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Patrick Ireland. *Policy Challenge of Ethnic Diversity: Immigrant Politics in France and Switzerland.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994. xiv + 327 pp. $52.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-674-68375-4.

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This book deals with two of the central problems social scientists face in the study of ethnic diversity and politics in contemporary Europe. The first of these problems is that of ethnicity itself. Why, many analysts have been asking, have postwar labor migrants in Europe begun to make political demands on the basis of ethnic identity? Why have some immigrants failed to do this, while others have grown more insistent? The second main area of interest has been the impact of these demands on the very nature of European politics. How have European states managed this growing diversity? What difference does diversity make in the formulation of social policy? How do immigration and ethnicity contribute to a rethinking of the very notion of the "social" that has been so fundamental to the legitimacy of European democracies?

Ireland divides the different approaches to these questions into three broad areas. Because the majority of immigrants coming to Europe since the Second World War have been industrial or agricultural workers, many analysts have argued that their interests and demands would be defined by class. In this view, forms of political activism that stress ethnic identity are either false consciousness or a stage in the eventual alignment of immigrant politics with those of the indigenous working class. Others focus on ethnicity as a fundamental determinant of the forms of immigrant political activity. This perspective, at least as Ireland defines it, suggests that one should look to political forms and practices in the sending society to understand the activism of immigrants. Finally, some have argued that immigrant political activism is "channeled" by the institutional framework and particular policies of the host society. Whether immigrants choose to be politically active and the forms such activism will eventually take, are in large part determined by the processes through which immigrants are linked to the institutions of the host society, including political parties, unions and voluntary associations. Class and ethnicity, in this view, are the result of these processes, rather than independent factors that can explain immigrant activism. Ireland's main objective is to show the effectiveness of this last approach.

To accomplish this, Ireland sets out a detailed and fascinating comparison of two countries, France and Switzerland, in which immigration has been both economically and politically significant since (at least) the Second World War. Although the largest immigrant groups in each country differ, Ireland argues that these two cases are ideal for testing his "institutional channeling" hypothesis because characteristics of the various groups present in each country are comparable. Thus, large groups of Spanish and Turkish immigrants live in both countries and, according to Ireland, share similar immigration histories. Ireland also claims that the Algerians in France and the Italians in Switzerland, as numerically significant groups, have defined debates around immigration in similar ways. For many French people, the word "immigrant" is a synonym for "Algerian". Apparently many Swiss view Italians in the same way. The significant and similar Portuguese populations in both countries allow him to compare one group in both contexts. Finally, the vast majority of immigrants in France and Switzerland come from rural backgrounds and find themselves in low-skilled, industrial labor (or in low-skilled agricultural work). As Ireland notes, "since I am able to control for and to isolate both class and ethnic factors, the analysis here hinges on the dynamic, interactive relationship between the immigrants and indigenous institutions in the two host societies (18)."

A large part of the book is devoted to the examination of the history of immigration policy debates in both countries. At the national level Ireland is particularly interested in the effects on immigrant political activism of the very different ways in which political life is structured in France and Switzerland. Recognizing that even

in a centralized state like France local politics can take on a wide variety of forms, he also provides an analysis of two cities in each country. In France, he compares the communist municipality of La Courneuve (in Paris' suburban Red-Belt) with the more diverse political structures of Roubaix (in the north). In Switzerland, Ireland examines politically conservative Schlieren (in the Canton of Zurich) with the more progressive La Chaux-de-Fonds (in the Canton of Neuchatel). At both levels of analysis, Ireland contrasts the organization and activism of first generation migrants with the activities of so-called "second generation immigrants". He carefully examines this activism in relation to political structures, debates and policies within the indigenous population.

True to his methodological focus, Ireland does show that indigenous political structures and policy debates provide a framework for immigrant political activism. Furthermore, he indicates that the political framework of each country (and, within each, of the different localities where immigrants may be active) has also provided a context for racist and xenophobic activism on the part of non-immigrants. In debating and developing immigration policy, governments have to take into account both the challenges presented by immigrants and the dangerous rise of racist political actors. One of the strengths of Ireland's book is to indicate that these are related. This leads to Ireland's other set of conclusions. He argues that by entering local and national political debates in both France and Switzerland as ethnic groups, immigrants present a challenge for the relationship between the individual and the state that stands at the very basis of politics in modern Europe. While this is most evident in France (because of the threat immigrant "difference" is thought to pose for the dominant "Jacobin" ideology there), it is also true in Switzerland; as Ireland indicates, immigrants pose a problem for defining who "the people" are in modern European democracies.

