

Chapter 2

Evolving Citizenship Conception in the West

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the evolution of the concept of citizenship in the West and, by doing so, construct the dimensions and elements of the Western analytical lens to be used in the examination of the meaning of citizenship in contemporary Chinese society later in this book. The construction is based on English-language scholarly literature on citizenship in the Western context. Labelling the lens as ‘Western’ entails no implication of any indispensable particularity of Western citizenship against citizenship conceptions in other contexts. The concept of citizenship in the West is far from univocal and unanimous, whether historically or contemporarily. Its complex and often contested variations are, however, not the focus of this chapter, though some will be taken into account. This chapter is to trace the conceptual evolution of Western citizenship, marking and explaining where it is from, in what shape it has been, and in what direction it is now changing. In so doing, it unpacks the components of Western citizenship at the vantage point of early twenty-first century. Specifically, the first three sections will deliberate, respectively, its historical roots, modern formation and contemporary reconfiguration, with a particular focus on the societal conditions behind. The last section will connect the analytical lens to the study of this book, explaining the importance of the Western perspective in understanding the concept of citizenship in general and Chinese citizenship in particular.

Pre-modern Citizenship

The idea of citizenship in Western thought is widely accepted to have its historical roots as long ago as in ancient Greek and Roman times. Ancient Greeks handed down citizenship as active political participation in the name of civic virtue while later Romans offered citizenship as legal status with entitlements (Walzer 1989).

Against the background of citizenship practice in ancient Greek city-state or the *polis*, Aristotle defined citizen as a member of the political community who rules

and is ruled by others, actively and collectively participating in the political community to make and obey decisions with mutual respect (Pocock 1995). At the heart of Aristotelian citizenship is the ‘basic moral calibre’ to ‘common weal’ through active political participation (Heater 1999, p. 45). As a result of such conception practiced in Greek city-state and theorized by Aristotle, citizenship replaced biological relations to be the social bond; and collective participation in political deliberation for community was desired beyond personal material goods (Shafir 1998). Shafir (1998) called these ‘a double process of emancipation’: ‘the liberation of a portion of humanity from tribal loyalties and its fusion into a voluntary civic community’ and ‘the transcendence of the instrumental sphere of necessity...into the sphere of freedom’ (p. 3).

What should be noted is that both in theory and in reality, not all but only a few in the city-state were able to practice in the political community the freedom of ruling and being ruled in the name of citizen. In Aristotle’s normative account citizenship was reversed for those in the categories of ‘a male of known genealogy, a patriarch, a warrior, and the master of the labour of others (normally slaves)’ (Pocock 1995, p. 31). In other words, citizen was ‘a leisured, propertied elite’, freed from the private sphere looked after by women and slaves and accordingly able to ‘study or participate fully in public affairs’ (Heater 1999, p. 46).

Citizenship defined in ethical and active terms—which is the source of what is now called the civic republican tradition of citizenship (Heater 1999)—had a close link to the societal conditions of the *polis* wherein it was practiced. Featuring small-scale population and intimate social connections between citizens, or in Walzer’s (1989, p. 213) words, ‘the minimal range of social differentiation’, ancient Greek city-state was ‘not merely a collection of individuals’ but ‘an organic society’ in which citizens as members engaged with each other in public affairs for ‘the mutual benefit of the individual and the community’ (Heater 1999, pp. 44, 55).

Citizenship conception altered as societal conditions changed. The extension of citizenship to defeated subjects in the expanded Roman Empire resulted in ‘a large and heterogeneous population’ (Walzer 1989, p. 215), which in turn contributed to the emergence of the other tradition than the civic republican one in Western thought of citizenship. Without the unity and trust between homogeneous citizens as in ancient republican times, the moral commitment to and active involvement in community were gradually replaced by loyalty to legal institutions, which protected citizens in communities of strangers across the Empire by rights under a common law. In such circumstances, citizen of the Roman Empire was perceived less as active participant in public affairs but more as ‘passive recipient of specific rights and entitlements’ under the protection of law; and citizenship became ‘a legal status rather than a fact of everyday life’ (Walzer 1989, p. 215).

The break from active political participation, however, did not strip Roman citizenship of the political nature of citizenship apparent in the Greek one. Rather, as Pocock (1995) explained, it is the meaning of political that was altered by Roman citizenship through the notion of law. Unlike Greek citizen who ruled and was ruled by others, Roman citizen did not have access to the making of imperial law applying to and governing them. Yet by appealing to the law that conferred rights

on him, Roman citizen in effect involved in ‘the process of adjudication, and litigants, witnesses, compurgators, pleaders and so forth’ that functionalized and effectively determined the law (Pocock 1995, p. 39). In this sense, Roman citizenship maintained the nature of being a political institution for deliberation and negotiation as of Greek citizenship. Also resembling Greek citizenship, Roman citizenship remained a privilege enjoyed by adult men and off limits to women and slaves.

Citizenship as a legal status at the state level ‘was then eclipsed in the West by the various feudal and religious statuses of the medieval Christian world’ (Smith 2002, p. 106). Yet *qua* members of various voluntarily-formed and self-governing guilds, citizens in medieval cities still enjoyed certain rights of self-governance and exercised active involvement in the public affairs of the guild (Isin 2002a). In the same time medieval citizenship showed some unprecedented features. As various guilds—seen by Isin (2002a) as ‘the most important technology of citizenship in the struggle of various groups for dominance in the city’ (p. 128)—competed for rights in medieval cities, citizenship rights became claims to be won through active contestation and struggles, as opposed to rights as passive entitlement like in the Roman Empire. This development arguably helped pave the way for the establishment of democracy and the universalization of citizenship rights in the late eighteenth century marked by the French Revolution.

