

How the Italians Became Blond! Immigration and Political Rights in France, Switzerland and Germany

Introduction

In his book on “how the Irish became white”, Noël Ignatiev explains how a community of immigrants used their relations to the labor unions, the Catholic Church and their political and social organizations to help gain and secure their newly found place in the White Republic of the United States during the 19th Century¹. “Whiteness”, we learn from this context, consists of those who partake of the privileges of the white skin in a society that differentiates in racial terms. Its most wretched members share a status higher, in certain respects, than that of most persons excluded from it. The Catholic Irish, more than one century ago an oppressed race in Ireland comparable to American slaves, reassessed their position in America through their integration and the formation of a new American working class, differentiating themselves from the African Americans. The Italians, formerly seen in the US as “Europe’s Negroes”², were undergoing a similar process of assimilation and class building some decades later, overcoming open racial resentments. But not only in the US, even in the European industrial areas of France, Switzerland, Germany and Belgium, Italian emigrants faced open hatred and dislike at the end of the 19th Century³. In a true liberal age where labor markets were not na-

¹ IGNATIEV, Noël, *How the Irish became white*. New York, Routledge, 1995, pp. 6-31.

² STEINER-KHAMSI, Gita, *Multikulturelle Bildungspolitik in der Postmoderne*. Opladen, Leske + Budrich, 1992, p. 66.

³ BARNABÀ, Enzo, *Morte agli Italiani! Il massacro di Aigues-Mortes*. Giardini-Naxos, Bucolo Editoriale, 2001, 105 p.; LOOSER, Heinz, *Der Italienerkrawall von 1896: Widerstände gegen die Einführung bürgerlicher Verhältnisse in der Grossstadt*. Zürich, [s.n.], 1983, 150 p.; LOOSER, Heinz, *Zwischen “Tschinggenhass” und Rebellion: der “Italienerkrawall” von 1896*. In: LOOSER, Heinz (ed.), *Lücken im*

tionally protected and the freedom of domicile was already an European *acquis*, Italian workers suffered several riots and were labeled on one side to be blacklegs, on the other to be politically dangerous⁴.

Two world wars in the 20th century fostered liberalism in a culture of threat where citizens sporadically feared that the presence of foreign workers would menace the social order and the values of their nation⁵. Despite this hedgehog position, the foreigners or immigrants were welcome again after 1945, but as labor only. France, Switzerland, and later Germany needed them to profit from the economic boom that flourished between 1950 and 1970. Again, the Italian emigrants formed the manpower needed in the first decades of this economic Golden Age. Their prolonged presence in the countries of immigration took to the first extensive investigations on the inclusion of this new minority into society⁶. In the last thirty years, this process seems to have come to a successful end. Recent publications give the impression that the integration of the Italian immigrants is an achieved fact now open to historical reflection⁷. Photo exhibits, movie programs and

Panorama: Einblicke in den Nachlass Zürichs. Zürich, Geschichtsladen Zürich, pp. 85-107.

⁴ GABACCIA, Donna R.; IACOVETTA, Franca (eds.), *Women, gender, and transnational lives: Italian workers of the world*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2002, 433 p.; GABACCIA, Donna R.; OTTANELLI, Fraser M. (eds.), *Italian workers of the world: labor migration and the formation of multiethnic states*. Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2001, 248 p.; HERBERT, Ulrich, *Geschichte der Ausländerpolitik in Deutschland: Saisonarbeiter, Zwangsarbeiter, Gastarbeiter, Flüchtlinge*. München, C.H. Beck, 2001, 442 p.; HOLMES, Madelyn, *Forgotten migrants: foreign workers in Switzerland before World War I*. Rutherford, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1988, 167 p.

⁵ BRAUN, Rudolf, *Sozio-kulturelle Probleme der Eingliederung italienischer Arbeitskräfte in der Schweiz*. Erlenbach-Zürich, E. Rentsch, 1970, 589 p.; HERBERT, U., *Geschichte der Ausländerpolitik in Deutschland: Saisonarbeiter, Zwangsarbeiter, Gastarbeiter, Flüchtlinge*, op. cit.; WEIL, Patrick, *La France et ses étrangers: l'aventure d'une politique de l'immigration de 1938 à nos jours*. Paris, Gallimard, 1995, 592 p.

⁶ CASTLES, Stephen; KOSACK, Godula, *Immigrant workers and class structure in Western Europe*. London, Oxford University Press, 1973, 514 p.; HOFFMANN-NOWOTNY, Hans-Joachim, *Soziologie des Fremdarbeiterproblems: eine theoretische und empirische Analyse am Beispiel der Schweiz*. Stuttgart, F. Enke, 1973, 377 p.; SCHNAPPER, Dominique, *Centralisme et fédéralisme culturels: les émigrés italiens en France et aux Etats-Unis*, «Annales ESC», XXIX, 1974, pp. 1141-1159; ID., *Tradition culturelle et appartenance sociale: émigrés italiens et migrants français dans la région parisienne*, «Revue française de Sociologie», XVII, 3, 1976, pp. 485-498.

⁷ RÖNNEBURG, Carola, *Grazie mille! Wie die Italiener unser Leben verschönert haben*. Freiburg, Herder, 2005, 159 p.; THRÄNHARDT, Dietrich, *Inklusion und Exklusion. Die Italiener in Deutschland*. Münster, Universität Münster, 1997, 26 p.; TRIBALAT, Michèle, *Faire France: une grande enquête sur les immigrés et leurs enfants*. Paris, Ed. La découverte, 1995, 231 p.; WICKER, Hans-Rudolf; FIBBI, Rosita; HAUG, Werner (eds.), *Migration und die Schweiz: Ergebnisse des Nationalen Forschungsprogramms “Migration und interkulturelle Beziehungen”*. Zürich, Seismo, 2003, 596 p.

other cultural productions do their part in trying to recover the Italian experience in the different European states, sacramentalizing a history still on the move, with the implicit intention to create benchmarks for newer, non-European immigrant groups⁸. The former southern, black-haired immigrants got more and more perceived as Europeans, as citizens of an economic power, as “blonds” freed from the stigma of being offspring of a backward rural population, ironically reverting the final scene of the actor Nino Manfredi in *Pane e Cioccolata* (1973): it is not “them” who adapt themselves coloring their hair, but society who makes out the Italians differently.

This paper will argue that a form of symbolic inclusion has actually taken place giving space to a civil and political integration of Italian immigrants in France, Switzerland and Germany alike. How this form of inclusion can be mirrored in social integration is outlined at the end of the argumentation. Political integration, however, was structured through active migrants and according to the institutional channels the societies under scrutiny offered to them. Moreover, this analysis gives theoretical and empirical insights in how institutions more than ethnic descent or a common social class background is able to frame the civil and political incorporation of migrants, illuminating therefore the different outcomes to be observed in the three different nation-states.

