But They Are Not "Just the Same as Us"!: Identity, Reception and Political Incorporation for Immigrants in Dublin and Madrid

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The issues of immigrant reception and integration have attracted ample migration scholarship. However, less attention has been paid to the significance of culture in both welcome and incorporation outcomes for immigrants in Western Europe. This paper explores how culture and identity politics influence both the inclusion-exclusion and political integration of foreign populations in the new migration spaces of Dublin and Madrid. Through the examination of four case studies, namely Poles and Nigerians in Dublin and Bulgarians and Ecuadorians in Madrid, the paper surveys how the identity characteristics, both those of the newcomers and their host societies, affect the discourses of inclusion and exclusion of ethnic communities in the receiving cities. Next, the article turns to the role of cultural identity in the formation of immigrants' own perceptions of belonging or isolation in the host society. Finally, the paper studies how the granting and exercise of political rights connects with both the reception discourses and immigrants' notions of belonging in the host cities.

In 2005, young migrants of North African descent rioted in France against ghettoization, unemployment, and racial discrimination (Roy 2005). The occurrence was replicated in multicultural and tolerant Sweden in 2013 (Higgins 2013). A Roma girl was grabbed from a school bus and deported by French police with a belief that "only a minority" of racially and culturally different Roma can be integrated in France (Rubin 2013). Extreme parties and movements campaigning on the exclusion of non-European, physically visible migrant populations have gained ground throughout the continent. Such trends are particularly troubling when replicated in new countries of immigration, like Spain or Ireland, which have so far avoided succumbing to right-wing parties or the anti-immigrant sentiment gripping the rest of Europe. Occurrences like *The Irish Independent*'s quipping "Africa brings nothing but AIDS" or a Greek politician comparing Nigerian immigrants to chimpanzees highlight

the challenge of accommodating *de facto* multicultural societies in new migration spaces amidst economic contraction, conflicted national identity, and heightened anti-immigrant sentiment even among previously moderate publics and elites on the continent ("Beware of Greek" 2013; Myers 2008).

The anecdotes above suggest that xenophobia and ethnic stereotyping are once again on the rise throughout Europe and participate in the formation of public opinion and immigration and integration policy on the continent in practice. While issues of culture and ethnicity increasingly determine how Europeans talk about and deal with the issue of migration, however, this rising importance has not been fully reflected in current migration scholarship. Numerous studies continue to track the rise and lifecycle of Europe's right-wing parties, but the focus is on pragmatic issues of electoral support and effects on the political process rather than on the cultural underpinnings of the politics of resentment (for ex., Golder 2003; Kitschelt 2007; Schain 2006). Immigrant reception and immigration policy are largely discussed from the perspective of declining state sovereignty (for ex., Guiraudon and Lahav 2000; Joppke 1998; Jacobson 1996), the economic costs and benefits of migration (for instance, Castles and Kosack 1985; Miles 1986, 1987) or the preferences of national interest groups (for ex., Freeman 1995). Immigrant integration is studied in the context of citizenship laws (Brubaker 1992; Howard 2006) or the structure of relevant domestic institutions (Etzinger 2000; Faist 1994; Ireland 2000). Conspicuously missing is a discussion of culture, especially in new spaces of migration in Europe, which are only now struggling to define the contours of immigrant reception, integration and participation, particularly on the local level. Furthermore, as incorporation is attributed to the characteristics of the receiving society, immigrants are rarely considered agents who have beliefs and preferences and might choose not to integrate in the host country.

This paper attempts to address some of the gaps left by migration scholarship by making three principal contributions. First, it explores the role of culture and identity in both immigrant

reception and political participation.[1] The emphasis is on political incorporation, as integration in the political sphere is the best weapon that foreign populations have against heightened discrimination, limited access to economic resources, or social isolation. In particular, the project surveys how the identity characteristics of foreign populations interact with these of the host society to produce perceptions of either difference or similarity and contribute to the welcome or rejection of the newcomers. The paper also studies the role of culture in the formation of immigrants' own perceptions of belonging or exclusion in receiving communities. Finally, the project explores the correlation between identity and immigrants' political incorporation. The focus is placed on how the granting and exercise of political rights is influenced by the host society's identity-based inclusion-exclusion discourse and the immigrants' own notions of belonging or isolation. Consequently, and second, the project takes immigrant agency into account. While foreign populations often face powerful obstacles to truly belonging in their new home, they can still make choices and determine their own destiny.

Third, the paper studies the significance of culture for immigrant political incorporation in the new immigration spaces of Dublin and Madrid. The role of culture and identity is explored for four case studies, namely those of Poles and Nigerians in Dublin and Bulgarians and Ecuadorians in Madrid, with emphasis on the local level. Despite similar economic and immigration trajectories in the 1990s, Spain and Ireland have attracted very different foreign populations. European Poles, and as of late Romanians, continue to dominate immigration inflows in Ireland, although Nigerians and Filipinos register a major presence (CSO 2012). A majority of immigrants from Latin America choose Spain as their destination, but Moroccans, Romanians and Bulgarians favor the receiving country as well (INE 2010). These foreign cohorts meet with different dynamics of welcome or rejection, especially on level of the city. East Europeans are generally welcomed in Ireland, even if exploited in the labor market, while non-European nationals are severely marginalized (Kelbie 2006; ICI 2008). The diverse immigrant population in Spain

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[1]For a definition of both terms, refer to page 5, where the main argument of this paper is presented.

met with tolerance and empathy initially, yet is struggling in the receiving country today due to economic contraction (Arango 2013).[2] Dublin and Madrid are also the home of varying levels of ability and willingness for immigrants to exercise their political rights. While the Nigerian community in Dublin exhibits relatively high levels of civic mobilization, for instance, political integration is obstructed by institutional and individual discrimination. Generally apathetic Poles are being drawn into the political process by eager political parties (for ex., Fanning 2011). Bulgarians and Romanians are neither interested in nor solicited for electoral participation in Madrid. However, cultural and historical connections enhance political access for a number of Latin American groups regardless of their non-EU citizenship status (for ex., Perez and Fuentes 2012). How identity and culture figure into these variations is of particular interest of this paper.

The argument proceeds as follows: after a brief literature review, the theoretical framework and research methods are outlined. In the ensuing section, the four case studies are introduced. Local discourses of exclusion, immigrants' perceptions of belonging, and political incorporation outcomes are discussed in turn. The conclusion points to some interesting findings.

Immigrant Reception and Incorporation in the Literature
While there is an ample and nuanced literature on immigrant reception and political incorporation, there are three key omissions in it. First, the significance of culture or identity is rarely discussed, especially in scholarship on immigrant reception and immigration policy. Second, immigrant agency is often missing from arguments about incorporation, including political incorporation. Third, analyses tend to concentrate on traditional immigrant receivers and the national and supranational levels of analysis rather than the local level.

