When the European Football Championship was taking place in Sweden in 1992, the German weekly magazine *Der Stern* had this to say of the then manager of the German national team, Berti Vogts: “Discipline, order, punctuality—national trainer Berti Vogts leads his team in the tried and tested Teutonic tradition” (*Der Stern*, June 25, 1992, as cited in Holliday, Hyde, & Kullman, 2004, p. 128). In this apparently throwaway remark, made with unstated but absolute confidence that it would make obvious sense to his (probably “his” rather than “her”) readers, *Der Stern*’s journalist makes a number of remarkable claims: (1) There are a number of characteristics shared by Germans in general, and agreement about what they are is widespread enough for them to be listed without any need to argue for or offer evidence for their existence; (2) the German football team, consisting as it must of Germans, will naturally also share these characteristics; and (3) there is nothing particularly new about this “national” character—on the contrary, it stretches back into the mists of time, into the European Dark Ages of the first century AD when the Teutonic tribes were wandering around northern Europe. These characteristics, therefore, either are or are seen as elements
of a Germanness that long predates the emergence of the modern German state, carried in the genes of “Germans” for the best part of 2 millennia.

Here is the ethno-cultural nation at its most concise: an ancient community of blood relations to which the state is merely an institutional and bureaucratic approximation. Members of the national community might well live outside the state, while the state itself might harbour others who do not belong to the nation. The Other is understood in ethnic, rather than in political terms. As the author, Sanna Inthorn, shows in her fascinating study of discourses regarding national identity circulating in (and circulated by) the German media, such conceptions of the German nation are still commonplace today. Over a decade later—a decade which has seen great changes not only on a geopolitical level, but also within Germany itself (a number of which the author addresses in this book)—trainers of the German national team still routinely refer to “old Germanic virtues”, and understand them in the same terms.

Against this ethno-cultural concept of the nation—and indeed enjoying a complex dialectical relationship with it—we find the civic understanding of the nation as a community bound by physical frontiers and commitment to a democratically agreed political project, a “population” whose ethnic variety is irrelevant, where nationhood is understood in terms of goals rather than origins. Although, as the author points out, such civic definitions of the nation are often seen as expressions of “good nationalism”; they do not imply the disappearance of the Other. The United Kingdom and the United States remain Others even for the civic German nation, but the difference is no longer one of essences, but rather one of political agendas.

This book offers a detailed and highly enlightening analysis of how a range of actors—primarily politicians, as well as both print and television journalists working in a variety of fields—circulate these discourses, not only reproducing them but also inflecting them at the same time, among readers and viewers from varying sectors of German society and in relation to a number of themes. Indeed, this multifocal approach is one of the great strengths of the analysis. It examines
not only discourses circulated in relation to political and legal issues and aimed clearly at an educated and even elite readership—as Gaye Tuchman (1978) suggests, one can easily get the impression here of “eavesdropping” (p. x) on a conversation between different sections of that elite—but, by including football reporting (particularly its televisual variety), it also enters the realm of popular culture and working-class audiences. It then complements these analyses by paying close and overdue attention to that fountainhead of petit-bourgeois “distinction” (to use Bourdieu’s [1984] term), the restaurant review with its studiedly pompous language, its self-referential interest in the “exotic”, and its confident claims to be able to sniff out the enduringly authentic in contrast to the commercially and superficially fake.

As the author points out, the panorama is not complete; and, indeed, never can be covered exhaustively in a single volume. National identity, as a site of ideological struggle rather than in any sense a “thing”, is overdetermined in complex and not always overlapping ways. Any German who is uninterested in the various domains covered here—politics, citizenship law, football, culinary reviews—will find yet other narratives of national identity circulating in yet other fields: music, advertising, fashion, comic strips, soap operas, leisure activities, and so on. The discursive matrix is dense and multistranded—and as readers, viewers, and listeners, while we are not destined to occupy any particular part of it, we cannot move outside it.

Among the many strengths of this book are both an acknowledgment of the specificities of each domain it covers and the identification of a metadiscourse, which behind the variety of styles and languages present can be seen as present in all of them. On one hand, while the language of political and legal debate (covered in both chapters 1 and 2, respectively) can be adversarial—even hostile—and characterised at times by the deployment of a quasi-technical, domain-specific vocabulary, and while the terminology of restaurant reviews (chapter 4) is exquisitely self-important and occasionally verges on the baroque, on the other hand, the relationship between sports journalists and their readers/viewers (chapter 3) is—as the author quite correctly points out—often built around the use of humour and even
forms of banter. She gives a wonderful example of such a rapport (see chapter 3) when she quotes German comedian Dieter Nuhr as saying the following of neighbouring Holland in the run-up to a German-Holland match during the 2004 European Championship:

There is, of course, more to Holland than cheese and caravans. Holland is...[he pauses]...I mentioned cheese already, didn’t I? I think there is probably more to it, but, quite frankly, who cares?

Such a mode of address is, needless to say, unimaginable in the other domains covered in this book. But, while it would be virtually impossible to take offence at remarks (e.g., these within the context of television football reporting), as the author argues, behind the humour lurks the ethno-cultural definition of the nation: The nation is defined by something as “obvious”, and enduring, as its food. Yet, the attack by German supporters on a French policeman in Lens in 1998 caused a notable irruption of the discourse of the civic nation even in football coverage, a discourse that would again be mobilised in an attempt to interpret German fan behaviour during the World Cup held in Germany in 2006 (this is analysed in the final section of this book, “Conclusion”). All domains, however trivial they may seem to be, are sites of discursive struggle. As the author shows on more than one occasion, opposing and even incompatible discourses can appear in the same newspaper, at times in the same article.

Perhaps the most famous German of all once wrote: “the tradition of the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the minds of the living” (Karl Marx, 1852/1978, p. 9). In the case of 20th- and 21st-century Germany, as the author points out, it is not the tradition but rather the sins of the dead generations that weigh, like a nightmare, on the minds of the Germans of today. Binding the four domains covered by this book together—and no doubt many other domains besides—is the constantly evoked memory of the national socialist past. Germany must present itself as a “good” and selfless European to banish the ghost of its former militaristic and aggressive self. It must attempt to develop an inclusive understanding of those living within its territory to
erase the memory of the horrors of the Nazi regime. Violent behaviour by football fans kindles fears of a resurgent Third Reich. Only in the realm of food is the national socialist past not expressly present, but as a reading of the reviews analysed by the author will show, even there the history of German food appears to begin in the last years of the German Reich.

In fact, the power of the Nationalist Socialist past regarding the deployment of history in these various discourses analysed is quite astonishing. While Scottish football fans and journalists will often interpret games between Scotland and England through reference to the Battle of Bannockburn (1314), and Portuguese journalists and fans will make sense of matches between Spain and Portugal by evoking the Battle of Aljubarrota (1385), their German counterparts seem unable to move beyond footballing hero Fritz Walter and his role in the Battle of Berne in 1954 (an event described by one journalist as taking place “a long, long time ago” [Schulze, 2002a, p. 33]). When they do attempt to see beyond 1945, they leap centuries back to the Dark Ages of marauding Germanic tribes. Great swathes of history are missing, with perhaps only Prussia as a possible exception as source of “virtues”, such as discipline, order, and hard work.