Immigrants as political actors

In a great sector of social science literature, immigrants have for a long period be seen as workers, as neighbors, as parents and pupils, but rarely as political subjects that have an impact on our political communities or as carriers of legitimate political and social claims. Only in rare cases we get conscious that migrants may have claims, since often we see them as discrete and without any visibility in our public spheres. Moreover, in other cases migrants are perceived to be persons who demand asylum or seek protection fleeing oppressive political regimes. As they are expression of global crises we may get – communicated by the media – the impression to be surrounded by migrants who are menacing our economic and cultural “equilibrium”. Finally, other migrants with a long-during residence and coming from traditional emigration countries after World War II do not seem to be

⁸ BACHMANN, Dieter (ed.), *Il lungo addio: una storia fotografica sull'emigrazione italiana in Svizzera dopo la guerra = Der lange Abschied: 138 Fotografien zur italienischen Emigration in die Schweiz nach 1945*. Zürich, Limmat Verlag, 2003, [n. p.]; HALTER, Ernst (ed.), *Gli italiani in Svizzera: un secolo di emigrazione*. Bellinzona, Edizioni Casagrande, 320 p.

perceived as immigrants anymore. With the years which passed they arrived to get invisible in the public sphere of European states.

Therefore, it is interesting to understand how the migrant population defines their relation to the political community in the country of residence; and how they contribute to enforce the quality of our democracies when they are inquiring the administrations of the host societies with their political mobilization and their political claims.

The political dimension in the research on migrants has often been underestimated⁹. More than the political aspects, socio-structural, socio-economic and demographic facets have been at the center of migration analysis¹⁰. Only recently the political aspects have been highlighted. A great part of the migration research consists of historical overviews or policy analysis, which often betray their attempt to compare Western societies and their handling of immigration, juxtaposing simply national case studies. These studies accentuate the role of the state and its public policy when they are concerned with questions of immigration and integration, leaving little attention to the mobilization of migrants themselves. The latter are seen mainly as passive non-actors of these policies. More than that, these works are mostly descriptive and give no systematic empirical analysis.

Other approaches have attempted to consider the political process as such, beyond public policies. Therefore, they have studied the relationship between immigrants and ethnic minorities on one side, and the country of residence on the other side¹¹. The aim was often used to explain their political incorporation in their guest country. Certain studies have underlined the political participation and collective action of migrants. According to Patrick Ireland, these studies adhere mainly to three schools of thought: the first analyzes the mobilization through the lenses of class theory¹². For this approach, race and ethnicity are

⁹ MILLER, Mark J., *Foreign workers in Western Europe: an emerging political force*. New York, Praeger, 1981, 228 p.; ID., *Political participation and representation of noncitizens*, In: VERTOVEC, Steven (ed.), *Migration and social cohesion*. Cheltenham, E. Elgar, 1999, pp. 187-202.

¹⁰ CASTLES, S.; KOSACK, G., *Immigrant workers and class structure in Western Europe*, op. cit.; CASTLES, Stephen; BOOTH, Heather; WALLACE, Tina, *Here for good: Western Europe's new ethnic minorities*. London, Pluto Press, 1984, 259 p.; MILES, Robert, *Labour Migration, Racism, Capital Accumulation in Western Europe since 1945*, «Capital and Class», 28, 1986, pp. 49-86.

¹¹ BANTON, Michael, *Promoting racial harmony*. London, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1985, 135 p.; ETIENNE, Bruno, *La France et l'Islam*. Paris, Hachette, 1989, 364 p.; FONER, Nancy, *West Indians in New York City and London*, «International Migration Review», XIII, 2, 1979, pp. 284-297; RATH, Jan, *Political Action of Immigrants in the Netherlands: Class or Ethnicity*, «European Journal of Political Research», XVI, 6, 1988, pp. 623-644.

¹² IRELAND, Patrick Richard, *The policy challenge of ethnic diversity: immigrant politics in France and Switzerland*. Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Press, 1994, 327 p.

reflected through class relations. Therefore, immigrants are reacting according to their class interests. Problematic here is a certain economic determinism which is neglecting the role of political and social actors as much as the role of the political process in which migrants are intervening in order to shape the debates on migration and their social and political situation in the country of residence. The second school has pointed to ethnic and racial identities and their impact in formulating a political agenda. Acts of participation are not depending on social class, but on ethnic or religious identities. The economic determinism of the neo-Marxist theorists has been changed with a sort of cultural determinism: Cultural identities are interpreted as the main feature in explaining political mobilization of the immigrants themselves. But again, the relation between the immigrants and their surrounding political and institutional contexts was neglected.

In order to fill up this lack of understanding, some authors have put forward the role of political institutions in the country of residence as third school of thought¹³. This approach was used to explain the situation of immigrants, emphasizing the importance of policies and citizenship laws in structuring the integration of immigrants and the nature of ethnic relations in a given country of residence. According to this approach, the mobilization of the immigrants, their allies and their counterparts are not a question of class division or of ethnic identities, but a characteristic of the institutional context and of the relation between this context and the migrants, a relation formed by the political process¹⁴.

The entry of the migrants in the public sphere is theorized by conflicting frameworks. One of the most important pillar in a so-called neo-institutional setting¹⁵ is still the importance of the national context that varies from one country to the other¹⁶. This variation may

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ KOOPMANS, Ruud; STATHAM, Paul (eds.), *Challenging immigration and ethnic relations politics: comparative European perspectives*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000, 443 p.

¹⁵ CLEMENS, Elisabeth; COOK, James, *Politics and Institutionalism: Explaining Durability and Change*, «Annual Review of Sociology», XXV, 1999, pp. 441-466; POWELL, Walter W.; DiMAGGIO, Paul, *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991, 478 p.

¹⁶ DELLA PORTA, Donatella, *Social movements, political violence, and the state: a comparative analysis of Italy and Germany*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995, 270 p.; KRIESI, Hanspeter, *New social movements in Western Europe: a comparative analysis*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1995, 310 p.; McADAM, Doug; TARROW, Sidney; TILLY, Charles, *Dynamics of contention*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, 387 p.; TARROW, Sidney, *Power in movement social movements, collective action and politics*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, 251 p.

have an important implication with regard to the nature and content of migrants' political claims. We are particularly underlining the importance of the citizenship framework, the very heir of the European nation building process, in channeling the political claim making.

The Significance of Citizenship

A number of studies have recently underlined the existence of national incorporation models towards migrant communities as much as the importance of citizenship in this process¹⁷. According to Brubaker, who wrote a seminal work on the relation between incorporation and citizenship, citizenship received two qualities over the process of modernization: universalism and exclusion. Universalism refers to equality, which enables every citizen to share the same rights and duties due to a common citizenship. Exclusion refers to the fact that citizenship includes citizens but excludes non-citizens. In other words: not all inhabitants of a state are citizens and not all human beings have access to a state, which is always the state of a particular nation.