Indeed, immigrant reception is most often attributed to economic costs and benefits, social contact, and the efforts of national-level interest or political groups. Immigrants are accepted

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[2] Confidential interviews by the author, February 2011 – May 2011, Madrid.

when they provide Western European countries with cheap labor in economic sectors undesirable to native workers (Piore 1979) and serve the economic interests of the capitalist classes in the receiving state (Messina 2007, Freeman 1995). Foreign laborers are excluded when they compete with nationals for scarce resources like jobs, wages, or welfare benefits (Von Tubergen, Maas and Flap 2004). Alternatively, social contact theory contends that meaningful contact between ethnic minorities and majorities reduces prejudice and debunks harmful stereotypes (Allport 1954). Therefore, longer-established immigrant groups who have had sufficient opportunities for interaction with native populations are perceived as less of an economic or social threat and are welcomed by their host societies (Zhou and Logan 1989). Finally, immigrant inclusion or exclusion is argued to depend on the domestic politics of the receiving state. Migrants are accepted due to the efforts of national administrators (Guiraudon 1998), courts (Joppke 1999), or employers (Freeman 1995). Foreign populations are rejected with the break-up of traditional state structures and the participation of anti-immigrant parties in national political processes (Betz 1991; Messina 1989). All three approaches raise significant points, but do not consider issues of culture and identity that often shape immigrant reception on the ground. Anti-immigrant sentiments are attributed to political dynamics or economic competition rather than perceptions of similarity and difference. This paper addresses the gap in the literature by turning to the role identity plays in the rejection or welcome of distinct immigrant populations in Western European societies.

Issues of culture and identity do not play a definitive role in studies of immigrants' political incorporation either. The literature here is dominated by discussion of national citizenship laws, including the declining importance of citizenship for political integration, and the characteristics of national institutions. In particular, citizenship laws, and consequently access to political rights, are attributed to the nation-building processes that took place in receiving countries historically (Hansen 2002). Brubaker (1992) advances the argument for France and Germany and Favell (1998) develops it for France and Britain. Another approach focuses on

declining state sovereignty in liberal states and the reduced significance of citizenship for full political participation (Miller 1981; Hollifield 1992; Soysal 1994). According to this argument, immigrant groups have few incentives for citizenship acquisition altogether, as political participation is decoupled from legal status in Western democracies. Finally, incorporation, including political incorporation, is considered to be contingent on national actors and institutions. For instance, participation of radical right parties in host states' legislative systems is argued to impede political integration through direct influence on citizenship legislation or through shifting the whole political process to the right (Givens 2007). National legislation granting municipal voting rights to immigrants, for instance, or institutions like immigrant councils open up space for political participation by foreign cohorts in Western Europe (De Rooij 2012).

While the three approaches make important contributions to the study of immigrant incorporation, once again they omit issues of identity or culture, which are significant in Western Europe today. Institutional, legal and political instruments are instead the focus. More significantly, all three paradigms focus on the characteristics of receiving states and pay little heed to the immigrant as an agent who chooses to acquire citizenship or participate in the host states' political process. When immigrant characteristics are discussed, as in some scholarship on political mobilization, the emphasis is on "human capital". Particularly, the literature discusses experience with politics in the home country, which might lead to more engagement in host societies (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), language, age or socio-economic status, which correlate with more resources to participate (De Rooij 2012), and legal status, which feeds right back into discussions of citizenship (Ramakirshnan and Espenshade 2001). Immigrants' ethnicity, culture, or self-identification are rarely analyzed, even though these attributes have a role to play in immigrants' preferences, motivations, and actions in the host state (Fennema and Tillie 1999; Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004).

Finally, issues of immigrant reception and incorporation are usually studied at the national (for ex., Castles and Miller 2009; Hofhansel 2008; Messina 2007) and supranational levels (Geddes 2001; Lavenex 2006; Givens and Luedtke 2004). They are mostly

surveyed for European countries that have received large numbers of immigrants historically (for Germany, for ex., see Euwals, Dagevos and Roodenburg, 2010; Kahanec and Tosum 2009; Kanas at el 2012; for France, consult Bleich 2005; Weil and Crowley 1994; for the UK, examples include Boswell, 2011, 2012; Favell 1998; Koopmans and Statham 1999). Less attention is dedicated to the local level (except for instance Money 1999; Jørgensen 2012) or to new immigrant receivers like Ireland (except for ex. Fanning 2002, 2011 or Lentin and Moreo 2012) or Spain (except for ex. Arango 2009; Calavita 2005; Martin-Perez and Moreno-Fuentes 2012).

Bringing Culture Back in: Argument and Significant

This paper aims to address the gaps left by existing literature in three respects. First, it surveys the role culture, identity and emotion play in immigrant inclusion-exclusion and political incorporation. The author does not deny that reception and political integration are contingent upon factors such as economic calculations, the characteristics of national institutions, political processes, and citizenship laws, or the power of radical right parties. Assessing the relative significance of each of these factors through causal or statistical analysis is beyond the scope of this paper. The article is instead dedicated to addressing an omission in current scholarship by surveying how culture figures in immigrant reception and integration from the perspective of both receiving societies and foreign populations. Second, the paper brings immigrants' agency back into the discussion of political mobilization. The immigrant is considered a conscious actor who interprets characteristics and surroundings and forms preferences. The interaction between immigrants' perceptions, ambitions, and resources on the one hand, and the receiving societies' discourses and preferences on the other constitutes a central piece of the argument. Finally, the article turns to newer migration receivers, which have warranted less scholarly attention than traditional migration spaces, and to the local level of analysis, as that is where reception and integration actually shape up.

Before outlining the role of culture, identity, and emotion for immigrant reception and integration, a definition of key terms is necessary. This paper takes culture to mean "the beliefs, behaviors,

objects, and other characteristics common to the members of a particular group or society." Culture is subjective and employed by groups and individuals for self-definition and for distinction from other groups. However, culture is dynamic and changeable, as are the boundaries between groups that culture is often used to erect. The focus here is on non-material culture or the "knowledge and beliefs that influence people's behavior", as well as the different symbols and rituals that come to constitute a culture (Livesey and Lawson 2008). Notably, this definition diverges fundamentally from essentialist paradigms that interpret the concept as an immutable marker of personal and group identification. Unlike Huntington's understanding of culture as a rigid objective category that produces conflict between individuals, groups, states, and civilizations, this project considers culture subjective and fluid (Huntington 2005). Consequently, group boundaries can be reconstructed, clashes between ethnic populations are not inevitable, and exclusion or integration deficiencies can be remedied.

Identity is defined as the counterpart to culture. Identity is understood as a means of self-definition for a person or a social group, which is relational, or possible only through distinction from another person or social group (Jenkins 1997; Somers 1994; Taifel 1982). Individuals' and groups' identity formation, or the answering of both the question "who am I (are we)?" and the query "who are you (they)?", is based on cultural ideas and beliefs (Livesey and Lawson 2008). "Assumption of dissimilarity of beliefs between oneself and the members of the out group", as well as similarity of beliefs among the members of the in-group is one element of group identity (Tajfel 1981, 1982: 25, Weber 1978). Identity, and especially the group identity of interest here, is thus a feeling of communality defined in opposition to the perceived identity of other racial and ethnic groups (Barth 1969). Therefore, identity is often used by members of the in-group to "maintain and achieve superiority over an out-group on some dimension" (Lamont and Molnar 2002, Tajfel and Turner 1985). As culture and identity are intimately interrelated, with culture constituting one element of identity and identification of both "us" and "them" based on cultural beliefs, the two concepts are used in conjunction throughout the paper.