However, as Inthorn shows, the deployment of the national socialist past is often part of much larger political strategies, and its negation—whether in the adversarial world of politics or the colourful world of football—can itself be, at least in part, in response to commercial and economic imperatives. Thus, German politicians use Germany’s selfless “European credentials” as a cover for pursuing what is invariably referred to as the country’s “national interest” (a widely used code now employed everywhere to designate the interests of domestic capital). In the meantime, transnational corporations based outside Germany mobilise the ethno-cultural nation to sell snacks. Indeed, reading Inthorn’s analysis one can understand better how, for French theorist Michel Foucault (1989), discourse “allows or prevents the realization of a desire, serves or resists various interests, participates in challenge and struggle, and becomes a theme of appropriation or rivalry” (p. 118). It is, therefore, a highly valuable
resource, to be mobilised in pursuit of a range of strategies, its value deriving at least partly from what Foucault calls “rarity” (p. 133), in the sense that the number of things said is always infinitely smaller than the number of things that could have been said. As this book shows, the analysed discourses circle obsessively around a small number of constantly reappearing themes; behind them lie very different understandings of what kind of society Germany should be, and behind those very different interests pursuing their own ends.

As Inthorn argues on a number of occasions, in a world of globalising capital we are all obliged to constantly negotiate our identity/identities not only across a number of fields (e.g., age, gender, and race) but also increasingly on a number of levels—local, regional, national, and global. The increasing presence not only of global brands in our everyday lives but also of the growing globalisation of sport and of leisure and cultural activities in general has led some to suggest that the days of the nation-state as a meaningful unit are numbered, if not already over. This book demonstrates that reports of the death of the nation-state are, without any doubt, exaggerated. The particular complex of discourses analysed here was and is only present in Germany. It could not be found in Germany’s German-speaking neighbours, such as Austria or Switzerland, or indeed anywhere else. While the influence of globalisation is undeniable, the nation-state and its media remain a key location for the negotiation of national identity and much more. This wide ranging and engagingly written book offers us an exceptional insight into that process.

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The existing breadth of literature on Germany—the nation and its identity—is vast. Scholars in various disciplines have contributed, and continue to contribute, to this field. Many have their intellectual home grounded in the disciplines of history and politics, and approach the subject with a keen eye for governmental processes, policies, and the law. My own background is in media and cultural studies, and I have tried to tackle the study of German identity from within these disciplines. Media and cultural studies remind us that we need to widen our understanding of “the political” and that popular culture is a sphere in which social struggles over power take place. They are disciplines which take the popular and its consumers seriously and show that “politics” happens not only inside governments. My decision to focus all case studies in this book on media discourse is informed by this tradition, as is my choice to compare media coverage of European integration and reforms of citizenship legislation and immigration policy with media coverage of international football tournaments and restaurant reviews. The comparison shows how concepts of national identity, which are constructed in the reporting of government processes and policy making, are sustained
in the seemingly nonpolitical sphere of entertainment and consumer culture.

Yet, highlighting how media discourse offers particular subject positions is not enough to explore the political nature of the popular. Media and cultural studies locate media content within its social and political contexts and show how discursively constructed identities in the media relate to wider social relations of power. While I do not wish to argue for a model of straightforward media “effects”, I do argue that the media are a key source of information that help us make sense of the social and political world around us, as well as our own place within it. We may incorporate media discourse in modes of behaviour and forms of identification. From the premise of this argument, the following questions arise: What range of different ways of being in the world does media discourse have to offer? Does it challenge or sustain the current distribution of power in society? All four case studies in this book find evidence that media discourse constructs not only a civic concept of the nation but also an inward-looking, ethnocentric concept. In order to show how this discourse relates to a wider social and political context in which an ethnic concept of the nation underpins exclusionary practices against ethnic minorities, in the introduction, as well as chapters 1 and 2, I sketch out some key processes and events in German politics and society.

I highlight key characteristics of German government approaches to European integration, as well as central elements of Germany’s reform of citizenship legislation and immigration policy. I then relate the findings of my media analysis back to these contexts, in order to show how media discourse offers similar concepts of identity to those that are propagated by political discourse and enshrined in legislation. Readers in the fields of politics and history might be disgruntled with what I think they might see as my “skimming over” political events and complex governmental processes. I mainly have relied on what I believe is a useful range of secondary literature to make my argument, but I concede that a primary analysis of political discourse would be a valuable addition to my research. I encourage future researchers to pick up where I did not go further. I chose to
Concentrate my efforts on offering a comparison of discourses on a wide range of subjects, but in order to be able to do so in the confines of this study, I only included media discourse into my sample. The result is four case studies, which show that a particular narrative of what it means to be German can be traced across a range of different subject contexts. The four subject contexts I chose to discuss in this book, as seen in the four case studies, are the following: (1) European integration, (2) citizenship and immigration, (3) international football tournaments, and (4) food culture. We can see the struggle between ethnic and civic concepts of German identity in media coverage of all four subjects, and I try to show their discursive overlaps throughout the text.

While the four case studies in this book allowed me to compare the political with the seemingly nonpolitical, the decision to look at a range of different subjects meant that I was in danger of not being able to do justice to them all. While highlighting the ways in which discourses overlap, I also aim to show how media discourse on each particular subject has its very own characteristics. Readers who want to find out how the German press reports on European Union (EU) summit proceedings and citizenship reform can go straight to chapters 1 and 2. Readers interested in media coverage of popular entertainment and consumer culture can go straight to the case study on football reporting in chapter 3, or the study on restaurant reviews in chapter 4. I embedded the discussion of each of the four case studies in a literature review, which highlights main arguments relevant to each subject context. This allows me to show how my research findings relate to wider academic debates. Scholars in media and cultural studies—and also in politics, history, anthropology, and sociology, to name but a few—have written extensively on my four chosen subject contexts, and they might feel that I have barely touched upon the surface of what their discipline has to contribute to each debate. I tried my best to do justice to the literature on each subject, but as I tell my students, there is always more to read; I hope that the individual case studies in this book encourage readers to find out more about a particular subject of which I could only outline some key debates.
As I trace the discursive construction of national identity against these four subject contexts, I argue for concepts of the nation and national identity as social and cultural artefacts. Even though this book suggests that there is a master narrative of German identity to be found across four subject contexts, it does not argue that there is no other way of making sense of German identity in media discourse or public discourse as a whole. In both the introduction and the conclusion I discuss how a different sample for this study already might have revealed a different range of discursive concepts. I do not wish to make definite claims about the totality of the German media market, nor do I wish to make claims about German identity per se, not least because I believe that there is no single “true” definition. This book emphasises that the concept of German identity is debated, changing, and fought over. The four case studies highlight the struggle between two particular concepts of national identity: an ethnocentric and a civic one. I hope that by demonstrating how this struggle is sustained not only in the context of politics in the traditional sense but also in the sphere of popular culture, my book can make an interesting “media studies contribution” to the literature of Germany identity.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CDU Christian Democratic Union of Germany (Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands)
CSU Christian-Social Union of Bavaria (Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern)
CEEC Central and Eastern European country
EEC European Economic Community
EU European Union
SPD Social Democratic Party of Germany (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands)
GERMAN MEDIA
AND NATIONAL IDENTITY
INTRODUCTION

What is a nation and what makes national identity? While academic debate grapples with the complexity of these questions, popular culture offers ready-made, seemingly simple answers to those in search of a national self. In the world of online chats and commercial or private Internet sites, we can find many a guide on what it means to be French, German, or English, for example. Popular with many creators of personal homepages seems to be the “Top 10 Reasons for Being...” list, which identifies all that is good about having a particular nationality. The top 10 reasons for being French, so it seems, include the benefits of “sounding gay” when speaking fast, a diet of “insect food like snails and frog legs”, and the chance of “surrendering early” in a war. Benefits of being English appear to include having won “two World Wars and one World Cup”, “Union Jack underpants”, and not “being Welsh”.

