

7

Homeland nationalism in Weimar Germany and “Weimar Russia”

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In interwar Europe, one of the most dangerous fault lines was that along which the domestic nationalisms of ethnically heterogeneous nationalizing states collided with the transborder nationalisms of neighboring “homeland” states, oriented to co-ethnics living as minorities in the nationalizing states. The clash between the nationalizing nationalism of interwar Poland and the homeland nationalisms of Germany and the Soviet Union,¹ between the nationalizing nationalism of Czechoslovakia and the homeland nationalisms of Germany and Hungary, between the nationalizing nationalism of Romania and the homeland nationalisms of Hungary and Bulgaria² – to name only a few – generated both chronic tensions and acute crises, tensions and crises that were bound up with the background to and the outbreak of the Second World War.³

¹ Since large Belarusian and Ukrainian populations were included in the interwar Polish state, the Soviet Union – having established nominally sovereign Belarusian and Ukrainian Soviet Republics, granted them considerable cultural autonomy during the 1920s, and even encouraged them to embark on “nationalizing” programs – could represent itself (with a certain plausibility during the 1920s) as the external national homeland for co-nationals in the eastern borderlands of Poland.

² Like Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria lost substantial territories and large numbers of co-nationals in the post-World War I settlement. More than 3 million Hungarians were stranded as minorities mainly in Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, while Bulgarian nationalists, identifying the much-disputed nationality of all Slav inhabitants of Macedonia as Bulgarian, claimed that the post-war settlement had left a third of all Bulgarians in other states. Concern to recover lost territory and redeem ethnic kin dominated Hungarian and Bulgarian politics in the interwar era and led both states into wartime alliance with Nazi Germany. On interwar Hungary, see C. A. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and its Consequences, 1919-1937* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937); and Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1974), chapter 4. On Bulgaria, see *ibid.*, chapter 7, esp. pp. 325-6; and Myron Weiner, “The Macedonian Syndrome: An Historical Model of International Relations and Political Development,” *World Politics* 23, no. 1 (1970), esp. 671. On the nationalizing nationalism of interwar Romania, see Irina Livezeanu, *Cultural Politics in Greater Romania: Regionalism, Nation Building, and Ethnic Struggle, 1918-1930* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1995).

³ On conflicting national claims in interwar East Central Europe, see the splendidly concise overview in Rothschild, *East Central Europe Between the Two World Wars*, pp. 3-14. On national tensions and the background to World War II, see A. J. P. Taylor, *The Origins of the Second World War* (New York: Atheneum, 1961), especially chapter 8 on the Sudeten crisis. For an account

Analogous collisions along the same fault line threaten the stability and security of the region today. In some cases they have already led to war. As I argued in Chapter 3, the interplay between the nationalizing nationalism of Croatia and the homeland nationalism of Serbia (along with the minority nationalism of Croatia’s borderland Serbs) led to the breakup of Yugoslavia. Similarly, the interplay between the nationalizing nationalism of Azerbaijan and the homeland nationalism of Armenia (initially sparked by the minority nationalism of Karabakh Armenians) led to the war over Nagorno-Karabakh. Many other collisions or potential collisions along this fault line, while they have yet to generate large-scale violence, remain potentially destabilizing. The nationalizing nationalisms of Romania and Slovakia have clashed with the homeland nationalism of Hungary.⁴ The nationalizing nationalisms of Serbia and Macedonia confront the incipient homeland nationalism of Albania.⁵ The nationalizing nationalism of Bulgaria faces the potential homeland nationalism of neighboring Turkey.

The most important – and potentially the most dangerous – clash along this fault line today is between the nationalizing nationalisms of Soviet successor states and the homeland nationalism of Russia. The nationalizing policies and politics of Estonia and Latvia, especially their restrictive citizenship policies toward their large Russian minorities, have met with harsh Russian condemnations of “apartheid” and “ethnic cleansing” and repeated assertions of Russia’s right to protect Russians against allegedly massive human rights violations. Chronic tensions between Ukraine and Russia over Russian-dominated Crimea flared up in 1994 when the Crimean Russian leadership declared itself virtually independent of central Ukrainian authority and sought closer ties to Russia.⁶ Tensions between Kazakhstan and Russia, too, have increased over the hardening nationalizing policies applied by the Kazakh regime in the Russian-dominated north.⁷ And a limited war broke out in trans-Dniestrian

of the complex relation between Nazi Germany, Sudeten German organizations, and the Czechoslovak state in the making of the Sudeten crisis and the Munich agreement, see Ronald Smelser, *The Sudeten Problem, 1933-1938* (Folkestone, UK: Dawson, 1975).

⁴ Nationalizing nationalisms may be found in established as well as new states. On the nationalizing practices of post-Ceausescu Romania, see Vilmos Tancos, “Kettös hatalmi szerkezet a Székelyföldön” (“The Dual Structure of Power in the Szekler Lands”), manuscript (1994). On the background to contemporary Hungarian homeland nationalism, see László Neményi, “The Dynamics of Homeland Politics: The Hungarian Case,” paper presented at conference on “National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe,” Bellagio Study and Conference Center, Italy, August 1994.

⁵ Serbia exemplifies both homeland and nationalizing nationalisms; see n. 12 below.

⁶ It should be noted, however, that while Russian nationalists have asserted that Crimea belongs to Russia, and have contested the validity of its 1954 transfer from the RSFSR to the Ukrainian SSR, the Russian government has not, as of this writing, encouraged Crimean Russian separatism.

⁷ Ian Bremmer, “Nazarbaev and the North: State-Building and Ethnic Relations in Kazakhstan,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 17, no. 4 (1994).

Moldova in summer 1992 between the initially strongly nationalizing Moldovan state and the secessionist, Russian- and Ukrainian-led “Dniester Republic,” backed by the Russian 14th army, acting with the tacit acquiescence, if not the active direction, of MOSCOW.⁸

Having addressed nationalizing states in Chapter 4, I turn in this chapter to the transborder nationalisms of external national homelands. Homeland nationalisms, too, have been neglected – indeed to an even greater extent than nationalizing nationalisms – in the literature on nationalist politics. One symptom of this is that there is no generally accepted analytical vocabulary for discussing – or even for identifying – what I have called “homeland nationalism.” Particular instances of this kind of nationalism have, of course, been studied. The most substantial literature concerns interwar Germany. Even that literature – comprising only a few specialized books and a handful of articles, almost exclusively in German – is minimal by comparison with the huge literature on other aspects of German nationalism. Written overwhelmingly by historians, moreover, that literature has been highly particularizing, oriented to the details of one particular situation, indeed in most cases to one or another aspect of the interwar German concern with ethnic Germans in neighboring states. Its key concepts – *Deutschumpolitik*, *Volkstums-politik*, *Deutschumsarbeit*, *Deutschumpflege*, all denoting an active concern with ethnic “Germanism” (*Deutschum*) – have been tied specifically to that historical situation; it has been little concerned to develop wider theoretical or comparative perspectives.⁹

As for the generalizing literature on ethnicity and nationalism, while it has addressed irredentism and external intervention in ethnic conflict, it has not focused sustained analytical attention on external national homelands or homeland nationalism as such. Irredentism – a movement to incorporate *irredenta*, that is, lands or peoples represented as “unredeemed” because stranded under “alien” rule – is indeed an instance of homeland nationalism, but it represents an extreme limiting case, not the field of homeland politics as a whole. And the problematic of “external intervention” cuts across that of homeland politics. On the one hand, it casts a broader net, including intervention by any external power, whether an external national homeland, another state, or a transnational or international organization. On the other hand, “intervention” is usually conceived narrowly as armed or at least

⁸ See Paul Kolstoe and Andrei Edemsky, “The Dniester Conflict: Between Irredentism and Separatism,” *Europe-Asia Studies* 45, no. 6 (1993); Jeff Chinn and Steven D. Roper, “Ethnic Mobilization and Reactive Nationalism: The Case of Moldova,” unpublished manuscript (1994).

⁹ *Volkstum* theorist Max Hildebert Boehm’s sketch of “co-nationalism” – that is nationalism directed towards ethnic co-nationals living in other states – is an exception; but Boehm’s discussion, to my knowledge, has not been taken up elsewhere in the literature. See Max Hildebert Boehm, *Das eigenständige Volk* (Göttingen. Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1932), pp. 177ff.

coercive intervention, while the multifarious actions constitutive of homeland politics involve the use or threat of force only as a limiting case.¹⁰

To address this undertheorized form of nationalism, this chapter, like its predecessor, adopts an historical approach. The major part of the chapter is devoted to the analysis of one particular – and particularly relevant – case of homeland nationalism: that of Weimar Germany. Weimar homeland nationalism invites our attention not only for its intrinsic interest, and not only because its themes and methods were appropriated by the Nazis, but also because of the striking similarities between Germany after the First World War and Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union – similarities that have led some commentators to speak of “Weimar Russia.”¹¹ Accordingly, the final section of the chapter addresses the emergent homeland nationalism of post-Soviet Russia, comparing it with that of Weimar Germany.

Nationalizing and homeland nationalisms

Nationalizing and homeland nationalisms are diametrically opposed and directly conflicting: nationalizing nationalisms (like that of interwar Poland) are directed “inward” by states toward their own territories and citizenries, while homeland nationalisms (like that of interwar Germany) are directed “outward” by neighboring states, across the boundaries of territory and citizenship, toward members of “their own” ethnic nationality, that is toward persons who “belong” (or can be claimed to

¹⁰ On irredentism, see Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), chapter 6, and Naomi Chazan, ed., *Irredentism and International Politics* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner and Adamantine Press, 1991). From the burgeoning literature on external intervention in ethnic conflict – and, more generally, on the international dimensions of ethnic conflict – see for example Weiner, “The Macedonian Syndrome”; Astri Suhrke and Lela Gardner Noble, eds., *Ethnic Conflict in International Relations* (New York: Praeger, 1977); Joseph Rothschild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), chapter 6; Gabriel Sheffer, ed., *Modern Diasporas in International Politics* (London and Sydney: Croom Helm, 1986); Alexis Heraclides, “Secessionist Minorities and External Involvement,” *International Organization* 44, no. 3 (1990); Paul Smith, ed., *Ethnic Groups in International Relations* (Aldershot, UK and New York: Dartmouth Publishing Company and New York University Press, 1991); Robert Cooper and Mats Berdal, “Outside Intervention in Ethnic Conflicts,” in Michael Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993). In this literature, Paul Smith’s brief discussion of the relation between ethnic groups and their “external motherlands” perhaps comes closest to articulating the specific phenomenon of homeland nationalism that I address in this chapter; see *Ethnic Groups in International Relations*, p. 8.

¹¹ In the US, Stephen Sestanovich was an early exponent of this concept. See for example Bill Keller, “Gorbachev’s Grand Plan,” *The New York Times*, December 5, 1988. For a critical discussion of the Weimar analogy, see Jack Snyder, “Nationalism and the Crisis of the Post-Soviet State,” *Survival* 35, no. 1 (1993), 6.

belong) to the external national homeland by ethnonational affinity, although they reside in and are (ordinarily) citizens of other states. Since these latter states are ordinarily nationalizing states (or are at least so represented by the external homeland), homeland and nationalizing nationalisms typically collide head-on.

Nationalizing states and external national homelands advance competing jurisdictional claims over the same set of persons. These are persons who “belong,” or can be represented as belonging, to both states – to the nationalizing state by citizenship, to the homeland by putative ethnocultural nationality. The nationalizing state, appealing to norms of territorial integrity and sovereignty, asserts that the status and welfare of its citizens, whatever their ethnocultural nationality, is a strictly internal matter over which it alone has legitimate jurisdiction. The external national homeland, rejecting this view, asserts that its rights and responsibilities *vis-à-vis* “its” (transborder) nation cut across the boundaries of territory and citizenship, that it has the right, even the obligation, to monitor, promote, and, if necessary, protect the interests of “its” ethnic co-nationals even when they live in other states and possess other citizenships. Precariously situated between these competing claims are the national minorities themselves – sharing citizenship but not (ethnocultural) nationality with the nationalizing state, and sharing nationality but not citizenship with the external national homeland.