Ireland provides an excellent account of what might be termed the political opportunity structure for immigrants in both France and Switzerland, thus laying out the terrain on which immigrants can act. However, by making the political structures and policies of the host society the ultimate determinant of the forms of immigrant group activism, Ireland flattens out the differences between ethnic groups and leaves aside issues that are important for an explanation of immigrant political activism. He divides ethnic activism into two very simple categories: identification with the sending society, or "rainbow coalition"-style difference assertion. These categories fail to explain what persuades people to identify with a particular group in the first place. What makes up an ethnic identity cannot be contained in the notion of "homeland-orientation" that Ireland uses, instead, ideas of what constitute significant difference in the host-society often come to define the content of ethnicity (this is why so many stereotypes of ethnic mothers seem to resemble each other in the United States). Ireland's examination of political structures and policies provides the beginning of an analysis of ethnicity, but he leaves out an explanation of why ethnic identities among immigrants and their descendants in Europe can be motivating. How are people persuaded to believe in ethnic community? Why are some ethnic communities considered to be more difficult to assimilate than others? What do these debates tell us about the very notions of national and ethnic communities in France and Switzerland?

It seems likely that Ireland could have begun to look more closely at these questions had he used his apparently extensive interview data more effectively. While many, if not most, of the footnotes refer back to interviews he conducted with ethnic activists in France and Switzerland, he very rarely treats the reader to the sort of telling detail or comment that would provide insight into what makes some forms of activism attractive. On the rare occasions he does provide such details, they are indeed fascinating and one can only imagine what lies behind them. For instance, he notes (189) that Swiss branches of SOS-Racism did not use the French organization's open palm symbol bearing the slogan "Hands off my buddy", but instead chose a hand with crossed fore- and middle fingers and the slogan "I'll love whom I like." Ireland does note that this is suggestive of alternative ideas about constituencies and objectives in the two countries, but he does not pursue the rhetoric of difference here, or elsewhere in his book. What, one would like to know, do the Swiss mean by "racism" in this context? Examples of this sort abound. When he notes (137) that racist vigilantes in Roubaix organized themselves as the "Knights of Roubaix", what does this mean and why did a local newspaper call this a "Roubaisian KKK" rather than make references to French racist or anti-semitic organizations of the past? When Swiss immigrant solidarity groups organized a referendum to improve the status of immigrant workers, why did they call it a "Togetherness Initiative" (181)? When he notes (114) that racist and anti-immigrant acts brought "a swift, fierce reaction" from local authorities in La Courneuve, what specifically does he mean? These details would likely enhance Ireland's argument, providing the reader with insight into the reasons why ethnic activism takes the forms it does.

Ireland misses or glosses over important points by not attending to the cultural discourse on immigration and ethnicity in each country. He hints (74) that the debate around "second generation immigrants" is due to a perception that the children of post-war migrants - having never immigrated anywhere - are "unmeltable" (that is, unassimilable) in French society, but then goes on to use the term "second generation immigrant" as if its wide use in France was not itself an important indicator of the "channeling" of ethnic voices. He suggests (93) that non-Europeans are, for the French, seen as distinct from European immigrants and have become the object of racism. But he does not examine the ways in which such distinctions might shape the very content of ethnic identities among these particular groups in France. Along with policy and structure, the evaluative terms and concepts used to define who belongs and who is different shape the ways immigrants may think and act. After all, politics is at least partly about persuasion. Swiss and French leaders need to persuade people that their policies are the most likely to succeed. Ethnic activists have to convince putative members of their communities to follow them and they have to persuade other members of society that they have a constituency. To understand all of this persuading requires examination of the development of ethnic identities in the context of discourses about identity and difference. The examples I have cited suggest that Ireland may have placed too much emphasis on the importance of policy and political structures while leaving political culture itself largely unexamined. And this means that his conclusions about challenges to democracy and to ideas about the social in Europe remain fairly unconvincing.

Finally, Ireland's perspective is well-grounded in the literature on immigration in France and Switzerland, but by narrowly defining his comparison he has missed some of the ways in which ideas and policies concerning immigrants may have been shaped. In France, for instance, Algerians do not define immigration and difference for many French people only because of their large numbers, but also because of French colonial history. A great deal of recent research has focused on the development of ideas about difference in Europe in relationship to colonialism and Ireland's hypotheses might have benefited from an examination of this material. Some analysts have also begun to argue that immigrant political activism is being shaped more and more by "transnational" and "diaspora" perspectives that link immigrants not only to putative homelands, but to other points around the globe where they may have family or other contacts. There are, in the end, more perspectives on immigrant ethnicity than the three Ireland outlines. Taking into account the literature on colonial history and on transnationalism would have made for a far less neat comparison, yet it may have better reflected the politics of ethnicity in contemporary Europe.

This is a thoughtful and interesting book and, one suspects, of great methodological interest for political scientists. The questions Ireland raises should be of interest to those of us in other disciplines whose work focuses on ethnicity and migration in Europe, but it should also be of interest to non-Europeanists, especially Americanists, who might profit from a broader comparative perspective. While much of the material Ireland examines in France is fairly well-known (which, I hasten to add, takes nothing from the originality of his approach), his research on Switzerland will probably be new territory for most readers, including Europeanists. The emphasis on local political control and the relatively weak welfare state that characterize that country stand out in Europe and make the material especially evocative for Americans. For those of us in anthropology and sociology, Ireland's study of the structure and practice of immigration politics in France and Switzerland provides a useful framework for thinking about changing conceptions of class, race and ethnicity in Europe.

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