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Finally, the project derives its definition of emotion from sociology, where the focus is on emotions that are "socially constructed" and "interactionist." Emotions, therefore, are taken to denote feelings that are "culturally patterned, experienced, acquired, transformed, managed in daily life, and legitimated" and in turn affect interactions, cultures, and structures. Emotions are the cultural meaning given to certain feelings and as such are experienced differently in different groups, societies and cultures. They necessarily stem from the interaction between the person/group and their environment (Marshall 1998). Emotions are intimately related with culture (as they are defined by culture and in turn contribute to cultural development) and identity (as the interpretation of feelings derives from identity and emotions might lead to different attributions of identity not based on objective characteristics).

How do culture, identity, and emotion influence immigrants reception and integration in Europe? The argument is simple. Political incorporation is possible only when immigrants are both able and willing to acquire and exercise political rights. This is the case when they are included in their new society, and have access to rights, and also consider themselves to belong in the receiving community, and thus choose to use these rights. I argue that identity politics have a role to play for both of these preconditions (Dustmann and Preston 2000).

First, the paper argues that identity politics is significant in immigrant reception. Both elites and publics in receiving societies form preferences for certain immigrant cohorts over others based on emotions, or impulses and feelings of social and cultural anxiety; culture, or beliefs and ideas held in common within the group but considered fundamentally different for out-groups; and identity, or perceived characteristics which place a foreign population either in an insider or outsider status (Taifel 1982; Weber 1978). Local identity variations, or the definition of "who we are", affect how different migrant groups are identified, or the answer to the question of "who they are" (Livesey and Lawson 2008). Identity and local cultural understandings have a role to play in which immigrant characteristics are considered "similar" and welcomed and which ones are deemed "different" and undesirable (Triandafyllidou 2001). Immigrant

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populations are included when commonalities are perceived in cultural categories like race, religion, shared past, common lifestyle and disposition, as well as "work ethic" – a non-material and fluid characteristic that could be re-ascribed to any immigrant group (Barth 1969; Smith 2001). On the other hand, groups considered fundamentally different in terms of the same cultural attributes are excluded, as to maintain the cohesion and positive image of the host community. Connections are often invented both to justify the welcome of a certain foreign cohort and to emphasize the most desirable attributes of the receiving society. Commonalities could also be undermined or ignored as to solidify the placement of an immigrant population in an outsider status.

Second, culture and identity are important from the perspective of the immigrant as well. Foreign populations' own perceptions of difference or similarity from receiving communities, often framed though the same categories identified above, affect the preferences of the immigrant cohorts. Perceptions of belonging or isolation, expressed through subjective feelings of being different or similar, as well as integrated or isolated in one's diasporic community; future migration plans; satisfaction and primary identification as either an "alien" or an insider; and comparative levels of interaction with the host society and one's own ethnic group, influence migrants' stakes in the receiving community. If immigrant populations consider themselves similar to their hosts and believe they belong in their new home, they are more likely to actively seek and exercise political, as well as economic and social, rights. Perceptions of difference and isolation on the part of the newcomers lead to the reverse, with little engagement in the host society's everyday life and political processes.

Table 1: Integration Outcomes (Model)

		Host Society Actors	
		Reject	*Accept*
Immigrant Group	*Belong*	Third best outcome	Optimal outcome
	Don't Belong	Worst outcome	Second best outcome

Finally, identity has a role to play in political incorporation. The host society's identity-based exclusion-inclusion dynamics correlate with open or closed opportunities for integration and access to political rights. Immigrants' identity-based perceptions of belonging or isolation are connected to certain preferences for both the active pursuit and exercise of these rights. There are four possible outcomes based on this dynamic. Incorporation results are expected to be optimal when the immigrant group perceives itself to be similar and belong and when the receiving society shares in this discourse of inclusion. Integration outcomes are least favorable when the immigrant group considers itself isolated or "different" and the receiving community reproduces this discourse of exclusion. The other two outcomes are intermediary, with acceptance from the host society combined with lack of belonging accounting for the third best outcome (Table 1 above).

Political incorporation is operationalized through indicators like citizenship legislation and naturalization rates, as well as rates of voting and running in elections. This analysis also includes extra-political activities, like trade unionism and associational membership levels, as civic activism is often a precursor for political involvement. Identity in the context of immigrant inclusion and exclusion is reconstructed through characteristics like race/ethnicity, religion,

history, culture/disposition, and work ethic. These categories are not objective indicators, however, but rather subjective concepts constructed and reconstructed by the main actors in the immigrant receiving spaces. Inclusion and exclusion are taken to mean mostly discourses and attitudes prevalent among the host society's elites and general public rather than legal or administrative immigration policy decisions. The latter are discussed when describing immigrants' political incorporation. To reiterate, belonging and isolation are defined through the subjective feelings of being different or similar, as well as integrated or isolated in one's diasporic community, future migration plans, satisfaction and primary identification, and comparative levels of interaction with the host society and one's ethnic group.

Cases, Methods and Data
The paper explores the connection between cultural factors and immigrant political integration in four case studies. The project studies the Polish and Nigerian in Dublin and the Bulgarian and Ecuadorian in Madrid. While necessarily simplified and stylized, the four cases were selected as they roughly fit into the four quadrants of Table 1 and thus illustrate well the main argument.

Spain and Ireland were chosen for this project as they are new migration countries, which have received less attention from the literature. Both became major immigration receivers in the mid-1990s, as they moved from the European periphery to the forefront of economic growth with booms in the service and construction sectors (Brücker 2007). Both are coming to terms with the immigrants in their midst for the first time in the context of stronger European harmonization, sweeping economic change, and fragmented identity. Both states are experiencing severe economic contraction since the late 2000s, yet struggle with continued immigration and pressure to integrate their foreign populations. Neither, however, is subject to overt immigrant racialization or the influence of a right-wing political party. Changes in citizenship rules in Ireland in 2004 have rendered the two states similar in terms of political incorporation rules, with voting rights generally extended to the foreign-born on the local level, yet access to citizenship

increasingly limited and ethnicity-based (Fanning 2011; Martin-Perez and Moreno-Fuentes 2012).

Despite these similarities, there is an important distinction between the two country contexts. Ireland remains the only EU country where European immigrants are more numerous than third country nationals and relatively large groups of Nigerians are still dwarfed by Polish and Romanian immigrants (European Commission 2008; CSO 2012). In contrast, Spain's foreign population is multicultural, with Ecuadorians, Moroccans, and Bulgarians as some of the largest groups (INE 2010; Papademetriou, Sumption, and Terazzas 2010). While East European immigrants are generally favored by immigration and immigrant policy in Ireland, they are relatively more disadvantaged than Latin Americans in Spain (Fanning 2011; Martin-Perez and Moreno-Fuentes 2012).