These examples tell us that national identity is essentially relational (Woodward, 1997, p. 12). It is based on difference and establishes a dichotomy of in-groups and out-groups: Being English means not being Welsh, and it also means not being French. This difference is often marked symbolically (Woodward), be it, for example, through Union Jack underwear or the assertion of differences in national diet.
The key to the establishment of in-and out-groups is the assumption of internal homogeneity—or unity—of a nation, which in turn can be distinguished from other, equally distinct and united national collectivities. This unity of the nation “is constructed through the narrative of the nation by which stories, images and symbols and rituals represent ‘shared’ meanings of nationhood” (Meinhof & Galasinski, 2000, p. 325). In the narrative of the nation, there are dominant themes through which we mark our sense of self and other. These themes include concepts of national character; national culture (e.g., expressed in language, religion, diet, and fashion); a common past, present, and future; and a national corpus, which represents itself through landscape and natural artefact (see Wodak et al., 1998, pp. 61–102, for a discussion of these themes). The French, for example, are said to have a history of surrendering early and a “gay” sounding language, the English are thought of as a nation that celebrates golden memories of football and war. The narrative of the nation speaks of a united national collectivity in which all members somehow adhere to a particular cultural makeup.

Yet, counter to the idea of the homogenous and unified collectivity, some aspects of our identities may be in conflict with that of “our” nation (Woodward, 1997, p. 12). Our religion, for example, may make it difficult for us to identify with a nation that defines itself around a faith different from ours, or none at all. The debate over whether Muslim women may wear headscarves to school in France highlighted how such conflicts might erupt over the negotiation of national and religious identities. The concept of national identity and culture is, thus, “a discursive device complementary to and in competition with other forms of identity discourses” (Meinhof & Galasinski, 2000, p. 325). Socially dominant concepts of national identity often hide social differences and conflicts within a social group; and national identity itself results from a social, cultural, and political struggle over the right way of how to think about the nation. National cultures are not unified or eternally fixed, once they are established. They are in constant flux, produced and reproduced over space and time. Discursive constructions of the nation are produced
by different agents and in different topic contexts. We “imagine” our national identities in public and private settings, and encounter them in everyday popular culture (Billig, 1995; Wodak et al., 1998). Political speeches, news reporting, sports, television fiction, film, and even weather forecasts: They all imagine the nation and locate us within it.

Some discursive practices come to formulate state action and legislative frameworks. The state and its institutions play a key role in the construction of national unity (Gellner, 1983). We encounter state concepts of national identity in our school books and in state funded media cultures; we experience it when applying for citizenship (Brubaker, 1992; Herb, 2004; Michels, 2004). The collective effort of these “storytellers” represents, and also reinforces, the values and beliefs of our social and cultural environments. Discourses of national identity inform the way in which we make sense of the world around us and give basis to the formation of our identities (Wodak et al., 1998, p. 70). Concepts of national identity that are enshrined in law are, of course, cast in more rigid forms than, for example, identities expressed in everyday conversation. Once established as dominant, however, discourses are not fixed or “sealed off” (Wodak et al.). Several versions of an imagined nation may circulate and struggle against each other. This means that discourses within the popular, for example, are not necessarily in tune with institutional discourse. Such clashes of competing images of what defines a nation clearly expose the artificial nature of the nation. If we are to understand the nation, it is crucial to approach it as an artifice. Nation and national identity are constructs, built from a selective choice of defining elements. This choice may vary, depending on who tells the story of the nation.

A poster in the Munich underground (see Figure 1), advertising Germany’s new citizenship law in 1999, illustrates the dialectic nature of national identity and the complexity of its construction.

The poster advertises the government campaign for a citizenship policy that was intended to challenge the ethnocentric definition of the German nation. Graffiti, scribbled over the advert, engages with
Figure 1. Campaign poster advertising the 2000 citizenship law.
Introduction

its message. The words “Parasites” (Parasiten) and Kanacken\(^2\) have been written over the faces of three young women (see Figures 2 and 3), identified by the poster as “Children of Foreign Parents” (Kinder ausländischer Eltern) and as “Here at Home” (Hier zu Hause) (see Figure 3). The racist graffiti in turn is challenged by a counter voice that condemns fascism with the words “Damn Shit Fascists” (Verdammte Scheißdrecke Faschisten)\(^3\) and with the drawing of a crossed-out swastika (see Figure 4).

Together, poster and graffiti messages display the highly contested nature of the German nation. Official government discourse and popular voices define the German self. An ethnocentric vision of German identity struggles against a liberal discourse that condemns fascism and propagates a civic understanding of the German nation.

For the researcher with an interest in competing discourses of national identity, Germany is perhaps one of the most fascinating subjects. The search for an answer to what the German nation might be is an objective that has not been put to rest for over a century. If one was to make claims about a German tradition or national culture, the search for a working definition of the German nation should be on the list of “German obsessions”. Because the nation is a discursive construct, ever in flux and in dialogue with other forms of identity, a discussion of all aspects of German identity is an undertaking beyond the scope of this book. Therefore, it does not make any claims about the totality of German identity, and does not presume to offer an insight into the whole complexity of this construct. The interest of this book lies in the very notion of national identity as a fluid and negotiated concept. To explore the contested nature of identity, it focuses on the discursive struggle over the very definition of what German national identity should be. Since the development of a German national consciousness, this question has never been fully resolved. At the heart of this struggle are two competing concepts of the nation: an ethnocentric and a civic one. The ethnocentric vision of the nation makes cultural identity the criterion by which people gain access to the national community. Citizens of a nation-state are assumed to share cultural and social practices, ethics, or even ethnicity (Bruter, 2003, p. 36).
Figure 2. Campaign poster extract.
Figure 3. Campaign poster extract.
Figure 4. Campaign poster extract.
The civic nation, in contrast, defines national identity as identification with “a political structure, the state which can be summarised as the set of institutions, rights and rules that preside over the political life of a community” (Bruter, p. 36). These two concepts are easily distinguishable on a theoretical level. Yet, as previously argued, identities are complex and may incorporate potentially conflicting elements. A brief sketch of sociopolitical studies of German nation-building shows that the concept of German identity has, for a long time, negotiated both civic and ethno-cultural concepts of the nation.

Emerging essentially as a reaction to Napoleonic domination, and what was perceived as its desertion of the French Revolution’s objectives, German nationalism from the beginning presented itself as a polysemic doctrine. Liberalism—the call for popular sovereignty and constitutional reform—stood next to ethno-cultural visions that dreamt of a return to a medieval, strong, and united Germany (Hughes, 1988, p. 22). From its early days, the definition of the German self was insecure and struggled between ethnic and civic notions. Under the German Kaiserreich (1871), culturalist and civic notions of the German nation were still present; yet, ethnic overtones increasingly found their way into the image of the German nation. While “appeasing” liberal voices with a constitution, Prussia employed a nationalist discourse to unite the newly created German nation against threatening forces, from both inside and outside the nation. France, Russia, Britain, Jews, Masons, Catholics, Socialists, and intellectuals became the target of German nationalism (Schoenbaum & Pond, 1996, p. 24). By the end of the century, ethnic nationalism, as a reaction against democracy, liberalism, and socialism was a powerful force of the Right; and with the propagation of a “racially pure”, ethnic community (*Volksgemeinschaft*) by national socialism, the ethnic definition of the German nation was brought to a disastrous high. Since 1945, Germany yet again has been in search of its identity, and the struggle of ethnic and civic understandings of the nation remains at the heart of the discursive construct. Yet, added to this dilemma (of how to understand the very concept of the nation) is the memory of the past.
The collective memory of a nation is not so much a truthful account of past events, but rather a selective construct. It is a myth that resonates with the members of a group at a specific time (Halbwachs, 1992; Wodak et al., 1998). The selection of specific episodes of the past as constitutive of a nation’s identity is not solely the work of historians. Group myths are created (and challenged) through the representation of landscapes (Till, 1999, p. 255); they are evoked in cinematic representations of the past (Koshar, 1995); and in politicians’ speeches (Billig, 1995). As Till (1999) reminds us, “because collective identities are defined in part by perceived group needs in the present and projected future” their social narratives about the past are always changing (p. 254). Since 1945, national socialism has been at the heart of Germany’s collective memory and informs Germany’s sense of self. This became particularly evident after 1945, when political elite and public alike sought to find a new identity for Germany and its people.

