturalisation (Howard, 2008). This suggests that the former *jus sanguinis* basis of German citizenship had excluded people on the basis of their ethnic origin, but that many saw the change in the law as a welcome opportunity to join the German nation irrespective of their ethnic background. Therefore it is clear that many ethnic minorities share the view that ethnicity no longer gives rise to exclusion from the national society and its rights in contemporary Germany and so we must look elsewhere in order to account for the feelings of exclusion harboured by the Turkish community in Germany.

The previous chapter highlighted the other concern over exclusion in Germany based not on ethnicity, but rather on different culture. It was feared that the emphasis on culture in German nationalism would create a division along which a policy of exclusion of those from non-German cultural backgrounds could be developed and implemented by the German national state. It appears that, rather than ethnicity, feelings of cultural difference can account for the exclusion described by many Turks in Germany. Contemporary German and Turkish cultures are distinct from each other: German culture has come to be
defined by Western and liberal principles, while Turkish culture and values remain based on conservative and traditional beliefs (Der Spiegel, 2010). These differences lead to antagonisms which appear to the minority Turks as exclusion. Since reunification German nationalism has sought to bring immigrants and native Germans together to develop a national identity based on common acceptance of certain values. Yet Turks in Germany place great importance on defending their cultural and linguistic distinctiveness (over 90% of the community believe it is important to fight to keep a distinct Turkish culture within Germany) and nearly 60% believe they should be allowed to join the national community with no conditions at all attached (INFO/Liljeberg, 2009, p. 4). Thus one of the most common complaints of German integration policy is the compulsory German language lessons provided by the state (Der Spiegel, 2009c), and it is understandable to see why: it is viewed as an attack on Turkish identity. And, while Turks in Germany believe that they have a good grasp of day-to-day German, around half of the community report difficulty in language comprehension when filling out official forms, receiving important information and visiting government offices (INFO/Liljeberg, 2009, p. 2). Furthermore, educational experts in Germany blame the often poor attainment of students from Turkish families on their inability to fully comprehend their education due to poor language skills: indeed, minorities that are more willing to immerse themselves fully German, especially in school, do not appear to face such barriers to civic participation and feel more included in the German nation (Der Spiegel, 2009c). The fact that the German state provides access to German language classes argues that it is not using linguistic differences to single out and exclude ‘outsiders’. This suggests that a general reluctance within the Turkish to risk a loss of distinctiveness and fully learn German creates an obstacle to engagement in the common civic sphere German nationalism seeks to create, thereby helping to explain their feelings of exclusion.

Another way in which cultural differences appears to impact Turkish feelings of exclusion is their highly conservative approach to social tolerance. Germany is a relatively open and liberal society in terms of social issues such as women’s and sexual minority groups’ rights, and this conflicts with much more ‘traditional’ cultural backgrounds of many in the Turkish community in Germany, which often translate into illiberal political views (Der Spiegel, 2009d) leading to tensions with Germany’s liberal
civic sphere. For instance, around 65% of Turks in Germany believe that it is only the man’s job to provide for the family and 70% believe homosexual relationships are wrong; for Germans those numbers are 30% and 20% respectively (INFO/Liljeberg, 2009, pp. 7-8). The same report shows this pattern of Germans being more tolerant than large sections of the Turkish community in Germany to be continued across a wide range of controversial social issues such as the role of the woman as housekeeper and abortion to name but two. These views pose a serious challenge to the liberal civic sphere that German nationalism seeks to develop as a means of bringing different groups into the German national community and appear to turn many Turks away from a German political scene based on liberal constitutional rights and participation. For instance, German judges often find Turks unaware of the law, with one commenting ‘there are large [numbers of Turks in Germany] who don’t have the slightest interest in knowing how our constitutional state works’ (cited in Der Spiegel, 2009c). Interestingly, while around 70% of Germans are interested in German politics, only 40% of those of Turkish descent took any interest in German politics though 60% took an interest in Turkish politics (INFO/Liljeberg, 2009, p. 11). So it would appear that cultural differences alienate Turks in Germany from the civic political sphere meant to help them come together and join the rest of the German national community, thus they find one of the key channels of inclusion apparently closed to them and their views, giving rise to feelings of exclusion.