The four immigrant populations were selected as they are among the most prominent European and non-European groups in the receiving localities. The first non-Irish immigrants to arrive to Ireland, mostly as asylum seekers, Nigerians grew from only 10 in 1996 to 19,780 in 2011 and represent the largest third-country national group in the receiving context (CSO 2012; Komolafe 2008). Nigerians are dwarfed by Polish immigrants. Attracted to a rapidly growing and liberal economy, the spoken English language, and the ease of migration with EU enlargement, Polish nationals are the most numerous foreign group in Ireland in 2011 with 122,585 persons (CSO 2012). With a number of bilateral labor market agreements between the two countries, booming services and construction sectors, as well as cultural connections between the receiving and sending contexts, Ecuadorian labor mobility to Spain rose sharply in the early 2000s, rivaling traditional migration from Africa (Perez 2003). Ecuadorians are the third largest national group in Spain with 440,304 persons as of 2009 (INE 2010). Spain is also the home of the largest Bulgarian diaspora in Europe. Attracted to the opening of borders with EU enlargement, a familiar and flexible market structure, and their hosts' similar disposition, together with

Romanians, Bulgarians have been the fastest growing European immigrant group in Spain in the late 2000s (INE 2009, 2010).[3]

The four immigrant groups of interest cluster in Dublin and Madrid (CSO 2008; INE 2010). Dublin is the home of forty percent of all Nigerians residing in Ireland and about one third of all the Polish workers in Ireland in 2011 (CSO 2012). Madrid hosts the largest Ecuadorian community in Spain (30% of the total) and the most Bulgarians in the receiving state (18% of the total) (INE 2010). The two cities are also the center of the immigrants' political activities, as all four immigrant groups are entitled to political participation at the municipal level regardless of their citizenship status, yet enjoy varying political rights and opportunities at the national level (Fanning and O'Boyle 2009, Munoz 2009). Madrid and Dublin's political landscape and local identity have been profoundly transformed by the immigrants.

The analysis is based on original research in the cases between 2010 and 2011. In particular, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with three sets of actors: the immigrants themselves; the immigrants' representatives in ethnic organizations; and local political actors. In each location, ten to forty representatives of the immigrant populations were interviewed, where the less numerous interviews conducted with Nigerians and Ecuadorians were supplemented through surveys of these communities by other researchers and research organizations. Questions focused on belonging and civic and political activities. Information provided by the immigrants' representatives in ethnic organizations was employed to confirm trends identified by the foreign-born. Finally, thirty local administrative or political actors were approached in each city. These include elected local politicians and administrators, representatives of the relevant ministries and trade unions, and members of the police

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[3] The Bulgarian population in Spain grew by 112% between 2006 and 2007, from 60,174 to 127,058 persons. This is the largest relative migration growth for any national group excluding Romania with 185% (INE 2010). It also represents a shift in European migration to Spain from retirement-based migration from Western European older EU member states to economic migration for low-skilled and informal employment from among the new Eastern European EU members (Papademetriou et al. 2010).

and the media. Questions were comparable, yet autonomy was given to the participants to identify the issues in local integration of most importance to them.

The snowball approach was employed to identify immigrant participants, where each respondent would provide contacts for several more interviewees. However, the approach was modified where subsequent interviewees were selected on the basis of their difference from the previous "seed" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2004). Respondents were also picked at random from immigrant-heavy areas. Sampling for immigrant representatives and local labor market actors was purposive. The local organizations that take part in shaping exclusion, inclusion and integration were identified in advance, where the left-right political spectrum was accounted for.

Interview data are used to comment on variations in reception and belonging across immigrant groups and localities. While the interviews also pointed to certain patterns of political participation among the immigrants, political incorporation outcomes were mostly reconstructed through analysis of pertinent legislation, as well as governmental and non-governmental reports. Both citizenship and immigration policies were considered. Statistics by national statistical institutes were employed to come up with naturalization rates. While municipal voting numbers disaggregated by nationality were hard to come by, those were recreated with the use of non-governmental and scholarly studies and the interviews. The latter sources were also employed to come up with any other pertinent political activities by the immigrants.

The next section of the paper turns to the four case studies as to explore how the experiences of the four immigrant populations of interest reflect the role of identity and culture in political incorporation. Discussion of identity-based inclusion-exclusion dynamics is followed by consideration of the immigrants' self-identification. Finally, political integration outcomes are outlined and the four immigrant groups are placed in the four quadrants of Table 1. All four cohorts are surveyed in each sub-section.

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A Tale of Two Cities: Political Integration in Dublin and Madrid

Exclusion and Inclusion

How do identity politics figure in the reception of the four foreign populations explored by the paper? To answer this question, the article turns to content analysis of thirty to forty interviews with employers, politicians, administrators, police, journalists, and researchers, as well as simple statistical analysis of one hundred surveys conducted with the native population in each host city. The data suggest that even though the immigrant groups of interest are a permanent presence in their new communities, they have been received very differently by local actors and the general public. The Polish were warmly welcomed and perceived with "novelty and curiosity" rather than fears of inundation. Despite historical and cultural connections with the host country, Nigerians are considered different and unable to "settle" in Dublin. Regardless of perception of common European destiny and similar mentality, Bulgarians remain isolated in Madrid. Ecuadorians are generally welcomed in the receiving city.

Identity has something to do with it. Five markers of identity, namely race, religion, shared history, a common lifestyle and disposition, as well as similar work ethic, are employed when talking about Poles and Nigerians in Dublin and Bulgarians and Ecuadorians in Madrid. These cultural attributes render Poles and Ecuadorians familiar, and welcome, and Bulgarians, but especially Nigerians, different and threatening. These characteristics are also employed by politicians and the general public to emphasize the receiving society's own desirable identity traits while downplaying the undesirable. Therefore, by discussing the question "who are they" in relation to the four foreign groups, local actors also answer the query "who are we."

Preference for Poles and Ecuadorians to Nigerians or Bulgarians in Dublin and Madrid respectively is justified in terms of perceived ethnic and racial commonality. White European Poles are considered to easily fit in and contribute to a limited and comfortable sense of multiculturalism in Dublin, simply because they are "hard to distinguish" from the Irish physically. On the other hand, Nigerians

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"of different color of skin" are deemed to have a harder time integrating because they stand out from the Irish. In fact, respondents associate racially-different immigrants in Dublin with Nigerian nationality, asylum seeker status, proneness to "cause problems," and a tendency to abuse the system, much in contrast with the "hard-working" Poles and Irish. In their turn, Balkan Bulgarians are not only perceived as second-class Europeans but call forth a recent past in which swarthy Spaniards have been located at the cultural and economic periphery. Ecuadorians carry a common Hispanic ethnicity and are considered "brothers" by Madrilenos (Peixoto 2012).

The religion shared between Polish workers and their Irish hosts and Ecuadorians and Spaniards is another marker of similarity. The Polish influx into Dublin was even perceived as beneficial to Irish Catholicism, with the demand for Polish Catholic mass rejuvenating lackluster chaplaincies. Latin American inflows into Madrid are taken to reaffirm the host society's Catholic values. On the other hand, Nigerians are considered suspect and likely "not Christian" even though 25% are Catholic and another 52% are non-Catholic Christians (CSO 2012). Bulgarians' Orthodox faith and atheism set them apart from the local population in Madrid.

A third marker of commonality is shared history. A shared history of emigration contributes to a sense of kinship and empathy for Polish immigrants in Dublin. The historical experience of being overshadowed by a larger neighbor and the national myth of overcoming this hardship are invoked in relation to the Polish to stress Dublin's own spirit of independence, autonomy, and entrepreneurship. The significant influence of Irish missionaries, ideas, and institutions in Nigeria and the experiences of being within the sphere of influence of the British Empire are omitted in the case of Nigerians in Dublin. Historical parallels with Bulgarian immigrants of being "on the wrong side of history" during the Second World War or having suffered through decades of dictatorial leadership are deemphasized to avoid painful memories of Madrid's own authoritarian past under Franco. Connections with Ecuador are invented to return to a more glorious past of a powerful quasi-imperial Spain in South America.

