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IMMIGRANTS IN EUROPE: BETWEEN INTEGRATION AND EXCLUSION

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A few years ago, Daniel Franklin, then European editor of the weekly *The Economist*, described a day in the life of a middle-class Londoner in the following terms:

> First thing in the morning, the newspaper is delivered by the Indians who run the corner shop (nobody in the area could be bothered to do such an early service any more). Then the cleaner arrives; she is Polish, and will in time almost certainly return home. The walk to the underground station takes him past restaurants run by Chinese, Italians, and Indians, and a Jewish bakery. He buys his underground ticket from a West Indian. He arrives at the office, where the security guard is Irish. He shares room with a South African, the secretary is Canadian, his ultimate boss is a Rhodesian. Most days he has lunch at the local Italian restaurant or sandwich bar, and supper is often a pizza delivered by any one of a dozen nationalities, but never British.

"This example", he added, "happens to be my own, but I have no reason to believe that it is not fairly typical" (Franklin, 1993). Indeed, the social landscape that constitutes the background of the picture painted by Franklin is not very different from the one that would obtain, *mutatis mutandis*, of a similar exercise in Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin, Zürich, or a score of other European cities. The national and ethnic mix would be different in each case, but a considerable degree of human heterogeneity would be common in all of them. In fact, a similar story could be told of the daily experience of citizens living in many European cities, especially big ones and metropolitan areas. Only fifty years before, however, the corresponding picture in each and all of these places would have been markedly different.

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The foregoing attest to a profound, far-reaching transformation that several European societies have undergone in recent decades, and that a few other are undergoing in our days: their conversion in multiethnic, pluricultural societies. It has happened for the simple reason that a large number of migrants - many of whom came as temporary workers - have stayed and become permanent settlers, whether *de iure* or *de facto*.

This societal transformation is second to no other in importance and implications. To signal but a few, it deeply affects the labor market; the provision of basic public services; social infrastructures, including the welfare system; the social structure - through the creation of new inequalities or the perpetuation of old ones -; and may affect cultural, linguistic, and religious pluralism. Even more, it affects ethnicity, feelings of national identity, and the definition of the polity -who are 'us' and who are not 'us'. It tests the strength of some of the enlightened principles on which democratic societies were founded, such as basic equality, social cohesion, or universal citizenship. It entails the accommodation of heterogeneity.

Obviously, such transformation is not an easy one. Other societies have preceeded Europe along this path, and nowhere has it happened - or is still taking place - without tensions; not even in the traditional immigration-receiving socities of North-America or Australasia, where immigration has been an essential mechanism in nation-building. It should come as no surprise that this conversion be particularly difficult in Europe, where a past of out-migration and a tradition of exclusionary conceptions of nationhood have left strong cultural underpinnings that militate against the full incorporation of migrants in society.

Historical influences and predispositions notwithstanding, the inescapable fact is that immigration and ethnic diversity have become a permanent feature of the human landscape of European societies. As a result, the integration of migrants has therefore become an important issue of public policy and a political matter of the utmost concern (Castles, 1994; Piché, 1998).

The urge to integrate migrants who are permanent residents stems from the combination of moral and political obligations - including loyalty to foundational democratic principles and the respect of human rights - and self-interest, i.e. the realization that society cannot live harmoniously if a substantial part of the population is marginalised and socially excluded. Yet, this engine is often not powerful enough to remove the main obstacles that stand in the way of integration: attitudes unfavourable to immigrants, or anti-immigrant feelings, and a deeply-ingrained exclusionary conception of the polity.

The outcome of integration efforts depends on the interplay of these contradictory impulses, and because of that is bound to be mixed: a certain degree of integration that runs side by side with varying measures of exclusion - in the two meanings of the word, political exclusion and plain social exclusion.