Modern Citizenship

The concept of citizenship underwent its modern transformation into what is now called liberal citizenship, which, viewed from the contemporary vantage point, is not only one of the two traditions of citizenship (the other one is civic republican citizenship) influencing citizenship debates, but also the ‘dominant’ form of citizenship at least in the West (Heater 1999, p. 4).

Like Greek, Roman and medieval citizenship, modern liberal citizenship also came along under certain societal conditions. Powered by industrialization, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of Western Europe witnessed the rise of capitalism and the growing and prevailing power of the market which necessitated individual freedoms. It experienced subversions by the bourgeoisie against the monarchs and aristocrats for civil and political rights. With the intellectual support of English liberalism flourishing in the seventeenth century and the practical experience of British Civil War and American Revolution (Heater 1999), the 1789 French Revolution became the tipping point of those subversions. It gave birth of modern democratic state in which subjects were turned into citizens; law-protected rights were open to formerly excluded groups; and a ‘direct relation’ between citizens and the state was established ‘so that all citizens as individuals possess equal rights before the sovereign, national authority’ (Bendix 1977, pp. 89–91). Marked by this unprecedented direct citizen–state relationship, French Revolution, as Heater (1999) noted, ‘first established the principle and practice of citizenship as

the central feature of the modern socio-political structure' (p. 4). In short, what features modern liberal citizenship is equal and universal citizenship status and rights, grounded on the idea of individual liberty and bounded within the sovereign state.

The routes to modern citizenship are argued to be not identical in Western states, at least among Britain, Germany, France and America. Critically arguing that the equal and universal entitlement of citizenship was actually a 'ruling class strategy' from above to reconcile demands for rights below, Mann (1987) demonstrated that in Britain modern citizenship was employed by the ruling class—first the monarch and aristocrats and later the bourgeoisie—as a liberal strategy to incorporate lower classes through the welfare state, while in Germany modern citizenship served as an authoritarian strategy for the German monarch to settle down demands from lower classes with substantial social rights yet superficial political rights. As a criticism to Mann's argument, Turner (1990) pointed out that perceiving citizenship solely as strategy from above renders citizenship a completely passive institution, obscuring the reality that in some cases, such as France and America, citizenship was actually the result of active struggles from below. He complemented that, although it is true that citizenship was passively bestowed from the top in Britain and Germany, the two cases can be further distinguished from a public/private perspective as the former locating citizenship in the public arena while the latter constraining citizenship in the private arena. Likewise, while French and American citizenships were obtained through active struggles from below, the former required active public engagement while the latter focused on the private realm of individuals (Turner 1990). Departing from Mann's differentiation of modern citizenship formation, Turner (1990) suggested that there were four routes to the establishment of citizen–state relationship and hence four types of citizenship in modern times: British passive and public citizenship, German passive and private citizenship, French active and public citizenship, and American active and private citizenship.

Whether initiating from above or below and whether ending in public or private realm, modern citizenship formation was not only an extension of citizenship rights to former subjects but also a separation of citizenship rights itself. Based on the English experience, Marshall (1998) offered a classical three-element classification of citizenship rights, which were 'blended' in pre-modern times but 'parted company' and separately, if neither necessarily nor sequentially, developed under the status of citizenship from the eighteenth to the twentieth century (pp. 94–5). They are civil rights 'necessary for individual freedom', political rights 'to participate in the exercise of political power' and social rights covering 'from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in the society' (Marshall 1998, p. 94).

While civil and political rights have been extended, albeit at varying paces, to formerly excluded groups in modern Western democracies, it does not necessarily mean that subject-turned modern citizens are able or willing to directly and actively participate in state affairs on a par with Ancient Greek citizens. Even in republican France where citizenship featured active and public characteristics and Rousseauian

desire for direct popular governance at the state level was high, Greek active citizenship was not restored. This is because, as Smith (2002) remarked, ‘in modern large-scale republics, there has simply been no practical alternative to extensive reliance on representative systems of self-government, except for effective abandonment of any meaning self-government at all’ (p. 107). After all, when the bourgeoisie led the struggles to universalize civil and political rights, their primary purpose was to secure their individual freedoms in the market other than political participation per se. For modern citizenship, individual freedoms are the end to be met through means such as ‘the odd duty’ of taxpaying for rights protection by the state in return, and the right to ‘rouse itself from the quiet pursuit of private affairs and rebel’ in cases that the state trespasses on or fails to protect individual freedoms (Heater 1999, pp. 6–7). In a word, political participation is perceived no more than a means to meet the end of individual freedom. In this sense, modern citizenship is ‘apolitical’ (Smith 2002, p. 108).

Civil and political rights alone cannot live up to the idea of modern citizenship. That is, as Marshall (1998) revealed, civil and political rights are in effect ‘an aid, and not a menace, to capitalism and the free-market economy’ as ‘a system, not of equality, but of inequality’, while ‘citizenship, even in its early forms, was a principle of equality’ (pp. 102–5). Behind the universalized civil and political rights lie certain necessary social resources and capabilities for supposedly equal modern citizens to exercise those rights. The theory and practice of social rights—such as education, minimum wage and health care—under the legal and equal status of citizenship were thus introduced as an attempt to eliminate or at least alleviate inequalities in social resource and capability. The struggles and contests in the distribution of often finite social resources gave unprecedentedly significant rise to the social dimension in modern citizenship, leading Turner (2006) to claim that distinct from classical ‘political citizenship’, modern citizenship is ‘social citizenship’ in essence (p. 150). Moreover, as citizenship now covers issues not only in relation to the state but also to the market, the public and the private life (Janoski 1998), how to secure civil and political rights for individual liberty on one hand and social rights for social equality on the other hand continues to be a key question in contemporary citizenship debates.