Citizenship allows access to a territory and enables the administration to control possible interactions within the state. The rights of non-citizens are limited and never unconditional. Even privileged non-citizens can be excluded under certain circumstances. The territorial closure of a state depends on its administrative capacity to control entrance and settlement of foreigners. In a world in which every territorial state wants to control the migration flow, it is not possible to expel someone from one territory without being expelled into another one. In order to interrupt this stalemate-situation, modern states are willing to limit their capacity to expel and exclude non-citizens. The institution of citizenship, with its rules of allocating persons to states, is

¹⁷ BRUBAKER, Rogers, *Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany*. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1992; FAVELL, Adrian, *Philosophies of integration: immigration and the idea of citizenship in France and Britain*. Houndmills, Macmillan, 1998, 288 p.; GIUGNI, Marco G.; PASSY, Florence, *Entre post-nationalisme et néo-institutionnalisme: la structuration des débats publics en Suisse dans le domaine de l'immigration et des relations ethniques*, «Revue suisse de science politique», VIII, 2, 2002, pp. 21-52; JOPPKE, Christian (ed.), *Challenge to the nation-state: immigration in Western Europe and the United States*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, 360 p.; KOOPMANS, Ruud; KRIESI, Hanspeter, *Citoyenneté, identité nationale et mobilisation de l'extrême droite: Une comparaison entre la France, l'Allemagne, les Pays-Bas et la Suisse*. In: BIRNBAUM, Pierre (ed.), *Sociologie des nationalismes*. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1997, pp. 295-324; SOYSAL, Yasemin Nuhoglu, *Limits of citizenship: migrants and postnational membership in Europe*. Chicago, The University of Chicago, 1994, 244 p.

a necessary precondition for this limitation. Therefore, citizenship not only is an instrument, but even an object of closure, or – to say it differently – a status with limited access. There are only two possibilities to receive citizenship: by ascription or acquisition.

Normally, every state ascribes its citizenship to every native person at birth. According to Brubaker, this ascription represents an exception to the secular trend, in modern societies, moving away from ascribed statuses. Interestingly, the ascription of citizenship is not compatible with the liberal credo according to which political membership ought to be found on individual consent¹⁸. A first reason for this situation lies in an administrative convenience: births can be recorded clearly and easily. The alternative, namely a voluntary or contractual, citizenship would be a nightmare for any administration.

Secondly, ascription is based on the presumption of strong loyalty to a particular state, as well as the expectation of solidarity among its members. In a nation of citizens the strongest attachment is thought to be to the territory, where the parents already possess citizenship. More doubtful is the expectation of loyalty from native-born children of foreign-born parents, or from foreign-born children of native citizens.

Traditional immigration countries generally ascribe citizenship to all persons born on their territory¹⁹. This *jus soli*-provision is also valid to a certain extent in France. “Immigration countries of a new type” – as the German historian Bade calls Switzerland and Germany²⁰ – where permanent settlement of migrants has been treated as political anathema, until recently had no or still have no regulations to confer citizenship automatically to second or even third-generation immigrants. Citizenship can only be provided by descent (*jus sanguinis*).

Another possibility to find access to citizenship is its acquisition through naturalization. The rules governing this acquisition can be more or less restrictive. Examples of a restrictive policy have been provided by Germany until the year 2000 and are still valid in Switzerland, where the candidate must fulfill certain conditions, but the citizens can decide whether the naturalization is in its own interest or not. High fees underline the unwillingness of the state to promote naturalization. Alternative models are offered in Sweden, US and Canada, where candidates that correspond to certain conditions are natural-

¹⁸ SCHUCK, Peter; SMITH, Rogers, *Citizenship without consent. Aliens in the American polity*. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1985, 173 p.

¹⁹ BRUBAKER, R., *Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany*, op. cit., p. 33.

²⁰ BADE, Klaus J. (ed.), *Deutsche im Ausland – Fremde in Deutschland. Migration in Geschichte und Gegenwart*. München, C.H. Beck, 1993, 542 p.

ized. Naturalization is promoted by the state. The procedure is simple and the fees low²¹.

Explaining the different conceptions of Citizenship

Although sharing the same interests, states govern access to citizenship in different ways. France has ascribed automatically citizenship to second generation immigrants since 1889, Germany's treatment is based on a deeply rooted descent-based policy, and in Switzerland a nationalist renewal movement succeeded at the turn of the century to prevent the introduction of *jus soli* in a essentially pluri-lingual republican nation. This difference reflects basically the distinction between *Staatsnation* and *Kulturnation*, referring to the distinct patterns of nation-building between France and Germany²². The French concept of *Staatsnation* is based on a state-centered and assimilationist understanding of the nation, held by the Jacobin French elites. Therefore, nationhood corresponds to the geographic and institutional borders of the state to which all citizens have an equal and individual relation to. The assimilationist view that enforces loyalty is regularly activated by the elites in periods when the perception of nationhood is put into doubt. The status of the foreigners had been a legal one, but included also the feature of the political outsider that shouldn't live too long within the borders of the state. Reversely, from an assimilationist point of view it seemed anomalous to exclude legal foreigners from citizenship, who had been living socially integrated for generations in France.

In Germany the development of national citizenship went along a longer and more difficult path. Until 1871, there was no unified nation-state which could have given the framework for a common citizenship of all Germans. Besides that, the fragmentation and decentralization of the Empire did not help to foster a common nationhood that was in line with the borders of the territorial state. State and nation were distinct entities in Germany, whereas in France they were superposed. The aspects of citizenship described above, which were integrated into a uniform process in France, developed independently from one another in Germany. This evolution is reflected in the history of the term: in German “Nationalität”, “Staatsangehörigkeit” and “Staatsbürgerschaft” are not synonyms as in French, but represent ethnonational nation-membership, formal state-membership and participatory citi-

²¹ WANNER, Philippe; D'AMATO, Gianni, *Naturalisation en Suisse: le rôle des changements législatifs sur la demande de naturalisation: rapport*. Zürich, Avenir Suisse, 2003, 43 p.

²² MEINECKE, Friedrich, *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat*. München/Berlin, R. Oldenburg, 1919, 539 p.

zenship. This semantic differentiation reflects the independent and antagonistic course of state-building, nationalism and democracy in Germany²³. Crucial for the understanding of nationhood in Germany are the Romantic and the Prussian reform movements, both influenced by the French occupation of Germany. The Romantic movement understood the nation as a body of historically rooted, organically developed individualities, united by a distinctive *Volksgeist*. Its understanding of nationhood was ethnocultural and diametrically opposed to the French model, in which political unity was a precondition to, and the cultural unity an expression of the nation. Vice-versa, for the German Romantic school of political thought, ethnocultural unity was an essential precondition of the political unity of the German nation.

Correspondently, a completely different tradition of treatment towards aliens appeared in which there was fundamentally no option of incorporation. The Wilhelmine citizenship law of 1913 – operative until the year 2000 – defined the citizenry based upon the concept of a hereditary community. This law was expansive toward ethnonational German emigrants and restrictive toward non-German immigrants. *Jus sanguinis* and strict naturalization laws provided a long term civil and political exclusion of immigrants and their descendants. One important purpose of this law was the preservation of Germandom abroad and at home²⁴.

With regard to Switzerland, Renan missed the point when, in his famous speech at Sorbonne University, he described the Helvetic Confederation as a nation founded on pure political will²⁵. Doubtless, Swiss nationbuilding has developed a particular citizenship that was able to maintain its position against the German and French model²⁶. Regardless of the republican tradition, Switzerland was not less exclusive and assimilationist than its neighbors Germany and France. Naturalization is based today on the “Federal Law relative to Acquisition and Loss of Swiss Citizenship” (September 29th, 1952) that expects in its modified version of 1990 a minimal settlement of twelve years, with the years between the age of 10 to 20 counting double.