So far we have seen that the very aspect of German nationalism that seeks to bring everyone together into the national community, integration into a German speaking civic political culture, has actually led to the largest immigrant community to feel excluded. This begs the question of whether cultural integration should be abandoned from German nationalism in favour perhaps of culture free Verfassungspatriotismus. The answer to this question is no, it should not. As we have seen above, Turkish cultural values have impacted their political beliefs and alienated Turks in Germany away from liberal constitutional approaches. It is hard to see how the even more liberal and abstract doctrine of Verfassungspatriotismus could be any more successful in fostering bonds between the German national community and the Turks living in Germany. And the picture is not all gloom: in recent years there have been a number of success stories of Turks integrating.
into German society and contributing greatly (Der Spiegel, 2009c). One of the best examples of this is Cem Özdemir, the German Turkish co-leader of die Grünen, one of Germany’s political parties with representatives in the Bundestag. He is seen by many in the Turkish population in Germany and wider German society as the archetypal integration success story (BBC, 2002). He maintains his Turkish identity but has been able to integrate into the German nation by accepting its Western civic cultural, as well as political, values (Today’s Zaman, 2008). Indeed, the results of the INFO/Liljeberg study into the views of Turks in Germany show that integration programmes appear to be working, with the Turkish community in Germany’s beliefs being consistently less hard-line than those of Turks living in Turkey (Der Spiegel, 2009d). As we have seen above, while they are still not as liberal and civic as German views, the hope is that over time this gap will narrow further and the obstacles to Turkish involvement in Germany’s civic sphere will decrease.

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated that the largest ethno-cultural minority in Germany, the Turks, feel excluded by German nationalism, but that this is not as a result of a desire for German nationalist policy to intentionally exclude them. Many of the Turkish minority do not feel excluded as a result of not being ethnically German and have used liberalisation of German citizenship law to gain German citizenship. The tension appears to be around the use of culture in German politics. Contemporary German nationalism places great emphasis on all members of the German nation speaking German so that they can come together in a civic cultural and political community. Yet many Turks in Germany place great importance on maintaining linguistic distinctiveness, resulting in resentment to having to learn German and poor language skills precluding their full involvement in German national society and education. Furthermore, the strong conservative theme running through Turkish culture often translates into conservative and illiberal political views among Turks, further alienating them from the liberal and civic national German community. This civic cultural and political approach to defining the national unit is an attempt by German nationalism to offer a route to the inclusion of minority groups through integration, thus the Turks being sceptical of it leads to their feelings of exclusion. This does not, however, mean that this approach of integration into a civic cultural and political community should be abandoned; not least because the likely
alternative of *Verfassungspatriotismus* is unlikely to engender bonds due to its being so liberal and abstract, but also because it appears that integration is beginning to work, with the views of Turks in Germany becoming more open. The hope is that over time they will begin to associate and identify more with the German civic national community and feel included in it, rather than excluded by it.

**Conclusion**

This dissertation has sought to offer an assessment of nationalist politics in Germany since the reunification of the German nation twenty years ago. In light of the public debate over the potential directions of nationalism in Germany that took place during reunification between *völkisch* and civic conceptions of the nation, it has specifically sought to investigate whether contemporary German nationalism has an inclusionary or exclusionary impact on the large number of ethno-cultural minorities now resident in Germany.