Yet despite their directly opposed orientations, homeland and nationalizing nationalisms share one key similarity: both are oriented to a “nation” distinct from the citizenry of the state. In nationalizing states, this nation is smaller than the citizenry; for external national homelands, it is larger, extending beyond the citizenry – and beyond the territory of the state – to include citizens and residents of other states.¹² Both nationalizing and homeland nationalisms therefore reveal, although in differing ways, a deep tension inherent in the nation-state as a model of political organization – a tension between the “conceived order” or “imagined community” of the “nation”¹³ and the territorially framed organizational reality of the state.

¹² Concretely, to be sure, nationalizing and homeland nationalisms may be found together in the same state. This happens when the “core nation” cuts across the state’s citizenry such that a substantial fraction of the citizenry does not belong to the core nation, while a substantial fraction of the core nation are not citizens. Serbia is a nationalizing state *vis-à-vis* Albanians in Kosovo and an external national homeland *vis-à-vis* Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Romania is a nationalizing state *vis-à-vis* Hungarians, a homeland *vis-à-vis* Romanians in Moldova. Russia today is a homeland for diaspora Russians, but also (potentially) a nationalizing state *vis-à-vis* non-Russian minorities in Russia. Interwar Germany was of course not only an external national homeland for transborder Germans, but a murderously nationalizing state *vis-à-vis* Jews.

¹³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd edn (London: Verso, 1991); on the nation as conceived order, see M. Rainer Lepsius, “The Nation and Nationalism in Germany,” *Social Research* 52 (1985).

The dominant “Western” understandings of the nation-state, whether in their English, American, or French variants, provide no analytical purchase on this tension, for in these traditions (important differences among them notwithstanding) “nation” is seen as subsumed under, congruent with, and framed by the state. (Even in the American tradition, with its weak sense of stateness, “nation” is seen as congruent with if not as subsumed under the state.) Yet where “nation” is understood (in however imprecise a fashion) not as a coincident but as an *alternative* reference, cross-cutting rather than reinforcing the territorial and institutional frame of the state, the flattened, “Western” conception of the nation-state, collapsing nation and state into fully congruent categories, is inadequate. This is clearly the case in Central and Eastern Europe – the world region in which “nation” is most strongly established as a cognitive and evaluative frame independent of and incongruent with the frame of the territorial state.¹⁴

Weimar homeland nationalism

Origins

Although homeland nationalism in Germany emerged only in the last decades of the nineteenth century and crystallized as a significant political force only after the First World War, the incongruence and tension between the conceived order of the nation and the organizational reality of the state – a central precondition for the emergence of homeland nationalism – has deep roots in German history.¹⁵ Its matrix was the distinctive economic, political, and cultural geography of Central Europe. Two features of that geography are relevant here. First, western Germany lay in the heart of Europe’s “city belt,” a legacy of the overland trade routes of the middle ages, extending from Italy to the North Sea and the Baltic. In this zone, dubbed “polycephalic” by Stein Rokkan and Derek Urwin, the density of cities, ecclesiastical principalities, and other small but autonomous political jurisdictions created obstacles to the expansion and consolidation of centralized territorial states – obstacles that were much weaker in the “monocephalic” zones to the west and east of the city belt, where, in consequence, large centralized states emerged much earlier.¹⁶ The resultant long-standing fragmentation of political authority meant that ethnolinguistic and political boundaries did not even come close to coinciding in Central Europe. A second distinctive feature of Central European cultural geography has been the broad zone of ethnoculturally mixed settlement patterns extending eastward from the area of consolidated German settlement – a legacy of the large-scale eastward migration of German peasant settlers and colonists that occurred in several great waves in the

¹⁴ On cross-cutting conceptions of nationhood in the Soviet and post-Soviet contexts, see chapter 2, pp. 32-40, 45-6.

¹⁵ I have explored this tension in a different context in *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), Introduction and chapter 6.

¹⁶ Stein Rokkan and Derek Urwin, *Economy, Territory, Identity: Politics of West European Peripheries* (London: Sage, 1983), pp. 7-12, 16-17, 35-9.

high middle ages and again in the early modern era. Together with the fragmentation of political authority in western Germany, these extensive mixed zones in its eastern border-lands prevented congruence between ethnolinguistic and political boundaries.

Until the second half of the eighteenth century, no cultural or political significance was attached to the *Volksprache* (the language of the *Volk*, or of everyday life, as opposed to the *Staatsprache*, the language of public affairs). As a result, the lack of even remote congruence between ethno-linguistic and political units had no particular importance.¹⁷ This changed in the late eighteenth century: the *Volksprache* was celebrated most powerfully by Herder – as a matrix of creativity and individuality, and a conception of nation as founded on language and linguistically embedded culture took root among the flourishing German *Bildungsbürgertum*. From this time on, the imagined community of the ethno-cultural nation was available as a point of orientation, focus of value, source of identity, and locus of allegiance independent of – and potentially conflicting with – the state. Thus was realized one key precondition for homeland nationalism.

Through the end of the eighteenth century, this new ethnolinguistic or ethnocultural understanding of “nation” remained an apolitical, even antipolitical concept, while conceptions of statehood remained uninformed by the national idea. Around the turn of the nineteenth century, however, the two frames of reference – ethnocultural nation and territorial state – came to stand in a relation of dynamic tension to one another. The French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars – especially the crushing and ignominious defeat of Prussia by the French at Jena in 1806 – made a tremendous impression in Germany. That the state must seek to harness the energies of the nation, and the nation to embody itself in a state, became the conventional “progressive” wisdom. How this melding of nation and state might be accomplished was a central question of German political and intellectual life for the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century.

With the founding of the German Reich in 1870-1, representing the triumph of the *Prussian-kleindeutsch* over the *Austrian-grossdeutsch* project for a German nation-state, there was now, for the first time, a state claiming to embody the German nation. Yet the very “incompleteness” of this incarnation – the fact that millions of Germans, above all the eight million Austrian Germans, were excluded from the new state – created the possibility for homeland nationalism.¹⁸ Thus in the very act of becoming a nation-state – the long-sought state of and for the ethno-cultural German nation,

¹⁷ This lack of correspondence between linguistically embedded culture and polity, of course, was characteristic not only of Germany, but of most of the world before the age of nationalism. Its utterly unproblematic quality has been emphasized most vigorously by Ernest Gellner in *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983). For a contrasting view, see Anthony Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986).

¹⁸ On the Bismarckian Reich as an “incomplete” (*unvollendet*) nation-state, see Werner Conze, “Nationsbildung durch Trennung,” in Otto Pflanze, ed., *Innenpolitische Probleme des Bismarckreiches* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1983).

yet one that failed to incorporate substantial parts of that nation – the new German Reich became at the same time not only a cardinal point of cultural and political reference but also a potential external national homeland – patron, protector, and possible “redeemer” – for the excluded co-nationals.

In the first decade of the Reich, and through most of the second as well, homeland nationalism remained an unactivated potential. After the wars and territorial upheavals involved in the *Reichsgründung*, Bismarck’s chief foreign policy priority was to reestablish and maintain a stable European inter-state order so as to make possible the internal consolidation of the state; he repeatedly assured other European powers that the Reich was territorially “saturated.” Consistently statist rather than nationalist in orientation, moreover, Bismarck repudiated any suggestion that the Reich had a special responsibility for or concern with ethnic Germans outside its frontiers. Nor was there any significant body of opinion or organized constituency advocating such homeland-nationalist claims during these decades.¹⁹

The position of Germans outside the Reich, however, was beginning to change. Long-privileged Baltic Germans were increasingly threatened, from the late 1880s on, by Russification, Hungarian Germans by Magyarization. More importantly, German dominance in the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire was increasingly contested by the growing Slav majority, in particular by vigorous Czech, Polish, and Slovene national movements. In response to this challenge, a clamorous pan-German movement arose among Austrian Germans in the 1880s. Seeking to restore German hegemony in the core Austrian lands through their separation from the overwhelmingly Slav-inhabited outlying territories of Galicia and Dalmatia, the pan-Germans looked to the Reich for support and, covertly, for eventual incorporation of Austro-German lands.²⁰

This increasingly beleaguered position of Germans outside the Reich evoked in response an organized movement of support within the Reich. In this way homeland nationalist claims first found organized expression in Germany. The pioneering organization in this respect was the German School Association, which sought to sustain German schools outside the Reich so as to “preserve Germans outside the

¹⁹ See Theodor Schieder, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich von 1871 als Nationalstaat* (Cologne and Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1961), pp. 22ff., 42-3; Hans Rothfels, *Bismarck, der Osten und das Reich* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1960), Part I.

²⁰ Robert A. Kann, *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy, 1848-1918* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), vol. I, pp. 97ff; Schieder, *Das Deutsche Kaiserreich als Nationalstaat*, p. 50. Not only pan-Germans but other Habsburg Germans, disappointed by the Monarchy’s concessions to non-German nationalities, gradually began to reorient themselves to the Reich. For the case of the Sudeten Germans, see Rudolf Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit? Der sudetendeutsche Volkstumskampf in den Beziehungen zwischen der Weimarer Republik und der ČSR* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1977), pp. 34-5.

Reich for Germandom.”²¹ While this association (renamed Association for Germandom Abroad in 1908) focused on cultural support for co-ethnics abroad, the more radical Pan-German League, founded in the early 1890s, advanced political demands as well, presenting itself as a “national opposition” and advocating the “national consolidation of the entire German *Volkstum* in Central Europe, that is, the eventual establishment of *Grossdeutschland*.”²² The League’s president, Ernst Hasse, who was also a National Liberal deputy, often demanded in the Reichstag that the Reich actively intervene to support hard-pressed Germans outside the Reich.²³ This initial phase of homeland nationalism reached its peak of intensity in 1897, when violent Austro-German protests against an ordinance establishing Czech alongside German as an official administrative language in Bohemia and Moravia and requiring officials in those lands to know both languages induced a strong protest movement in the Reich as well.²⁴ In this moment of high enthusiasm for the Austro-German cause, a few influential diplomats and army figures even advocated the incorporation of Austro-German lands into the Reich.²⁵

The new homeland nationalism, however, remained politically weak, and proved unable to influence Reich policy. On foreign policy grounds, Bismarck’s successors continued to adhere to his strict noninterventionist stance *vis-à-vis* *Volksdeutsche* outside the Reich, and to exclude any consideration of a possible *Anschluss* of Austro-German lands. Moreover, demands for intervention on behalf of beleaguered *Volksgenossen* had no mass support and only fragmentary elite backing. This reflected not the weakness of nationalism in Imperial Germany but the extent to which nationalist sentiment was focused on and “contained” within the territorial and institutional frame of the Reich. “The nation,” for nationalists, no longer necessarily meant the institutionally amorphous *Kulturnation* but rather the *Staatsnation* constituted by the *Reichsgründung* and strengthened in the succeeding decades by the powerfully integrative workings of state-wide institutions, economic dynamism, and geo-political prestige. This “containment” was far from perfect; nationalism spilled over not only into concern for *Volksdeutsche* outside the Reich but also, and more significantly, into an imperialist *Weltpolitik*. On balance, however, the process of “concentration” of the concept of nation (and of “Deutschland”) onto the territory

²¹ Quoted in Otto Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland 1770-1990* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1993), p. 191.

²² Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 192.

²³ Schieder, *Das deutsche Kaiserreich als Nationalstaat*, p. 52.

²⁴ A. J. P. Taylor, *The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1918* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1948), pp. 181ff.; Robert A. Kann, *A History of the Habsburg Empire, 1526-1918* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), p. 441. More generally, organizational ties between Reich Germans and Austro-Germans in trans-border associations facilitated the development of a homeland-nationalist response in the Reich to the Austro-German predicament. See Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland*, p. 189.