Swiss citizenship law is constituted by three major characteristics: First, naturalization is linked to the acquisition of citizenship rights in the domiciled municipality and canton of the immigrant. The federal office is only important in opening the procedure and at the end, when

²³ BRUBAKER, R., *Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany*, op. cit., p. 50.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 115.

²⁵ Renan, Ernest, *Che cosa è una nazione?* Roma, Donzelli, 1993, 146 p.

²⁶ CENTLIVRES, Pierre; SCHNAPPER, Dominique, *Nation et droit de la nationalité Suisse*, «Pouvoirs», XVI, 56, 1991, pp. 149-161.

it receives the decision of the canton. Secondly, the admission to the citizenship of the municipality and the canton is decided by the legislative body. Because of municipal and cantonal autonomy, procedures can be handled differently according to the community one wishes to enter in. Thirdly, each candidate is supposed to meet an aptitude test, in which the integration in the local community, the assimilation of Swiss culture and the observance of laws are checked.

This aptitude test is often used by the local and cantonal citizenship-commission as a filter to get rid of undesired candidates, for example candidates that are not cooperative in the community and do not participate in local associations or events. Although the federal administration does not require an explicit assimilation, this precondition is very important for a lot of municipalities and cantons. In those places “assimilation” does not only mean knowledge of laws and citizenship rights, but includes a vague notion of assimilating cantonal and national culture. In this sense not only conformity to formal admission requirements is asked for, but an interiorization of local customs and habits is expected that cannot be learnt through socialization and good will alone.

Against the popular assumption of a 700-year-old Switzerland, the creation of the contemporary federal state traces back to the Federal Constitution of 1848. The victory of the liberal, mostly protestant cantons over the secessionist, catholic-conservative cantons of the “Sonderbund” (confederation apart) during the civil war of 1847 introduced the federal state, disposing for the first time of a permanent government that abolished the annual meetings of a loose confederation. The liberals – claiming political hegemony in the new state – learnt a lot from the failures committed by the first centralist Helvetic Republic (1798-1803) installed by the French occupation army. In the new Federal Constitution they respected the cleavages of the new nation-state, which were not only based on linguistic matters, but included economic, religious and political differences as well²⁷. Federalism protected the catholic and French speaking cantons from the unitarian traits of the nation-state and allowed for a coexistence of cultural diversity. On the other hand the collective identity – formed by patriotic associations and shooting-matches that found their icons in the founding myth of 1291 and other heroic battles against foreign oppressors – underlined the liberal-republican character of Switzerland²⁸. The Fed-

²⁷ LINDER, Wolf, *Swiss democracy: possible solutions to conflict in multicultural societies*. Houndmills, Macmillan Press, 1998, p. 8.

²⁸ For the significance of associations in Swiss nationbuilding see the 6th Chapter of BRAUN, Rudolf, *Sozio-kulturelle Probleme der Eingliederung italienischer Arbeitskräfte in der Schweiz*, op. cit.

eral State claimed the existence of a Swiss nation unified by the same liberal-republican political culture, but recognized as its members only citizens of cantons who in their turn were defined by their membership of a cantonal municipality. Nation as a political category only referred to the republicanism of the state, whereas cantons and municipalities were decisive for everyday life. This federal structure is also reflected by the use of the political vocabulary that utilizes the notion of "nation" very carefully. The only political institution claiming the attribute of "national" is the assembly of representatives²⁹.

Citizenship as a Contested Political Field

The Contemporary Situation in Germany

The differentiation between *Kulturnation* and *Staatsnation*, rooted in the distinct process of nation-building of this major three immigration countries in Europe, has not only formed different concepts of citizenship, but also influenced the nature and the content of immigrant political actors, and in particular the Italian as one of the more remote groups, in the field of civic and political incorporation policies. This larger traditions of thought showed their framing impact also in the definition of the role resident immigrants should take and the degree to which they should become integral part of the national community³⁰. Therefore, citizenship models are constituting the necessary political opportunity structures which allow migrants to mobilize in particular contested fields as the incorporation within the larger society. The access to the political system, the level of state repression, the configuration of power and the capacity of states to implement decisions once taken are the most important aspects of the political opportunity structure. It includes also the immigrants' legal situation, their social and political rights, host-society citizenship laws, and naturalization procedures. Moreover, immigrant actors are heavily conditioned by the political context and the action of the important civil associations, which function as gatekeepers controlling the access of migrants to political participation. In the following section I will talk on the different dimensions dealing with political incorporation, such as the access to citizenship by birth, by naturalization, and the evolution of inhabitants' political rights.

²⁹ This assembly in Switzerland is called "Nationalrat", i.e. National Council.

³⁰ SOYSAL, Y.N., *Limits of citizenship: migrants and postnational membership in Europe*, op. cit.

Before starting my discussion I would like to recapitulate the most important events concerning the immigration of foreign labor in all three countries. France had its first bilateral agreement with Italy in 1947, Germany in 1955. The Economic Unification of Europe that led to the Treaty of Rome 1957 simplified mobility of Italians to France and Germany although Italians as EC-nationals were not obliged to stay in the country, thus experiencing a larger amount of intermittent migration (*migrazione pendolare*) and a lesser degree of permanent settlement³¹. Switzerland on the other hand signed its first bilateral agreement with Italy in 1948, renewing it in 1964 after heavy diplomatic pressure from Italy, conceding Italians far better social and civil rights than they had before. Nevertheless, in all three countries political incorporation remained an open question, finally to be debated from the end of the 1980s until the end of the 1990s. Three controversial fields of immigrant politics were the cause of public contention. Firstly, the possibility of granting immigrants the right to vote in local elections; secondly, the liberalization of complicated naturalization procedures; thirdly, the acceptance of dual citizenship as a facilitation of integration. These controversial fields will be analyzed separately for each country.

The quality of *jus sanguinis* showed to be remarkably resistant in Germany. The Wilhelmine citizenship survived two World Wars, three regime changes, and the division and reunification of the country. To be sure, the racist citizenship legislation of the Nazis with all its notions of organic ethnic community (Volksgemeinschaft) and the exclusion of "fremdvölkisch" elements such as Jews and others, was continuous of the Wilhelmine citizenship law of 1913. After World War II the German self-understanding as an ethnic nation was not discredited. On the contrary, the expulsions of ethnic Germans from the former eastern territories of the Reich, from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union strengthened and legitimized the German concept of nation. According to Article 116 of the Fundamental Law anyone is German who holds German citizenship or was expelled as an ethnic German. This article allowed the inclusion of 8 million ethnic Germans in West Germany until 1950. The status of refugee was so broadly defined to include further 2.5 million ethnic German immigrants until 1990. What resulted in an open-door policy regarding ethnic German immigrants, was at the same time an exclusive policy for non-Germans. "We are not a country open for immigration" has been the official leitmotiv and

³¹ ROMERO, Federico, *L'emigrazione italiana negli anni '60 e il Mercato Comune Europeo*. In: PETERSEN, Jens (ed.), *L'emigrazione tra Italia e Germania*. Bari, Piero Lacaita Editore, 1993, pp. 117-138.

political-cultural norm, although a great part of the 5 million immigrants has settled definitely and constitutes an integral part of the population. The systematic repression of this evolution prevents a social and political integration of a stable immigrant minority³². The reference to the possibility of naturalization is ambivalent, because it is only provided in exceptional cases, when it is in the interest of the state and a "valuable addition to the population" can be expected³³.