We saw that one of the main camps in the debate over what form German nationalism should take was the forces of the so-called New Right. At the extreme they sought to define the German nation as an ethnic and culturally unique and homogenous unit, whose distinctiveness was threatened by an influx immigrant ‘outsiders’. As a result they often advocated the exclusion of ethnic and cultural minorities from the German nation in order to protect it. The presence of the New Right heightened fears following reunification of a resurgence of chauvinistic and racist nationalism in the new Germany. However, it was demonstrated that, since reunification, Germany has sought to distance itself from ethnocentrically based nationalism. Far-right parties that share similar views to those of the New Right have failed to gain widespread popular support, and have often faced explicit repudiation of their ideology in the new Germany. Furthermore, Germany has taken another step away from ethno-nationalism by, after nearly a century, altering the legal definition of German citizenship. Previously it had been a highly ethnic concept based on descent from German ancestors. While some aspects of ethnic preference do still remain, the new nationality law of 2000 for the first time formally allows for a clear framework
for non-ethnic Germans to become naturalised German citizens should they wish. Thus we can see that contemporary German nationalism seeks to include, rather than exclude, ethnic minorities.

The other proposed approach to nationalism in the debate during reunification was the idea of Verfassungspatriotismus. This was based on the idea that the national community should be defined purely in liberal political terms: people joined the national unit by identifying with the state’s constitutional principles and respect for human rights. This obviously has a much more inclusive approach minority groups as it is uninterested in their ethnic or cultural background and welcomes anyone who chooses to participate in Germany’s civic political sphere. If German nationalism has come to reject the exclusionary approach of the New Right, does it mean it has embraced Verfassungspatriotismus? Indeed, the liberalisation of citizenship along jus soli lines and the extension of welfare rights to non-citizens do suggest that German politics have moved closer to the principles of Verfassungspatriotismus. However, German nationalism has also come to include an emphasis on a common national culture based on the German language and Western values, into which everyone is expected to integrate. Verfassungspatriotismus is clear in arguing that the only factor that can determine national inclusion is allegiance to national political values: culture, like ethnicity, is exclusive and must play no role. Therefore, while some of its views have been adopted, Verfassungspatriotismus has not come to define contemporary German nationalism.

Yet, does this emphasis on culture mean that German nationalism has come to reject civic conceptions of the nation and merely replace ethnicity with culture as the means by which it excludes minorities? The answer is no. Far from excluding anyone with a different cultural background, the German policy of cultural integration is intended to help foster bonds to the German nation in a civic sphere. This arose out a concern that Verfassungspatriotismus alone was too abstract to develop meaningful links between minorities and the German nation. In other words, by expecting everyone to speak
German and respect certain liberal values it facilitates people coming together in a common civic sphere: it seeks to include.

While many minorities have integrated relatively easily, currently this approach and emphasis on culture has led to the Turks in Germany, the largest immigrant group, to feel excluded. However, as we have seen this is not the intended consequence of the policy of cultural integration. Rather, these feelings of exclusion arise from antagonisms between this liberal common German national identity and the traditional conservative approach to culture that often defines Turkish society. This has led to resentment at having to learn German and alienation from what is perceived to be too liberal a community in Germany. Yet this does not mean that the policy of cultural integration should be scrapped as, as well as facilitating the inclusion of other minorities, it appears to be having an impact on the inclusion of Turks, albeit a long term one. Compared to the views of Turks in Turkey, German Turks are becoming more open and tolerant. Hopefully this will continue until Turks no longer feel excluded, but rather included in Germany’s common national civic culture.

Therefore, in conclusion German nationalism has sought to distance itself from exclusionary approaches since reunification. In particular it has rejected any attempt to define the German national group in racial and ethnic terms or pursued exclusionary policies to keep the German nation ethnically ‘pure’. In moving away from ethnic nationalism it has moved towards more civic conceptions of nationalism based around bringing different ethno-cultural groups together into one common national culture based on the German language and Western civic values. The emphasis on culture has led some cultural minorities to feel excluded by the contemporary German nationalism but this is not the intention of German policy and a common civic culture is designed to include all into the German national community in the long run. It remains to be seen, however, whether this policy of cultural integration will ultimately lead to the inclusion of all minority groups. This is one of the key challenges facing German nationalism as we
move into the next twenty years of the German national story and beyond and certainly warrants further investigation in future years.

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