²⁵ Schieder, *Das deutsche Kaiserreich als Nationalstaat*, p. 44.

and population of the Reich through the integrative workings of a dynamic, prestigious, “successful” territorial state at a moment of high geopolitical competition among states did much to weaken support for the transborder appeals of homeland nationalists.²⁶

The crystallization of homeland nationalism

This changed dramatically with the First World War and its aftermath. The fate of Germans outside the state – previously a peripheral concern of scattered intellectuals, with no mass support and no bearing on high politics – abruptly became a central preoccupation of nationally minded intellectuals, a focus of vigorous and broad-based associational activity, and an object of continuous and high-level state concern. Weimar Germany “crystallized,” in a way that Wilhelmine Germany had not, as an external national homeland for its ethnic co-nationals in other states.²⁷ This newly urgent transborder concern with “Germandom” – with what German authors have called *Deutschtumspolitik* or *Volkstumspolitik* – crystallized in response to the drastic and intertwined transformations experienced by the German state and by ethnic Germans living outside its borders in the aftermath of the war. The state suffered not only military defeat, political revolution, and loss of territory, but also – temporarily – loss of standing as a Great Power. The Weimar Republic’s territorial boundaries were fixed by a treaty universally denounced, in Germany, as unjust, illegitimate, and humiliating; its constitutional order was under attack from the beginning by the revolutionary Left as well as by the radical Right. With the basic territorial and institutional parameters of statehood thus deeply contested and lacking firm legitimacy, the Weimar Republic proved unable to “embody” the nation or to “contain” nationalism, as the Kaiserreich had done, within the territorial and institutional frame of the state. Because the state had lost much of its binding, integrative power, nationalism was partially de-territorialized and de-institutionalized. Nationhood, which had become firmly, though never exclusively, identified with the prestigious and “successful” state in the Bismarckian and Wilhelmine eras, was now detached from the devalued frame of the defeated state, and again identified primarily with the state-transcending, institutionally amorphous ethnocultural nation or *Volk*.²⁸

²⁶ *Ibid.* esp. pp. 40-3, 52, 168-9, n. 75; Jürgen Kocka, “Probleme der politischen Integration der Deutschen, 1867 bis 1945,” in Otto Busch and James Sheehan, eds., *Die Rolle der Nation in der deutschen Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1985).

²⁷ For an account of the multiple functional “crystallizations” of the state – each the center of its own “power network,” each involving a different set of institutions, tasks, and constituencies – see Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 75ff.

²⁸ Martin Broszat, “Die völkische Ideologie und der Nationalsozialismus,” *Deutsche Rundschau* 84, no. 1 (1958), 59-60.

This *völkisch* reorientation of nationalism reflected not only the weakness and (in the eyes of many nationalists) illegitimacy of the Weimar Republic but also the dramatically embattled position in which ethnic Germans beyond German state frontiers found themselves after the war.²⁹ Germans outside the Reich – neglecting overseas emigrants, who did not figure centrally in *Volkstumspolitik* – had lived chiefly in the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires. Their position, to be sure, had been weakening in the last decades before the war; precisely this had occasioned the initial formulations of homeland-nationalist demands in Wilhelmine Germany. It changed much more drastically, however, with the collapse of the great multinational empires. This was particularly true for the millions of Austro-Germans who were abruptly transformed from the *Staatsvolk* of a Great Power into national minorities in nationalizing Czechoslovakia (roughly 3 million) and in equally nationalist Italy (a quarter of a million). Nearly 2 million Germans from the Hungarian half of the Habsburg Empire became national minorities in rump Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia, as did the Baltic Germans in the new states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. An even sharper and (given German military successes on the Eastern front) entirely unexpected reversal in status was suffered by the million-plus Reich Germans in eastern and predominantly Polish districts of Prussia who suddenly and unexpectedly found themselves beyond the reach of German state authority in the incipient Polish state. All of these new (or newly reconfigured) states understood themselves as nation-states, as the states of and for particular ethnocultural nations; in all of them, Germans faced policies and practices of nationalization resembling in some respects those analyzed in Chapter 4.

It is not enough, however, to focus on the result of this transformation – on the status of ethnic Germans as new minorities in newly nationalizing states. What engaged the attention – and provoked the indignation – of Weimar nationalists were the processes and especially the struggles through which the transformation occurred. The reorganization of previously multinational political space along ostensibly national lines in Central and Eastern Europe was a protracted process that spanned several years.³⁰ It involved not only prolonged negotiations among the victorious Powers but also armed struggles to create “facts on the ground.” In some cases the

²⁹ The war itself had radically transformed the position of dispersed ethnic German communities in the western parts of the Russian Empire, that is, in the Baltic provinces and Russian Poland. Their fate was connected with the wider German community both by German occupation of these territories and by the tendency of Russia – fighting not only Germany but “German” Austria-Hungary as well – to define Germans, not only Germany, as the enemy. See Werner Conze, *Die Deutsche Nation* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1963), p. 104; Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland*, p. 218.

³⁰ Geoff Eley, “Remapping the Nation: War, Revolutionary Upheaval, and State Formation in Eastern Europe, 1914-1923,” in Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyi, eds., *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective*, 2nd edn (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1990).

demarcation of boundaries was delayed pending plebiscites; campaigns leading up to these again involved bitter and sometimes violent struggles. While the defeated and disarmed German state was unable to play a major role in this protracted shaping of the postwar settlement, non-state German groups such as the Freikorps captured the imagination of nationalists with their armed struggles on behalf of beleaguered *Deutschtum* in the Baltics, in the mixed German-Polish districts of Poznan and Upper Silesia, and along the German-Slovene frontier in Carinthia.³¹ These “heroic” struggles in the ethnic borderlands helped divert nationalists’ attention from the “impotent” state to the vigorous, autonomous *Volk*.

Even where the postwar settlement did not transform Germans into minorities, as in the creation of the rump Austrian state, the process of political reconfiguration created fertile ground for homeland nationalism in Germany. As the Austrian half of the Habsburg Empire fractured along national lines in the final stages of the war, Austro-Germans set their sights on union with Germany. Before the war, such a union, although envisioned as an eventuality by some pan-Germans in Austria and Germany, was not a serious possibility: as noted above, Bismarck and his successors consistently repudiated any initiative tending in this direction, since it would have entailed the disintegration of a Great Power that was Germany’s chief ally. But with the prewar state system destroyed and the disintegration of the Empire inevitable, these obstacles to *Anschluss* with Germany no longer existed. The principle of national self-determination, moreover, evoked by the Empire’s secessionist nationalities and enshrined in President Wilson’s Fourteen Points, seemed to provide a powerful warrant for *Anschluss*. On November 12, 1918, the Austrian Provisional National Assembly declared itself a Republic and part of the German Reich; this was endorsed by the Weimar National Assembly.³² Support for *Anschluss* in 1918-19 was nearly unanimous, across all party lines, in German Austria and Germany.³³ Yet at the insistence of France, unwilling to create a larger and more populous Germany, the victorious Powers prohibited the union. So while Austria became a German state, the Allies’ refusal to allow union with Germany reinforced the conception – basic to homeland nationalism – of Germans as a state-transcending *Volk* to whom the right

³¹ Broszat notes that new national legends that arose after the First World War concern not the core state but ethnic Germans in the borderlands and beyond (“Die völkische Ideologie und der Nationalsozialismus,” 60). See also Max Hildebert Boehm, “Die Reorganisation der Deutschtumsarbeit nach dem ersten Weltkrieg,” *Ostdeutsche Wissenschaft: Jahrbuch des ostdeutschen Kulturrates* 5 (1959), 12-13.

³² Conze, *Die Deutsche Nation*, p. 109.

³³ Indeed it has been argued that German democrats were even more strongly committed to *Anschluss* than conservatives, partly because they hoped the inclusion of Austria would counter Prussian predominance in the Reich. See Stanley Suval, *The Anschluss Question in the Weimar Era* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 23-4; Michael Laffan, “Weimar and Versailles: German Foreign Policy, 1919-1933,” in Laffan, ed., *The Burden of German History 1919-45* (London: Methuen, 1988), p. 84.

of national self-determination was denied at the same time that this right was trumpeted in principle as the basis of the postwar settlement. One further factor nourishing Weimar homeland nationalism was the flow of ethnic German resettlers to Germany.³⁴ From the territories ceded to Poland after the war there was a mass migration of roughly two-thirds of the ethnic German population.³⁵ Predominantly urban, and well-schooled in ethnonational struggle from the decades-long efforts before the war to secure the ethnonationally mixed eastern districts of Prussia for “Germandom,” these resettlers formed a ready-made constituency and reservoir of leadership for Weimar *Deutschumpolitik*. The flow of German resettlers from the Baltic states, the Sudetenland, and other formerly Russian and Austro-Hungarian territories, although much smaller, also included many who became actively involved in the “Germandom” cause. Through this latter migration, ethnonational perspectives formed in the great multinational Romanov and Habsburg empires, often without any special reference to Germany, were trans-posed to and internalized within Germany itself.

Civil society homeland nationalism

Weimar *Deutschumpolitik* was not confined to the state. It embraced all those, within and outside the state, who articulated, propagated, or tried to inculcate a concern with and sense of responsibility for *Deutschum* as a whole, and for German minorities in other states in particular.

Deutschumpolitik in this broad sense flourished in Weimar civil society. Although some associations and organizations concerned with ethnic Germans outside Germany had been established before the war, scores of new ones sprung up in its aftermath. Many of these, to be sure, were transitory groupings of little significance.³⁶ Still, Germandom-oriented associational activities did involve considerably wider circles of participants than their prewar analogues. The Association for Germandom Abroad, the only prewar association to retain a central place in Weimar *Volkstumspolitik*, did so by transforming itself into a mass organization with 2 million members and a strong base in the schools.³⁷ Another major Germandom organization, the German Protective League for Border and Foreign Germandom, united in a loose federation over a hundred Germandom-oriented associations, many émigré-based and focused on particular German minority communities, others based abroad in the minority communities themselves.³⁸ A third organization, the

³⁴ Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland*, p. 266; Broszat, “Die völkische Ideologie und der Nationalsozialismus,” 61.

³⁵ Richard Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles: The Germans in Western Poland, 1918-1939* (Lexington: Kentucky University Press, 1993), chapter 2.

³⁶ Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, p. 151.

³⁷ Boehm, “Reorganisation,” 19; Dann, *Nation und Nationalismus in Deutschland*, p. 267.

³⁸ Bastiaan Schot, *Nation oder Staat? Deutschland und der Minderheitenschutz* (Marburg/ Lahn: J. G. Herder-Institut, 1988), pp. 106ff.

Organization of German Ethnonational Groups in Europe, linked German minority organizations throughout Europe, and was active primarily in international fora, mainly the League of Nations and the Congress of European Nationalities. Youth and church groups too were involved in Germandom-oriented activities. Trips were arranged for youth groups to familiarize them with ethnic German communities in other states.³⁹ Church-based associations – the Evangelical Gustav Adolf Association and the Reich Association of Catholic Germans Abroad – provided substantial material as well as moral support for German co-confessionals abroad.⁴⁰

In the associational sphere, then, concern with Germandom across state frontiers was much more vibrant and broad-based than it had been before the war. Public interest in co-nationals abroad was both expressed in and reinforced by what Martin Broszat has described as a “flood of belletristic, polemical-political and half-scientific literature” concerned with Germandom abroad as well as an abundance of newsletters and periodicals on the subject.⁴¹ At its more academic pole, this literature shaded over into *Ostforschung*, research on “the East,” which received a major impetus during and after the war, and much of which focused on the territories ceded to Poland and on other areas of ethnic German settlement in *Ostmitteleuropa*.⁴² At its more reportorial pole, it shaded over into “ordinary” journalism, which also (especially the more nationalist oppositional papers) devoted considerable attention to the tribulations of Germans in other states.

The boundary between civil society and the state, in the domain of *Deutschumpolitik*, was anything but sharp. In 1919-20, the government, prohibited from acting itself, worked through nominally private associations to check the Polish uprising in Poznan in early 1919 and to organize voters in the plebiscite districts in West and East Prussia in 1920.⁴³ Throughout the Weimar period, the government channeled money to the *Auslandsdeutsche* through ostensibly private but in fact state-controlled intermediary organizations; it also provided funding for the major Weimar Germandom-oriented associations, trying in return, with little success, to promote their coordination and consolidation.⁴⁴ Close connections between leading figures in the associations and state agencies concerned with *Auslandsdeutsche* further eroded the

³⁹ Conze, *Die Deutsche Nation*, p. 113; Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, p. 73.

⁴⁰ Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, pp. 71ff.; Karl-Heinz Grundmann, *Deutschumpolitik zur Zeit der Weimarer Republik: Eine Studie am Beispiel der deutsch-baltischen Minderheit in Estland und Lettland* (Hanover-Döhren: Harro v. Hirschheydt, 1977), p.124.

⁴¹ Broszat, “Die völkische Ideologie und der Nationalsozialismus,” 61

⁴² Michael Burleigh, *Germany Turns Eastward: A Study of Ostforschung in the Third Reich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Grundmann, *Deutschumpolitik*, pp. 125ff.