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Common language between Spaniards and Ecuadorians is stressed, as is the unwillingness or inability of Bulgarians to learn Spanish. While Nigerians speak English, their different intonation is emphasized, as is the Polish' eagerness to learn English. Therefore, racial and cultural dissimilarity is projected onto language as to cement distinctions between Dubliners and the African newcomers. Moreover, cultural connections between Polish immigrants and their Irish hosts allowing for a deeper level of communication are discussed. Those compare to Nigerians' "loud and annoying voices" and different socio-cultural interaction patterns isolating them from their hosts. Bulgarians' sternness and tendency to socialize in the home sets them apart from Madrid's population, whose cultural and social rituals are found common to those of Ecuadorians.

Finally, the category of hard work is employed to summarize all other desirable characteristics of the "similar" immigrant populations and the host society. All respondents characterize Polish nationals as "very hard-working people" and willing to "go the extra mile" in contrast with the "lazy," "untrustworthy," "unqualified" Nigerians. Interestingly, in 2006, 38.3 percent of Nigerians in Dublin held at least a third-level degree compared to 19.2 percent of Poles (CSO 2008). Similarly, the low qualifications of Bulgarians are emphasized, as are Ecuadorians' humble beginnings and motivation for a better life. This final identity characteristic implies a qualitative judgment of character and traits like good education and skills, reliability and honesty, flexibility and efficiency, as well as pride in one's work.

In sum, Poland and Ireland share few deep-seated historical, linguistic, or cultural ties, apart from their membership in the European project. Nonetheless, elites and the general public in Dublin talk about the Polish as insiders who belong to the city and any differences and gaps in integration are explained out. Therefore, this group falls in the right-hand side of Table 1. On the other hand, Nigerian immigrants are contrasted with the Polish and deemed "outsiders" despite historical connections and affinities between Nigeria and Ireland. They are positioned in the left-hand side of Table 1. Similarly, despite the parallel experiences of Spaniards and Bulgarians, little connection is perceived to exist between the two

groups and Bulgarians fit in the left-hand side of Table 1. Historical experiences of Spain as a leader in the Iberian community are amplified to create connections with Ecuador where there are none, and Ecuadorians can be placed in the right-hand side of Table 1. Invented or omitted cultural ties have something to do with the distinct patterns of inclusion and exclusion for the immigrants.

Immigrant Belonging and Isolation

Does identity play a role in the immigrant groups' own perceptions of belonging or isolation in the receiving communities? It is significant to consider whether the cohorts belong in their new home, as feelings of similarity and welcome correlate with higher stakes in the host cities and more engagement in these cities' life and political process. The discussion below elaborates how the foreigners themselves reconstruct their experiences in the host spaces.[4]

While they consider themselves relatively welcome in the city, Polish immigrants in Dublin largely debunk the myth of belonging constructed by their Irish hosts. Poles profess to have arrived in Ireland not due to an affinity to Irish culture, history or mentality but mostly due to economic reasons, the desire for adventure, and the influence of social networks. One interviewee best summarizes the complex motives behind Polish migration to Dublin, "Polish people came to Ireland because they wanted a better life. Second, it was very easy. Economic was very high. Of course also if all your friends are here, you are going to come here ... Of course there was a boom and many people came with the EU" (Male, 37). [5] While most interviewees had spent at least five years in Ireland, therefore, they continue to consider themselves temporary sojourners who arrived with a specific goal in mind and plan to return to Poland (as vague as that plan might be).

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[4] Sources include in-depth interviews with thirty to forty members of the Eastern European cohorts and ten members of the non-European groups, as well as all four groups' representatives in ethnic organizations (five to ten for each group). In the case of Nigerians in Dublin, interview data are supplemented through a study conducted by the Immigrant Council of Ireland, as to make up for the lower number of respondents. In the case of Ecuadorians in Madrid, periodic surveys by the Autonomous Community of Madrid complete the sources.

[5] Confidential interviews by author, September 2010-December 2010, Dublin.

Moreover, Poles feel dissimilar from their Irish hosts and "better educated, better experienced, better motivated, and stronger" (Male, 45). While they feel welcomed as a group by the Irish, they perceive this welcome to be based on their economic utility. Therefore, few relationships with the Irish occur beyond the workplace. As one respondent put it, "the Irish people like you only as a colleague … but after that, that's it" (Male, 28). In view of incomplete relationships and a language barrier, the Polish community in Ireland is perceived as hardly integrated in Dublin, with most of its representatives stuck within a "Polish bubble" - living in the same neighborhoods, speaking only in Polish, taking advantage of services in Polish and working only with Polish people (Male, 45). While individual respondents feel happier and more integrated than the larger Polish community, they still self-identify as exclusively Polish and find themselves to be outsiders in Dublin. A majority of the interviewees "feel as an immigrant … think in Polish, read in Polish … write in Polish" and therefore remain connected almost exclusively to their homeland (Male, 32).[6] Based on these responses, the Polish group fits in the bottom row of Table 1.

Nigerians do not belong in Dublin either. Nigerian immigrants report migrating to Ireland in search of "greener pastures" and in view of connections between Ireland and Nigeria, including the English language, Catholic religion, and embeddedness of Irish priests and missionaries in Nigerian history. As one respondent eloquently summarizes,

> *An Irish missionary took in my father and trained him as a priest called Patrick in Nigeria. And my dad went to college in an Irish-built college. So I always felt good about the Irish because they built a lot of things in Nigeria and Africa. When you talk about Catholicism, you talk about the Irish missionary. I am Catholic. And it is an English-speaking country, so that had really helped me* (Male, 32)

Nigerians have resided in Ireland for an average of ten years and consider their stay long-term. However, the African migrants do plan

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[6] Confidential interviews by author, September 2010-December 2010, Dublin.

their eventual return to the homeland, perhaps due to the fact that they do not feel welcome in their new environment. In fact, only 10 percent felt welcome in Dublin in 2007 and more than half disagreed with the statement "Irish people accept diverse cultures and communities as part of Irish society" (ICI 2008: 158). Individual and institutional discrimination is an everyday experience for all of this author's Nigerian respondents, who self-identify as "the people who suffered some of the greatest stereotyping and discrimination in the whole world" (Male, 46). In view of such prejudice, Nigerians do not consider their larger community integrated in the host city and report to be "oriented just toward their own community and live a parallel life" (Nigerian organizational representative, male). Many prefer to be residentially segregated from the Irish and live in Nigerian communities for safety and support with raising children. Due to cultural differences, interviewees report few interactions and deeper relationships with their Irish hosts. While individual participants consider themselves more content and integrated than the larger community, they still feel "unhappy" and "depressed" in Ireland, as they have "left [their] soul in Nigeria" (Male, 32).[7] The second case study also falls in the bottom row of Table 1.

While Bulgarians arrived in Spain to pursue economic opportunity and in view of family and friends already in the host country, they also cited Spaniards' common temperament and feeling of common past and future as reasons for their choice of destination. Indeed, Spain is seen as a model for the motherland. As one person eloquently argued,

> *I saw a Spain that I want Bulgaria to be like. A multinational Spain, with many cultures, many religions, no one bothered by that, everyone learning from each other and cohabiting with tolerance and empathy among ethnicities… Spaniards are used to this sea of nationalities and migrants… they are so polite, so tolerant. I saw a Spain that was so socially accepting and welcoming* (Male, 55)

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[7] Confidential interviews by author, September 2010-December 2010, Dublin.