In many aspects the period of German re-unification (1989-1990) was crucial for the political incorporation of immigrants. The fact that these years represent a fundamental turning point is best documented by a) the provisional (1989) and final (1990) Federal Constitutional Court decision against the German states of Schleswig-Holstein and Hamburg, which had wanted to introduce local voting rights for resident aliens³⁴; b) the introduction of a new legislation for alien residents (*Ausländergesetz*) which includes new and easier access to German citizenship; c) the hastened elaboration of the European Union (Maastricht) introducing in 1992 the EU-citizenship, allowing EU-nationals full geographical mobility, local voting rights and consular protection from all member states. This change led to a certain amount of splits among immigrant communities, after politically organized groups had been cooperating in local "foreigner's councils" (*Ausländerbeiräte*) for the achievement of local voting rights in many cities during the 1980s.

The quest for citizenship that had succeeded the fights of immigrants for the extension of welfare rights during the 1970s was not originally taken up by migrants, who were mainly concerned with social rights (e.g. schooling and professional training of their children)³⁵. The Swedish and Dutch experience, where political rights were given to foreigners by the government, and the humanitarian commitment of solidarity groups helped to transplant the request for political incorporation to immigrant organizations³⁶. The petition for citizenship in Germany had a highly symbolical value. Introducing a new form of

³² BADE, K.J. (ed.), *Deutsche im Ausland – Fremde in Deutschland: Migration in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, op. cit., p. 446.

³³ BERNSDORFF, Norbert, *Probleme der Ausländerintegration in verfassungsrechtlicher Sicht: eine Untersuchung der drei wichtigsten Eingliederungskonzepte*. Frankfurt am Main, P. Lang, 1986, p. 199.

³⁴ See Bundesverfassungsgerichtsentscheid (BVerfGE) Nr. 81, judged provisionally 11.10.1989 – 2 BvF 2/89. Final decisions: BVerfGE Nr. 83, 31.10.1990 – (2BvF 2, 6/89 and 2 BvF 3/89).

³⁵ SABEL, Charles, *Work and politics. The division of labor in industry*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982.

³⁶ SIEVERING, Ulrich O., *Integration ohne Partizipation? Ausländerwahlrecht in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland zwischen (verfassungs-)rechtlicher Möglichkeit und politischer Notwendigkeit*. Frankfurt/M., Haag und Herchen, 1981, 163 p.

identity politics, the quest for citizenship offered immigrant organizations a chance to mobilize their own community on new political issues. At the time, it represented an opportunity to unite their goals with those of the native citizens, finding new alliances and helping immigrants to overcome their social isolation.

In Germany there had been several attempts to introduce local voting rights for resident aliens in the 1980s. But the higher administrative courts of Schleswig-Holstein and Lower Saxony impeded an extension of political rights. The courts justified their decision basically with the ethnic interpretation of the "Volk", which is the only sovereign at any level of the German federal state according to the Basic Law. The ruling supported the interpretation of the Basic Law given both by the parliamentary CDU/CSU group and the Bavarian Government, an interpretation which stated that only the German "Volk" (people) is entitled to political rights³⁷. Ironically, two years later the same government introduced with the Maastricht-Treaty local political rights for EU-nationals, a decision which was not objected to by the Federal Constitutional Court³⁸. This court however indicated a facilitated naturalization procedure of resident aliens as a solution to the quest for citizenship³⁹.

The legislation for foreigners which was debated in 1989-1990 and implemented January 1, 1991, introduced in fact some facilitations concerning naturalization procedures, thereby attenuating the traditional ethnonational interpretation of German nationhood. With the new law especially second and third generation immigrants were to be granted full incorporation through a provision that reduces residence requirements from ten to eight years for 16 to 23 year-olds. The new law also renounces uniform family citizenship, allowing young people access to nationality without the approval of their parents and reducing the fee to 50 EUR. Nevertheless, opposition among immigrants has not decreased since the majority of the government coalition in the Bundestag categorically refused to accept dual citizenship as a concession to immigrants' psychological and economic interests. Violent attacks by German right wing social movements on refugees and the killing of Turkish immigrants in Mölln and Solingen (1992-1993) put more pressure on the government and induced it to open the door to German citizenship. On June 1, 1994, at the end of the 12th election period of the Bundestag, naturalization, which had previously been at the discretion of the government, was turned into a legal claim for immigrants. However, multiple citizenship was not yet accepted despite

³⁷ See BVerfGE Nr. 83, p. 37.

³⁸ See BVerfGE Nr. 89, p. 155.

³⁹ See BVerfGE, Nr. 83, p. 52.

the large public and parliamentary pressure⁴⁰. This may not only be due to the growing number of dual citizens originating from binational families, but is also due to the fact that the law considers the reinstatement of two different groups' nationalities as an explicit right. On the one hand, many victims of the Nazi persecution have the right to reclaim their former citizenship, while on the other hand there are Eastern Europeans of German descent who are also entitled to German citizenship without losing their previous nationality.

The red-green coalition under Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder agreed short after its election 1998 on the necessity to implement a new citizenship law, introducing on 1 January 2000 the *jus soli* principle for the German-born children of immigrants. However, the proof had been given that a paradigmatic ethnic nation can be able to change its laws in response to internal social change and converge towards the more liberal models in Europe.

Germany actually has two types of naturalization. The first is based on the "right to naturalization", and the second grants nationality on the basis of an assessment procedure, in which the authorities review the application and decide if the formal conditions are satisfied. The main requirements are that applicants must have residence permits for at least eight years, have a reasonable knowledge of German (be capable of carrying on a conversation), not be reliant on social welfare, not be unemployed, recognize the liberal and democratic order set out in the German Constitution, and be prepared to give up their previous nationality⁴¹. It should be noted here that the German Parliament has not been able to secure national consensus on the recognition of dual nationality, within the meaning of the European Convention on Nationality, 6 November 1997 (European Treaty Series No. 166) – although most European countries accept this. This and other factors may be a hindrance for the Italians in Germany who naturalize at very small rates in Germany to search access to citizenship.

The Contemporary Situation in France

Already more than 100 years ago citizenship law was defined in France by *jus soli*. Even Vichy-France did not dare to challenge this principle, although it denaturalized 15.000 Jews who had acquired

⁴⁰ Verhandlungen des Deutschen Bundestages, PlPr 12/225 (28.4.1994), pp. 19404-19414.

⁴¹ For more details, see BEAUFTRAGTE DER BUNDESREGIERUNG FÜR MIGRATION; FLÜCHTLINGE UND INTEGRATION (eds.), *Wie werde ich Deutsche/r?* Bonn, Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Migration, Flüchtlinge und Integration, 2005, p. 24.