This is the line of reasoning that I shall try to develop in this paper. I will start with a brief, cursory look at history, to see how European countries became immigration receiving societies, and how ethnic minorities were formed. An effort will then be made to characterize prevailing citizens' attitudes and policy orientations, and to ascertain if there is anything specifically European about them. In turn, the cultural and historical underpinnings that contribute to understanding these attitudes will be briefly explored. Then the paper will look at the overall experience of integration in Europe, in what cannot be but a broad and sweeping generalization. Finally, implications of the present state of things as far as integration is concerned will be discussed.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The relatively brief story of European immigration has been told many times, but it may be

worth remembering it once again, underlying those facts that contribute to shape perceptions and attitudes, and to condition policies. From this vantage point, three periods can be discerned:

1) 1950-55 to 1973-74. In the course of the third quarter of the 20th century, several European countries became *de facto* immigrant societies. Due to an exceptional combination of manpower shortages - stemming from war losses and low fertility in the interwar years - and vigorous economic growth, fueled first by a 'recovery bonus' and then by an irrepetible sociopolitical context, the booming economies of Northwestern Europe demanded a seemingly unlimited supply of foreign workers. Colonies or former colonies, and surplus-labor countries in the Southern European periphery and later across the Mediterranean, provided the human resources required. No doubt, there were precedents - Irish in Britain, Spaniards and Italians in France, Italians in Switzerland, Poles in Germany, Finns in Sweden -, but neither the numbers involved in previous moves nor the diversity in the composition of the flows could be compared with present ones. In the European past, emigrants had always greatly outnumbered immigrants - with the partial exception of France. For the first time in centuries, Europe was ceasing to be the foremost exporter of labor to emerge as a major immigration receiving region. Until then, prototypical migration currents had flown from labor-intensive countries to land-intensive regions. For the first time in history, a traditionaly labor-intensive region was being transformed into an immigration receiving one.

2) 1974-1985. The Yom Kippur war, and the ensuing first oil shock, marked the end of an unusually large period of sustained economic growth - so vigorous that some economists coined the term 'super-growth' to distinguish it from ordinary growth (Kindleberger, 1967). The winds of bonanza which had presided over the economic - and hence social and political - atmosphere for a quarter of a century gave way to stormy, unstable wheather. At the same time Europeans born in baby boom times were coming of age and entering the labor market (Werner 1986). The era of full employment was over, maybe for good, and unemployment and inflation became a permanent feature of the landscape. One after the other, European governments decided to halt recruitment and close their borders to foreign workers, adopting restrictive entry policies that would prove permanent. They also promoted diverse schemes to induce the return of guestworkers which met generally with little success. Indeed, soon thereafter European societies realized that guestworkers had taken seriously the invitation extended to them and had decided to stay, in what constituted a typical case of unexpected and unintended consequences. Moreover, they called their relatives to join them. Despite the closure, the number of foreigners did not go down. Family reunion, higher birth rates and the passage from the first to subsequent stages of the migration cycle made the composition of migrant populations more akin to native ones - as well as more visible, as they gradually moved from industry to the services sector. As a result of compositional changes, the labor market participation of foreigners began to ressemble that of native workers. Indeed, between 1975 and 1987, the proportion that immigrants made of the workforce decresed, while that of the general population remained stable (Soysal 1994). This, together with an increased consumption of public services by migrant families, made the fiscal balance of immigration less attractive for receiving societies. Besides, a 'second generation problem' was beginning to emerge, due to family reunion and demographic trends (Werner 1986). In these years, the proportion of people from

non-European stock among migrants gradually increased, as flows from Southern Europe got ever more scarce and a number of previous guestworkers from Italy and Spain returned home. As a result, the ethnicity of European societies was transformed in a short period of time. As migrants were not being easily or swiftly integrated, ethnic minorities began to be formed. Hostility and feelings of rejection against foreigners began to mount, and conflicts exploded around 1980 in several countries. A number of policies were adopted at that time, at the same time of integration and restrictive of further entries.