East Germany declared itself unburdened by links with the past. Defined as victor over fascism, the East German state denied responsibility for crimes of the Third Reich (Chandler, 1999, p. 59). In West Germany, politics and culture were caught in a “seesaw effect” of remembering and forgetting (Grossmann, 2000). West Germany defined itself as successor of the nation before 1945, with all its consequences and responsibilities. Political identity was based on the conviction that political isolation and the lack of liberal and democratic thought had led to the horrors of the national socialist regime. Consequently, a decisive turn away from these principles was made the foundation of national identity and government policies. Institutional rebuilding, economic recovery, atonement for the crimes of the Third Reich, reconciliation with former enemies, and Western integration were new bases for identity (Chandler, pp. 58–58). West Germany was imagined as a Western, anticommunist state, a “state of law” with democracy and constitutionalism as key normative characteristics (Hogwood, 2000, p. 128). The regime in Bonn “was to be distinguished from the lawlessness of the Third Reich and Soviet authoritarianism” (Hogwood, p. 128). The memory
of the past, in particular the Holocaust and the failings of the Weimar Republic, informed West Germany’s choice of policies (J. Sperling, 1999, p. 276). Economic stability became regarded as the basis for social stability, democracy, and peace (J. Sperling), which meant that economic performance, symbolised in a strong and stable Deutschmark, become an important vehicle of postwar identity (Jarausch, Seeba, & Conradt, 1997, p. 41). Furthermore, West Germany adopted the policy of a civilian power and embraced a multilateral form of diplomacy (Jarausch et al.). Accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and European integration became central to the Westernisation of the Federal Republic and its attempts to secure the trust of its former enemies (Haftendorn, 1999, p. 1).

Europe in particular seemed a “less problematic fatherland” than the idea of the German nation (Berghahn, Flynn, & Michael, 1997, p. 179) and West German identity became increasingly detached from the idea of the German community of people collectively defined by members’ parental lineage, heritage of national culture, as well as shared cultural values, history, national character, and ancestry (Volk). The constitutional order of parliamentary democracy, but also strengthened federalism, “germinated a new legitimacy, found in what Habermas called Verfassungspatriotismus, in which democratic performance and adherence to constitutional values rather than ethno-national pride became the bases of identity” (Chandler, 1999, pp. 58–59). Increasingly, the image of an ethnic German nation was deemed to be waning. In the 1980s, national identity seemed so detached from the past of a once united Germany that among conservative thinkers there were concerns that national consciousness would disappear altogether. The memory of the past seemingly enabled West German politics and society to embrace a concept of the nation that was free from ethnocentric visions of a Volksgemeinschaft. “Constitutional patriotism” and “Staatsbürgernation”, which were grounded in appreciation of the benefits guaranteed by the Basic Law for the Federal Republic of Germany, the democratic order, and political processes, seemed to be widely accepted alternatives to ethnocentric identification with the nation.
Yet, while (West) Germany embraced the lessons of the past and opted for the identity of a Western, liberal democracy, in the immediate postwar years, high levels of anti-Semitism were still prevalent among the population (Fulbrook, 1999, p. 148). Further, in the first 2 decades after the war there was a high degree of “toleration and elevation” of men who could be described as political opportunists and “immoral trimmers” of the Third Reich, such as Konrad Adenauer’s chief aide in the Chancellery, Hans Globke, and Rudolf Bilfinger, who had been involved in preparing the Nazi regime’s racial legislation (Fulbrook, pp. 61–62). While it is fair to say that the Federal Republic was, in many ways, constructed as the antithesis to Germany prior to 1945, it needs to be acknowledged that the past was remembered in very specific ways. While West Germany committed itself to Western democracy and restitution for Jewish victims, it took the Republic decades to openly address the question of Germans’ collective responsibility. As Grossmann (2000, p. 95) argues, while the Republic gained international recognition by embracing Western values and the payment of retributions, domestically much of its legitimacy was based on recognition of German victims and the rollback of Allied efforts at denazification and punishment of Nazi war criminals. Failed denazification went hand in hand with successful democratisation and stabilisation (Grossmann, pp. 95–96). Postwar Chancellor Adenauer’s approach to secure democratisation, by rehabilitating some of the rank and file of Nazism and presenting ordinary Germans as victims of the regime, won the day over those voices that were forcefully represented by social democrat Kurt Schumacher, who argued that opposition to Nazism could not mean “giving short shrift to the persecution of the Jews and the political opponents of the Nazi regime” (Herf, 1997, p. 273).

Some cultural events temporarily broke the silence surrounding Germany’s guilt. Bundespräsident Theodor Heuss (1949–1959), urged fellow citizens “to accept the burden of ‘collective shame for the Nazi past’ ” while at the same time “reminding them of the multiple, more humane continuities of German history” (Herf, p. 330). On the cultural scene, the American stage version of The Diary of Anne
Frank (1956) gave a public voice to the victims of Nazism. Yet, for the main part of the 1950s, crimes committed in the name of national socialist Germany were not openly addressed. The reluctance to incorporate the teaching of history, as a subject in its own right, into the curricula of West German schools (Jeismann, 2001, p. 26) illustrates how few attempts were made to make history—and national socialism in particular—central to the formation of political identity. Anti-Semitic acts of vandalism in 1959 and 1960 showed the failings of this approach and highlighted the necessity of making Auschwitz central to Germany’s collective memory (Jeismann, p. 27).

The 1960s saw a turning point in Germany’s approach to its past. A number of commercially successful books, including Melita Maschmann’s account of her time in the League of German Girls (Bund Deutscher Mädel [BdM]) and Peter Weiss’s Die Ermittlung, based on transcripts of the Auschwitz trials (1963–1965), offered a critique of Germany’s past and pushed the memory of genocide into public debate. Memorials and exhibitions to commemorate the victims of national socialism were built (see Grossmann, 2000, pp. 98–99). A younger generation now openly faced Germany’s past and confronted the question of Germany’s responsibility. In the 1970s, the Left discovered the forgotten “other Germany” and started to engage with the thoughts of Jewish exiles. However, much of the Left’s interest in Jewish history and victims’ stories formed part of a Marxist analysis of fascism, which saw anti-Semitism as “the forfeiture of the cosmopolitan, liberal humanist culture associated with German Jews” (Grossmann, p. 101). Among the Left there was little interest in the murder of East European Jews by the Nazis (Grossmann). In politics, West Germany’s Ostpolitik pushed Germany’s invasion of Poland and the Soviet Union into collective memory. In order to reassure Eastern European states and its citizens, West Germany had to demonstrate a sharp break with the past. It had to show that it was not “the fascist regime bent on regaining lost territories which Communist propaganda had depicted for twenty years” (Herf, 1997, pp. 345–346). Political rhetoric, especially by Chancellor Willy Brandt (1969–1974) and Helmut Schmidt (1974–1982),
expressed West German guilt and penance. However, remembrance of this past was always counterbalanced by praise for the German resistance and emphasis on a German tradition of valuing democracy and the individual’s dignity and freedom (Herf, pp. 344–348). While there was acknowledgment of Germany’s dark past, at the same time, there were clear signs of “a search for precursors of a ‘good Germany’ in the German past” (Herf, p. 348). The 1979 screening of the American television series *Holocaust* brought the Jewish fate back into public discussion. However, at the same time, critics—including members of the Jewish “second generation”—pointed out the political and religious conservativism of the Jewish community in Germany and the hypocrisy of their Christian democratic allies, which still had ex-Nazis like Hans Georg Filbinger among its ranks (Grossmann, p. 102). Germany was still caught between remembering and repressing. The 1980s saw the emergence of an expansive memory culture (Grossman, p. 102), yet incidents of repressing the past in Germany’s postwar identity kept coming. In 1984 during his visit to Israel, Chancellor Helmut Kohl (of the Christian Democratic Union of Germany [Christlich Demokratische Union Deutschlands] [CDU]) proclaimed the concept of “belated birth”, which denied the memory of Auschwitz a central place in German postwar identity. Then, in 1985 Kohl infamously shook hands with U.S. president Reagan over the graves at Bitburg, a war cemetery where members of the German Wehrmacht and the SS had been laid to rest. In the service of Cold War politics, the memory of the Second World War was distorted to highlight the victim status of Wehrmacht and SS.