One important social feature of modern citizenship is the development of the idea of nation and the attendant national identity and nationalism, and its influence on citizenry solidarity. The term ‘nation’ in its classic Roman usage connoted community of people of the same decent, either geographically or culturally but not politically (Habermas 1995, p. 258). Politicizing the idea of nation and defining it in ‘universalist, rationalist, assimilationist, and state-centred’ terms, the French bourgeoisie employed it to mobilize the population at large against the monarch and aristocrats and, through the French Revolution, to establish the self-determining sovereign nation whose membership was institutionalized in the political and legal form of citizenship (Brubaker 1998, pp. 139–42). This process resulted in what Hobsbawm (1992, p. 19) meant ‘the equation nation = state = people’ or what Delanty (2000, p. 91) called ‘the coupling of nation and state’ in modern political vocabulary. Following the invention and institutionalization of nation-state came

the emergence of exclusive nationalism out of the internal defence of the nascent nation-state and its later external expansion (Brubaker 1998, p. 143). Viewed on the state and citizenship side, Habermas (1995) remarked that the emerged nationalism ‘founded a collective identity that played a *functional role* for the implementation of the citizenship that arose in the French Revolution’; while national identity served as the ‘socio-psychological connection’ for, yet ‘was never conceptually tied to’, modern liberal citizenship (p. 259, original emphasis).

First introduced into modern political discourse through French revolution (Shafir 1998, p. 16), the idea of nation and nationalism experienced conceptual transformation in the late nineteenth century (Hobsbawm 1992). Brubaker (1998) neatly pointed out the cause behind and the result of this transformation:

[The expansive and aggressive political-ideological nationalism directed abroad] contributed to the later emergence, during the Napoleonic period, of a German counternationalism in which ethnocultural motifs came to play an important role. Revolutionary expansion, itself driven by political nationalism, thus engendered ethnocultural nationalism: the ‘crusade for liberty’ elicited in response the myth, if not the reality, of a ‘holy war’ of ethnonational resistance. (p. 144)

This alternative and ethnocultural nationalism was rooted in the German ‘particularist, organic, differentialist, and *Volk*-centred’ perception of nationhood (Brubaker 1998, p. 139), echoing the classic usage of nation in their connection to culture. Yet, ethnocultural nationalism is significantly modern in the sense that it was constructed upon the French experience of the politicized nation and thus was charged with the demand of self-determination often, if not always, in the form of independent state.

Unlike political nationalism based on acquirable political ideas, ethnocultural nationalism presupposes ascriptive and distinct ethnic and cultural homogeneities among people of the claimed nation. But similar to political nationalism, ethnocultural nationalism arguably also functions as the socio-psychological bond among modern citizens, whether it is viewed by Anderson (2006) as an imaginary construct, thanks to modern technology and apparatus, or it does involve distinctly recognizable ‘ethnic core’ like in pre-modern cultural communities, as argued by Smith (1989).

The equations of nation with state and people of the nation with citizen of the state, together with the conceptual transformation of nation and nationalism, complicated the answer to the question of who is a citizen in modern discourse. While in modern nation-state citizenship continues to be a legal status, it tends to, though not necessarily in theory and not always in practice, bear implications of ethnocultural homogeneities such as common homeland, common culture (typically language), and common descent (Smith 1989, p. 344). In other words, in its modern conception citizenship as legal membership of the state is often associated with national membership based on assumption of cultural and ethnic homogeneities.

So far our journey on the conceptual evolution of citizenship in the West has gone from ancient Greek and Roman citizenship, briefly through medieval citizenship, to modern liberal citizenship. As these variations are the grounds for the

contemporary conceptual development of Western citizenship, it is helpful to highlight the key connections and distinctions between them before we continue the journey to contemporary times.

Modern citizenship can be seen as a continuity of the Roman experience of citizenship in the sense that both serve as a legal status entailing certain law-protected rights. Yet, it should be noted immediately that such similarity makes sense only with reference to the Greek republican citizenship. While both the modern theory and the Roman practice treat citizenship as a legal status, modern citizenship inspired by the liberal idea of social contract—through which citizens as independent individuals submit themselves with consent to the authorities in exchange for protection of their rights—is fundamentally different from citizenship subject to the arbitrariness of Roman emperor. The difference in source of authority further determines that rights negotiated and equally shared by all independent and equal citizens, at least in theory, in modern nation-state—developed from medieval experience of rights contestation between guilds in cities—are distinct from rights of subject bestowed by emperor. In addition to the above distinctions, the contents of rights have also been considerably expanded in modern times, compared with ancient citizenship rights, or indeed privileges.

In spite of these important differences, modern liberal citizenship shares the feature of passivity with Roman imperial citizenship, as it does not necessarily entail active political participation in the name of virtue which is the essence of the civic republican tradition of citizenship. Though modern citizens legally have the right to political participation and do sometimes actively participate in political community to protect or claim for rights, for modern citizenship political participation serves as the means to ends rather than itself the end. Modern citizen in this sense is similar to what Pocock called ‘legal being’ when he discussed the imperial citizenship in comparison with ‘political being’ of classical citizens in ancient republican Greece and Rome (Pocock 1995, p. 34). By ‘political being’, Pocock (1995) indicated citizens that emancipate themselves from individual possessions or ‘thing’ so as to politically engage with others, which itself is an end or ‘the ideal’; by contrast, ‘legal being’ means citizens only engaging with others through and for possessions or ‘things’ which are material or ‘the real’ (pp. 34–5). The focus on ‘the real’ rather than ‘the ideal’ in the modern conception renders the nature of civic virtue required by modern citizenship different from that by the ancient republican citizenship. As mentioned above, political engagement in everyday life as ‘the ideal’ is required in the name of virtue in the Aristotelian model of citizenship. For modern citizenship, however, virtue as duty such as taxpaying and voting becomes the means of access to ‘the real’ and individual liberty secured by rights.