While they arrived in Madrid with short-term or unclear plans, a few months have turned into more than ten years and most Balkan interviewees "have negotiated in [their] heads that [they are] staying [in Spain]" (Female, 30). As they are profoundly disappointed by their homeland's unstable and corrupt reality, even if they yearn for return to Bulgaria in the long-run, in practice most Bulgarian respondents reunite the family unit in Spain and settle in their new home. Consequently, while they consider the larger community far from integrated, individual respondents find Bulgarians to be welcomed in Spain, especially in view of their being "part of Europe" (Male, 29), sharing a history of emigration and slavery with the Spanish, and partaking in a common "mentality… the way of fiestas" with their hosts (Bulgarian organizational representative, female). As a consequence of this, the Balkan workers report looking to establish lasting relationships with the Spanish. Still mostly identifying themselves as Bulgarian, the immigrants nonetheless strive to become more "European" and find that goal easier to achieve in Madrid (Male, 55).[8] Based on these replies, the group can be placed in the upper row of Table 1.

Despite their relatively short sojourn in Spain since only the early 2000s, Ecuadorians consider their migration to Spain long-term. They arrived to Spain in view of economic opportunity, but also since Madrid is considered an extension of the homeland and an integral and familiar part of the Iberian community. Immigration is thus motivated by the ease of the socio-cultural and economic transition. One Latin American migrant speaks of the connection between home and host countries with colonization,

> *They implanted their religion in South America, they brought us the Christin religion. The culture they have, that the Spanish have here, we carry as well, the same culture and the same traditions and customs. Because they came to Latin America* (Male, 39).

Most respondents travel back and forth between Ecuador and Spain, and therefore consider both the sending and receiving countries their

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[8] Confidential interviews by author, February 2011-May 2011, Madrid.

"home." In view of language and cultural similarity, connections with the Spanish are multiple and meaningful and the community is considered to naturally fit in within Madrid's life. Indeed, unlike the "closed, not like the Spanish, the Latinos" Bulgarians (Male, 39) or the "Arabs… with different mentality and hostile blood" (Male, 32), Ecuadorians consider themselves to be "Spanish blood" (Male, 32). Self-identification is national (as Ecuadorians), supranational (as Iberian or Hispanic), and local (as part of Madrid), with common culture rendering life in the receiving context "happy" (Comunidad de Madrid 2014, 2010a, 2010b). As one person puts it, "the culture… it is very similar to that of Latinos… it is easy to coexist [with the Spanish]" (Female, 30).[9] The group neatly fits in the upper row of Table 1.

In sum, Polish workers remain "in between" the host and sending countries, as they identify with Poland, but have started creating superficial ties in Dublin. While Nigerians were actually attracted to Ireland due to the cultural and historical ties they share with the Irish, discrimination and cultural difference correlates with self-identification as Nigerian, fewer connections with the Irish, and a desire to return to Nigeria. Despite a number of actual differences, Bulgarians consider themselves to belong in Spain and emphasize perceived commonalities with their hosts. Ecuadorians construct Madrid as an extension of their homeland with similar socio-economic and cultural structures and interactions. Identity and culture do participate in the ways in which the four groups talk about their experiences and stakes in the host cities.

Political Incorporation Outcomes

Based on the argument extended in the paper, what are the political incorporation outcomes in the four case studies? It is expected that welcome by the host society and a certain perception of belonging by the immigrant group would correlate with fuller opportunities for political integration, while rejection by the receiving community and feelings of isolation by the foreign population would be connected to lesser political rights or motivation for political mobilization. Based

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[9] Confidential interviews by author, February 2011-May 2011, Madrid.

on these assumptions and the model advanced in Table 1, Ecuadorians in Madrid are expected to fall in the upper right quadrant of Table 2 and both enjoy and exercise political rights as they are both welcomed and belong in the city. Nigerians are surmised to fit in the lower left quadrant and neither have full political access nor possess the motivation to participate in the political sphere. The Polish should roughly fit in the lower right quadrant of Table 2, as they are welcomed in Dublin but have lesser stakes in engaging into the city's political life. Finally, Bulgarians are expected to represent the third best outcome, as they are not quite included in Madrid and are conflicted about their belonging in the host city (Table 2).

Table 2: Political Integration Outcomes (Cases)

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td rowspan="2"></td><td colspan="2">Host Society Actors</td></tr>
<tr><td>Reject</td><td>Accept</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Immigrant Group</td><td>Belong</td><td>Third best outcome (Bulgarian in Madrid)</td><td>Optimal outcome (Ecuadorian in Madrid)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Don't Belong</td><td>Worst outcome (Nigerian in Dublin)</td><td>Second best outcome (Polish in Dublin)</td></tr>
</table>

The four case studies roughly fit into the four quadrants of Table 2 as predicted by the argument, but there are certain qualifications. For instance, Nigerians are much more politically active than predicted by the author. What is more, the paper does not purport that a causal connection is established between inclusion-exclusion and belonging-isolation on the one hand and political incorporation outcomes on the other. Rather, it just traces how identity participates in all three of these aspects of immigrants' experiences in Dublin and Madrid. Still,

the cases do indicate a correlation between culture and incorporation. To emphasize the connection, each case study is discussed in turn, starting with the optimal outcome and moving down to the least favorable one.

As expected by this author, Ecuadorians enjoy a relatively substantial set of political rights in Madrid and tend to exercise them. Legal and policy developments favor the "similar" Latin Americans in Spain despite their status as third-country nationals. For instance, the annual quota system ensures that labor shortages in Spain are filled by Ecuadorian and other South American workers rather than Eastern Europeans or Africans. Latin Americans account for one third of all permits granted in the 2000s. Bilateral agreements between Spain and Ecuador further enhance migrant labor and social rights and the work conditions of the immigrants (Perez 2003). Ecuadorians who have become irregular were some of the main beneficiaries of the latest 2005 regularization program in Spain, where the integration of the newly regularized migrants was emphasized (Arango 2013). Indeed, integration has been a priority in Spanish legislation, with Law 4/2000, for instance, focusing on granting political and social rights to non-EU foreigners (Perez 2003). A 2007 Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration (PECI) focuses on Latin American immigrants and their local incorporation through cooperation among regional and municipal governments and ministries, NGOs, employers' organizations and trade unions (Arango 2013). Madrid's City Council's Plan on Social and Intercultural Coexistence launched in 2004, and subsequently in 2009, repeats the objectives and successes of PECI on the local level (Bertozzi 2010).

Ecuadorians are privileged by naturalization and voting laws as well. Article 22 of the Spanish Civil Code establishes a period of ten years of legal continued residence to obtain Spanish nationality, but that period is reduced to only two years for Hispano-Americans and other nationalities historically linked to Spain. According to Zapata-Barrero and Zaragoza (2009), this is a clear "selection by origin" and an instance of positive institutional discrimination. As a result, between 1980 and 2008, 523,106 individuals have been naturalized in Spain, 81 percent of which from Latin America

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(Mateos and Durand 2012). In 2010, 103,971 of the 123,721 naturalized citizens were from Latin America and 43,091 from Ecuador – the largest national group to acquire Spanish nationality (Perez and Fuentes 2012). Moreover, voting rights in municipal elections have been extended to a number of non-EU nationalities in Spain on the basis of treaties and reciprocity, especially in anticipation of the 2011 elections (Arango 2013; Zapata-Barerro and Zaragoza 2009). Latin Americans enjoyed a 30 percent registration rate in the 2007 Madrid elections compared to 17 percent for all foreigners (Munoz 2009).