Whether through calculation or incompetence, Kohl at Bitburg created yet another of the zero-sum games of non-recognition in the history of divided memory which pitted “Jewish” against “German” suffering and again used the excuse of Western alliance solidarity to manipulate the interpretation of the Nazi past. (Herf, 1997, p. 352)

These proceedings on the political scene were accompanied by a nostalgic fascination with Nazism and the Third Reich in cultural
productions. Edgar Reitz’s television series *Heimat* (1984) gave a “provocatively honest” account of the good times enjoyed by most Germans under national socialism and “marginalised the persecution of Jews and the Final Solution” (Grossmann, p. 103). These attempts at normalising and denial were countered by Bundespräsident Richard von Weizäcker’s speech in commemoration of May 8, 1945. Weizäcker emphasised the need for Germans to “look truth straight in the eye—without embellishment or distortion” (as cited in Herf, p. 355). He acknowledged Germans’ collective responsibility and described the remembering of the past as a “moral obligation and a political necessity” (as cited in Herf, pp. 357–358). Yet, the seesaw effect, which caught Germany between remembering and repressing, continued. As part of the so-called historian’s debate (*Historikerstreit*), conservative voices called for a shift in the narration of German collective memory. Germany was to free itself from its “guilt complex”; instead of national socialism and genocide, it could include more positive and “healthy” aspects of German history, such as the Bismarckian Empire (Eley, 2000, p. 26). These calls were countered by the Left, with Jürgen Habermas as one of their leading voices. Habermas insisted that the responsibility for Auschwitz remains the starting point for Germany’s postwar democratic identity. Moreover, he argued that “the existence of Auschwitz disqualified German nationalism as an acceptable political stance” (Eley, p. 26). Despite such calls for civic identity and the fact that constitutional patriotism seemed to be an accepted alternative to the ethnic nation, German citizenship policy suggested that the country could not free itself entirely from its past. A relic of the Federal Republic’s *Alleinvertreteranspruch*, ethnocentrism determined the right to belong to the collectivity of German citizens (Hogwood, 2000, pp. 128–129).

With the dramatic events of 1989 and German unification, the definition of the German nation again was overhauled. The fatal cocktail of German ethnic identity and nationalism was on offer once again. Within Germany, voices rejoicing in unification and warnings of nationalism opposed each other. Intellectuals like Günther Grass saw in unification the breeding ground for fatal ethnic nationalism,
while others, such as Martin Walser, openly rejoiced in the prospect of a united Germany, seeing a possible future of the unification of what should belong together (Müller, 2000). Among Germany’s neighbours and allies, fears of the German nation and the German “national character” rekindled. In *The Times*, Conor O’Brien (1989) warned that nationalism would resume its sway over Germany’s youth. After the end of monarchy, the collapse of a republic, two world wars, as well as genocide, division, and unification, German identity and the German nation were not only as complex as ever but also feared.

A central concern underpinning the debate about postunification Germany is the question of whether the memory of the past still informs German identity. The very notion of what the German nation is, and what identification with the very same can be legitimately, have been tied to the memory of national socialism. The historians’ debate was not the only occasion where critics feared that a change in Germany’s collective memory and identity were under way. Some of Germany’s postunification politics, such as the recognition of Slovenia and Croatia, caused irritation among some of its EU partners, with the chairman of the EC Peace Conference, Lord Carrington, accusing Germany of having “torpedoed” the conference (as cited in Brahimi, 2005, p. 11) and were signs of a “new German assertiveness” (Meiers, 2002, p. 199).

The country’s continued commitment to European unification and NATO proved fears of another German Sonderweg unjustified. Support for European integration continued, as did the recognition of France as an important partner. NATO membership also was not questioned, as Germany’s leaders remained convinced that NATO would best serve its security interests (Haftendorn, 1999, pp. 24–25). It seemed that Germany’s political leadership would not desert the policies of multilateralism and would continue to tone down national interests.

Public debate over German national identity and the past continued to flare up in the 1990s, which saw the enthusiastic public reception of Daniel Goldhagen’s *Hitler’s Willing Executioners: Ordinary
Germans and the Holocaust (1996). Goldhagen’s thesis argued the case for a German tradition of anti-Semitism and ordinary Germans’ involvement in the Holocaust. The book, which deals with the horrors of genocide in an open and explicit way, was criticised by many historians for its simplistic dichotomy of a perpetrator/victim scenario and a general lack of academic rigor, among other shortcomings. In contrast, the German public welcomed Goldhagen’s attempt to address the question of collective guilt as a chance of escaping a perceived climate of moral indifference (Bartov, 2000, p. 45; Grossmann, 2000, p. 114). Certainly, Hitler’s Willing Executioners was not the first time Germany came face to face with the horrors of national socialism and genocide. The American television series Holocaust (1979) is an example, prior to Goldhagen’s thesis, of a text that punctured the atmosphere of repressing and allowed Germans to discover their past again (Grossmann, p. 96). Yet, in the 1990s, Goldhagen struck a particular cord. After unification, Germany faced a climate of “political, economic, and moral uncertainties” (Grossmann, p. 118). Embracing Goldhagen’s argument offered the possibility of reaffirming the power of the West and its democratic values, not least because Goldhagen suggested that 1945 marked a turning point for German society, which since then had seemingly given up all anti-Semitism (Fulbrook, 1999, p. 230; Grossmann, pp. 118–119; Jeismann, 2001, p. 152). There were signs that a younger generation was more distanced from the past, but at the same time acknowledged the place of Auschwitz in their national history and identity. Younger Europeanised Germans “are less shameful but also less defensive. They seem able to unburden themselves from the ‘moral cudgel’ while still recognising that Auschwitz is an absolutely central and impossible-to-extinguish element of their history and national identity” (Grossmann, p. 128). Arguably, the cumulative effect of debates over German identity and its past—among them the New Left’s challenge to avoidance and judicial delays of the Adenauer era, Brandt’s Ostpolitik, the broadcasting of Holocaust, Bitburg, Weizäcker’s speech, and the Historikerstreit—had kept the Holocaust and the Nazi era in public debate (Herf, 1997,
It could be said that the conservative government under Kohl confronted a society that had “increasingly adopted the contrasting argument about democracy and memory inaugurated by Heuss and Schumacher” (Herf, p. 362).