While the ideas of liberty and democracy, which are the backbone of modern Western citizenship, may not be commonly espoused across the globe, citizenship as legal status has been institutionalized in most, if not all, modern nation-states (Isin and Wood 1999, p. 5), including China.¹ Some nation-states follow the

¹How citizenship is legally defined in China is explained in Chap. 3.

principle of *jus sanguinis* which offers the legal membership at birth to those born to parent with the legal status, while others apply the principle of *jus soli* which grants the status to those born in it (Heater 1999, p. 80). The change of legal citizenship is often eligible based on criteria varying in different states, such as a certain length of legal residence. The worldwide recognition of citizenship as legal status offers a common ground for citizenship discussion at a time that contemporary societal conditions and developments have brought modern citizenship into question.

Contemporary Reconfiguration

Citizenship, as demonstrated in the above sections, is a fluid, contested and constructed concept, altering along changing societal conditions. Modern citizenship formed in particular historical context is thus inevitably reconfigured in contemporary settings featuring postmodernization and globalization which pose serious challenges to modern citizenship. This reconfiguration is a constructing process as the history of the evolution of the concept suggests, and is in a contesting manner given that not only may the elements of the concept come into conflict (such as civil vs. social rights), but also there are contrasting ideas in the conceptual legacies of citizenship, notably the civic republican and the liberal traditions. Rather than placing the focus on the details of contemporary contestation and construction, in this section I intend to depict the changing landscape of the concept in contemporary times by highlighting in what way modern citizenship is challenged by, and in what direction the concept is evolved under, the two contemporary forces of postmodernization and globalization identified by Isin and Turner (2002). It is this contemporarily reconfigured Western citizenship that serves as the analytical lens for the examination of citizenship in the Chinese case.

The contemporary citizenship reconfiguration departs from and draws on its pre-modern and modern legacies, which—to oversimplify—include political participation and civic virtue from ancient Greek citizenship, legal status and law-protected rights from ancient Roman citizenship, and national identity from modern citizenship. This summary corresponds with Delanty's (2000, p. 126) definition of citizenship containing four components of rights, responsibilities, participation and identity. Similarly, Isin and Turner (2002) suggested that citizenship has 'three fundamental axes, extent (rules and norms of inclusion and exclusion), content (rights and responsibilities) and depth (thickness or thinness)' (p. 2). A synthesis of these categories creates three dimensions of citizenship: (1) content about rights and responsibilities, (2) extent about identity, and (3) depth about participation. In what way are these dimensions reconfigured by contemporary postmodernization and globalization? This is the question to be addressed below.

Citizenship in Postmodernization

Postmodernization, either as the ideological movement of postmodernism or as the historical process towards the condition of postmodernity, is, in the simplest terms, a departure from modern society. Any discussion of postmodernization thus has to start from a consideration of modern society. For some the departure is merely the continuity of modern society, while for others, such as Crook et al. (1992), it is 'a genuinely new historical configuration' (p. 1).

Modern society featured at least two transformations from pre-modern society. One was the rationalization of human experience into calculable and impersonal knowledge; and the other was, inspired by the first one, the universalization of ideas and values attempting to bind together differentiated units of social structure (Crook et al. 1992). The former gave rise to modern science, while the latter gave birth to bureaucratic administration. Postmodernization, according to Crook et al. (1992), is the extension 'to extreme levels' of both the universalization of modern social organization with rationalized and centralized management, and the differentiation of modern social structure with increased specialization and complexity (p. 32). Calling the former extension 'monocentric organization' and the latter 'hyperdifferentiation', Crook et al. (1992) argued that the contradiction of the two renders the former 'untenable', breaking down modern established principles and categories and leading to uncertainty and unpredictability (pp. 34–5).

The collapse of modern principles and categories is, in a sense, the failure of the modern grand narrative of universality. Such failure is illustrated in Pathak's (2006) account on modern values, although he did not position himself as a postmodernist but aimed to 'humanize modernity' (p. 161). Pathak (2006) observed that, while modernity bears core values such as 'freedom, criticality, democratization, openness and optimism for the future' which are desirable and undeniable for human beings, it may induce 'arrogance and violence' in practice (pp. 23–6), in the sense that modernity could become a kind of Western cultural imposition which universalizes certain understandings and behaviours in the name of rationality, consequently disregarding social, cultural and religious differences and obscuring the heterogeneity in the actual world. This critique of modernity implies that paralleling the fall of modern and supposedly universal grand narrative is the rise of attention to difference and particularity in the hyperdifferentiated postmodern society.

This shift poses challenges to modern universal citizenship at least from two directions. First and within individual nation-states, it breaks up the modern monolithic image of citizen projecting the dominant culture in the nationalized state, opening up questions of cultural inclusion and exclusion (Stevenson 2001). Ethnic, gender and religious groups excluded or marginalized from mainstream discourses of modern citizenship increasingly demand group identity to be recognized and group-differentiated rights to be guaranteed in the name of citizen (Isin 2002b, pp. 122–3). The concept of citizenship is hence turned to be a contested terrain not merely for social resources as since its modern formation, but also for cultural recognition and representation in contemporary debates. In other words, the

postmodern shift opens the cultural sphere in the concept of citizenship, bringing in cultural rights seen by Norman and Kymlicka (2003) as ‘a fourth wave of citizenship rights...to the accommodation of cultural difference’ (p. 218). Second and across nation-states, modern liberal citizenship with a bundle of rights is perceived in the postmodern vein as little more than a Western construct. Citizenship study is thus required to be contextualized by considering specific historical, political, social and cultural conditions. In other words, citizenship is now less seen as a meta-narrative but more as a context-sensitive narrative that is constructed and can only be properly understood in specific contexts. Corresponding to citizenship reconfigured in this way, citizenship education is increasingly considered not context-free but dependent on ‘cultural norms, political priorities, social expectation, national economic development aspirations, geopolitical contexts and historical antecedents’ (Kennedy 2004, p. 17).