⁴³ Schot, *Nation oder Staat?*, pp. 87-8, 111.

⁴⁴ Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, pp. 150ff. In some instances, government subsidies for *Ostforschung* institutes clearly compromised the integrity of research; see Martin Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1972), p. 231.

boundary.⁴⁵ Yet despite the blurring of this boundary, Germandom-oriented activities in civil society constituted a distinct domain of *Deutschumpolitik*. These activities created a dense web of relations linking leaders of the various minority German communities with one another and with Germans in the Reich and Austria. And they contributed to the formation of Weimar public opinion, sustaining public interest in and concern with the fate of minority Germans, and supporting the understanding of the German nation as a state-transcending ethnocultural unity.

Discourse and activities in this domain tended to be *Volk-* rather than state-oriented. To be sure, many – probably the overwhelming majority – of those involved in Weimar Germandom-oriented activities, like the Weimar citizenry as a whole, hoped for eventual border revisions that would bring Austria and key portions of territories ceded to Poland into the Reich. Some envisioned a more far-reaching territorial reorganization of Central Europe that would unite all contiguously settled Germans, including the Sudeten Germans of Czechoslovakia, in a single state. Yet whatever their hopes for territorial revision, these did not directly govern their activities in the sphere of *Deutschumpolitik*. Border revision was a distant dream, not a concrete goal toward which one could work with any hope of achieving it. From a *Volk-oriented* perspective, moreover, the urgent imperative was not to change state frontiers but to diminish their significance, to strengthen the *Volk* as a self-subsistent, autonomous entity,⁴⁶ and to strengthen public awareness of and interest in this state-transcending *Volk*. There were, to be sure, ambiguities and outright contradictions involved in this stance, in this concern to “organize the organic *Volk*,” to deploy the financial means of the state to increase the autonomy of the *Volk*.⁴⁷ But an underlying *völkisch* orientation did distinguish the homeland nationalism of Weimar civil society from that of the Weimar state.

Official Weimar homeland nationalism

Before the First World War, as I indicated above, the German state had carefully refrained from making commitments to or claims on behalf of ethnic Germans outside the Reich, limiting itself to noncommittal expressions of sympathy for its ethnocultural kin. This changed sharply after the war. The state became continuously implicated in *Deutschumpolitik*.

The core of official *Deutschumpolitik* involved covert financial support for Germans outside the Reich. Funding was channeled through intermediary organizations that were nominally private but in fact financed and controlled by the government; this arrangement permitted the government to avoid public debate and accountability in this domain and thereby to shield this support from the scrutiny

⁴⁵ Schot, *Nation oder Staat?*, pp. 93, 99, 109.

⁴⁶ The most sophisticated theoretical exposition of this aim can be found in Boehm's *Das eigenständige Volk*.

⁴⁷ Broszat, “Die völkische Ideologie und der Nationalsozialismus,” 63.

both of the minority-harboring states and of the Allies.⁴⁸ Through these backdoor channels the Reich provided substantial support for German schools, newspapers, churches, charitable organizations, and social and cultural activities. It provided credit for beleaguered German farming and business interests and sought to help preserve German land ownership.⁴⁹ Using its funding as leverage, moreover, the government sought – albeit with little success – to promote the consolidation of the numerous German organizations abroad and, failing that, to monitor, coordinate and control their activities (again in a discreet, behind-the-scenes manner). The Foreign Affairs Ministry in particular attempted this task of coordination and control, in order to prevent embarrassing incidents or activities (such as openly irredentist activities) that could interfere with Reich foreign policy, to resolve disputes among and promote the unity of minority German organizations, and to promote activities consistent with Reich foreign policy aims.

Rhetorical invocations of the plight of transborder Germans were often highly generalized, referring to *Grenz-* and *Auslandsdeutschum* as a whole.⁵⁰ This generalized rhetoric, however, masked differentiated policies. This is best illustrated by the differing Weimar policies towards transborder Germans in Poland and Czechoslovakia.⁵¹ The situation of Germans in these states – by any reckoning the two most important communities of Germans outside the Reich – was in certain respects quite similar. In both states, Germans were large and (for the most part) territorially concentrated communities.⁵² In both states, Germans were borderland

⁴⁸ On the most important of these nominally private institutions, the *Deutsche Stiftung*, see especially Norbert Krekler, *Revisionsanspruch und geheime Ostpolitik der Weimarer Republik* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1973), pp. 16ff.; Schot, *Nation oder Staat?*, pp. 132-3.

⁴⁹ Krekler, *Revisionsanspruch*, pp. 65ff.

⁵⁰ Interwar German public discussion made a standard distinction between the *Grenzdeutsche*, compactly settled in areas adjoining the Reich and part of the contiguously settled German population of Central Europe, and *Auslandsdeutsche* proper, who lived in German enclaves or were dispersed amidst non-German populations.

⁵¹ See Rudolf Jaworski, “The German Minorities in Poland and Czechoslovakia in the Interwar Period,” in Smith, ed., *Ethnic Groups in International Relations*; Wolfgang Jacobmeyer, “Die deutschen Minderheiten in Polen und in der Tschechoslowakei in den dreissiger Jahren,” *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, 31 (1986); and Manfred Alexander, “Der Politik der Weimarer Republik gegenüber den deutschen Minderheiten in Ostmitteleuropa, 1918-1926,” *Annali dell'istituto Storico Italo-Germanico in Trento*, vol. IV (Bologna: Mulino, 1978).

⁵² German concentration was, however, much greater in Czechoslovakia. Germans comprised nearly a quarter of the total population of the state, and were an absolute majority in 4,000 *Gemeinden* (Jacobmeyer, “Die deutschen Minderheiten,” p. 21). In Poland, although there were local German majorities before World War I in some areas ceded after the war to Poland, the great wave of emigration from these regions left “not a single Landkreis or significant town in the area ceded to Poland which still had a German majority” (Richard Blanke, “The German Minority in Inter-war Poland and German Foreign Policy,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 25 (1990), 93).

minorities, inhabiting regions contiguous to the Reich (and thereby of much greater and more immediate concern to the Reich than, say, the distant Russian Germans). In both states, finally, Germans had been unexpectedly and unwillingly transformed from the *Staatsvolke* of a Great Power into what they perceived as second-class citizens of third-class states.

Yet there were also three key differences between Germans in Poland and in Czechoslovakia. First, the borderland Germans of Poland had been citizens of Germany until 1919; some retained their Reich citizenship even after the war. The Sudeten Germans of the Bohemian and Moravian borderlands, by contrast, had been citizens of Austro-Hungary, and had never in modern times been united with the Reich-Germans in a single state. Second, there was a mass exodus of Germans from the newly Polish territories to Germany immediately after the war, and continuing into the 1920s, while there was no comparable large-scale migration of Sudeten Germans to the Reich (or to Austria, for that matter).⁵³ Third, the Weimar regime had territorial claims against Poland – indeed revision of the Polish border was a fundamental axiom of Weimar foreign policy – but not against Czechoslovakia. These differences were interdependent: all reflected the fact that the borderland territories inhabited by Germans in Poland had long belonged to Germany, while those inhabited by Germans in Czechoslovakia had long been part of a separate state. The Reich and Germans in western Poland were united by longstanding political as well as ethnocultural ties, by ties of common statehood and common citizenship, not merely (as was the case for the relation between the Reich and the Germans of Czechoslovakia) by the ties of common language and culture.

Reflecting these basic differences, Weimar policies and practices concerning co-nationals in Poland and Czechoslovakia differed substantially. Outrage over the territorial settlement in the east, empathy for the large numbers of ethnic Germans – and Reich citizens – who had suddenly come under Polish rule, and apprehensions concerning their large-scale migration to Germany together meant that initial government attention was concentrated almost exclusively on Germans in Poland, specifically on those in the ceded territories. Indeed, far more attention and resources continued throughout the Weimar era to be focused on co-nationals in western Poland than on those elsewhere in the “new abroad.”⁵⁴ Moreover, attention and resources were concentrated on an immediate and concrete aim in the Polish case: to stop or at least limit the reflux of Germans into the Reich and thereby to secure the continued existence of the German minority in the western borderlands of the new Polish state. To this end, the Reich limited payments of compensation for re-settlers (since such payments only encouraged further resettlement) and developed instead a

⁵³ See Chapter 6 for a discussion of post-World War I migrations of ethnic unmixing involving Germans and other formerly dominant nationalities.

⁵⁴ Helmut Pieper, *Die Minderheitenfrage und das deutsche Reich 1919-1933/34* (Hamburg: Institut für Internationale Angelegenheiten der Universität Hamburg, 1974), p. 58; Jaworski, “German Minorities,” 179.

system of “anticipatory compensation” or “preventive refugee assistance” for Germans still in Poland, involving cash payments to the unemployed, loans to German enterprises, and supplementary cash support for needy German pensioners.⁵⁵

This immediate aim of stopping the influx into Germany, in turn, was inseparably linked to longer-term revisionist aims: as leading Foreign Ministry officials frankly acknowledged in internal documents, it was necessary to preserve a substantial German presence in the ceded territories in order to be able to make ethnodemographically plausible revisionist claims on those territories in the future.⁵⁶ Substantial Reich outlays for agricultural credits from 1924 on, intended to preserve German landownership in the ceded territories, were also seen as buttressing future revisionist claims. It would be one-sided, to be sure, to see Weimar support for Germans in Poland solely in terms of Germany’s revisionist aspirations.⁵⁷ The ties of common citizenship, only recently and (from the German point of view) arbitrarily ruptured, could be seen to require such support, irrespective of possibilities for territorial revision, while limiting the reflux of minority Germans to the Reich was justified by economic as well as ethnopolitical considerations.⁵⁸ Moreover, the government discouraged openly irredentist activities by minority organizations; it aimed to preserve the possibility of revision in the long term, not directly to foster an irredentist stance on the part of the minority.⁵⁹ Finally, while revisionist hopes focused on parts of the ceded territories (on the “Corridor” that cut off East Prussia from the rest of German territory and on Upper Silesia, not on Poznan), aid was generally distributed to Germans throughout the ceded territories, indeed in many cases to Germans throughout Poland.⁶⁰ Yet even when these and other factors are taken into consideration, it remains indisputable that definite revisionist commitments substantially shaped Weimar *Deutschumpolitik vis-à-vis* Poland.

The same cannot be said for Weimar *Deutschumpolitik vis-à-vis* Czechoslovakia.⁶¹ In organizational form, to be sure, support for Sudeten Germans looked very much like support for the Germans of western Poland: money was channeled through intermediary organizations that were nominally private but in fact closely controlled by the Reich government. In the cultural and caritative domain, moreover, the pattern of support was similar, although funding was at a considerably lower level than in Poland. Schools were here too the top priority, but newspapers, charitable organizations, cultural associations, and various social and cultural programs and activities were also supported. Weimar support for Sudeten Germans, however,

⁵⁵ Krekler, *Revisionsanspruch*, pp. 48-59.

⁵⁶ Broszat, *Zweihundert Jahre deutsche Polenpolitik*, p. 228.

⁵⁷ On this point I follow Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, esp. pp. 159ff.

⁵⁸ Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, p. 161; Krekler, *Revisionsanspruch*, p. 63.

⁵⁹ See the 1922 Foreign Ministry circular that is quoted in Krekler, *Revisionsanspruch*, p.44.

⁶⁰ Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, p. 161.

⁶¹ Jaworski, “German Minorities,” 179-80.

lacked the urgency, the immediate practical objectives, and the clear long-run strategic significance of support for the Germans of western Poland. There was no threat – from harshly nationalizing policies or heavy outmigration – to the very existence of the German minority in Czechoslovakia, nor was there any commitment to incorporating Sudeten German lands in the Reich.⁶² The Weimar government encouraged Sudeten Germans to address their grievances by working within the new state, as loyal Czechoslovak citizens.⁶³ Although Sudeten Germans figured centrally in the unfolding of the Munich crisis and in Hitler’s dismemberment of the Czechoslovak state, they did not – in marked contrast to the Germans of western Poland – figure centrally in Weimar foreign policy. The Reich did not object to the postwar incorporation of Sudeten German lands into Czechoslovakia, but sought rather to establish good relations with the new state from the outset.⁶⁴ And while the status of the Sudeten Germans was an irritant in German-Czechoslovak relations, those relations – again in marked contrast to the chronically hostile relations between Germany and Poland – remained at least “correct” throughout the Weimar era.

