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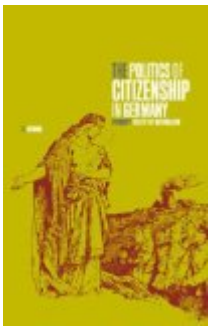
Eli Nathans. *The Politics of Citizenship in Germany: Ethnicity, Utility and Nationalism.* Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2004. xvii + 294 pp. $36.95, paper, ISBN 978-1-85973-781-1.



Reviewed by Jennifer Walcoff Neuheiser

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In the last decade, citizenship and naturalization have been hot topics in Europe. German reunification, the rise of the European Union, and population movements triggered by wars in Southeastern Europe have effectively challenged existing notions of national citizenship, especially in Germany. Until the 1990s, the principle of descent from German ancestry for the most part governed policies regarding citizenship and naturalization in Germany. This so-called *Abstammungsprinzip* made German citizenship policies different from those of other Western European nations, where individuals born within the territory of the state acquired citizenship. German naturalization policies also tended to be quite stringent when it came to granting citizenship to non-Germans, even those who had been residents since birth.

In recent years, scholars have sought to explain how these processes of inclusion and exclusion developed by using the closely linked concepts of national citizenship, naturalization, and immigration. Most notably, Rogers Brubaker's study contrasted the German and French models of citizenship. He argues that in France, the nation and the unified state emerged at roughly the same time as the revolution, while in Germany the idea of a nation formed prior to the creation of a unified state. This fundamental distinction has thus led to differing conceptions of the nation, and, therefore, membership in that nation.[1] The degree to which German citizenship policies differed from those of France and other Western European countries, however, has been the subject of much recent debate.[2] This research has made clear that a clear distinction needs to be made between policies relating to immigration and naturalization of foreigners and those that regulate the acquisition, maintenance, and loss of national citizenship. While interrelated, these policies serve different functions in the regulation of national populations.

Eli Nathans's new work on German citizenship policies further complicates the debate by questioning whether the measures taken from the 1890s to the 1980s were inherent in the logic of the developing nation-state. With a predominantly political perspective based primarily on gov-

ernment records, Nathans outlines the broad contours of the development of national citizenship and naturalization policies in Germany from the early nineteenth century to the present day. Often conflating citizenship with naturalization and immigration, he traces the interplay of factors such as ethnicity, nationalism, economic utility, military demands, and foreign relations in the development of ethnically exclusive national policies in the German states. Nathans also lays out causal links to specific changes in citizenship policies, most notably those of 1842, 1904, 1913, 1935, and 1999. Simultaneously, Nathans describes how aspects of these policies discriminated not only against "foreigners," but also women. Ultimately, Nathans suggests that despite apparent continuities in policies, naturalization laws were products of conflict, not consensus. Nathans also asserts, however, that throughout the time period under consideration, policies continually restricted the naturalization of certain ethnic groups, namely Poles and Jews.

Nathan begins by describing how, in the 1830s, inadequacies in existing laws and treaties governing citizenship generated an increasing number of disputes over the naturalization of individuals in the German states. Previously, local communities had for the most part controlled the granting of citizenship to outsiders. Desirable immigrants who would contribute to the economic well-being of the community might be granted citizenship, but those who could not prove they had sufficient resources were often denied citizenship because they might someday need poor relief. Gradually, however, states tried to regulate the movement of people more closely in order to promote the economic interests of the state itself. Concurrently, new theories of the state and nation by Adam Smith, Georg Friedrich Hegel, and Johann Gottlieb Fichte provided state governments with rationales for asserting such centralized control over immigration and naturalization. Whereas Smith and Hegel gave ideological justifications for measures that were both authoritarian and liberal, Nathans argues, Fichte's ideas of German nationality had little effect until the late nineteenth century.

Nathans then takes Prussia as a starting point from which to examine how these theoretical teachings were put into practice. He argues that the 1842 law outlining descent from a Prussian father as the principal basis for the transmission of Prussian citizenship not only reflected these theories of the state's obligation to protect the common good, but also highlights the key role that military service played in the relationship between state and subject in Prussia. This new law, the *Untertanengesetz*, also threatened nobility's rights by implying that allegiance to Prussia was to be exclusive and thus strengthened the power of central administration vis-Ã -vis local communities. It also required that the Interior Ministry approve all Jewish petitions for citizenship.

Nathans also maintains that the ideas of citizenship promoted by the revolutionaries of 1848 and the 1860s were real alternatives in a more federal German state. Similar to Bismarck, the revolutionary leaders sought to create a more united Germany that included neighboring lands and individuals who were not necessarily ethnic Germans. The revolution's failure, however, opened a window for tighter central control over inclusion and exclusion as governments sought to expel potential sources of further revolution. During this period, moral issues also became increasingly important in determining whether an individual was a desirable immigrant worthy of naturalization or an undesirable element deserving expulsion.