3) 1985-present. After a long recession, economic growth picked up again from the mid-80's to 1992. Immigration flows increased markedly between 1985 and 1993 (Salt 1997), and the number of asylum demands skyrocketed, multiplying by ten between 1983 and 1993. The fall of the Berlin Wall lifted former limitations on mobility from Central and Eastern European countries. Fears of massive migration set in, and cassandristic forecasts of massive flows from South and East proliferated, contributing to a state of paroxism around 1992-93. At that time, an economic downturn, with marked rises in unemployment, compounded insecurity feelings and popular anxiety. Indicators of racism and xenophobia swelled, and extreme-right parties in several countries increased their electoral support. Violent incidents of a xenophobic nature have proliferated ever since. The contradiction between the official stand of closed borders and persistent entries of migrants fuels the impression that governments have lost the control of borders. A new restriccionist drive took place since around 1990. For the first time, starting in the mid-80's, immigration has become a political issue, and a very divisive one. After 1993, the state of anxiety and alarm seems to have been somewhat attenuated, but not entirely. Migration flows seem to have stabilized somewhat (Salt 1997), and the ominous forecasts of massive floods of migrants have not materialized. Restrictionist orientations continue to preside over immigration policies, but integration seems to attract increasing attention. It is unclear whether or not 1994 marks the start of a new, less climatic period.

CITIZENS' PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS IMMIGRATION

The viewpoint of receiving societies towards migrants expresses itself mainly through the attitudes harbored by their citizens and the policies put forth by their governments - at all levels of government, central, regional and local. Attitudes and policies are interrelated in various ways, and influences operate in both directions. In turn, attitudes are affected by perceptions, and, to complicate things, also condition them.

Citizens' attitudes can be directly gauged through surveys, and attitudes towards migrants and foreigners at a European scale are periodically monitored by the European Commission's Eurobarometer, carried twice a year on the 15 countries that make up the European Union. Questions about these matters were included in 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994 y 1997 (Melich, 1995).

The picture that these surveys consistently reveal is hardly favourable or friendly to immigrants. No doubt, a majority declares that "society should be inclusive and offer equal rights to all citizens, including those from immigrant and minority groups" (European Commission, 1997:5). Yet, more specific questions provide a more nuanced picture, with many respondents favoring further restrictions or the limitation of migrants rights.

To start with the baseline of perceptions in the matter, roughly one in two Europeans think that there are 'too many' migrants in their country. This perception strongly rose at the end of the 80's, peaked in 1993, declined slightly the following year and has stabilized ever since.

Giving the foregoing, it can hardly come as a surprise that a large majority is not willing to accept foreign workers "without restrictions". Those who do are between 12% and 15%. One out of four Europeans prefer not to accept their entrance in the country at all. The majority of respondents of all countries prefer to accept them "with restrictions" (60% in 1997). Asylum seekers command an slightly larger degree of aceptance.

Figures for people coming from the South of the Mediterranean or from Eastern Europe do not differ markedly. Accordingly, the origin of immigrants does not seem to count very much. Yet, in some countries there is a clear preference for one of the groups - or a stronger rejection for the other.

The majority of European citizens not only are not in favor of allowing the unrestricted entry of immigrants, but they do not favor enlarging migrants' rights either. On the contrary, one in three would like to see those rights reduced, while only one in six favors enlargeing them.

As it might be expected, few citizens openly recognize that, in their daily life, they 'feel disturbed' by the presence of people of other nationality, race, or religion. Race and religion matter more than nationality, but the difference is almost negligeable. Yet, a minority of between 13 and 15 per cent do declare their annoyance. Clearly, in this most sensitive matter, the extent of unsympathetic feelings may be somewhat masked by a tendency to conform to patterns of social desirability.

Those who declare that they do feel disturbed by the opinions, customs and way of life of people different from themselves, i.e. migrants and foreigners, have a much greater tendency to perceive that these 'others' are 'too many'. On the contrary, those that are not disturbed by the presence of different people have a lower propensity to find that there 'too many' of these. Indeed, perceptions and attitudes are clearly correlated. Yet, it has to be said that the perception of the number of migrants is not exactly a perception, or at a any rate not a factual or value-free perception. In fact, value-judgments and attitudinal stands are clearly involved, as the both the phrasing of the question and the type of value-loaded answers offered suggest. Unfortunately, published data do not allow to discern a causal relationship the other way around, that is, whether a change in numerical perceptions results in a change in attitudes.