Yet the contrast between Weimar *Deutschtumspolitik* towards Poland and towards Czechoslovakia, although substantial, should not be overdrawn. Weimar support for the Sudeten Germans was not purely cultural, not innocent of political design. Although it had no claims on Czechoslovak territory, the Reich nonetheless refused to guarantee the German-Czechoslovak frontier; it preferred to leave the Sudeten German question – even its territorial aspect – formally open, so as to be able to extract maximum diplomatic leverage, in pursuit of other foreign policy aims, from its acknowledged status as external national homeland for the Sudeten Germans.⁶⁵ Covert government subsidies for radically nationalist Sudeten émigré associations in the Reich, whose radical demands could then be cited, in diplomatic discussions, as evidence of the pressure of public opinion on the government, also suggest the Weimar regime’s interest in exploiting the Sudeten German issue as a diplomatic bargaining chip.⁶⁶ At the same time, the Reich hoped to work through the Sudeten Germans to influence Czechoslovak foreign policy in a manner favorable to Germany, above all to promote the interpenetration of the Czechoslovak and

German economies as part of a broader, if never precisely defined, aspiration for German economic hegemony in East Central Europe and the Balkans.⁶⁷

In view of this substantial program of covert state support for co-nationals abroad, and the vigor of civil society homeland nationalism, it is surprising that public articulation of homeland nationalist themes by state and government officials remained rather muted and limited. At certain political conjunctures, to be sure, official homeland nationalist rhetoric did become more salient. Thus, for example, Gustav Stresemann, Weimar foreign minister from late 1923 through his death in 1929, used homeland nationalist idioms to counter the nationalist Right’s vehement attacks on his *rapprochement* with the Western powers in the 1925 Locarno agreements and his proposal to join the League of Nations. *Rapprochement* with the West, Stresemann argued to his domestic nationalist opponents, would “open up new possibilities” for German revisionism in the East, while League membership would enable Germany more effectively to defend the League-guaranteed rights of its co-nationals,⁶⁸ the violation of which had been emphasized above all by the nationalist Right. By comparison with post-Soviet Russia, however, official public pronouncements on the obligation to aid co-ethnics in other states were neither particularly frequent nor particularly salient in Weimar Germany (a point I return to, and seek to explain, in the final section of this chapter).

In an internal memorandum of 1925, Stresemann made the case for a more energetic and visible official public engagement on behalf of German minorities. After emphasizing the “extraordinarily endangered situation” of German minorities and the “inestimable political, cultural, and economic importance to the Reich” of preserving these communities and their German spirit [*Gesinnung*], Stresemann argued that this end could best be realized by working to influence world public opinion.

“*Machtpolitisch*” means – for example, coercive diplomacy or military intervention – were foreclosed by the present European balance of power; and financial help – limited in any event – could help minorities exercise rights, but not compensate for their lack of rights. Thus the “only way open to the German Reich of truly helping its co-nationals [*Volksgenossen*] living under the sovereignty of a foreign state” was to “interest world opinion so strongly in the fate of oppressed German minorities that the majority peoples will be compelled through inter-national pressure to grant them

⁶² It is true that the Reich refused to guarantee Czechoslovak as well as Polish borders, and some have seen this as an indicator of latent revisionism *vis-à-vis* Czechoslovakia. But certainly there were no focused, specific revisionist commitments *vis-à-vis* Czechoslovakia, while such specific revisionist commitments *vis-à-vis* Poland are abundantly documented.

⁶³ Jaworski, “German Minorities,” p. 180. See also F. Gregory Campbell, *Confrontation in Central Europe: Weimar Germany and Czechoslovakia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 162.

⁶⁴ Peter Krüger, *Die Aussenpolitik der Republik von Weimar* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985), pp. 57, 113; Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, pp. 137-8.

⁶⁵ Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, pp. 138-9.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.141.

⁶⁷ See Stresemann’s *Denkschrift* of 1925, reprinted in Schot, *Nation oder Staat?*, p. 215; Krüger, *Aussenpolitik*, p. 113; Campbell, *Confrontation*, pp. 77, 266-7; Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, pp. 187-8; Wolfgang Michalka, “Deutsche Aussenpolitik 1920-1933,” in Karl Dietrich Bracher, Manfred Funke, and Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, eds., *Die Weimarer Republik* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1987), p. 318; Johann Wolfgang Brügel, *Tschechen und Deutsche 1918-1938* (Munich: Nymphenburger, 1967), pp.221-2.

⁶⁸ Annelise Thimme, “Gustav Stresemann: Legende und Wirklichkeit,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 181 (1956), 315-16; Carole Fink, “Stresemann’s Minority Policies, 1924-29,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 14 (1979), 405ff.; Fink, “Defender of Minorities: Germany in the League of Nations, 1926-1933,” *Central European History* 4 (1972), 336ff.

their vital [*lebendsnotwendige*] cultural freedoms” – above all the freedom to establish schools in which children study “not only in the German language, but in the German spirit [*Gesinnung*].” Stresemann conceded that League of Nations supervision of the legal rights granted minorities in the peace treaties had been very weak in practice, indeed “almost illusory.” But more important than the working of the League provisions themselves was their importance as a “means of influencing world public opinion.” Already, minorities’ numerous complaints to the League of Nations had “made the minority problem a question of international interest. . . and a liberal [*grosszügig*] solution of this problem in Europe is seen as a precondition of any lasting peace.” Germany should therefore seek to “further strengthen this existing trend of world public opinion.” In particular, it should seek to “persuade world public opinion that. . . cultural autonomy is a natural right of every minority.” This, after all, was simply “a particular case of the principle – already long recognized by the world in theory – of the self-determination of peoples, and the realization of this principle need not require changes in territorial borders. . . The wish to avoid further violent convulsions in Europe is today. . . so strong, that an idea that promises to reduce the explosiveness of the European situation is bound sooner or later to win over the opinion of the world.”⁶⁹

This grand vision remained conspicuously unrealized. Stresemann did give minority protection a somewhat higher profile within the League of Nations; but he did not undertake the wide-ranging campaign envisaged in the 1925 memorandum, and a rather modest German proposal to reform League minority protection procedures was quietly buried. *Auslandsdeutsche* and Weimar nationalists, whose hopes for a forceful German *Minderheitenpolitik* had been aroused by Stresemann’s earlier rhetoric, were disappointed.⁷⁰ There were several reasons for Stresemann’s caution in pressing this agenda in the League. The granting of full cultural autonomy to minorities within Germany – conceived by Stresemann as a key precondition for this campaign – was blocked by Prussian opposition.⁷¹ Moreover, considerable

⁶⁹ Stresemann’s *Denkschrift* is printed in full in Schot, *Nation oder Staat?*, pp. 286-92.

⁷⁰ Martin Broszat, “Aussen- und innenpolitische Aspekte der Preussisch-Deutschen Minderheitenpolitik in der Ära Stresemann,” in Kurt Klöxer and Wolfgang Mommsen, eds., *Politische Ideologien und nationalstaatliche Ordnung* (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1968), p. 442; Fink, “Stresemann’s Minority Policies,” 408ff.; Fink, “Defender of Minorities,” 339-40; for more detail, Carole Fink, “The Weimar Republic as the Defender of Minorities, 1919-1933,” Ph.D. Dissertation, Yale University, 1968, *passim*.

⁷¹ The best analysis of the interrelation between Germany’s internal minority policy and its external concern for the rights of Germans abroad remains Broszat, “Aussen- und innenpolitische Aspekte.” While the Foreign Ministry, from 1925 on, pushed for a generous Reich-wide policy of full cultural autonomy for minorities, the proposal foundered on the resistance of state governments – and particularly Prussia, where most minorities were located. In 1928, finally, limited concessions were made regarding minority schooling in Prussia, and Stresemann indeed pushed the minority agenda more vigorously after this time. But this fell far short of the initial demands for full cultural autonomy, which would enable Germany (while

international skepticism regarding German sponsorship of minority protection – in particular the all-too-transparent connection between this sponsorship and Germany’s revisionist aspirations – diminished the political attractiveness of such a campaign. Finally, Stresemann was reluctant to expend scarce political capital by pushing too aggressively in the League for minority protection at the expense of other, more immediately pressing foreign policy goals – above all a reduction in German reparations payments and the withdrawal of Allied occupation troops from the Rhineland – to which Stresemann was committed, and for which he required the support of the Western powers.⁷²

After Stresemann’s death, Germany did adopt a more aggressive stance in the League in the sphere of *Minderheitenpolitik*, reflecting the generally more confrontational character of foreign policy in Weimar’s last years.⁷³ But this did not occur in the manner foreseen by Stresemann in the 1925 memorandum. Rather than occupy the moral high ground as an advocate of universal minority rights, Germany became embroiled in acrimonious confrontations with Poland over the status of Germans in Poland, indeed precisely in those areas of Poland – the Corridor and Upper Silesia – that were the focus of German revisionist aspirations. Through this and other developments, Germany became increasingly isolated in, and disenchanted with, the League.⁷⁴ The League system of minority protection – which never functioned to the satisfaction of minorities, host states, or external national homelands in any event – was on the verge of breaking down. And it did break down soon thereafter: the would-be “defender of minorities” became their greatest persecutor with the Nazi seizure of power; Germany withdrew from the League in October 1933; and Poland renounced its Minority Treaty a year later.

The legacy of Weimar homeland nationalism

Weimar homeland nationalism was a complex – and far from coherent – web of political stances, cultural idioms, organizational networks, and transborder social relations.⁷⁵ As a *political* phenomenon, homeland nationalism involved a set of

avoiding a simple politics of reciprocity and using instead the language of “natural rights”) to demand similarly broad cultural autonomy for its own minorities in other states.

⁷² Stresemann’s one dramatically confrontational League intervention in the sphere of minority protection – a passionate, table-pounding reply to Polish Foreign Minister Zaleski, who had denounced the numerous petitions to the League by the *Deutscher Volksbund*, the major German minority organization in Upper Silesia, as “bordering on treason” – seems to have been a calculated gesture aimed at placating domestic nationalist critics, dismayed at his lack of energetic action on behalf of German minorities (Fink, “Stresemann’s Minority Policies,” 411; Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, pp. 132-3).

⁷³ Fink, “Defender,” 352ff.; Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, p. 135.

⁷⁴ Fink, “Defender,” 354ff.

⁷⁵ Political, cultural, organizational, and social-relational aspects of Weimar homeland nationalism were, of course, closely intertwined. I distinguish them here not in order to suggest

“moves” in both domestic and international political arenas. In the domestic arena, these moves were intertwined with party competition; in the interstate arena, they were bound up with – and generally subordinate to – Germany’s efforts to recover sovereignty, revise the Treaty of Versailles, and reestablish its position as a Great Power and regional hegemon. Because of this intertwining, Weimar homeland nationalism cannot be understood solely in terms of its own “internal” logic, cannot be analyzed as an “autonomous” domain of politics. Homeland nationalist stances were often deployed instrumentally, in a more or less consciously calculated fashion, as a means to other ends. At the limit, this could involve a cynical exploitation of homeland nationalist rhetoric for purposes indifferent, indeed hostile, to the specific interests of transborder Germans. In general, however, the resonance and taken-for-granted legitimacy of homeland nationalist discourse in Weimar Germany meant that homeland nationalist stance-taking could be objectively strategic and at the same time subjectively “sincere.”

As a *cultural* phenomenon, Weimar homeland nationalism involved the articulation, propagation, and appropriation of a set of idioms of identification with, and responsibility for, transborder Germans. These idioms represented transborder Germans as full members of the German national community, of the German *Volk*. In this discourse, “nation” and “*Volk*” were detached from the frame of the state and implicitly or explicitly redefined in ethnocultural terms. In its more elaborate forms, this expansive outward redefinition of the nation to include transborder Germans was one key component of the broader *völkisch* movement that flourished in Weimar Germany. (The other – more familiar and more fateful – component of *völkisch* thought and discourse was of course the restrictive inward redefinition of the nation to exclude Jews.)⁷⁶ This discourse of identification with and responsibility for co-nationals abroad was articulated and propagated by journalists, publicists, scholars in *Ostforschung* institutes, émigrés from transborder German communities, and activists in Germanism-oriented associations and organizations – categories that were often closely overlapping. It was appropriated and used by politicians and state officials as well, but generally in fragmentary fashion and without the anti-statist implications of consistently *Volk*-oriented discourse.