French citizenship in the 1930s, sacrificing them to the Nazis⁴². In the mid-1980s the principle of territoriality was challenged and attacked by the extreme right: the *Front National*⁴³. During the legislative campaign of 1986 the center-right parties led by Jacques Chirac took up these positions and proposed to suppress "automatic" acquisition of French citizenship.

The main target of the nationalist attack were the *beurs*, second generation Algerian immigrants, although they were a minority among the naturalized immigrants. The colonial background of France made *beurs* already French citizens at birth, because their parents had been born in formerly French Algeria. The mostly indifferent or instrumental relation of many *beurs* to their second French citizenship and their putative unassimilability were, in the eyes of Front National and the moderate center-right politicians, an attitude that desacralized and devalued French citizenship. "Être français, cela se mérite" was the slogan of the New Right against the young immigrants who claimed their right to be different⁴⁴. Fundamentalism was used as metaphor for an aggressive Islam, also marking the cultural distance of the *beurs* to French society. But the nationalist position utilized an undifferentiated and essentialist characterization of Islam, ignoring the varieties of Islam in France. The mainstream right appropriated these arguments and advocated an abolition of Article 23⁴⁵. If the young immigrants desired French citizenship they should be demanded a voluntary and explicit pledge of allegiance to France.

Once in power, the government of Jacques Chirac was not able to reform the citizenship law and withdrew it from the legislative agenda. Article 23, attributing French citizenship automatically to third generation immigrants, could not be abolished for legal reasons. Likewise, the alteration of Article 44, attributing citizenship rights to second generation immigrants, found heavy political resistance. In a new political climate, the government of Balladur succeeded where Jacques Chirac failed: in June 1993 the automatic attribution of French citizenship at birth (Art. 23) was cancelled, and since 1994 immigrants born in France who wish to receive French citizenship have

⁴² MARRUS, Michael Robert; PAXTON, Robert O., *Vichy France and the Jews*. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1995, 432 p.

⁴³ COSTA-LASCOUX, Jacqueline, *Nationaux, mais pas vraiment citoyens*, «Projet», 204, 1987, pp. 45-57.

⁴⁴ TAGUIEFF, Pierre-André, *Face au racisme*. Paris, Editions La Découverte, 1991, 2 vols., 246 p. and 177 p.

⁴⁵ The «Code de la nationalité française» of January 9th, 1973 declares that a person born in France is attributed French nationality, when at least one of the parents was also born there. This law has its roots in the legislation of 1851. See BRUBAKER, R., *Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany*, op. cit., p. 93.

to request their will formally, and must be accepted by the state⁴⁶. Although this bill adheres to the recommendations of the Marceau Long-Commission of 1986 titled "Être Français, aujourd'hui et demain", to shape the citizenship law on a more voluntary basis and free it from colonial residuals, some liberal commentators feared that the French self-understanding would be threatened. Above all, the anti-Algerian direction of this bill, the possibility of administrative arbitrariness and the fact that second generation immigrants are denied any citizen rights until majority were criticized. Other experts declared however that this law – which is still "open" compared to other European legislations – would not endanger the acquisition of citizenship through its voluntary provisions⁴⁷.

The last fundamental reform of the citizenship law took place under the Socialist government of Lionel Jospin 1997. With the support of an academic report the automatism was not reestablished, but since then second generation youngsters socialized in France can apply between the age of 13 and 18 if they have not been born in the country, but they have to prove to have a five year domicile since they were 13 years old⁴⁸. Parental consent is needed until the age of 16, thereafter a declaration of one's own will is needed.

The Contemporary Situation in Switzerland

With regard to the free circulation of people in the European Community the attraction of Swiss citizenship declined remarkably during the 1980s⁴⁹. In the period between 1955 and 1988 200'000 immigrants naturalized. Between 1955 and 1965 the annual naturalization rate ranged between 3000 and 3500 and continued to grow up to an exceptional rate of 15000 in 1977. In the 1980s the naturalization rate declined again, varying between 7000 and 9000 procedures per year. Mostly young immigrants of the second generation perceived the procedure as complicated and degrading. They also took offence at the requirement to renounce their original nationality, which meant to deny

⁴⁶ *Le Monde* and *Libération*, 14.5.1994, p. 1.

⁴⁷ COSTA-LASCOUX, Jacqueline, *Continuité ou rupture dans la politique française de l'immigration: les lois de 1993*, «Revue européenne des migrations internationales», IX, 3, 1993, pp. 233-261.

⁴⁸ WEIL, Patrick, *Mission d'étude des législations de la nationalité et de l'immigration: des conditions d'application du principe du droit du sol pour l'attribution de la nationalité française: pour une politique de l'immigration juste et efficace*. Paris, La documentation française, 1997, 175 p.

⁴⁹ AREND, Michal; FAHRNICH, Peter, *Einbürgerung von Ausländern in der Schweiz*. Basel, Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1991, p. 55.

an essential part of their identity⁵⁰. One of the leading Italian immigrants organization in Switzerland – the Federazione delle Colonie Libere Italiane – therefore urged the Italian state to change its citizenship law to the effect that emigrants could keep their citizenship if naturalized abroad. Switzerland, on the other hand, was asked to refrain from requesting naturalization candidates to renounce their former citizenship⁵¹. Two research studies supported this demand: they recommended a liberal treatment of naturalization candidates wishing to keep the former citizenship, and advocated a facilitated naturalization of young candidates⁵². In March 1990 the National Council agreed with the Council of States to abolish the ban on dual citizenship for immigrants⁵³, although some months before the same Parliament had considered such an alteration of the citizenship law as not practicable⁵⁴.

Until the 1960s in Switzerland, immigrant politics were oriented toward the homeland. A restrictive Swiss political opportunity structure (POS) indicated to immigrant elites that they should orient their group level political strategies around their homeland polity⁵⁵. Italian immigrants in Switzerland lobbied in Italy by way of party and union contacts. The public debate in Italy then moved from the domestic to the international arena by transforming into a debate between Italy and Switzerland over immigrant rights.

The renewal of the bilateral agreement of 1964 was a watershed in that because it granted Italian immigrants increased civil, and social rights in Switzerland. Concessions granted to Italian immigrants induced concessions to citizens of other countries who were living in Switzerland. This development also mobilized the right wing which manifested itself in the form of a referendum to expel immigrants. Immigrants reacted strongly against the nativist referendum. However, un-

⁵⁰ RAKIC, Mirjana; TEREZIANI, Franca, "Wir wollen nicht länger Fremde sein": *die Frage der politischen Integration der zweiten Generation Italiener und Italienerinnen in der Schweiz*. Zürich, [s.n.], 1988, 59 p.

⁵¹ Article 17 of the citizenship law declares: "Who is asking naturalization has to omit any step to keep the former citizenship. As much as it is bearable the former citizenship should be renounced." According to this direction naturalization candidates had to formally omit any procedure to keep the former nationality and prove this step. Swiss citizens however, were never asked to renounce to their Swiss citizenship if they acquired a second citizenship.