Yet, this is an important point. In general terms, countries with a lower proportion of immigrants tend to show a higher degree of acceptance of 'others', and a lesser frequency of anti-immigrant feelings and xenophobia. It is often surmised that the explanation for the lower incidence of xenophobia lies in sheer numbers. If this was true, an increase in the number of migrants would entail by itself a deterioration of attitudes towards them. The scant information available does not confirm this mechanistic explanation. Indeed, on the one hand the above correlation does not always obtain in Europe: Greece or Danemark have relatively low proportions of migrants in their population and yet exhibit a relatively high degree of rejection of migrants. On the other hand, in recent years, between 1994 and 1997, the percentage of people in Italy who find disturbing the presence of other has increased by five points, while the proportion of those who think that there are too many migrants was in 1997 substantially lower than in the period 1991-93. Finally, the overall correlation between proportion of immigrants and frequency of anti-immigrant feelings -measured by a composite 'index of xenophobia'- does not seem to be very strong.

Within all countries, anti-immigrants feelings are more prevalent "among people aged more than 55, with few years of education, unsatisfied with the functioning of the democracy in their country, not being strong media users, quite pessimist about the future, very proud of

their national identity and with a self-perception on the right of the left-right scale. On the mirror side, the most tolerant are to be found on the contrary aspects. Sex, although, is not a discriminatory variable." (Melich, 1995:10).

As for the evolution of these attitudes, the general trend points to a marked deterioration between the mid-80's and early 90's, an slight improvement afterwords and an stabilization since 1994. This is clearly the case with the perception of the number of migrants. A similar evolution can be predicated of attitudes towards the acceptance of migrants and feelings of annoyance, except that variations are much smaller. A worrisome evolution took place between 1988 and 1992 concerning attitudes towards the rights of migants: the proportion of those that want them curtailed doubled in four years - from 18% to 34% -, while that of those in favor of enlarging them was halved - from 30% to 17%. Maybe because of such ominous evolution, or for fears that knowledge of it might have deletereous effects, the question has been discontinued in subsequent surveys.

A special survey carried out in the Spring of 1977 in the 15 countries of the EU 1997 with the occasion of European Year against Racism and Xenophobia offers even more frightening results, a worrying level of racism and xenophobia in Member States, with nearly 33% of those interviewed openly describing themselves as 'quite racist' or 'very racist' (European Commission, 1997:5).

Factors associated with xenophobia are again dissatisfaction with life circumstances, fear of unemployment, insecurity about the future and low confidence in public authorities and the political establishment. Ethnic minorities are the foremost target of racist and xenophobic feelings. Their implantation has coincided with structural changes and globalization which are perceived by some groups as a threat to their income, job security and national identity (Castles 1994; Alt 1998).

The conclusion is that "racial prejudice, discrimination and racist attacks continue to present a constant problem to the European Union" (Eurobarometer 1997). Both the European Commission and the European Parliament have expressed serious concern about the persistence, if not the rise, of racism and xenophobia in a number of occasions. In 1993 the latter reccomended that national legislation directed to combat racism, xenophobia and anti-semitism in Europe be passed in Member States.

Do citizens' attitudes matter? Implications of anti-immigrant feelings

Attitudes do matter, both directly and through their influence on policies. Some of this connections materialize in the play of electoral politics. The development of a social climate adverse, when not directly hostile, to immigrants in Europe, has had a number of direct and indirect implications which affects policies or condition the political context in which they are adopted.

It can be said that nothing determines more the position that ethnic minorities have in society that the combination of citizens' attitudes and government policies.

The most direct manifestation of such a hostile climate is racist violence, which has manifested itself in an ominous proliferation of violent incidents of a xenophobic nature in which immigrants have been often the victims. In some countries, these incidents are counted by the thousands every year (Witte, 1995).

Obviously, racism and anti-immigrant feelings result in various forms of exclusionary practices against ethnic minorities, in the labor market and elsewhere, that are too varied to be accounted for here. A well-known mechanism that has attracted increased attention recently

through which racism and anti-immigrant feelings perpetuate themselves in a self-fulfilling prophecy is the temptation of the scapegoat. As Stalker has put it, "immigrants are blamed for everything from stealing jobs, to criminality, to eating strange kinds of food, or swamping the streets with alien languages. Above all, they are seen as a threat to the integrity of the dominant host nation" (Stalker 1994:61).