However, as the past is approached in a more open way than before, there are concerns that the memory of the past no longer has a hold over the ways in which social and political actions are shaped. Debates about the generational change and its political consequences were fuelled in September 1998, when Germany’s post-war generation, in a coalition of social democrats and Greens, came to power. In contrast to Kohl’s foreign policy approach, heavy with historic rhetoric, the prospect of a German foreign policy less influenced by the memory of the past and more receptive to domestic demands became a realistic possibility (Haftendorn, 1999, p. 24). In Germany, fewer and fewer politicians have biographical links with the national socialist past. The Holocaust has arrived in collective memory. Despite this change, the past still informs German identity. Acknowledgment of and reference to the memory of Auschwitz have become discursive tools to signal support for democracy and universal human rights. In 1999, for example, German politics mobilised this memory to support the decision to send out Bundeswehr troops to Kosovo (Jeismann, 2001, p. 33). Not sending German soldiers—indeed, a lack of response—would have been interpreted as allowing genocide like Auschwitz to happen. Thus, the Holocaust has become a symbol of genocide. Evoking its memory is a way of signalling Germany’s democratic identity and opposition to racism. The past serves as an affirmation of the present and as a signal that Germany is different from what it once was (Jeismann, 2001, p. 138). Despite this affirmation of German identity as liberal and democratic, however, right-wing extremism has a clear presence. Between 1996 and 1997, the number of xenophobic attacks (fremdenfeindliche Straftaten) rose by over 20% from 1,631 to 1,973 incidents. The number of anti-Semitic attacks rose by 15% from 719 to 825 incidents (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 1999). The trend continued in 1998. In the first half of that year alone, 937 xenophobic or racially
motivated attacks (*fremden- und ausländerfeindliche Straftaten*) were registered (europäische institut für migrationsstudien, 2003).

The late 1990s—a time when a change in government, as well as a rise in right-wing violence fuelled debates about Germany’s collective memory and the “proper” concept of identity for this troubled nation—are the starting point for this book. Its case studies cover the period of 1998 to 2005. In these 8 years Germany saw two changes of government: (1) In 1998 Gerhard Schröder’s “Red-Green” (i.e., “Red-Green” refers to the social democrat/Greens) coalition ended conservative-liberal rule, and (2) in 2005 his government was succeeded by a coalition government of conservatives and social democrats, under the leadership of Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU). This book explores discourse surrounding a number of key national and international policies during this time in which Germany was challenged to clearly formulate its sense of self: In Europe, debates about enlargement were on the agenda, while at home in Germany the reform of citizenship and immigration policies inserted civic elements into the concept of the German nation. Against the context of European integration, citizenship reform and immigration, chapters 1 and 2 explore how German identity negotiates both civic and ethnic concepts of the nation and makes the past the measure for the rights and wrongs of politics.

Chapter 1 shows how press discourse mobilises the memory of the past to propagate the concept of an integrationist Germany in Europe, a Germany that tones down its national identity in favour of a European alternative. Europe is the framework through which Germany can signal its postwar democratic credentials, as well as its support for liberalism and market economy. Europe offers a turning point away from the past. However, adopting a European identity also allows Germany to flex its muscles. Under the cloak of European interests, the German press pushes for national interests and even constructs an ethnocentric vision of Europe. Chapter 2 traces the memory of the past in the context of citizenship and immigration reforms. Again, we see a nation that is aware of its history. The past is mobilised to prescribe a future of democracy and a civic concept of nationhood. Yet
again, racist discourse blurs the picture, as immigrants are presented as a problem and threat to social cohesion.

As argued in the previous text, the construction of national identity and collective memory are not exclusive to the sphere of politics. Popular culture, too, is a central agent in the narrativising of the nation. To acknowledge the role of the popular in the imagining of the nation, chapters 3 and 4 take readers into the realm of sports and culinary consumption. Demonstrating the political nature of popular culture, these chapters show how football and food are contexts against which ethnic and civic notions of national identity are imagined. Discourses of football and food feed concepts of German identity that are enshrined in government policies on European integration and citizenship. Chapter 3 shows how press and television coverage of international tournaments work with an ethno-cultural concept of national identity. So-called German virtues of battle and determination are celebrated. It is only when fans engage in acts of violence, or show hatred of other nations, that pride in one’s nation becomes problematic and a civic concept of the nation emerges. Chapter 4 traces the ethno-cultural nation further and argues that restaurant reviews show a nostalgic longing for a romanticised world of cultural simplicity. Social change and hybridity of cultural identities are rejected. The other is celebrated, yet rendered to a state of powerless exoticness that does not grant access to the German nation. By comparing discourses on different topics, this book thus traces a master narrative of German identity that can be found not only in the political sphere but also in the popular.

NATIONAL IDENTITY AND THE MEDIA

As previously argued, for those in search of national identity, the choice of storytellers of the nation is almost overwhelming: political rhetoric, media discourse, public ceremonies, landscapes—the list is seemingly endless. While acknowledging that the narrative of the nation is constructed by many agents, this book focuses on the role of the media. Its case studies are based on analyses of television and
press. Both print media and broadcasting are central to the imagining of the nation. In order for a sense of national identity to develop, members of the nation need to have a sense of spatial and temporal unity, and share a sense of the defining characteristics of their “imagined community”. B. Anderson (1991) describes the daily ritual of newspaper consumption as a channel which makes the imagining of the national community possible, while Scannell and Cardiff (1991) show how the broadcasting of annually recurring events, such as football league finals, may become national viewing rituals in which audiences feel part of a national community. Yet, it is not just communal consumption of media texts that offers the potential to feel part of an imagined, national community. Media content itself signals to us what it means to belong to a nation. Next to the “banal” methods of addressing audiences as a community through personal pronouns and deixis (Billig, 1995), the selection of specific themes and images is central to the media’s imagining of national self and other. Presenting a highly selective assembly of characteristic elements and denying the hybridity of identities within a collectivity (Hall, 1991), national past and future, a home territory, a national culture, national character traits, as well as a national race are imagined to build the national collectivity (see Blain, Boyle, & O’Donnell, 1993; Brookes, 1999; Croucher, 1998; Griffith, 1993; Hardt-Mautner, 1995; McKee, 1999; Meinhof, 2000; Roscol, 2000; Yumul & Özkirimli, 2000). As Mercer (1992) reminds us, what is at stake here is not merely a question of representation. Media discourse trains us in knowing where we are in the social world and how best to do things there. It consolidates what “actually counts as society and how ‘what counts’ gets incorporated and individuated in modes of behaviour and forms of identification and affiliation” (pp. 27–31). Thus, media discourse plays a central role in reminding us, on a daily basis, what it means to belong to a particular nation.