As an *organizational* phenomenon, Weimar homeland nationalism involved a network of state agencies, formally private but more or less state-controlled organizations, and voluntary associations.⁷⁷ This network provided a rich variety of organized sites for the development and promotion of interest in, expertise about,

that these were sharply distinct spheres or forms of homeland nationalism, but rather in order to highlight the complex, multifaceted nature of that nationalism.

⁷⁶ On the duality of *völkisch* thought, see Broszat, “Die völkische Ideologie und der Nationalsozialismus.”

⁷⁷ For the official and semi-official organizations, the best sources are Krekler, *Revisionsanspruch*, and Schot, *Nation oder Staat?* For voluntary associations, see especially Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*

and activity on behalf of ethnic Germans beyond the frontiers of the Reich. The leading personnel in these organizations and associations were well connected with one another, partly through overlapping memberships and interlocking directorates, partly through joint participation in a variety of meetings touching on the affairs of *Auslandsdeutsche*. Together, they constituted an organized “public,” a structured, differentiated space of communication, discussion, and debate.

As a *social-relational* phenomenon, finally, Weimar homeland nationalism involved the organized cultivation and maintenance of a dense network of cross-border relations and the organized provision of a steady cross-border flow of resources. These relations and resource flows – funded, for the most part, by a few state agencies but organized in decentralized fashion through the network of organizations and associations described above – not only linked *Auslandsdeutsche* to Weimar Germany but, perhaps more importantly, contributed to detaching them from the states in which they lived. This restructuring of social networks and relations was most important in the case of the Sudeten Germans. The networks and relations of Germans in the western borderlands of Poland had long been framed by the Prussian and German states; in their case, Weimar homeland nationalism aimed at sustaining or reconstituting social relations that had been disrupted by the change in borders, not at reorienting those relations in a new direction. The networks and relations of Sudeten Germans, by contrast, had been framed by the Habsburg state but were substantially restructured after its collapse. In part, of course, this involved the reframing of networks and relations by the new – and administratively comparatively strong – Czechoslovak state; but it involved at the same time – and in tension with this statist reframing – a reorientation of external ties (ties outside Bohemia and Moravia) away from German Austria and toward the German Reich, reflecting the fact that it was unambiguously Weimar Germany, not the rump Austrian state, that had assumed the multifaceted role of external national homeland for Sudeten Germans. The strengthening of Sudeten German ties with Germany, in turn, encouraged the Sudeten German elite to look to Germany for solutions to their problems rather than seek a durable *modus vivendi* within the Czechoslovak state.⁷⁸

The vicissitudes of homeland nationalism after the Nazi seizure of power lie beyond the scope of this chapter. It is worth noting in passing, however, that the

⁷⁸ Jaworski, “Die Sudetendeutsche als Minderheit,” 35. For a richly detailed account of this reorientation of social relations, see Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, pp. 70ff. Throughout the Weimar period, there was a struggle among Sudeten Germans between “activists,” who favored working within the Czechoslovak state, and who participated in coalition governments from 1926 through 1938, and “negativists,” who rejected all political engagement in the new state. As Jaworski has shown, however, the activists were in a weak position, partly because of the strong elite disposition to look for support to Weimar Germany. Strikingly, even the activist political leaders sought approval from high officials in Berlin for their decision to enter the Czechoslovak coalition government (Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, esp. pp. 179ff.; Campbell, *Confrontation in Central Europe*, p. 168).

Nazis appropriated the political, cultural, organizational, and social-relational legacy of Weimar homeland nationalism:

the calculated deployment of homeland nationalist stances in domestic and international arenas; the *völkisch* idioms of identification with and responsibility for transborder Germans; the network of official, semi-official, and unofficial agencies, organizations, and associations concerned with co-nationals abroad; and the web of cross-border ties and resource flows. In this sense, one can speak of continuity between Weimar and Nazi homeland nationalism.⁷⁹ And there was in fact no abrupt break in the early years of the new regime. Indeed, homeland nationalist themes at first receded from public view as the regime focused on internal consolidation, pursued an initially cautious line in foreign policy, and discouraged the press from focusing on the problems of the German minority in Poland in the wake of the German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact of 1934.⁸⁰

Yet the Weimar legacy was radically transformed in the context of the aggressive Nazi foreign policy of the late 1930s (and again in the context of imperialist war and German occupation in the East). The cautious diplomatic use of homeland nationalist themes in Weimar gave way to the blustering fulminations of Hitler in the months preceding the Munich agreement. The *völkisch* discourse of identification with and responsibility for transborder Germans was redefined by the Nazi commitment to establishing a *grossdeutsches Reich* incorporating, minimally, the entire area of consolidated German settlement. The sprawling network of Weimar Germanism-oriented associations was subordinated to the state and party apparatus, and the “traditionalist” homeland nationalist leaders, committed to the integrity and autonomy of German minority communities, were displaced by others who did not scruple to subordinate transborder minorities to the imperatives of Reich foreign policy.⁸¹ The web of cross-border ties, finally, permitted Hitler to use the Sudeten Germans, in 1938, as a fifth column in his plan to destroy the Czechoslovak state.⁸²

⁷⁹ On the theme of continuity, see Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*, p. 166.

⁸⁰ On the German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact and its consequences for the German minority in Poland, see Blanke, *Orphans of Versailles*, pp. 183-206.

⁸¹ Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *Nationalsozialistische Aussenpolitik 1933-1938* (Frankfurt am Main and Berlin: Alfred Metzner, 1968), pp. 160ff. On “traditionalist” Germanism leaders, see Smelser, *The Sudeten Problem*, pp. 14ff., esp. pp. 17-18. The struggle between traditionalists and radical statist is a major theme of Smelser’s book.

⁸² For a sophisticated account of the process through which Sudeten Germans, under the leadership of Konrad Henlein’s *Sudetendeutsche Heimatfront*, became available as a compliant tool of Hitler’s foreign policy, an account emphasizing struggles among Sudeten German factions and among different homeland-nationalist organizations in the Reich, see Smelser, *The Sudeten Problem*. Smelser’s account begins in 1933; for the background in Weimar, emphasizing the economic, political, and psychological dependence of Sudeten German elites on Germany, see Jaworski, *Vorposten oder Minderheit?*

Weimar Germany and post-Soviet Russia: homeland nationalisms compared

Like Weimar Germany, post-Soviet Russia offers fertile soil for homeland nationalism. Just as the collapse of the Wilhelmine, Habsburg, and Romanov empires stranded millions of Germans, so the disintegration of the Soviet Union stranded millions of Russians – indeed a far larger number, some 25 million in all⁸³ – as minorities in an array of successor states. Like the German minorities, the new Russian minorities have been portrayed as threatened by the nationalizing policies and practices of the successor states. Like their interwar counterparts, these states were established as the states of and for particular ethnocultural nations, and have been committed, in varying ways and varying degrees, to diminishing the accumulated economic advantage, cultural influence, and political power the minorities had enjoyed as members of the formerly dominant nations, and to promoting instead the specific interests of the state-“owning” nations. Like Weimar Germany, post-Soviet Russia has suffered a “humiliating” loss not only of territory but of its status as a Great Power, creating an opening for political entrepreneurs with a variety of remedial, compensatory, or restorationist political agendas. As in Weimar Germany, so in post-Soviet Russia bitter stories about separation from beleaguered or endangered ethnic kin have been central to public narratives of humiliation and loss, while commitments to protect those kin have been central to remedial, compensatory, and restorationist projects.

There are many further parallels between Weimar Germany and post-Soviet Russia that bear at least indirectly on homeland nationalism, including deep economic crisis, new and fragile democratic regimes, and geopolitical and economic preponderance *vis-à-vis* the respective “new” and “near” abroads in which their minorities were concentrated.⁸⁴ But rather than pursue these similarities, I want to explore in this final section three differences in the forms – and formative contexts – of homeland nationalism in the two settings. The first concerns the greater visibility of official Russian homeland nationalism, the second the weakness of civil society homeland nationalism in Russia, and the third the ambiguity of the population targeted by Russian homeland nationalism. This is necessarily a limited and highly selective discussion; a full analysis of Russian homeland nationalism would require,

⁸³ How many “Russians” were stranded as minorities in Soviet successor states depends, of course, on how “Russian” is defined. The standard figure of 25 million reflects the number of persons living in Soviet republics other than Russia identifying their “nationality” as Russian at the time of the last Soviet census in 1989. Below, I discuss ambiguities in the definition of the “target” of Russian homeland politics.

⁸⁴ The expression “new abroad” in interwar Germany, like “near abroad” in post-Soviet Russia, suggested a sphere of influence, a zone that was not quite fully “foreign.” Similarly, the prevailing interwar distinction between *Grenzdeutsche* or *Grenzlanddeutsche* (borderland Germans) and *Auslandsdeutsche* (foreign Germans) implied that the former, compactly settled in areas adjoining the Reich, were not truly foreign despite being residents and citizens of other states.

minimally, a chapter of its own. Official Weimar homeland nationalism transpired primarily behind the scenes. Our knowledge of its aims and modalities comes mainly from administrative archives, not from the records of public speech. The homeland nationalism of Weimar civil society – the discourse and activities of Germanism associations, *Ostforschung* institutes, the press and publicistic sphere – was public and visible, but that of the state was largely covert. State and government officials did invoke the obligation of Germany to help ethnic Germans in other states, but such pronouncements were comparatively infrequent, and the theme was not particularly salient in official discourse. Stresemann had envisioned a major public campaign on this issue, using the League of Nations as a platform, but it never occurred. Once Germany joined the League, it proved surprisingly reticent on the issue.

Russia, by contrast, has been anything but reticent; its official homeland nationalism has been conspicuously visible.⁸⁵ Public pronouncements on the right, and the obligation, to protect Russians in the near abroad have become a staple of official Russian discourse, figuring prominently in almost all accounts of Russian foreign policy priorities. High state and government officials – up to and including President Yeltsin and Foreign Minister Kozyrev – have issued a steady stream of pronouncements on the issue. These have varied in tone and substance with the audience to which they have been addressed and the domestic and international contexts in which they have been formulated, and it would be a mistake to read too much significance into any particular pronouncement. In general, however, a hardening of position and toughening of rhetoric on transborder Russians can be observed, mirroring the emergence of a generally tougher Russian stance *vis-à-vis* the near abroad, and reflecting the intensifying political challenge from the nationalist Right.⁸⁶ Illustrative of this shift was Kozyrev's widely reported assertion in April 1995 that armed force might be needed in certain cases to protect the rights of compatriots.⁸⁷

This demonstrative stance-taking by officials has been complemented by an official codification of the “fundamental guidelines” of Russian policy *vis-à-vis* “compatriots” in the near abroad.⁸⁸ Drafted on presidential initiative, and formally

⁸⁵ I do not mean to suggest that there is not also a crucial covert dimension to Russian homeland nationalism. No doubt there is. My intention here is simply to highlight the public and visible dimension of official Russian homeland nationalism – a dimension largely lacking from official Weimar homeland nationalism.

⁸⁶ A useful review of the evolution of official Russian policy *vis-à-vis* Russians in the successor states is given by Paul Kolstoe, *Russians in the Former Soviet Republics* (London: Hurst, 1995), chapter 10.

⁸⁷ *Nezavisimaia gazeta*, April 19, 1995; *Rossiiskie vesti*, April 19, 1995; *Izvestiia*, April 20, 1995.

⁸⁸ *Osnovnye napravleniia gosudarstvennoi politiki Rossiiskoi Federatsii v otnoshenii sootchestvennikov, prozhivaiushchikh za rubezhom* (Utverzhdeny postanovleniem Pravitel'stva Rossiiskoi Federatsii ot 31 Avgusta 1994, No. 1064) [Fundamental Guidelines of

approved by the government on August 31, 1994, this document is worth dwelling on for a moment. Compared with other pronouncements of state and government officials on the issue, the document is quite moderate in tone and substance, repeatedly stressing conformity with international law and norms and commitment to realizing its aims through bilateral agreements with the successor states. Yet it forthrightly outlines a series of thirty-nine governmental measures in support of compatriots abroad, grouping them under four headings as “political-legal and informational,” “diplomatic,” “economic,” and “social and cultural.”