Ecuadorians engage not only in political, but also in extra-political activities in Madrid. Spanish trade unionism is characterized by very low participation levels combined with unions' political activism and active protection of workers' rights. For instance, unionization rates for the construction industry are 8.7 percent for all workers and only 3.6 percent for immigrant workers. However, campaigns by UGT and CCOO have resulted in relatively high rates of unionization among Latin Americans despite lack of success with East Europeans and Moroccans. What is more, both major trade unions engage in regularization campaigns and the organization of Information Centers for Migrant Workers, which contribute to the regularization and enfranchisement of non-EU workers, and Latin Americans in particular (Meardi, Martin, and Riera 2012). Finally, despite the scarcity of research on the subject (Morales and Pilati 2014), Ecuadorians' associational activity in Madrid is significant. Of the 488 immigrant associations in Spain, 150 pertain to Latin Americans, and 58 to Eastern Europeans. Ecuadorians have the largest number of organizations in Spain among all nationalities (89) compared to 49 for Romanians, for instance. While organizational density is intermediate (with 26.5 organizations per 100,000 persons), it is still higher than that for Eastern Europeans.[10] As Morales and Pilati (2014) argue, many of these organizations are focused on the home country. Of the thirteen organizations surveyed by Gomez and Cubillo (2010), for instance, ten reported cooperating with the

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[10] For example, organizational density among Romanians is 15 organizations per 100,000 people. That number compares to 63 organizations for Dominicans (Gomez and Cubillo 2010).

country of origin and working to maintain the immigrants' own culture. Nonetheless, as ten of the thirteen were dedicated to political activities, Ecuadorians' civic activism in Madrid is a significant indicator of Ecuadorians' tendency to rely on political mobilization and of the immigrants' capacity to engage politically in Spain (Gomez and Cubillo 2010). In one instance, Ecuadorians associations in Madrid mobilized to prevent Ecuadorians national banks from recovering mortgage debt acquired in Spain in 2011 (De Sandoval 2011).

Poles in Dublin roughly constitute the second best outcome in terms of political incorporation among the four cases. Despite reluctance to participate in their host community, these immigrants have been drawn into the political and civil process by eager Irish political parties and trade unions. Indeed, Poles have not naturalized in Ireland in large numbers. In fact, only 20 Poles naturalized in 2005, 37 in 2006, and 13 in 2009 compared to 155, 189, and 454 Nigerians for these years respectively (OECD 2010). The lower numbers among the Polish perhaps reflect the novelty of their migration combined with the long residency requirement for naturalization. Furthermore, only 15 percent of Polish voters registered to vote in the Dublin local elections in 2009 (ICI 2008: 79-80). Political apathy towards the host city is significant here. Union density is relatively low among the Polish in Dublin despite significant differences among economic sectors (with around 10% on average), perhaps in view of bias against the home country's labor movement. While Poles have established numerous associations in Dublin, Polish community energy is concentrated mostly on the Polish diaspora in Ireland rather than on Irish institutions (Fanning and O'Boyle 2010: 422).

However, legal and policy instruments clearly privilege these "similar" and desirable immigrants. Polish citizens are at an advantage politically and legally as they are citizens of the European Union and thus share certain political and economic rights with their Irish hosts. Ireland was one of three countries opening its doors to immigrants from the new member states joining the EU in 2004, most of whom were Polish (Fanning 2011: 16). To augment this broad advantage, specific beneficial policies have targeted the Polish. For instance, an expert group at the Ministry of Enterprise, Trade,

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and Enterprise declared in 2005 that all labor shortages should be met through the migration of EU nationals (Quinn 2010). Government officials responded to that policy statement by instituting recruitment fairs in Poland in particular (Wickham et al. 2008). Most fairs resulted in direct recruitment to Dublin. Local integration policies target the Polish as well. There were few integration initiatives in Ireland before 2004, and efforts from 2007 were clearly directed at Eastern European immigrants. Officials of the Office for the Minister of Integration in Dublin stressed efforts to combat work exploitation and aid English language acquisition, both of which privilege mostly Polish immigrants (McGinnity et al 2011). The Ministerial Council on Integration established in 2010 to provide large immigrant populations with political voice is consciously focused on Polish immigrants as well, with three Polish representatives and only one Nigerian (OMI 2011).

What is more, Irish political actors are eager to include Polish immigrants. The two main parties, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, recruited integration officers from among the Polish community in 2007-2008 and engaged in a forum organized by Forum Polonia to aid Polish candidates in the 2009 local election (Fanning 2011: 158; McGinnity et al. 2011: 38). Especially in Fine Gael, Polish candidates were clearly favored over other ethnic politicians. Poles' Catholicism contributed to an institutionalization of the party as religious in character and a connection was drawn between Fine Gael and Poland's Civic Forum (Fanning 2011: 159). As a result, nine polish candidates ran in the 2009 for all the major parties while there were none in the 2004 elections (Huseini and Yao,2010; Mutwarasibo 2011). While voting figures were low, East Europeans registered a 30 percent overall increase in voting for Dublin City, while voting rates among third country nationals plateaued (Huseini and Yao 2010). Polish unionization rates are on the rise as well due to active recruitment by the main trade unions (ICI 2008: 80; Mutwarasibo 2011). Union representatives target industries like cleaning where the Polish concentrate and prioritize Polish shop stewards in low skilled services. There is even a Polish section in the main trade union's website.

Bulgarians in Madrid are expected to represent the third best outcome in Table 2, as they are not quite welcomed in the receiving city yet they are reluctantly coming to belong in their new home (Table 2). There are few resources for Bulgarians' political mobilization in Madrid in practice. As EU nationals, Bulgarians are assumed to have a number of rights' protections or to be temporary migrants that do not require special integration efforts or funds. Still, they are eligible to vote in municipal and EU parliamentary election in Spain (Munoz 2009). While Spain removed transitional agreement barriers imposed on the 2007 EU joiners in 2009, and thus was one of the first countries to allow Bulgarian workers into its labor market, there are few other provisions that privilege or aid the incorporation of the East Europeans. In fact, in a rare reversal of the Schengen agreement, Spain closed its borders to Bulgarian and Romanian workers once again in 2010 citing severe unemployment and economic decay (Castle and Dempsey 2010). Unlike Ecuadorians, Bulgarians willing to naturalize are subject to a ten-year waiting period and a citizenship law based in the restrictive jus sanguinis principle (Zapata-Barerro and Zaragoza 2009). Despite the relatively high number of Bulgarians residing in Spain, moreover, there were only two polling stations for Bulgarians in the country that would allow the East Europeans to participate in the 2009 elections in their home country. As a comparison, there were more than fifty polling stations located in Turkey (Dobreva 2013).