National identity is, of course, intersected by global communication flows. The emergence of new communication technologies, as well as the deregulation of increasingly global media markets today, arguably challenge the extent to which media texts can still offer
us references to national or even more localised identities. Aided by new technologies that allow a fast-paced spread of commodities and values, the culture-ideology of consumerism is said to be driving a global culture (see Beynon & Dunkerley 2000, p. 15; Sklair, 2000, p. 179). Western industries in particular are seen to profit from global trade. Among them, the United States is often considered to be a main force. Terms like “McDonaldisation” reflect concerns over the global reach of U.S. culture (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000, pp. 240–241). The EU, even though a strong trading bloc itself, for decades has sought to keep the influence of U.S. culture at bay. Member states with a protectionist approach to culture, such as France, have successfully lobbied for the introduction of quotas on European television content. Fears over Americanisation, or the emergence of global culture are partially motivated by economic interests. The survival of national industries is at stake. Yet, cultural concerns also are behind cultural protectionism (Giffard, 2003). Powerful societies, such as the United States, and also Western societies in general, are feared to be imposing their cultural and social values on weak societies, “in an exploitative fashion” (Sklair, 2000, p. 178). Global culture is often associated with cultural homogenisation and a threat to indigenous, local cultures and identities (Beynon & Dunkerley, 2000, pp. 22–23). Its products are said to have no connection with local traditions. Global culture is criticised for its lack of authenticity and for up-rooting consumers from their local contexts. In a globalising world, the importance of national identities could be said to be diminishing. However, just like the nation-state has not yet become an outdated concept, the power of nationalism has not been diminished. Post the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks (9/11), the United States saw a surge in nationalism. Political leaders used the spirit of nationalism to secure Americans’ support for military interventions and a culture in which citizens report the “anti-American” activities of their neighbours (Puri, 2004, pp. 3, 5). Just as nationalism survived in political rhetoric, so it survived in culture. Indeed, culture remains a central platform for the expression and celebration of national and local identities. Audiences may consume globally available products,
yet this does not mean that they have abandoned national or regional products altogether. Instead of cultural homogeneity, globalisation has been said to offer consumers new ways of managing their identities and may even lead to a “revival of local culture” (Beynon & Dunkerley, pp. 24–25). Global media often adapt to local markets (Tomlinson, 1999), and audiences in their local context may inscribe their own personal and culturally specific meanings onto a global media “text” (Beynon & Dunkerley, pp. 29–30). Globalisation might lead to some degree of sameness across cultures, as some consumer goods, such as Coca-Cola or McDonald’s, have global reach. However, globalisation also leads to cultural hybridisation and a “dialectic between the local and the global, out of which are born increased cultural options” (Beynon & Dunkerley, p. 27). As part of this dialectic, global culture has witnessed a strengthening of local or ethnic identities, in which emphasis on the exoticness of ethnic and local origins are part of marketing strategies (Beynon & Dunkerley). Despite the strength of multinational consumer industries, to date the media’s potential to tell the story of a nation persists.

When analyzing media coverage of national and international politics and culture, it is important to remember that the media do not operate in a vacuum. This book takes the lead from discourse analytical approaches that place the results of their analysis within wider social, political, and institutional contexts (see Wodak et al., 1998). Central to the analysis is this question: How do concepts of national identity within the media text relate to social relations outside the confines of the text itself? By relating media discourses to the contexts that produce and receive them, it becomes possible to highlight the political nature of these discourses. Media texts negotiate discourses of identity available in other social and political spheres, such as political and social institutions, and in turn are informed by them. By exploring this dialectic relationship, the analysis can show how media discourse sustains or challenges social relations of power.

The way in which German journalism previously approached the memory of the national past highlights the dialectic nature of
national identity discourse. The 1990s saw an independent media, which offered a platform of debate for supporters and critics of Goldhagen’s thesis of Germans’ collective guilt (Pöttker, 2005, p. 131). It took German journalism a long time to reach this stage of (comparative) independence. From 1945 to 1955, the West German press, like the political elite and the public, sought a new national identity. Newspapers constructed a concept of West German identity based on liberalism, humanism, and democracy as counterpoints to the political doctrine of the immediate past (Hallwirth, 1987). The press sustained the same concept of German identity as it was propagated by government policy. Yet, while the national past functioned as a counterpoint for positive self-identification after the war, the question of Germans’ involvement in genocide was left untouched. In the 1950s, West German journalism supported the attempt of the political elite to repress the past and calls for Germans’ collective responsibility. The size and reach of the German resistance movement were emphasised, while the national socialist past of prominent politicians, such as Secretary of State Hans Globke, “was left unreported until the early 1960s” (Pöttker, p. 122). Media coverage of the Goldhagen case is evidence of a growing independence of German journalism. It also illustrates the importance of cultural and economic contexts in shaping media discourse. In the 1990s, Germany’s postwar generations were ready to openly engage with debates about collective guilt and responsibility. Moreover, increasing media choice and the deregulation of media industries meant that issues (still) uncomfortable for some members of the political elite were more likely to be provided by a market regulated by consumer preferences, rather than the interests of the political elite (Pöttker, p. 136). Media discourse, therefore, stands in a dialectic relationship with its social, industrial, and political context. It sustains, but also challenges, concepts of identity offered in the political sphere. Discourse analytical approaches seek to acknowledge this relationship by asking whose voices in society have access to media discourse (van Dijk, 1991, pp. 151–175) and by locating their findings within wider historical contexts (Wodak et al., 1998). When discussing media content, the following chapters in this book seek to place
findings in their specific social and political contexts. The analysis of media coverage surrounding citizenship reform, for example, is placed in the context of government policy, party political interests, and citizen discourse and seeks to highlight how discourses of identity relate to the social position of migrant residents in Germany. Further, by comparing discourses in the contexts of European politics and citizenship and immigration with those in the contexts of football and food, this book offers insights into how concepts of identity are constructed against a range of different topic contexts. The discursive context of media texts explored in each chapter not only encompasses political speeches, laws, and social structures, but also includes the discourses explored in other chapters.

Discourse analytical approaches tend to be purely qualitative in nature. This book does not offer any numerically expressed evidence about the strength of a particular discourse. Discourse analysis, and especially the tradition of so-called critical discourse analysis, explores how identities are formulated at the micro- and macro level of discourse. Amongst other elements, choices of grammar, lexical patterns, and the hierarchical structure of topics within a text are of interest. Studies that carry out a close critical linguistic reading of data often tend to not only illustrate their findings by presenting a representative example of media texts but also discuss it with attention to every linguistic detail at sentence level and above. This approach allows a full illustration of how linguistic choices construct particular meanings. This book acknowledges the benefits of this approach, yet its main interest lies not in discursive struggles at sentence level. This book aims to map out how, within media coverage of a particular topic, different groups of arguments relate to each other, and how patterns of arguments are sustained across a variety of topic contexts and genres.

The Scope of This Study

This study brings together topics from the political and (seemingly) nonpolitical sphere. The discourse analytical approach allows it to
show how, despite differences in topic context, these discourses are intertexts to each other and combine to tell the story of the German nation. Assumptions and propositions furthered in one topic context can be found repeated in another. Combined, they tell a story of what it means to be German. The story that is told is not always clear-cut. The individual topics take on board voices that may run counter to each other. The four case studies in this book trace the concept of a nation that has its roots firmly in the memory of national socialism and constructs ethnocentric nationalism as taboo. At the same time, this nation cannot escape the past as it harbours racist images of self and other.

While it traces a master narrative of German identity, this book does not support the idea that there is a true essence of the nation. Arguing for a concept of the nation as a social construct that may be imagined differently in different contexts, it acknowledges that there are competing versions of what it means to be German. In order to highlight this discursive struggle, its sample includes television and press coverage, as well as a selection of different newspapers and news magazines. This selection is wide enough to highlight competing discourses, but in order to clarify the scope of the argument, at this point it is necessary to flag the limitations of the sample: Germany currently has around 1,500 newspapers and over 130 national television channels (Schrag, 2007, pp. 118, 213). The present study is not so ambitious that it could try to claim to have studied them all. Choices had to be made, which inevitably impact on the extent to which this book can make claims about the German media market in general. The first two case studies are based on an analysis of news magazines and newspapers; the last two case studies explore both television and press. The television sample focuses exclusively on content from the two national public service broadcasters, ARD (Arbeitsgemeinschaft der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten Deutschlands) and ZDF (Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen), and does not include commercial broadcasters, such as SAT.1, RTL, or ProSieben. The television sample comprises coverage surrounding the European football championships in 2000 and 2004. ARD and ZDF secured the broadcasting
rights for these events. On average, in 2000 live coverage of matches reached an audience of 8.16 million viewers. In 2004 up to 11.57 million viewers watched a match (Zubayr & Gerhard, 2004, p. 422). An analysis of ARD and ZDF programming offers insights into discourses that were nationally available and widely accessed. This is not to say, however, that an analysis of commercial channels would not have enriched this study. Sport is central to the programming of both RTL and SAT.1. DSF and EuroSport are channels that are fully dedicated to the broadcasting of sports (Rühle, 2000). Including such channels in the sample could have allowed insights into how a commercial context impacts on discourses, the mode of their presentation, as well as their themes. Potentially, differences between programmes produced under a public service ethos and tabloid styles of presentation, often criticised as a consequence of a commercial market (Croteau & Hoynes 2003, pp. 58–63), could have been traced. Similarly, the inclusion of a tabloid newspaper in the press sample would have made the final conclusions of this study more nuanced.