⁵² AREND, M.; FAHRNICH, P., *Einbürgerung von Ausländern in der Schweiz*, op. cit.; CENTLIVRES, Pierre (ed.), *Devenir suisse: adhésion et diversité culturelle des étrangers en Suisse*. Genève, Georg, 1990, 278 p.; CENTLIVRES, P.; SCHNAPPER, D., *Nation et droit de la nationalité Suisse*, op. cit.

⁵³ *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 20.3.1990, Nr. 66, p. 25.

⁵⁴ *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 27.9.1989, Nr. 224, p. 25.

⁵⁵ KRIESI, H., *New social movements in Western Europe a comparative analysis*, op. cit.

like the original mobilization of Italian immigrants which had focused on the Italian polity, this second wave of immigrant politicization was oriented towards Swiss domestic politics. Immigrants explicitly linked their organizations to the Swiss political opportunity structure through alliances with solidarity organizations. In addition, opposition of Swiss business organizations to the nativist referendum influenced the immigrant elites decision to orient their group strategies around the Swiss polity. In the 1980s, the immigrant elites began to receive increased support from established interest groups within the Swiss civil society, which also helped to the shift in the immigrant's orientation from the Italian to the Swiss political opportunity structure⁵⁶.

Since the 1980s, immigrants in Switzerland have appeared as political actors in three major mobilization waves. Each of these mobilizations focused on achieving political rights – specifically local voting rights, dual citizenship and an easier access to citizenship. Immigrants promoted the first two issues themselves, the latter was part of a government project aimed at facilitating the integration of young immigrants through naturalization. Although immigrant groups did not instigate the last proposal, they did actively support it. Nativist resistance prevented local voting rights and easier access to Swiss nationality from passing the referendum. In contrast, the dual citizenship proposal was surprisingly successful.

At the end of the 1980s, important immigrant groups petitioned for local voting rights and dual citizenship. These immigrant social movement organizations considered themselves a stable minority of Swiss society, not transient guests. Consequently, they focused their campaign on making Swiss society more aware of their cause, as well as on helping their own community to leave its isolation. The final goal of these demands was the political equality of foreigners⁵⁷.

Unlike in Germany, the Swiss Constitution allows political rights to be transferred to foreigners⁵⁸. A territorial concept of democracy

⁵⁶ CERUTTI, Mauro, *Les communistes italiens en Suisse dans l'entre-deux-guerres*. In: FONDATION JULES HUMBERT-DROZ (ed.), *Centenaire Jules Humbert-Droz: Colloque sur l'Internationale communiste, La Chaux-de-Fonds, 25-28 septembre 1991: actes*. La Chaux-de-Fonds, Fondation Jules Humbert-Droz, 1992, pp. 213-240; ID., *Un secolo di emigrazione italiana in Svizzera (1870-1970), attraverso le fonti dell'Archivio federale*, «Studi e fonti», XX, 1994, p. 11-141; ID., *L'immigration italienne en Suisse dans le contexte de la Guerre froide*. In: BATOU, Jean; CERUTTI, Mauro; HEMBERG, Charles (eds.), *Pour une histoire des gens sans histoire: ouvriers, exclus et rebelles en Suisse: 19e-20e siècles*. Lausanne, Ed. d'en bas, 1995, pp. 213-231.

⁵⁷ D'AMATO, Gianni, *Vom Ausländer zum Bürger: der Streit um die politische Integration von Einwanderern in Deutschland, Frankreich und der Schweiz*. Münster, Lit, 2001, p. 236.

⁵⁸ THÜRER, Daniel, *Der politische Status der Ausländer in der Schweiz: Rechtsposition im Spannungsfeld zwischen politischer Rechtlosigkeit und Gleich-*

gives each Canton autonomous administrative power to include foreigners in their political processes. For example, the Cantons of Neuchâtel and Jura incorporate their foreign members into the polity like citizens. In contrast to such administrative tools, on the level of the federal state taking issues to the public has proven to be a less favorable strategy to gain immigrant political incorporation. Referendums in several cantons during the 1990s showed that native citizens were not willing to concede political rights to foreigners. Empirical studies show that many Swiss voters fear the participation even of long-term immigrant residents, who are still perceived to be foreigners⁵⁹.

In Switzerland, when state administrative efforts to grant immigrants political rights conflict with public desires to limit such measures at the level of the Canton, the conservative voters traditionally come out relatively successful. The administration's failed attempt to expand immigrant political rights in 1994 and 2004 illustrates this point. In these cases, the government wanted young second generation immigrants to get easy access to citizenship. The Parliament accepted the proposal, passing it on to scrutiny by the electorate. Although a slight majority of the Swiss population favored a facilitation of naturalization procedures, the majority of the Cantons refused the government proposal. Political scientists interpret this decision as a further nativist isolation of the country – an attitude that complemented the refusal by the majority of the public to join the European Economic Area in 1992.

The only successful effort to increase immigrant political rights in the last 20 years was the Swiss Parliament's approval of dual citizenship in 1990. Many members of parliament remarked that it was unacceptable to deny immigrants what is obvious to Swiss citizens, namely that one cannot lose one's original nationality. This decision was not submitted to a popular referendum. Representatives of different parties accepted the proposal of important immigrant groups to allow dual nationality in order to improve the integration of young immigrants and to let them express their multiple loyalties. The decisive factor was unclear. In the debate heavy pressures from the unions and the business associations were mentioned, both having an interest in integrating economically second generation immigrants. Another element could be detected in the general openness of the political elite towards European integration at the beginning of the 1990s. A political integration of mainly European immigrants would have obviously been a sign to Brussels. Any-

berechtigung? In: HALLER, Walter; KÖLZ, Alfred (eds.), *Festschrift für Ulrich Häfelin zum 65. Geburtstag*. Zürich, Schulthess Polygr. Verl., 1989, pp. 183-204.

⁵⁹ KOOPMANS, R.; KRIESI, H., *Citoyenneté, identité nationale et mobilisation de l'extrême droite: Une comparaison entre la France, l'Allemagne, les Pays-Bas et la Suisse*, op. cit.

way, dual citizenship seemed to be irrelevant to Swiss decision makers although a referendum surely would have impeded such a step towards inclusion, as the debate on an easy access to citizenship has shown. The Swiss case seems to lend support to the idea that general referendums are not helpful to immigrants when political rights are at stake.

Italy – whose citizens still represent the largest immigrant group in Switzerland – accepted the receiving states offer of dual citizenship. Immigrants from other nation-states then evaluated the action of Italian immigrants as a success and followed their example. Thus, Switzerland and its immigrant population have negotiated a means by which a great part of the immigrants can acquire dual citizenship and thus acquire political rights in the receiving country without having to make too many logistical or emotional sacrifices. Numbers of naturalization have been continuously growing since then⁶⁰.

Citizenship and Integration

The above mentioned aspect with regard to the role of mediating elites deserves special consideration. Similar to Switzerland, in France after the Mitterrand-Mauroy government introduced the Association Law of 9 October 1981 allowing immigrants for the first time to build up their own associations, the French support organizations had to compete with the immigrants' own associations for government largesse and for the right to represent the immigrant communities. As with French trade unions and left-wing political parties, competition between the immigrants' solidarity groups heightened the value for them. Associational life among immigrants received a decisive stimulus from the law and the number of associations skyrocketed after 1981. Much of the new activity proceeded along ethnic lines, feeding the continuation of patterns of participation characteristic of the societies from which the immigrants arrived, linking each group somewhat different to the political process.