“Political-legal and informational” measures include establishing Russian-language radio and television programming in the near abroad and ensuring its unimpeded functioning; working together with the Russian (*russkii*) and Slavic communities in the successor states, and providing information enabling the Russian Federation media to “report objectively” on the near abroad, “paying special attention to the situation of compatriots and the protection of their rights.” Diplomatic measures include raising the issue of the rights of compatriots in international fora, especially the United Nations and the Organization (formerly Conference) for Security and Cooperation in Europe; concluding agreements on citizenship (read: dual citizenship) with the countries of the near abroad; and working through Russian and world public opinion to pressure near abroad governments to modify their domestic legislation. Economic measures include cultivating ties between enterprises in Russia and enterprises employing compatriots in the near abroad; directly purchasing such enterprises (partly in exchange for cancellation of debts owed to Russia); establishing cross-border joint enterprises specifically aimed at aiding compatriots; and threatening a variety of economic sanctions including the curtailment of trade and a change in the customs regime in the case of “gross violations of the rights of compatriots.” Social and cultural measures, finally, include providing “technical, informational, and financial help” to the Russian-language press in the near abroad; supporting a variety of Russian (*russkii*) cultural institutions and activities; founding Russian (*rossiiskii*) universities, institutes, faculties, and gymnasia in the near abroad; admitting compatriots to secondary and higher educational institutions in Russia; and providing textbooks and training teachers for Russian-language education in the near abroad.

Although the Weimar government in fact adopted a number of similar measures, it did not and – given the then prevailing strength of norms of nonintervention – could not admit to maintaining direct contacts with transborder ethnic Germans, funding their organizations, supporting (and thereby controlling) their economic life, or supporting the German-language press and German-language educational institutions in its “new abroad.” The Russian government's forthright acknowledgment of these measures, together with the salience and frequency of

the State Policy of the Russian Federation Concerning Compatriots Living Abroad (Ratified by Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation of August 31, 1994, No. 1064)].

official pronouncements on this issue, reflects two key differences in the international context of homeland nationalism between the interwar period and the present. The first difference is normative and institutional. The principle of territorial sovereignty was far more robust in the interwar period than it is today. The League of Nations Minority Treaties imposed certain obligations on the post-World War I successor states; but these were bitterly resented and denounced as unacceptable intrusions in internal affairs, less because of their content (the provisions of the Minority Treaties were actually rather weak) than because of the then unacceptable symbolism of violated sovereignty.⁸⁹ This sort of denunciatory language, to be sure, still circulates today, but it has an antiquated flavor. By comparison with the interwar period, the exclusive claims of the nation-state to internal sovereignty have weakened through the growth of a complex web of cross-border jurisdictions in various policy domains, while transborder concern about the rights of minorities – like transborder concern for human rights – has acquired new levels of institutionalized international legitimacy.⁹⁰

The second salient difference is geopolitical. Russian military, political, and economic preponderance *vis-à-vis* the Soviet successor states is much greater than that of Weimar Germany *vis-à-vis* East Central Europe. This certainly holds for the initial decade of Weimar, and one could argue that it holds even for the first few years of the Nazi regime. A convincing argument has been made, to be sure, that Germany's long-term geopolitical position in Europe had actually improved as a result of the territorial settlement following World War I,⁹¹ while no one would make a parallel claim about post-Soviet Russia. In the short and medium term, however, Weimar Germany was in a much weaker position *vis-à-vis* its “new abroad” than is post-Soviet Russia today. Defeated and disarmed, it was (temporarily) militarily weaker even than Poland and Czechoslovakia; its freedom of action in foreign policy – even with respect to its structurally weak eastern neighbors – was reduced to a minimum. Russia, by contrast, enjoys vastly greater freedom of action, and far greater power, *vis-*

⁸⁹ Contributing to the resentment was the fact that the minority protection obligations were not universal, but were imposed only on the new (or newly enlarged) states.

⁹⁰ On international institutionalized legitimacy in the context of an emergent “world polity,” see John W. Meyer, “The World Polity and the Authority of the Nation-State,” in George M. Thomas, John W. Meyer, Francisco O. Ramirez, and John Boli, *Institutional Structure: Constituting State, Society, and the Individual* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1987). On the institutionalized international legitimacy of human rights discourse, see Yasemin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

⁹¹ The core of the argument is that the new states of East Central Europe, lacking substantial protection from the Western powers, and likely to be forced eventually (given the inevitably growing strength of Germany and the Soviet Union) to choose between Berlin and Moscow, were (given their fundamental anti-Soviet disposition) structurally inclined to align themselves with Germany. See Andreas Hillgruber, “Revisionismus – Kontinuität und Wandel in der Aussenpolitik der Weimarer Republik,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 237 (1983), 600ff.

à-vis its near abroad. This unambiguous and unchallenged regional geopolitical and economic preponderance enables Russia to adopt an assertive stance on Russian minorities abroad, while at the same time the normative erosion of strong claims to sovereignty and the new international legitimacy of transborder concerns with minorities enable it to frame its tough talk in the idioms of human and minority rights.

This suggests a further contextual difference between Weimar and contemporary Russian homeland nationalism. Weimar foreign policy was consistently focused on revising the Treaty of Versailles and this revisionism always included a commitment to eventual, albeit (at least under Stresemann) peaceful changes in territorial borders. Russia, on the other hand, although – or perhaps precisely because – it is overwhelmingly dominant geopolitically, is not necessarily committed to territorial revision. The present borders of the Russian Federation are universally seen as arbitrary, as lacking any historical sanction or normative dignity; yet they are not universally regarded as in urgent need of revision. Territorial revision is indeed pushed by certain political entrepreneurs, who claim to find intolerable the existence of Ukraine or Belarus as a separate state or the fact that 6 million Russians live under Kazakh rule. But it lacks the axiomatic, fundamental, unquestioned status it possessed in Weimar Germany.⁹² There is a rough elite consensus on the need to restore Russia's status as a world or at least continental Power; but there is no consensus that this necessarily requires border adjustments, let alone the wholesale reincorporation of the newly independent states. This has nothing to do with the “moderation” of the Russian leadership, or with the initial “Atlanticist,” pro-Western orientation of Russian foreign policy (which did not last long in any event). It has to do with a secular decline in the “material” significance of territory – with the partial “de-territorialization” and “economization” of power, at least in the more economically “advanced” world regions – and at the same time, in seeming opposition to this, with the institutional reification and “sacralization” of existing territorial frontiers in international discourse and international organizations.⁹³ The former makes border changes less necessary; the latter makes them more difficult. By comparison with the interwar period, borders have become more “inviolable,” but they have also become more insignificant. This dual development makes territorial revisionism a costly, “inefficient,” and, it could be argued, ultimately unnecessary way

⁹² One reason for this is that territorial revision was clearly focused, in Weimar Germany, on the Polish Corridor, Danzig, and Upper Silesia; although maximal positions varied, these were universal minimum demands. In the Russian case, revisionism is not clearly focused. The present boundaries of the Russian Federation are indeed felt to be arbitrary, but there is no consensual sense of what – or more precisely where – a minimally “adequate” Russia would be.

⁹³ On the declining significance of territory, see Richard Rosecrance, *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

to augment state power, even for many of those whose agendas are commonly labeled “neo-imperialist.”⁹⁴

The public rhetoric of homeland nationalism was well suited to Russian moves to consolidate a position of hegemony without territorial incorporation in the near abroad. Homeland nationalism, by definition, cuts across territorial boundaries; it asserts a form of nonterritorial jurisdiction over citizens of another state. It can therefore help establish and legitimize extraterritorial influence and control, as Russia has sought to do in the near abroad. The fit between homeland nationalist idioms and Weimar foreign policy priorities was less close. Homeland nationalist rhetoric was generalized, referring to all transborder Germans. Yet, as argued above, Weimar foreign policy *vis-à-vis* the two neighboring states with the largest German communities – Poland and Czechoslovakia – was sharply distinct, governed in the former case by deep antagonism and fundamental territorial claims, in the latter by “correct” relations and an effort to increase German economic influence in *Mitteleuropa*. Partly for this reason, and partly because of the more limited international legitimacy of transborder concern with minority rights in the interwar period, homeland nationalist idioms were less well suited to the public articulation and justification of Weimar foreign policy.

If the official homeland nationalism of post-Soviet Russia has been more public and visible than that of Weimar Germany, civil society homeland nationalism has been much less visible in the Russian case. Reportage and commentary on Russians outside Russia has figured prominently in the Russian press, and there is an emergent counterpart to Weimar *Ostforschung* in various research institutes conducting research on the near abroad. Given the degree of state control over the broadcast media, however, as well as state support for – and sometimes direct commissioning of – research, these belong only partially and ambiguously to the sphere of civil society. Oppositional political parties and factions, as well as individual political entrepreneurs, have made ample use of homeland nationalist rhetoric to castigate the government for failing to take bolder measures in defense of Russians in the near abroad;⁹⁵ but they too can scarcely be conceptualized as part of civil society, since their homeland nationalism, although defined in opposition to government policy and practice, arises directly from the struggle for political power. The core of civil society homeland nationalism in Weimar Germany – the dense and vigorous network of associations concerned with co-ethnics abroad – has no counterpart in post-Soviet

⁹⁴ Drawing on Michael Doyle’s definition of empire, Ronald Suny argues against conflating an “imperial project” proper, involving the establishment (or reestablishment) of full sovereignty by a center over a distinct and subordinate periphery, with “Great Power hegemony,” involving a relation of domination between separate states, and suggests that the latter is more likely in the case of post-Soviet Russia. See his “Ambiguous Categories: States, Empires and Nations,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 11, no. 2 (1995), 193-4.

⁹⁵ The stances of Russian political parties on the issue of Russians in the near abroad are reviewed by Kolstoe, *Russians*, pp. 276ff.

Russia. This reflects of course the general weakness of civil society in Soviet successor states. In Weimar Germany, moreover, civil society homeland nationalism could build, ideologically and organizationally, on an established prewar tradition of concern for Germandom abroad. Needless to say, there was no comparable tradition of concern for Russians outside Russia in the Soviet era.

The population targeted by Weimar homeland nationalism was relatively clearly defined. In practice, to be sure, it was not always evident precisely who belonged to this population, especially in regions (such as Upper Silesia or parts of East Prussia) of fluid ethnocultural identity. In principle, however, everyone agreed that German claims as external national homeland concerned the *Grenz- und Auslandsdeutsche* of Central and Eastern Europe, and that these borderland and foreign Germans were defined by their ethnocultural nationality.

In Russia, by contrast, there is no agreement even in principle about the circle of persons addressed by Russian homeland claims.⁹⁶ Five terms have been widely used to identify the relevant population. Most clearly paralleling Weimar homeland nationalism are claims to protect *russkie*, that is Russians by ethnocultural nationality. The second term, *rossiiane*, also ordinarily translated as “Russians,” construes Russianness not with reference to ethnocultural nationality – or rather not with reference to *Russian* ethnocultural nationality – but with reference to *Rossia*, that is, to the Russian state, or to Russia understood in a territorial sense. This formulation, in turn, can be interpreted in a subjective-political sense, in terms of identification with the Russian state or with Russia as *rodina* (homeland, native land, mother country), or, more commonly, in an objective-ethnocultural sense, in terms of membership of one of the many ethnocultural groups considered indigenous to Russia. This latter meaning is sometimes designated by the expression *etnicheskie rossiiiane*, seemingly oxymoronic in its juxtaposition of the adjective “ethnic” and a derivative of the expressly nonethnic noun *Rossia*. In practice, *rossiiiane* serves more as a “politically correct” substitute for *russkie*, one that acknowledges the multinational population of Russia, than as an alternative way of construing the population for whom Russia is a homeland.⁹⁷

⁹⁶ See Kolstoe, *Russians*, pp. 260ff.; Mark Beissinger, “The Persisting Ambiguity of Empire,” *Post-Soviet Affairs* 11, no. 2 (1995), 169-70.