While the attention to citizenship particularities helps prevent the ‘arrogance and violence’ of modern citizenship, overemphasizing them risks of falling into relativism and closing the door of mutual understanding and interaction between perspectives and conceptions of citizenship. This is arguably undesirable and indeed impossible, especially given that globalization—the other contemporary force to be discussed later—is the sharing context from which no contemporary citizenship conception can escape. There is thus appeal that ‘we should concentrate on how globalization... affects human beings, regardless of the differences in terms of culture, values or religion’ (Brunn and Jacobsen 2000, p. 11, cited in Kennedy 2004, p. 19). How to avoid violence at one extreme and relativism at the other has been an imperative yet unsettled issue in the face of contemporary conflicts ranging from politics and economics to culture and religion. Kennedy (2004) suggested the search for ‘common values’ in citizenship and ‘a common core of citizenship knowledge and insights’ for citizenship education (p. 17). By contrast, viewing the existence of common values as ‘assumption that...is not necessary a conclusion’ (p. 116), Byram (2006) argued for intercultural citizenship able to communicate, understand and evaluate different perspectives while acknowledging cultural relativity. The present study on the meaning of citizenship in Chinese society through the analytical lens of Western citizenship conception is in effect an intercultural communication about citizenship. The two, as will be compared in detail in Chap. 7, are indeed found to share some common values, such as rights as an inherent part of citizenship.

The postmodern hyperdifferentiation not only breaks up modern universal and monolithic construct of citizenship, but also alters both modern socioeconomic-based political culture and modern bureaucratic political participation through representation. By dismantling modern class composition and destabilizing modern sociopolitical conditions, social hyperdifferentiation, according to Crook et al. (1992), produces a new type of politics based on sociocultural, other than modern socioeconomic, allegiance as witnessed in the generational specificity and occupational diversity in contemporary social activism and movements in Western democracies. Featuring self-organized action and suspicion against established elites and centralized state apparatus (Crook et al. 1992, p. 148), this new type of politics highlights the significance of individual citizens in postmodern citizenship participation.

The altered nature of political culture and participation is reflected by the contemporary focus on the agency and activeness of citizenship, an aspect implicit in modern liberal citizenship conception. Viewing citizenship practice in connection with citizenship rights, Isin and Wood (1999) suggested that citizenship should be seen not only as a politico-legal concept about status but as a sociological concept about practice. The two aspects, they explained, are ‘not mutually exclusive but constitutive’ because rights attached to status are not only often first claimed through, but also guarantee for, citizenship practice (p. 4). Citizenship in this sense is perceived as practice through which citizens, especially those of minority groups, struggle for rights ranging from long concerned civil, political and social rights to cultural rights coming to the surface in postmodernization as discussed above.

Citizenship practice is pronounced not only for rights but also as civic virtue. The idea of active citizenship originating from the civic republican tradition of citizenship is revived by scholars as a response to the allegedly diminished public participation in Western democracies by citizens ‘losing the desire, the will and the means to be active citizens’ (Crick 2010, p. 16). Echoing the civic republican tradition, the idea expresses the necessity of active participation by citizens in community and politics on moral grounds. But the contemporary revival contains distinct variations, from being restored by classic civic republicans as the essence of citizenship, to being treated by communitarians as an instrumental way to maintain social bonds in hyperdifferentiated postmodern society.

Indeed, civic virtue or what Roche (1992, p. 49) called ‘duties discourse’ has gained momentum in contemporary citizenship discussion, paralleling, if not replacing, the modern discourse of rights dominating liberal citizenship. One illustration is the treatment of social and moral responsibility, together with political literacy and community involvement, as the three key strands of citizenship education proposed in the Crick Report (Crick 1998) which led to the formalization of the subject in national curriculum in England in 2002. The rise of concern over responsibility is arguably also in line with the postmodern context. Postmodernist focus on particularity of individual and society needs to be supported and sustained by mutual respect; and given the resistance against and the reduced capacity of authority and establishment in postmodern society, citizens are on one hand demanded by the New Right to bear more personal responsibilities usually at the expense of rights, social rights in particular, and on the other hand required by the Left to take more social and moral responsibilities to challenge against and help remove inequalities in society.

Perceived as either a responsibility, a right itself, or a means to protect and claim for other rights, citizenship agency or participation has been a recurring theme in contemporary citizenship debates. While its importance is recognized, how far should it go remains an open question. Citizenship participation, following Zukin et al. (2006), comes into two descriptive categories: political participation such as voting that ‘has the intent or effect of influencing...the making or the implementation of public policies’, and civic participation such as volunteering that is ‘organized voluntary activity focused on problem solving and helping others’ (pp. 5–7). Normative accounts of citizenship political and civic participation—that is what

citizens are desired to do—can be found in contemporary theories of good citizenship.

From the political perspective and in the context of multicultural American society, Banks (2008) developed a fourfold escalating typology of citizenship:

- (1) Legal citizenship: citizen that has legal rights and obligations but keeps away from political participation;
- (2) Minimal citizenship: citizen that conventionally votes in elections;
- (3) Active citizenship: citizen that takes action beyond voting to actualize existing laws and conventions; and
- (4) Transformative citizenship: citizen that takes action to actualize values and moral principles beyond conventional authority.