Consequently, distinct national organizational patterns resulted. This is also true for the Italians in France. Despite the widespread belief that it had melted without a trace into French society according to the assimilationist ideology and the inclusion through the French unions, the Italian community nurtured a vibrant associational movement that developed markedly in the freer post-1981 environment. Citizens of a fellow EC member state, Italians escaped the brunt of

⁶⁰ WANNER, Ph.; D'AMATO, G., *Naturalisation en Suisse: le rôle des changements législatifs sur la demande de naturalisation: rapport*, op. cit.

anti-immigrant sentiment, and their organizations did not try to create an independent political presence in the host society, as the Algerians did. The Italian communities were also more tightly knit than others. Fraternal organizations of Italian Catholics and Communists served both as social-service providers and cultural clearinghouses for the community. Most organizations enjoyed friendly, mutually supportive relations with officials in Rome and at consulates in France. Under their guidance, coordination among associations grew even closer⁶¹. Moreover, citizenship provisions to the second generation allowed this segment of society to be active as French citizens and carry the interest of their community within the national polity. Claim making and integration efforts were clearly oriented towards the society of the receiving state.

With regard to Germany, Dietrich Thränhardt typified the integration pattern of Italians as "clientelistic politisation", whereas civic commitment in Switzerland gave the Italians there a different representation of interest⁶². This civic commitment of Italian self-organizations in Switzerland may be explained by their lacking bridges into Swiss society. Until the 1980s, Italian self-organizations were obliged to construct parallel institutions like, for example, vocational schools, since they had no substantial support from Swiss society, whereas in Germany the social organizations and unions tried to integrate the immigrant workers at the workplace and the neighborhood, but not politically. The self-organization helped in a second turn to elaborate more political claims in the country of residence since social mobility depended also on visibility. Recent studies confirm for Germany a negative effect of the inclusion patterns on all items of political participation⁶³, whereas in Switzerland and France political participation and naturalization rates of the Italian community seem to be better shaped.

The degree to which the political incorporation as depicted above has interacted to influence the social integration process is still an open question. Cross-national literature on immigrant integration suffers from empirical deficits and is largely oriented towards norma-

⁶¹ CAMPANI, Giovanna; CATANI, Maurizio, *Les réseaux associatifs italiens en France et les jeunes*, «Revue européenne des migrations internationales», I, 2, 1985, pp. 143-160. A selection of recent works, but with remote contents, can be found in BLANC-CHALÉARD, Marie-Claude (ed.), *Les italiens en France depuis 1945*. Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003, 277 p.

⁶² THRÄNHARDT, Dietrich, *Immigrant Cultures, State Policies and Social Capital Formation in Germany*, «Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis», XI, 2, 2004, pp. 159-183.

⁶³ PICHLER, Edith, *La partecipazione ai diritti di cittadinanza politica degli Italiani in Germania*, «Studi Emigrazione», XLII, 158, 2005, pp. 309-326.

tive and typifying aspects. Already in the early 1980s, it was established that Italians in Germany performed worse than other “guest-worker” groups, and worse than Italians in Switzerland. More recent German data indicate that the participation of young Italians in the dual system of vocational training and education has increased since the mid-1980s, but their participation in higher education has remained rather low⁶⁴. In Switzerland, in contrast, second-generation Italians perform better than young Swiss with a similar social background⁶⁵. In France, the performance seems to be similar as in Switzerland⁶⁶. Probably, structural reasons had also their impact: In Germany, where the Italians were predominantly employed in the industrial sector, they entered a highly organized labor market. In Switzerland, in contrast, their employment expanded to all economic sectors, but particularly to sectors of the second economy, which were less organized. How and to what extent have these different histories of industrial relations and labor market incorporation influenced the comprehensive integration processes of Italian immigrants? The context in Germany may have been both a help and a hindrance particularly for the second generation of Italian immigrants. They may have been tempted to take up jobs in the same, protected sector as their parents. In Switzerland, in contrast, both the first and the second generation may have been more convinced of the importance of educational performance for attaining intergenerational social mobility. Future research will have to clarify these hypothesis.

Conclusion

Normatively spoken, civil society does not only prove to be the fountain of liberty opposed to the state, but also a demanding place where interactive exchange happens, and in which there is a dispute on the notion of “citizen”. Depending on the arguments, this conflict is

⁶⁴ ESSER, Hartmut, *Integration und ethnische Schichtung*. Berlin, Bundesministerium des Innern, 2001, 66 p.; THRÄNHARDT, D., *Immigrant Cultures, State Policies and Social Capital Formation in Germany*, op. cit.

⁶⁵ BOLZMAN, Claudio; FIBBI, Rosita; VIAL, Marie, *Secondas – secondos: le processus d'intégration des jeunes adultes issus de la migration espagnole et italienne en Suisse*. Zurich, Seismo, 2003, 240 p.; FIBBI, Rosita; LERCH, Mathias; WANNER, Philippe, *L'intégration des populations issues de l'immigration en Suisse: personnes naturalisés et deuxième génération*. Neuchâtel, Office fédéral de la statistique, 2005, 98 p.

⁶⁶ ALLEMANN-GHIONDA, Cristina, *Ethnicity and national educational systems in Western Europe*. In: WICKER, Hans-Rudolf (ed.), *Rethinking nationalism and ethnicity: the struggle for meaning and order in Europe*. Oxford, Berg, 1997, pp. 303-318.

able to set integration processes into motion, where recognition, respect and membership to the nation have a different valorization. The ethnonational and culturalist arguments, as they were predominant in Germany, France and Switzerland, give answers to immigration that appear as economically, politically and culturally impracticable or only feasible with high costs. What remains is a new argument, a co-existential one, with its demands for citizens and civil society. Integration can only arise when the agents of civil society act inclusively and can provide an egalitarian participation in the public cause. These are the places where recognition, political power and democracy happen; here, the identity of the individual is intertwined with collective identities, which should not be understood as static, but subjected to a process of self-transformation. Its reference to the national and transnational civil society still has to happen with the consent of a majoritarian policy; what counts is the constant sum-principle that renders any debate very protracted: the “natives” consider the rights of “foreigners” as an impairment of their own chances. Many starts and various disappointments cannot be avoided in this political field; vice-versa, experiences and reflections around this subject are a test regarding the quality of a disillusioned political theory which does not aim to be fashionable. Despite its democratic and inclusive criteria, the co-existential position would not let social discrimination disappear along the lines of ethnic or class criteria in spheres like school, work place, associations and housing. But according to our thesis, inclusion starts with citizenship. Only those who dispose of citizenship rights can place their own topics on the agenda without being dependent on social patronage. Participatory rights for the formerly excluded does not only distribute political power in a new way, but they effectively reform state and society, and make a just participation in commonly created welfare possible, so that anyone can get “blond”.

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