⁹⁷ As of 1989, the largest groups of *rossiiiane* (other than ethnic Russians) outside Russia were Tatars, Jews (considered to be *rossiiiane* under the Soviet nationality regime because they had, in principle, “their own” national territory within the RSFSR, although fewer than 5% of the inhabitants of this remote patch of land on the Chinese border identified their nationality as Jewish in 1989), Lezgins, Ossetians, Bashkir, Mordvinians, Chuvash, and Chechens (calculated from Gosudarstvennyi komitet SSSR po statistike, *Natsional’nyi sostav naseleniia SSSR*, pp. 5-11). In so far as members of these national groups, outside “their own” ethnonational territories, have tended to assimilate to Russians, they could indeed plausibly be construed as part of the population Russia could claim to protect. In this case, however, Russia would be

The third widely used term is *russkoiazychnye*, or Russian-speakers. Although almost all Soviet citizens spoke Russian to some extent, *russkoiazychnye* does not designate Russian-speakers in this purely linguistic sense. It points rather to two analytically distinct categories of persons (in addition to Russians by ethnocultural nationality) who might identify with Russians in the non-Russian successor states and with Russia as an external national homeland. The first category includes people living for long periods outside “their own” national state and tending to identify with and assimilate to the Russians in that state (especially Ukrainians and Belarusians but also members of other dispersed national groups such as Armenians and Jews).⁹⁸ The second category includes people who live in “their own” national state (“their own” in the sense that it corresponds to their official Soviet-era passport nationality or their self-identified ethnocultural nationality) but whose primary language (and sometimes even mother tongue) is Russian and who consequently may identify politically with Russians in that state and coalesce with them in resisting programs of linguistic nationalization.⁹⁹

The fourth term, *sootchestvenniki*, means compatriots, that is people who share a common fatherland (*otechestvo*). In the post-Soviet context, however, this original, clearly political meaning has been overlaid by a *mélange* of criteria based on some combination of descent, ethnicity, past citizenship, and spiritual-cultural orientation. Thus *sootchestvenniki* have been defined by one expert as “former subjects of the Russian Empire or citizens of the USSR and their direct descendants, not presently possessing Russian citizenship but belonging to one of the ethnic groups of Russia and considering themselves spiritually and culturally-ethnically tied to Russia.”¹⁰⁰ This

claiming to protect them in their quality as “Russian-speakers,” not in their national quality as Tatars, Jews, etc. On the avoidance of the term *russkie*, see Kolstoe, *Russians*, pp. 260-1.

⁹⁸ David Laitin has suggested that Russian-speakers in this sense, together with the ethnic Russians in non-Russian successor states, may be in the course of forming a new “Russian-speaking” nationality, distinct from the Russian nationality. See “Identity in Formation: The Russian-Speaking Nationality in the Post-Soviet Diaspora,” paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 1994.

⁹⁹ Dominique Arel has suggested that this latter category may be particularly significant in Ukraine. See “Language and Group Boundaries in the Two Ukraines,” paper presented at conference on “National Minorities, Nationalizing States, and External National Homelands in the New Europe,” Bellagio Study and Conference Center, Italy, August 1994.

¹⁰⁰ This definition was formulated by a working group headed by Professor Igor Blishchenko, Director of the Independent Institute of International Law, as reported in “Rossiia vnov’ prinimaet sootchestvennikov iz zarubezh’ia,” *Izvestiia*, September 8, 1992. I am grateful to Pål Kolstø for calling this to my attention. Similar definitions were given to me in interviews with officials of the Russian Ministry of Nationalities and Regional Policy in June 1994 and July 1995. The *Izvestiia* article refers to “relatives in direct ascending line”: rather than to descendants, but it is clear from the context and from other documents (including an article by Blishchenko himself) that this is simply a reportorial error. See for example I. P. Blishchenko, A. Kh. Abasidze, and E. V. Martynenko, “Problemy gosudarstvennoi politiki

incongruous blend of legal, ethnographic, and identitarian notions has become the term of choice in official documents.

The final term is *grazhdane* (citizens). The protection of one’s own citizens residing in other states, it would seem, is completely distinct from homeland nationalism, the defining feature of which is the claim to protect non-citizen co-nationals. Yet the distinction is not so clear-cut in the post-Soviet context. *Grazhdane* is often used (in political speech if not in official documents) metaphorically, as a rough synonym of *sootchestvenniki*,¹⁰¹ it is also used, again metaphorically, in connection with the claim that Russia has responsibility for all former Soviet citizens. Moreover, Russia has sought to convert co-nationals into fellow citizens.¹⁰² It has sought to conclude agreements on dual citizenship with other successor states.¹⁰³ More recently, Russian officials have suggested that, even in the absence of such agreements, Russia might accord citizenship on application to individual petitioners from the near abroad, even to those who possess the citizenship of another successor state.¹⁰⁴ Doing so on a large scale would strengthen Russia’s jurisdictional claims in the near abroad, and provide a convenient pretext for intervention.¹⁰⁵

Rossiiskoi Federatsii v otnoshenii sootchestvennikov,” *Gosudarstvo i pravo* 2 (1994), 10, which offers a similar definition but omits the reference to membership in one of the ethnic groups of Russia.

¹⁰¹ Kolstoe, *Russians*, p. 261.

¹⁰² Beissinger, “The Persisting Ambiguity of Empire,” 171.

¹⁰³ An agreement has been signed with Turkmenistan, and similar ones are being negotiated with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Belarus. See “Na chto setuet seto,” *Rossiiskie vesti*, July 6, 1995.

¹⁰⁴ The legal basis for such a practice was established in 1993, when a key provision of the original 1991 Russian citizenship law, barring the acquisition of Russian citizenship by persons possessing other citizenships except where dual citizenship was permitted by international agreement, was repealed.

¹⁰⁵ From the standpoint of international law, Russia’s claim to protect its citizens in the near abroad, if they also held the citizenship of the state in which they were residing, would be problematic at best. Traditionally, the protection of citizens abroad, known in the legal literature as diplomatic protection, has been permitted when the person in question was a citizen *only* of the state claiming to protect him or her, and not also of the state in which he or she was residing. In recent decades, however, the incidence of dual (and multiple) citizenship has increased sharply, and in a variety of situations courts have had to determine which of two or more formal citizenships should be treated as a person’s “effective” citizenship, reflecting the more “real” and substantial ties between a person and a state. Partly as a result of the development of this notion of “effective” citizenship, the traditional bar on the diplomatic protection of dual citizens (when one of the citizenships is that of the state in which the person to be protected is residing) has been eroded; states’ claims to protect such persons, although controversial, have received some measure of international judicial approval in cases where the “effective” citizenship of the person in question (ordinarily reflecting habitual residence as well as a preponderance of social, economic, political, and cultural ties) is that of the state claiming to protect him or her. Note, however, that this is a relatively narrow exception; it would provide no legal warrant, for example, for a Russian claim to protect a

The shifting and ambiguous vocabulary of homeland claims enables Russia to play in multiple registers, and to advance multiple and only partly overlapping jurisdictional claims in the near abroad. Through a kind of division of semantic labor, *russkie* provides cultural resonance and emotional power (and is therefore most useful in the context of domestic political competition), while *rossiiane*, *russkoiazychnye*, and *sootchestvenniki* (terms entirely foreign to everyday speech, and lacking – with the partial exception of the last – any kind of cultural resonance and emotional power) designate a broader target population and can therefore be used in international contexts and in official documents to expand Russia’s jurisdictional claims in the near abroad (and to represent those claims as transcending a narrow ethnic interest in protecting ethnic Russians). An expansive politics of citizenship, finally, enables Russia to combine the traditional (and from the point of view of international law more legitimate) rhetoric of protecting citizens in other states with homeland nationalist claims to protect noncitizen co-nationals. This opportunistic use of multiple idioms is further evinced in the somewhat incongruous marriage of a vocabulary of human rights to that of homeland nationalism, as in the frequent claim that Russia must protect the human rights of (ethnic) Russians in the near abroad.

Conclusion

Weimar homeland nationalism, I suggested above, was a complex web of political stances, cultural idioms, organizational networks, and transborder social relations. Russian homeland nationalism can also be regarded in this way. As a political phenomenon, homeland nationalism has been more salient, in both domestic and interstate contexts, in post-Soviet Russia than in Weimar Germany. Pronouncements on homeland nationalist themes have been more central to both governmental and oppositional political discourse, and to domestic political competition, than was the case in Weimar Germany. Like Weimar homeland nationalism, Russian homeland nationalism is doubly “intertwined” – with domestic political competition on the one hand, and with efforts to consolidate Russian hegemony in the near abroad on the other. In both domestic and interstate contents, homeland nationalist stances have been deployed instrumentally, as a calculated means to other ends. But again as in Weimar, this instrumental exploitation of homeland nationalist stances has occurred – and has indeed only been possible – against the background of taken-for-granted

person holding both Russian and Kazakhstani citizenship and residing habitually in Kazakhstan. Since the vast majority of Russians in the near abroad are long-term residents of the states in which they live, it is hard to see how their “effective” citizenship could be construed as that of the Russian Federation. The proliferation of dual citizenship among Russians of the near abroad, therefore, would not (from the standpoint of international law) provide Russia with a blanket *legal* justification for intervention in the near abroad, although it would undoubtedly strengthen the domestic *political* rationale for such intervention. On diplomatic protection and dual citizenship, see Loïc Darras, “La double nationalité,” Thesis in Law, Paris, 1986, pp. 631ff.

shared understandings concerning the plight of Russians in the near abroad and the obligation of the Russian state to do something on their behalf.

The dual embeddedness of homeland nationalism, as a political phenomenon, in wider domestic and interstate political contexts, means that it lacks its own autonomous logic and dynamic. As a political phenomenon, homeland nationalism is a set of moves, a set of stances, a family of related discursive claims – but the “game” in which these moves are activated, in which they payoff, or fail to payoff, is not the game of homeland politics, but the wider domestic and interstate “games.” The “value” or appropriateness of a homeland stance or move depends on the state of the game at a particular moment – on the rules of the game and the resources possessed by competing players.¹⁰⁶ In general, the greater international legitimacy and institutionalization of cross-border concern with minorities makes homeland nationalist “moves” more appropriate and more useful than they were in the interwar period. The domestic political arena in post-Soviet Russia also induces homeland nationalist moves, if only because there are so few politically profitable competing idioms today. Given the background of the widely shared, taken-for-granted sense that *something* ought to be done for successor state Russians,¹⁰⁷ homeland nationalist idioms have been adopted in the competition for domestic political power almost by default, *faute de mieux*.

As a cultural idiom, Russian homeland nationalism has been much more uncertain, ambiguous, and fluctuating than its Weimar counterpart. Weimar homeland nationalist discourse could build on the *grossdeutsch* tradition of the mid-nineteenth century and on the tradition of concern for Germans in the Habsburg and Romanov territories that developed in the late Bismarckian and Wilhelmine eras. Because of the lack of a comparable tradition in Russia, homeland nationalist discourse has had to be assembled by “bricolage” from various available and legitimate cultural “scraps.” Lacking indigenous roots, it has had to be cobbled together from a variety of discursive traditions: from “classical” homeland nationalism, from the legal rhetoric of diplomatic protection of citizens in other states, from human rights discourse, from the vocabulary of Great Power politics. As a result, the discourse has been multivocal and opportunistic, playing, as argued above, on multiple registers, and lacking consistency. The ambiguous and partly incongruous vocabulary for identifying the targets of homeland nationalist claims is but one indicator of this.

As an organizational phenomenon, Russian homeland nationalism lacks the strong associational base in civil society that characterized Weimar homeland nationalism; the network of organizations concerned with Russians in the near abroad is therefore

¹⁰⁶ For an extended discussion of rules and resources as constitutive of “structure,” critically engaging and reformulating Giddens’ notion of the “duality of structure” and Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, see William H. Sewell, Jr., “A Theory of Structure – Duality, Agency, and Transformation,” *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 1 (1992).

¹⁰⁷ This shared understanding, to be sure, is itself shaped and sustained by the media and is therefore, in part, a product as well as a condition of homeland nationalism.

much more state-centered. As a social-relational phenomenon, finally, Russian homeland nationalism, like its Weimar counterpart, involves the cultivation and maintenance of cross-border relations and the provision of a flow of cross-border resources. The process of organizing resource flows and reconstituting networks and relations disrupted by the breakup of the Soviet Union is still incipient; and too little is known at present to make substantive claims about it. In the long run, however, the political disposition of Russian and Russophone minorities in the successor states – in particular, the degree to which and manner in which they look to Russia for solutions to their problems, rather than work them out within the frame of the successor states – will be significantly shaped by these relations and resource flows, and on the degrees and forms of integration with Russia (and of detachment from successor state contexts) that they generate.

In: Brubaker, Rogers. *Nationalism Reframed*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 107-147.