A major manifestation of this climate, at the same time cause and effect of it, has been the ascent of extreme-right, xenophobic parties in several European countries. The novelty about it lies in the fact that the rejection of immigration usually constitutes the first and foremost tenet and banner of these parties. The fact that some of them manage to command a certain electoral following on the basis of such narrow, specialized platform, attest to the strength of anti-immigrant feelings in a segment of European societies.

Often the influence of these parties goes well beyond the limits of the social segments in which they find electoral support, and influence the stands of bigger mainstream parties, worried to lose electoral ground to extremist agitation. Very often the rationale of preventing the growth of extreme-right parties is used to justify a hardening of immigration policies. At times, electoral occasions give way to a sort of auction of restrictionist proposals among competing parties. As someone has put it bluntly, migrants are often hostages of the vote.

A RESTRICTIONIST DRIVE

This climate of opinion has been the context in which a strong restrictionist drive in immigration policies in Europe has taken place in recent years. If there is a common denominator in European immigration legislation in recent years, this is its "increasing restrictiveness" (Soysal 1994:121). This orientation clearly prevails in the realm of admission policies. Indeed, the bulk of the attention of policymakers in recent years has been devoted to entry policies. A full arsenal of measures to further restrict entry or to enforce existing regulations more severely has been passed since 1990 both in individual countries and in the European Union as a whole. As Catherine Withol de Wenden has put it, "partout en Europe, le droit d'immigrer apparaît en retraite" (de Wenden, 1997).

Besides the well-known prohibition of economic migration - with the exceptions of European, highly-skilled and temporary workers - a good example, relevant on its own, of this restrictionist drive is the evolution undergone in recent years by legislation and practices concerning asylum seekers. The changes that are taking place in this realm are so substantial that some experts are beginning to speak of a 'new asylum regime' in Europe whose main traits are increasing restrictions to the granting of protection and a preference for non-integration. Besides expeditious mechanisms for the inadmission of 'manifestly unfounded' demands and quick resolution of claims, a frequent, widespread result is the granting of statuses of temporary protection (i.e. three years) and limiteed rights, out of the scope established in the Geneva Convention. It is estimated that nine out of ten accepted asylum-seekers in our days receive statuses which do not conform to the provisions of the Convention. Among other limitations, integration programs have been suppressed in some countries, and even schemes for non-integration have been set up (Joly et al, 1997).

The evolution of legislation and practices in the area of asylum has run parallel to that of immigration policies. The most salient feature of both is a clear preference for temporariness and limitation of rights. In fact, the distinction between asylum-seekers and migrants is increasingly fading away.

The restrictionist drive does confine itself to entry policies: it extends also to integration

and affects also those that are already in, in matters that have to do with the definition of family reunion, access to citizenship or permanent residence, access to welfare services, and recognition of voting rights, inter alia (de Wenden 1997). Moreover, integration policies are often made appear as inseparable from stringent admission policies, allowing the thought that they are a compensation, if not an alibi, for the latter.

This climate is also affecting the first steps of the development of a European-wide immigration policy. Immigration is slowly starting to emerge as an area of policy, mainly at the level of intergovernmental cooperation, in the European Union - in what is known as the 'third pillar'. But a number of measures have been taken. The bulk of the resolutions, reccommendations, conventions, joint positions or joint actions adopted by the European Union in matters of immigration have to do with border controls and harmonization of asylum policies, and they all reflect a restrictionist orientation. Measures to promote harmonization or rights or that have to do with migrants' integration convey much less attention, despite the fact that the EU has often proposed that Member States apply the same legislation to workers originating from non-EC countries to their nationals" (Melich, 1995). Most initiatives taken so far at a European level emphasize control of immigrants and asylum-seekers whilst offering little in the way of immigrants' rights or measures to combat racism or xenophobia (Geddes, 1995). Indeed the fact that in the European Union Treaty approved in Amsterdam immigration appears in the unseemly company of international crime, prostitution, traffic in stolen works of art and terrorism cannot be devoid of symbolic significance.