Similarly, in the American context but more in civic circumstances, Westheimer and Kahne (2004) identified three escalating progressive conceptions of good citizenship:

- (1) Personally responsible citizen: with good characters such as honest, responsible and law-abiding, this kind of citizen acts responsibly in community, paying taxes, obeying laws and willing to volunteer if needed;
- (2) Participatory citizen: as active member in community, this kind of citizen possesses know-how and takes leadership in organizing community effort to accomplish collective tasks within established systems and community structures; and
- (3) Justice-oriented citizen: by critically assessing social, political and economic structures, this kind of citizen challenges established systems that reproduce injustice, making effort to solve social problems and improve society.

The most progressive models of good citizen in these two typologies, transformative citizenship and justice-oriented citizenship, share some common features. Similarly, referring to citizens pursuing justice even if breaking existing rules, they go beyond the active citizenship and participatory citizenship which take yet keep actions within established systems, to say nothing about the passive minimal citizenship and personally responsible citizenship. This echoes Almond and Verba's (1965) differentiation between the roles of subject and citizen vis-à-vis government and law. According to them, subject participates after general policy has been made, while citizen engages and exerts influence on policymaking; and subject 'appeals' by following existing rules to government accountability, while citizen 'demands' by challenging current norms (p. 169). As a consequence, the competence of subject is 'administrative' matter of 'being aware of...rights under the rules', as opposed to the competence of citizen that is 'political' one of 'participating in the making of the rules' (p. 169). It can be discussed that Banks's (2008) active and Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) participatory citizen who participates within established systems—such as monitoring government, engaging in local community affairs, and appealing to authority for intervention in the case of abuse of established rights—plays the role of what Almond and Verba (1965) called subject. By contrast, a transformative and justice-oriented citizen engaging in public affairs

to challenge existing unjust rules and make new just rules—for example, taking part in governmental policymaking and demanding for new rights—is qualified to be called citizen in Almond and Verba's terms.

A transformative and justice-oriented citizen not only makes efforts to remove current unjust norms but also engages in making new rules to 'promote social justice in communities, nations and the world' (Banks 2008, p. 137). Following Streich's (2011) argument that the pursuit for justice should be extended from 'justice for just us' to 'justice beyond just us' (p. 2), a transformative and justice-oriented citizen is expected to promote justice not only for themselves or in-group members but also for others or out-group members.

The idea of transformative and justice-oriented citizenship well corresponds to the postmodern denial of authority and articulation of agency. But admittedly, even active participation within established systems could be a burden for citizens today, since citizen is more often than not just one of many identities held by citizens who in their 'real life' have 'largely vicarious' participation in state affairs and 'too many other things to worry about' such as earning a living (Walzer 1995, p. 156). Nevertheless, serving as a benchmark for what citizens are desired to do in contemporary society, transformative and justice-oriented citizenship manifests the contemporary expectation for citizens to go beyond conventional participation within existing systems to actively engage in public affairs with the commitment to ensure that justice is not curbed by, but prevails beyond, authorized rules.

In summary, bringing particularity and agency to the fore, postmodernization challenges the genericness and passiveness of modern liberal citizenship. It reconstructs contemporary citizenship to be a context-dependent discourse in which citizenship practice is a lively theme.

Citizenship in Globalization

While the wave of postmodernist thought rising since the 1960s might be chronologically earlier than the dramatic spread of globalization theory around the 1990s, the two forces in effect have closely interacted with each other. It is for the purpose of clarifying their particular impacts on modern citizenship that they are separately discussed here. If modernity is 'primarily a discourse of time' in which emancipation, equality and democracy come into sight as utopias at the evolutionary end of human history, then the contemporary focus 'has shifted from time to space' (Delanty 2000, p. 83). While postmodernization draws our attention to context and emphasizes the particularity of space, globalization, defined tersely by Delanty (2000) as 'the diminishing importance of geographical constraints' (p. 83), makes possible both 'convergence and divergence' in space (p. 89).

Contemporary globalization, whether as an ongoing process or an existing condition, features an unprecedentedly intense flow of people, capital and information and the attendant interaction, cooperation and interdependence of local

economics, politics and cultures on the global scale. Scholarly evaluation of the consequence of globalization varies, involving, according to Delanty (2000), 'strong' and 'weak' arguments (pp. 86–9). On one hand, scholars taking the 'strong argument' side view globalization in the convergent direction as the formation of an integrative, standard and homogenous global culture and even a global society; on the other hand, those on the 'weak argument' side contend in the divergent direction that globalization leads to diversity and fragmentation, either politically, economically or culturally. While the 'weak argument' shares a similar perspective with postmodernists, the 'strong argument' of globalization needs to be differentiated from modernity, given that the latter, as discussed earlier, tended to ignore heterogeneity and violate particularity but the former does not necessarily so. An immediate illustration is that the aforementioned Kennedy's (2004) call to search for common values of citizenship in the globalized world is made with rather than without recognition of diverse and sometimes conflictive understandings of citizenship in specific contexts. Besides the one-way divergent or convergent considerations, globalization is also perceived by some in a dialectical way. Robertson (1992) suggested that 'contemporary globalization in its most general sense' is 'a form of institutionalization of the two-fold process involving the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism' (p. 102). The former process means 'the extensive diffusion of the idea that there is virtually no limit to particularity, to uniqueness, to difference and to otherness', while the latter carries 'the idea of the universal being given global-human concreteness' (p. 102).