Bulgarians' exercise of political rights is as conflicted as their access to them. Few Bulgarians naturalize in Spain. Only 2,086 of the 114,599 naturalized citizens in Spain in 2011 came from the EU (Perez and Fuentes 2012). Further, only 10% of Bulgarians voted in the 2007 elections in Madrid, a rate lower than the 17 percent for all registered foreigners for the region (Munoz 2009). Unionization rates are extremely low among East Europeans in Spain as well, both due to the immigrants' seasonal or temporary employment and distrust of trade unions. As Bulgarians are rarely irregular workers and are generally hostile towards institutionalized trade unions, they tend not to avail of the organizations' political clout and are involved in UGT only minimally (Meardi, Martin, & Riera 2012).

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Nonetheless, as they have begun to set down roots in the host country, Bulgarian immigrants have been very active in establishing and participating in civic associations in Madrid. In 2006, for instance, five of the fifty-two ethnic associations in Madrid were Bulgarian. The Bulgarian diaspora has set up a folklore troupe, a church, a newspaper, a magazine, and four schools in the Madrid Autonomous Community, focused on helping the continued contact between the home and host countries and facilitating the cultural dialogue between the native population and immigrants. This researcher met with representatives of seven Bulgarian associations in the Madrid area in 2011 dedicated to preserving Bulgarian culture on the one hand, but also on aiding in the broad integration of Bulgarians in Spain through provision of language courses and information on access to jobs or education, or through cooperation with Spanish institutions. Notably, none of the Bulgarian associations in Madrid are dedicated to political activity.[11] Bulgarians are often described as apathetic to the Spanish political process.

Finally, Nigerians are expected to represent the worst possible outcome in terms of political integration among the cases (Table 2). This is not entirely true, and this case study conforms least with the paper's expectations, where Nigerians are more politically active than hypothesized. Nigerians are still relatively slow to naturalize in Ireland, even if they do so in higher number than Poles (OECD 2010). According to a 2006 report by Africa Activa, while Africans participate in religious and ethnic communal activities, moreover, they are not interested in Dublin's local political life (Ejohr 2006). Two thirds of African respondents surveyed by the non-governmental organization were not involved in the receiving city's political landscape, only 2 percent participated in Irish political parties or associations, and less than one third voted in the 2004 local elections. While racism and exclusion by local political parties had a lot to do with it, lack of information or interest in Irish politics were also to blame (Ejohr 2006: 22-23).

Nonetheless, Nigerian immigrants employ the political process to battle issues of exclusion in other spheres, whereas Poles'

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[11] Confidential respondents, personal interviews, February 23 – May 11, 2011, Madrid.

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economic and social inclusion correlates with less urgency in political mobilization. About half of all Nigerians in a 2008 study reported registering to vote in the 2009 elections, with ten Nigerian candidates running in 2009 (ICI 2008; Fanning and O'Boyle 2010). Around one quarter of Nigerians in Dublin are unionized to combat discrimination in the labor market (ICI 2008). Nigerians are civically active, with an emphasis on amending the Irish asylum system and empowering the community through religious activities (Passarelli 2012: 143, 149-150).

Still, there are legal, institutional, policy, and individual blockages to Nigerian's political integration in Dublin. Nigerians are third-country nationals requiring a visa in Ireland and many arrived in Dublin as asylum seekers and/or illegal immigrants. Specific policies and laws disadvantage them further. After a 2004 referendum, citizenship laws were amended to no longer grant residency to non-Irish parents of Irish-born children – a change that affected Nigerian immigrants in particular (Fanning 2011). Other features of the naturalization system in Ireland, such as the significant delay in processing applications, discretion in decision-making, or the narrow definition of "reckonable residence" constitute instances of institutional discrimination aimed at Nigerian nationals who want to acquire Irish nationality (McGinnity et al. 2011). Events like the Passport Office's refusing to grant documents to thousands of newly naturalized Nigerians have a role to play too ("Thousands of Nigerians" 2012). New legislation in 2007 and 2009 restricted certain occupations as ineligible for work permits and even the residency allowance for Nigerian doctors was limited (Quinn 2010).

Moreover, while the Irish political parties did discover the significance of ethnic candidates before the 2009 election, they practiced "racialized politics" and focused on the Polish community (Mac Cormaic 2009; Fanning 2011: 159). While a number of Nigerian candidates did run in 2009, some as independents, none were elected. Nigerian candidates were often pitted against each other in the same district and competed for the same ethnic vote ("The Failure of Mulhuddart's" 2009). As one African candidate suggested, parties like Fianna Fail were "merely shopping for immigrant faces," and their enthusiastic courting of ethnic candidates did not translate into

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granting them the necessary resources to win (Fanning 2011: 154). Individual racial discrimination detracted from the much needed Irish vote for ethnic candidates, especially in the process of door-to-door canvassing (O'Boyle 2009; Okorie 2009).

In sum, privileged by permissive reception, naturalization, and voting laws, as well as their own perceptions of Spain as an extension of their motherland, Ecuadorians vote, naturalize and engage in civic associations in large numbers in Madrid. They exemplify the best outcome in terms of political incorporation among the four cases. Polish nationals in Dublin are not eager to acquire and exercise their political rights. However, they are reluctantly drawn into the political sphere by Irish policy-makers, political parties and trade union representatives who tout Poles' perceived cultural similarity. While Bulgarians are aspiring to belong in Spain and have set up a number of ethnic organizations in the city, they are still somewhat apathetic in terms of political mobilization in Madrid and have relatively few resources to aid in their political integration. Finally, Nigerians' political incorporation is less than perfect. While Nigerians seek political rights to combat exclusion in other spheres, this foreign population is severely limited by restrictive laws, individual and institutional discrimination, as well as few resources for group empowerment. The cohort roughly constitutes the worst outcome among the four groups of interest.

Conclusion

This paper surveys the role of culture for immigrant reception and political incorporation in new immigration spaces in Europe. It traced how identity influences the ways in which native elites and publics talk about, receive, and accommodate the foreign populations in their midst. The project further suggested that culture and immigrants' own conception of distance or similarity influences their willingness to make use of the privileges they were granted or fight for the benefits they were denied. Finally, the article studied how the granting and exercise of political rights connects with both the reception context and immigrants' notions of belonging or isolation in the host cities.

The analysis was developed for four case studies, and namely Polish and Nigerian immigrants in Dublin and Bulgarians and Ecuadorians in Madrid. Ecuadorians were deemed the optimal outcome in terms of political incorporation. These similar migrants are aided in their integration by the permissive legal, institutional, and discursive context in Madrid and by their own conception of similarity with Spaniards. While Poles continue to identify with their home country and have fewer stakes in Irish society, local political actors in Dublin draw them into the political process and contribute to the political incorporation of this desirable foreign cohort. While Bulgarians have few resources for political empowerment in Madrid and tend to be politically apathetic, the Eastern Europeans nonetheless aspire to belong in the host city and engage in rich civic activities there. Dissimilar and unwelcomed Nigerians face a number of limitations in their political mobilization in Dublin.

There are two surprising findings, however. First, European Union citizenship is not necessarily correlated with a more open access to political rights, where Ecuadorians are much more privileged than Bulgarian citizens in Madrid, for instance. Second, despite exclusion and lack of belonging, Nigerians still exhibit relatively high political participation levels. In this case, exclusion and racial discrimination do not connect with passivity but with the mobilization of ethnic group consciousness and resources. Further research is required to elucidate these puzzles.

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