In fact, the European Union has become the world leader in the efforts to curb asylum applications and limit the corresponding right. Yet, in all fairness it has to be said that other regions are following suit, either in a protective reflex or for sharing in the orientation.

Historical and cultural underpinnings of the political culture toward immigration

Neither anti-immigration feelings nor the prevalence of restrictive orientations in the area of policy are privative of Europe. In all receiving regions there are clear signs in recent years that point in the same direction. No doubt, in some migration systems - such as the oil-rich states of the Persian Gulf and a number of receiving countries in Asia - the rights recognized to migrants are much fewer than in Europe, and the treatment accorded to them far worse. This is generally true of receiving societies whose political regimes are not democratic.

Even in traditional overseas receiving societies signs of increasing restriction and mounting concern are patent, especially in the US - less so in Australia and even less in Canada. In the US popular attitudes tradicionally sympathetic to migrants may be reversing in recent years as never before (Massey 1995). Nevertheless, in all three classic countries of immigration restrictive measures coexist with others intended to attract immigrants; and a positive ideology of immigration still counteracts a negative one (Livi Bacci, 1993). Among democratic receiving societies, only Japan can be compared with Europe in terms of the restrictiveness of entry and incorporation policies, and prevalence of exclusionary orientations (Castles 1995).

The relatively short European experience with immigration has not followed in the steps of the classical model of integration set forth by the US, Canada, and Australia - and Argentina, Brazil or Uruguay in the past. In all these countries the major concern in relation to immigration was that of securing a continuous supply of immigrants, which meant cheap labor. Both their arrival and their integration in society as permanent settlers were actively encouraged, with minor exceptions. Indeed migrants tended to integrate with the passage of time - in three

generations, according to the classic theory of Park -, and became 'americanized', or 'australianized'. At that point ethnicity got restricted to the realm of folklore, and a 'twilight of ethnicity' took place (Massey 1995). Needless to say, these were land-intensive societies established on large territories, open to peoples of multiple origins. Immigration, which implied large economies of scale, was a founding mechanism.

This is hardly the case of Europe. The prevailing civic and political culture toward immigration rests on psycho-social underpinnings that were shaped by a past of labor surplus and by peculiar processes of nation-state formation, and which have been reinforced by its experience with immigration since WWII. Indeed, two structural features differentiate the European cultural background from that of overseas receiving societies: on the one hand a history of labor-intensive economies and of densely populated territories, in which space and land were fully occupied since very long, to the point that even modest increases in population threatened with altering delicate balances between resources and people; on the other, a close association - it does not matter much whether real or illusory - between territory, ethnic group, language and national identity. In Europe "the feeling of belonging to a nation is closely connected to a feeling of imaginary ownership of the territory of the nation-State" (Cordeiro 1997:109). This ideal correspondence makes it more difficult the acceptance of heterogeneity, specially as far as the definition of the polity is concerned. In Europe, nationality is primarily an ethnic concept, while in North America or Australasia it is primarily a legal one. In this framework, immigration is bound to be seen as a threat, or at least a nuisance, to the ideal cohesion of the nation-state, rather than a contribution to its formation or enhancement. Citizenship is reserved to nationals; 'others' are excluded from the polity, in different degrees. No doubt, these illusory links are not privative of Europe. But nowhere are they as strong and durable, except probably in Japan.

Given this background, it is easy to understand that, when after WWII several Northwestern European countries ceased to be labor-intensive and became capital-intensive and labor-scarce - a condition seen by them as exceptional and transitory -, and required the contribution of foreign workers, they invented the notion of the *gastarbeiter*, whose primary characteristic is its temporariness - together with a limited endowment of rights. As Soysal has put it, "the normative model of migration developed within this [guestworker] framework is essentially an 'exclusionary' one, supported by ideologies of nationhood and citizenship" (Soysal 1994:21). No doubt, other countries have resorted to similar models, in the past or in the present, such as the US with the Bracero Program in the 40's and 50's, the South Africa of apartheid with the homelands, or receiving countries in the Gulf region and Asia. Yet, in the first case it was not more than a temporary scheme to circumvent inadequate legislation, and its failure was relatively inconsequential; and in the remaining its functioning is not hampered by the legal and moral requirements of democracy.