Whether as a force of convergence or divergence or both, contemporary globalization traverses the boundaries of, and by so doing, confronts and weakens the predominant powers of modern nation-state. Held (1995) pointed out five 'disjunctures' in the contemporary global system that challenge the modern state's autonomy or 'the actual power...to articulate and achieve policy goals independently', and its sovereignty or 'the entitlement of a state to rule over a bounded territory' (p. 100). They are (1) the transcendence of international law from law between sovereign states to law addressing world order such as human rights and human heritages; (2) the internationalization of political decision-making which reflects expanded transnational links and corresponding needs for global governance; (3) the formation of power blocs and military alliances that reduces individual states' autonomy in defence and security; (4) the development of global communication systems that weakens the cultural hegemony of nation-states; and (5) the worldwide spatial reach of production, distribution and exchange that limits state control over economy (pp. 101–34). Drawing these legal, political, security, cultural and economic disjunctures as evidence, Held (1995) concluded that the autonomy, the sovereignty and consequently the powers of modern sovereign state have been eroded.

These disjunctures induce the reconfiguration of citizenship from its modern state-centred conception. First, as opposed to rights and responsibilities of modern citizenship which are determined, protected and enforced by the state, international law applying to all human beings, such as the Universal Declaration of Human

Rights by the United Nations, provides the legal basis for the recognition of citizenship rights and obligations beyond state boundaries. Also, it has become less legitimate for the nation-state to appeal to sovereignty for its infringement of citizenship rights stated in international law, notwithstanding its remaining functional significance in enacting and protecting citizenship rights within its boundaries. Grounded on international law, the increasingly internationalized political decision-making stimulates the idea of political citizenship at the global level. Despite that a world state in which all human beings *qua* global citizens practice political rights like in a democratic state is unrealistic, at least at the time of the early twenty-first century, what Heater (2002) called 'political quasi-world citizenship' is already in place, given the guarantee by international law of political rights at the state level and the evidence of worldwide political activities by citizens across state borders, largely through local and international NGOs (pp. 136–7).

Second, economic globalization, often fuelled by neoliberalism advocating free market without state interference and by market globalism believing in an inevitable and beneficial scenario of global integration of markets (Steger 2009), has impact on the substance and scope of modern social citizenship. It reduces the state's autonomy to allocate and distribute resources, and therefore its ability to fulfil the commitment taken on in modern times to guarantee the social rights of its citizens. Furthermore, by exposing one market to another and accelerating competition and exploitation between them, economic globalization brings economic and social inequality to the global scale. To counter this globalized inequality, there have been worldwide social movements known as 'global justice movement' since the late 1990s, from the regular demonstrations to sites of meeting held by major world economic institutions to the Occupy movements taking place in key financial districts around the world (Steger et al. 2013). These movements, according to Steger et al. (2013), bear the ideology of what they called 'justice globalism', two of whose core concepts are 'equality of access to resources and opportunities' and 'social justice'. These developments require social citizenship, considered by Turner (2006) as the essence of modern citizenship, to expand its conceptual scope from the state to the global in contemporary socioeconomic contexts.

Third, globalization challenges not only the predominant position of the state in modern political and social citizenship discourses, but also the implication of ethnocultural homogeneity attached to modern citizenship. Thanks to technological developments, unprecedented cross- and within-border human and information flows diversify the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of the population in individual nation-states and undermine the nation-state's capability to control cultural narratives. These break down the modern construct in the name of nation of the homogeneous 'us' inside and the alien 'other' outside the state, or, to put it succinctly, the modern equation of nation and state.

Indeed, Delanty (2000) argued that the nation once closely in association with the state has gradually shifted away from the state and instead is 'free-floating' in society; and national identity becomes only one collective identity among others not directed from above but often generating from below (p. 96). The implication of

this for the concept of citizenship is that citizenship as legal identity is detaching from national identity in the ethnic and cultural sense, and that citizens could have different ethnic and cultural identities while sharing the same legal state membership. Ong's (1999) study of the cultural logics of transnationality among overseas Chinese gives evidence from the anthropological perspective that in the age of globalization legal citizenship does not necessarily go hand in hand with ethnic and cultural identity. Her study recorded citizens of Southeast Asian states who reclaimed their long assimilated Chinese ethnic identity in business network building and investment in China, and multi-passport holders who used legal citizenship as a strategy to respond to changing political-economic conditions while not necessarily losing their original cultural identity. She coined the term 'flexible citizenship' to reflect the contemporary phenomena of legal citizenship driven by economic accounts and detached from cultural ones.

That detachment opens up the cultural discourse of citizenship, enabling its narratives to be diversified in terms of such as class, ethnicity, gender, religion, age and ability. As an approach to recognizing and accommodating these disclosed cultural differences, Yuval-Davis (1999) suggested that citizenship should be understood as a 'multi-layered' construct, from local to national and to global, to allow 'transversal dialogue', in which 'difference encompasses equality and perceived unity and homogeneity are replaced by dialogues' between inter-affecting collectivities across these layers (pp. 131–2). For the idea of global citizenship, it is important to note that the increased interest on it is not merely from proponents who use it as a way to challenge modern injustice and accommodate diversity in various spheres. It is also taken advantage of by neo-liberalists to glorify individual responsibility and entrepreneurial spirit in the global market and by authoritarian states to increase global competitiveness for the sake of national interest. We will refer to the latter case when we consider Chinese citizenship-related education in Chap. 3.

In short, the convergent and divergent forces in globalization considerably erodes, yet not necessarily eradicates, the autonomy and sovereignty of nation-state, the predominant modern political institution, triggering the expansion of the scope of political, social and cultural citizenship beyond nation-state and the corresponding changes with respect to citizenship rights, responsibilities, identity and participation.

It is important to remind us that the separation of discussion of citizenship in globalization and postmodernization in this section does not mean that the influences of the two contemporary forces on the concept of citizenship are always able to be sharply distinguished in reality. For instance, it is hard to claim that the postmodern denial of modern monolithic citizenship and articulation for citizenship particularity and agency is not related to the decline of state powers and the expanding scope of political, social and cultural citizenship resulted from globalization. The contemporary reconfiguration of citizenship is a process under the joint influence of postmodernization and globalization.