After unification in 1871, Bismarck instituted more explicitly ethnically exclusionary policies in Prussia. Nathans explains this shift under Bismarck by exploring the personal role the statesman played in the control of immigration and nationalization. Bismarck's calculations of national interest, his defense of authoritarian political institutions, and his combative personality led to in-

creasingly firmer policies that discriminated against Jews and Poles. In 1885, for example, Bismarck ordered the expulsion of Jews and Poles living in the eastern provinces of Prussia. Nathans argues that this move effectively ended opportunities for Jewish and Polish immigration and inaugurated ethnically exclusive naturalization policies in Prussia (p. 128). A government treatise written in 1904 provided general outlines for exclusion, and signaled out ethnic groups such as Jews, Poles, Czechs, and Danes especially, but there was never an official written declaration of which categories required the Interior Minister's approval.

Shortly before World War I, foreign policy interests, as well as internal pressures, forced yet another revision of citizenship policies. Rather than surrendering German citizenship upon emigration, a German citizen could now retain his German citizenship while living abroad--so long as he petitioned the local consulate and fulfilled his military service requirement. These changes, Nathans claims, reflected the state's imperial interests in using Germans abroad to further its goals, as well as the government's apparent concessions to nationalist pressure groups. The 1913 law, however, still further solidified national control over naturalization policies.

Switching gears from Bismarck's role, Nathans briefly discusses the ramifications of the shift to a republican government in 1918. He states that the barriers against the naturalization of non-Germans became more rigid as the 1920s were a period of intense xenophobia. Prussia, for example, imposed a ten-year residency requirement in 1920, which it raised to fifteen years in 1921. He also examines the challenges made by the women's movement to citizenship laws that determined that a woman's citizenship was tied to that of her husband. A German woman who married a foreigner, for example, lost her German citizenship; similarly, a man who married a German woman did not acquire her German citizenship.

Somewhat provocatively, however, Nathans then suggests a lack of continuity between National Socialist policies and those of previous governments. He claims that "since Nazi goals differed fundamentally from those of earlier German states, and since citizenship and naturalization policies directly touched on issues that were central to the Nazi's project, to a large extent the legislation which the regime inherited in this area became irrelevant" (p. 217). The racial hierarchies created by the National Socialist regime thus became the guiding markers of citizenship and naturalization because they determined who would be accepted, who would be tolerated, and who needed to be eliminated from the German nation. Rather than loosely based ethnic criteria for citizenship, the Nazis attempted to develop a highly organized categorization of people based on racial theories; those with full German blood were deemed *ReichsbÃ¼rger* and therefore had more political rights, while those classified as *StaatsangehÃ¶rige* had second-class status. The National Socialists also utilized the legal power to revoke citizenship more extensively and effectively than ever before. Nathans's insistence that Hitler "broke with nineteenth-century patterns and precedents" (p. 229), however, does not reconcile with his initial claims that policies originating in the mid-nineteenth century dominated German thinking about citizenship until the 1990s (p. 4). In many respects, the National Socialists, like Bismarck, used citizenship policies as ways in which to achieve political ends and to exercise control in the shaping of the German nation-state. Moreover, Nathans never clearly draws a distinction between "ethnic" and "racial" criteria, which perhaps stems from his failure to provide even working definitions of "ethnicity" or "race."

Regarding the post-war period, Nathans likewise asserts that the constitution of the Federal Republic "not only broke with the goals and principles--such that they were--of the Nazi regime, but also reflected the reality of German defeat, the division of Germany and the hatred for Germans

that Nazi policies had engendered" (p. 235). Moreover, the new government had to deal with the realities of massive movement among populations, as well as the state-directed introduction of guest workers. Despite these shifts, however, many of the policies instituted prior to 1933 were simply reinforced and those expatriated by Nazi edicts regained their citizenship. As in the 1890s, Nathans suggests that the role of the state's leader, in this case Adenauer, was critical in the shaping of policies. Not until the 1990s, however, did a liberalization of policies occur in which the state opened more avenues for the inclusion and naturalization of foreigners, and most importantly to individuals born in Germany to non-German parents who had been legal residents of Germany for an extended period of time.

Nathans succeeds in providing a comprehensive, multi-faceted overview of German citizenship policies useful to scholars of modern Europe. Detailed case studies as well as descriptions of general socio-cultural contexts enrich his perspective. A reader looking for an organized narrative thread or a thorough discussion of key concepts, however, might be disappointed. Although Nathans situates his account within current historiography, he fails to provide the reader with a clear sense of how he intends to use highly contested terms such as "citizenship" or "racial policy," nor does he define what constitutes "ethnically exclusive national policies." Thus, rather than finding a cohesive argument, the reader stumbles onto highly intriguing points, many of which will hopefully spark further discussion about the nature and development of citizenship in Germany.

Notes

[1]. See Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[2]. See, for example, Andreas Fahrmeir, *Citizens and Aliens: Foreigners and the Law in Britain and the German States 1789-1870* (New York: Berghahn, 2000)--see H-German review by Eli Nathans at http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.cgi?path=38191059590170; Dieter Gosewinkel, *EinbÃ¼rgern und AusschlieÃ?en: Die Nationalisierung der StaatsangehÃ¶rigkeit vom Deutschen Bund bis zur Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (GÃ¶ttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001); Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Francais? Histoire de la NationalitÃ© FranÃ§aise depuis la Revolution* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 2002).

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