But in democratic Europe guestworkers were not disposable. Those who decided to stay were able to do so. Even more, entitlements became the foremost avenue for the arrival of new migrants, including asylum-seekers. The commitment of European societies with human rights and democratic politics led governments to grant protection and stability to migrants, who by then were becoming permanent ethnic minorities, and to set forth policies of integration, despite the fact that the historical conditions that had led to guestworkers' recruitment were no longer there.

This notwithstanding, many European governments kept pretending that the guestworkers they were integrating continued to be temporary, and that they would eventually return home. Indeed, as it had been repeated many times, there are receiving countries in Europe which persist in denying the condition of immigration countries, against all evidence, and clinging to the view of immigration as a temporary and reversible phenomenon (Bolaffi 1997).

Processes of integration and factors of exclusion

Whether or not governments pretend that immigration is a temporary phenomenon, the fact is that many migrants have become long-term or permanent settlers (Castles, 1994), having stayed in Europe for over 15 years in average (Soysal, 1994: 24). This cannot be ignored by democratic societies. In fact, regardless of their official discours, all of them have launched integration programs and policies. Indeed, in the last twenty years migrants integration has emerged as an important area of public policy.

Evaluating the success and shortcomings of integration policies is admitedly far from easy, and it is not my purpose to do so. Apart from the fact that policies are relatively recent, embracing the variegated and often changing experience of a dozen countries makes generalization exceedingly risky. On the other hand, the number of policy areas and social processes to be taken into account is staggering. Not only formal policies, but informal practices are relevant.

Starting with the former, the first indication of limited integration is that most migrants are permanent aliens, and they are bound to keep that condition for a very long time if naturalization rates continue to be as low as they presently are in Europe as a whole. Certainly, not all migrants want to adopt the nationality of the host country, either for sentimental reasons - many would like to have dual citizenship, but few countries allow it - or for practical considerations, that is, because it is doubtful that it implies a major change. In fact, nationality does not seem to be a decisive factor in gaining access to basic services (North, de Wenden and Taylor 1987).

Indeed, migrants in Europe have many rights. After surveying a dozen countries, mostly in Europe, Soysal concluded that "the scope and inventory of noncitizens' rights do not differ significantly from those of citizens, and that [they] are increasingly standardized across host polities" (Soysal 1994:120). This is particularly true, as Hammar remarked long time ago, of those that have the status of permanent residents (Hammar 1985); and more so of social and economic rights than of political ones. An important and much-valued right that has been often upheld by the courts of justice is the right to family reunion.

Recognition of political rights remains scant. In some countries migrants who are legally permanent residents have the right to vote and be elected in local election. Yet, the importance of political rights should not be downplayed, both because of symbolic reasons and on account of instrumental ones. Political rights may mean influence, bargaining power, ability to extract concessions, especially in uninominal electoral systems. It may foster self-esteem and ethnic mobilization. This seems to have been the case, for instance, in the United Kingdom.

Another type of right of considerable symbolic significance which is not recognized to migrants - not even to permanent ones - is the supranational one of free circulation within the European Union. This denial is revealing of the conception of migrants as foreigners who do not belong in the European polity that is in the making, in spite of the realization that this refusal hinders the construction of an internal borders-free Europe and the process towards European citizenship.

All in all, it can be said that, as far as migrant rights are concerned, the European sky exhibits both lights and shadows. On the one hand, civil, social and economic rights are generally recognized, as it is normal in democratic societies. But other rights are ususally not granted, and governments often drag their feet in this recognition. In addition there seems to be a tendency to limit the number of those entitled to a large array of rights. The preference for short-term labor permits goes in this direction, as well as the trend to grant asylum-seekers temporary protection with limited rights. Temporary migrants often have limited social protection.