Western Citizenship as Analytical Lens

This chapter has so far traced the conceptual evolution of citizenship in the West, from the pre-modern roots to the modern institutionalization, and at last to the contemporary reconfiguration. The connections and changes in the process of evolution confirm that citizenship is a fluid and dynamic concept, subject to contestation, deconstruction and reconstruction according to changing political, economic and social circumstances. The general direction of this evolution can be summarized as from narrow to wide in the extent of citizenship as membership, from less to more in the content of citizenship including rights and responsibilities and from formal to informal in the depth of citizenship regarding participation. It is expectable that as the conceptual evolution goes on, new individuals and groups may be recognized as full citizens in particular political community according to redefined eligibility; new rights and responsibilities may be claimed and attached to citizenship; new forms of citizenship participation may emerge; and even new theoretical dimensions in addition to the extent, content and depth ones may be added to take further advantage of the concept of citizenship for human values such as liberty and justice.²

With acknowledgement of ongoing debates and controversies about it and its potential for further evolution, the Western conception of citizenship, viewed from the standpoint of the early twenty-first century, covers at least the following elements: citizenship as legal, local, national and global identities in the extent dimension; citizenship civil, political, social and cultural rights, and legal and moral responsibilities in the content dimension; and citizenship political and civic (non-political) participation in the depth dimension. These three dimensions are by no means isolated from each other. As briefly referred to at some points above, citizens' rights often serve as either the basis or the goal of citizenship participation, which on another occasion may be required as citizens' responsibility. Similarly, on one hand rights and responsibilities that citizens have help to shape their understanding of citizenship identity; and on the other hand their personal identities such as ethnic identity motivate citizens to claim for rights to recognize and preserve those identities often through citizenship practice in the forms of such as appealing, campaign, protest and social movement. In short, the content, extent and depth of citizenship are interdependent to the point of defining and redefining each other.

This book uses the Western conception of citizenship with the three dimensions as the analytical lens to examine the meaning of citizenship in China. While inevitably bearing the modern constructed East–West binary, this approach, as explained in the introductory chapter, allows this study on the East to access and

²It may sound contradictory to speak of human values given the postmodern denial of grand narrative. There is of course no single and universal definition of the mentioned values. But these values, however understood and interpreted, are at least commonly viewed as important for human beings around the world, from Western democracies to socialist China, which does attach them to citizenship in official documents as shown at the opening of this book.

connect to the intellectual debates in the West so as to help, using Bonnett's (2004, p. 6) words, 'map out the big picture' of the concept of citizenship. Furthermore, this approach bears three important implications for our understanding of the concept of citizenship in general and Chinese citizenship in particular.

First, more rather than less comparisons are needed at a time that the focus on difference and particularity gains momentum as a result of postmodernization. Citizenship is now widely recognized as a constructed concept. This suggests that as Eastern and Western conceptions of citizenship are constructs in respective historical, social, economic, political and cultural contexts, the two are not necessarily understood in the same way as each other. For instance, Lee (2003) observed from the cultural perspective that citizenship in Asia has three features that make it 'fundamentally different' from Western citizenship (p. 21). The three features are as follows: first, emphasis on relationship between individuals and collectives and harmony rather than individual rights and responsibilities; second, the priority of spirituality or one's personal quality over rights and responsibilities of citizens; and third, the focus on the development of individuality and the self rather than individualism or individualization. Leaving aside the question of whether such observation is convincing or not, at least Lee (2003) also noticed that 'the world is dynamic in its interaction and flow of ideas' (p. 22). It implies that even if there are fundamental distinctions between Eastern and Western citizenship conceptions, the two sides are not isolated from but influential to each other—although such influence in the critical perspective is unlikely to be equal, especially given the political and cultural power contestations intensified by globalization. Indeed, as will be shown in the next chapter, Western citizenship was historically not a stranger in the distance but had influence on the modern formation of Chinese citizenship. Arguably, distinction arguments and inevitable mutual influences require more rather than less comparisons between Western and Chinese citizenship conceptions for us to better understand their differences and connections and to share and learn legacies and lessons between the two sides. This book sees China in the mirror of the West, examining to what extent the Western conception of citizenship is embraced by the Chinese term of *gongmin* in contemporary society, without any intention of implying any intrinsic particularity, rightness, completeness or superiority of the Western conception.

Second, while from the postmodernist standpoint there is no universal theory of citizenship because different societies would have their own, it does not mean there is no need to search for common ground between various conceptions of citizenship in contemporary world. It is because that in the process of globalization there are increasing issues such as poverty, conflict, inequality and injustice that cannot be effectively resolved without understanding and cooperation by citizens at local, national and global levels. While the common ground may not exist as Byram (2006) understood, possibility cannot be ruled out either. Looking into Chinese citizenship through Western citizenship is in effect a research for the possibility. Third, China as part of the world is not immune to the contemporary forces of postmodernization and globalization. The Western citizenship conception being reconstructed in response to the two contemporary forces serves as a helpful

reference for exploring what Chinese citizenship conception is and, furthermore, in what direction it needs to develop.

Equipped with the Western citizenship elaborated in this chapter as the analytical lens, the following chapters will turn the focus to citizenship in the Chinese context. The book is about the meaning of citizenship in contemporary Chinese society, to which citizenship in the perspective of the state is a key factor. This is partly because citizenship is a concept closely associated with the state as demonstrated in this chapter, and partly due to the central and leading role of the party-state in citizenship issues in socialist China, as the next chapter will show.

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