Very much like the selection of the television sample, the choice of the press sample had to straddle the need to offer a balanced, and at the same time manageable, set of primary sources. A highly competitive market, a decline in public spending and decreasing advertising revenues has seen many newspapers struggle for their survival (Schrag, 2007, p. 16). Nevertheless, the number of newspaper titles remains high. With a history of a highly regionalised press, Germany today has about 1,500 newspapers, compared to, for example, 100 newspapers in Britain (Schrag, p. 118). All the newspapers in the sample for this study are available across Germany. For some, and the Bavarian Süddeutsche Zeitung in particular, regional editions and pages dedicated to the cultural and political life of a particular city are important to secure their income stream, which allows this study to examine how regional identities are negotiated in relation to national identity. What this sample does not allow is an analysis of regional differences along Germany’s East-West axis. The question whether different, and possibly opposing, kinds of national identity have developed in East and West Germany is much
debated. It has been suggested that despite political and economic unification, the foundations of an identity based on “common and shared symbols” of the nation have been difficult to achieve (Kim & Robertson, 2002, p. 8). As this study does not include regional media produced for East German audiences, it cannot offer any new insights to this debate. As it is the premise of this book that there is no “true” or single concept of German identity, a regional comparison potentially would have offered more evidence to highlight this diversity and the context-dependency of identity discourses. Despite the above limitations, the chosen sample design allows this study to explore the ways in which patterns of arguments are sustained across a variety of topic contexts in a range of different media outlets. The press sample in particular is varied and includes the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Die Welt*, and *Die Zeit*, as well as the two news magazines *Der Spiegel* and *FOCUS*. Before the study can present its first case study and explore the reporting of European integration by these publications, it seems worthwhile to briefly introduce them to readers unfamiliar with Germany’s press market.

Published in Munich, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* has its main readership in the city itself, as well as across the rest of Bavaria. The paper dedicates a section to regional and local news, but is sold nationwide. With a circulation of 444,658 (“Informationsgemeinschaft”, 2007) it is one of the best selling papers in Germany. Founded in 1945, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* has established itself as an influential voice commenting on German politics. It is known to keep a watchful eye on the politics of Bavaria’s governing conservative party, the Christian-Social Union of Bavaria [*Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern*] (CSU), favouring a liberal, social outlook and supporting democratic and social reforms (Meyn, 2004, p. 94). Despite being renowned for its journalism, by 2002, the paper faced financial disaster. Advertising revenues had gone down by 19% and the paper had to cope with a record minus of €33 million on its books. In order to save resources, the regularly published page dedicated to politics and culture from Berlin was abolished, together with the special
edition for North Rhine-Westphalia. Regional news reporting was reduced and many regional editions for areas surrounding Munich were axed. Additional income streams were opened up with new merchandise ranges. At the heart of this effort to win new customers is the SZ-Mediathek, which sells DVDs, books and CDs, selected and reviewed by journalists of the Süddeutsche Zeitung (Schrag, 2007, pp. 152–153).

Another paper with national reach (but a regional edition for the Rhein-Main area), the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung is another influential paper. With a strong emphasis on news from the stock exchanges, economy, taxes, and the law, it is popular with those employed in business and politics. While it does not top the list of best selling newspapers in Germany, selling around 364,525 copies (“Informationsgemeinschaft”, 2007) the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung has “a wider international reach than its German competitors” (Schrag, 2007, p. 154). It employs the largest number of correspondents of all German daily papers and international news is central to its content. Its coverage of domestic news for a long time especially has been regarded as conservative, with clear support for the two conservative parties CDU and CSU. More liberal outlooks can be found in the reporting of business news. Cultural news, which in many German papers can be found in the so-called Feuilleton, may even lean to the left of the political spectrum (Schrag, p. 155).

Die Welt, from its beginnings in 1946, was established as a national paper (even though there are editions for Hamburg and Berlin). It is popular with leading figures in politics and economy and had a reputation of an unshakeable conservative outlook (Meyn, 2004, p. 95), until the 1990s, when Mathias Döpfner took over as editor-in-chief and introduced more “politically balanced” reporting (Schrag, p. 157). The paper, which sells about 56,504 copies (“Informationsgemeinschaft”, 2007), is subsidised by more successful products of the Axel Springer publishing house, but is considered central to the company. Tabloid editions of Die Welt were introduced, and today, Die Welt tries to win audiences with an increasing use of graphics and illustrations, as well as references to informative Web sites.
Die Zeit is a weekly paper. It stands out from the rest of the market with a strong focus on social and political commentary and analysis. It is a liberal newspaper, targeting an academic audience. Selling about 488,294 copies (“Informationsgemeinschaft”, 2007), today, Die Zeit enjoys a wide circulation. Yet, until the 1970s, it could only survive with the help of subsidies donated by its founding publisher, Gerd Bucerius. Today, Die Zeit has “about 2 million readers” (Schrag, 2007, p. 158).

Renowned for its uncompromising investigative journalism, Der Spiegel is the “most quoted publication in Germany” (Schrag, 2007, p. 163). The weekly news magazine is known for being left-wing, but until his death in 2002, founder, publisher, and editor Rudolf Augstein at times gave space to reporting that reflected his own “patriotic views” (Schrag, p. 104). The magazine has a reputation for being a passionate defender of democracy and has a history of uncovering political scandals. Since the death of Rudolf Augstein in 2002, the magazine has been accused of lacking rigour and political bite (Schrag). Investigative journalism is said to be on the way out. Yet, Der Spiegel remains popular and sells about 1,050,397 copies, 969,796 of which are sold in Germany (Der Spiegel, 2007).

Introduced in 1993 and with sales figures at around 714,168 copies (Horizont.Net, 2007), FOCUS magazine is one of Der Spiegel’s stronger competitors. Whereas Der Spiegel built its reputation on investigative journalism and political commentary, FOCUS is a more lifestyle-orientated magazine that features, for example, special issues on Germany’s best doctors, universities, and holiday destinations. FOCUS does provide social commentary, but predominately by quoting the political and cultural elite, as well as citizens affected by a particular issue (Meyn, 2004, pp. 105–106). Its trademarks are “a combination of colourful pictures, graphics and short articles”, which make it an entertaining read (Meyn, p. 105). Central to the FOCUS brand is the magazine itself, but also very successful are its Web site and television programmes, such as FOCUS TV Magazin (ProSieben), FOCUS TV exclusiv (RTL 2) and FOCUS TV spezial (VOX). With FOCUS Gesundheit, a channel accessible
through Pay-TV provider Premiere, the FOCUS brand has continued to expand its foothold in the health and lifestyle market. Yet, it is this very focus on lifestyle, drama, and entertainment that has led some to criticise FOCUS products as being no more than a banal and chatty kind of journalism that does not offer readers enough information to form an independent opinion. Especially in its early days, the magazine was criticised for being “too colourful, bourgeois and banal” (Meyn, p. 105).

With journalism styles ranging from the informative but chatty to the investigative and critical—including a broad spectrum of political outlooks, as well as national and regional target audiences—the sample gives insights into a broad section of Germany’s press market. The following chapters explore how these newspapers and magazines, together with the public service broadcasters, tell a story of German identity.