Yet, as far as integration is concerned, obstacles of a different nature often matter more than a limited endowment of rights. These obstacles have mainly to do with the social disadvantages that usually plague immigrants and with informal practices, including different forms of racism and discrimination. For a substantial proportion of immigrantes and their children, chances of effective integration are limited above all by low socioeconomic status, discrimination or disadvantage in the labor market, residential segregation, poor educational results, limited social mobility, scant political and trade union participation, unemployment - especially youth unemployment - and racism. The last two are probably the most devastating ones, and both seem to be on the increase. As Alain Touraine has recently said, "l'entrée dans la société d'accueil se fait par l'adoption d'un genre de vie qui suppose une qualification et un revenu que les immigrés ne possèdent pas" (Touraine 1997:236).

In short, the majority of migrants are part of society, with different degrees of integration, often in low status and disadvantaged positions, and suffering from different forms of exclusion. And they are generally not full-fledged part of the polity and the nation.

In fact, two of the prevailing models of incorporation - the so-called 'exclusionary' and the 'pluralist' or 'multiculturalist' one - do not aim at the full incorporation of migrants in the polity. And the one that did aim at that, the 'assimilationist' model, is in deep crisis and in the process of being abandoned everywhere in exchange for other models or for hybrid formulae. Unfortunately, there is no space here for a full discussion of incorporation models and their effective working.

Concluding remarks

As far as immigration is concerned, European societies are caught between Scylla and Caribdis: between the Scylla of moral and political obligations stemming from their democratic nature, commitment to human rights and labor needs, and the Caribdis of exclusionary definitions of the nation and of citizenship and the prevalence of widespread anti-immigrant feelings. On the one hand, they have to come to terms with the fact that migrants have become permanent members of society, and, even more, that new ones will come to fill labor needs; and they have to be loyal to their foundational principles as democratic societies, and therefore grant protection and rights to these minorities. On the other, they do so reluctantly, not accepting fully the condition of immigrant societies, restricting access to citizenship and political rights, and limiting the number of those entitled to rights.

The degreee of integration of migrants in host societies results therefore from the operation of two impulses that pull in opposite directions. The fulfillment of democratic requirements and commitment with human rights, and labor market participation, lead to certain degree of integration - of a certain proportion. Anti-immigrants predispositions, including racism, and an exclusionary conception of the polity and the nation lead to varying degrees of exclusion - political exclusion for most, social exclusion in addition for some. The end result is that most migrants are incorporated to society, although suffering from varying degrees of social exclusion; but most of them are not full-fledged part of the polity. They are permanent aliens.

Such a balance can hardly be seen as a satisfactory one for the ethnic communities that live in European scieties. And the question can be asked as to whether it can be seen as a satisfactory one for the receiving societies themselves, especially having in mind that immigration is here to stay and that the stock of migrants is being constantly renewed through new, albeit limited, entries.

At least one author has recently taken a relatively optimistic view of this state of things.

Yasemin Soysal has presented the new dualism that characterizes European receiving societies as a blueprint for the future, an emerging form of postnational membership that signals the twilight of national citizenship: "a new and more universal concept of citizenship has unfolded in the post-war era, one whose organizing and legitimizing principles are based on universal personhood rather than on national belonging" (Soysal 1994:1).

The point is whether this can be a satisfactory membership, both for the migrants themselves and for the receiving society. So far, there are many reasons to doubt it. The first one lies in the fact that such a postnational membership is not usually the result of a voluntary choice, but a subbordinated status devoid of participation conferred upon migrants thrgough exclusionary practices. The second is the fact that such postnational condition coincides very often with membership in the lower ranks of society, perpetuated by limited amounts of intergenerational mobility.

Will this emerging model of postnational membership evolve toward an acceptable mode of incorporation? The answer will probably be given by the typical indicators of immigrant integration: migrants' satisfaction with their lifes, degree of equality achieved, avoidance of discrimination, participation in social and political life, and the like. From the viewpoint of society, the test will also be a classic one: the ability to recognize and accommodate minorities. Without it, the quality of democracy will be impaired. As Tomas Hammar wrote years ago, "representative government cannot properly function without the political participation of a large active segment of its constituents represented by permanent immigrants without citizenship" (Hammar, 1985:438). One of the major challenges that European societies face in the coming years is the capacity to accept and organize a certain level of heterogeneity, as Georg Simmel wrote several decades ago. In the absence of a strong political will to adapt the conception of society to a reality that is different from that of the past, a large degree of scepticism is warranted.

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