

Immigrant civil society in Portugal and Italy – A comparative perspective

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Introduction

This chapter gives final results of the analysis of pro-immigrant organisations in Italy and Portugal and their insertion in the host civil society. Taking in account an institutional approach, with the focus on political opportunities structures concept, we consider the multi-level organisational field in immigration issues and how this field is structured and related to the state. Insertion in the host civil society performs the volatile part of the political opportunities structures, while the different state governments and the channels they establish to involve pro-immigrant organisations are seen as the stable aspects of political opportunities structures. Our analysis highlights an almost opposite structure of the civil society on immigration issue and a different link with the state apparatus. In fact, Portugal and Italy are two countries that differ substantially in terms of immigrant civil society. We also try to discern whether or not there is an immigrant social movement in each country. We make a comparative systematic approach based on in-depth interviews to pro-immigrant organisations in both countries and we consider a political discourse analysis as the main method.

1 – Political opportunities structures and civil society: theoretical considerations

In this paper, we consider the civil society structures of each country and its relation with POS. In effect, POS have four main dimensions:

- a) stable aspects of the political system:
 - national division structures
 - formal institutional structures
 - dominant strategies and formal procedures

- b) more volatile aspects:

- structures of alliances.

Civil society's actors represent the allies immigrant organisations need to mobilise and to get heard. This aspect is related to more volatile aspects of POS, that is, the structures of alliances. In order to have a precise framework of the emergence of a political claim, it is necessary to consider the structures of alliances (Giugni and Passy, 2004: 58). Civil society actors are part of the structures of alliances and it is important to have a framework of actors, types of mobilisation, claims and alliances and competition among them to understand how and why immigrants mobilise. In fact, immigrant organisations do not act in a vacuum but in already pre-established civil society with its rules and structures. Immigrant organisations are part of host society's civil society. The POS has a dynamic part, which makes the link between group relations and contexts of action. The role of actors, the perceptions of opportunities they have, and their reasons to ally to certain civil society actors in detriment to others, are key factors to explain the emergence of a political claim. The more powerful those civil society actors are vis-à-vis political institutions, the more organized is the political mobilisation. Those civil society actors act as gatekeepers, controlling access to avenues of political mobilisation available to immigrants. depending on the political context, they may be allies or neutral actors vis-à-vis immigrants. We argue then that immigrant political mobilisation is dependent on the structures of host society's civil society and in order to situate immigrant organisations, we need to ascertain the characteristics of each civil society. Finally, we also consider the more stable aspects of POS that may explain the type of civil society. We look at the relations between successive governments and the development of civil society actors in the immigration field and we analyse, based on studies on civil society, the type of state, whether it is strong or not and its relation with civil society.

We, then, begin by providing an overview on civil society concepts and theoretical pertinence. We continue with the analysis of Italian and Portuguese civil society in the immigration field, and, finally, the relation of each civil society with the state.

Democracy is a special type of political system in which civil society and state institutions tend to function as two necessary elements. As Keane says, they are "separate but contiguous, distinct but interdependent(...) a system (...) which is subject to public disputation, compromise and agreement" (1998: 8). Civil society is the cradle of democracy (Purdue, 2007: 2), it renews and increases the democratic culture by bringing in new values and questions to the public sphere and contributing to the arising of public dispute, negotiation and consensus. Civil society is an essential mirror of the public sphere (Rueschmeyer, 1992).

Despite much disagreement concerning the exact nature of civil society, and following Odmalm (2005: 174), civil society is perceived as an “arena of friendships, clubs, churches, business associations, trade unions and other voluntary associations that mediate the vast expanse of social life and the state”.

Taking in account the definition of Weber, the state is understood as the organisation specialised in the detention of coercion means. It controls a specific territory over which it is the sovereign. Finally, it is centralised and formally coordinated (cited in, Cattacin et al., 1997: 13).

In order to understand its portée we have to see democratization as a process of inclusion or as an unfinished project, where a progressive inclusion of various categories of people in political life and public sphere takes place. However, as it is stressed in the literature (see Dryzek, 1996) the formal premise of democratic equality has masked continued exclusion and oppression, as it has been the case for powerless people, namely immigrants and ethnic minorities, homeless, unemployed and so forth.

As Dryzek argues, an examination of the history of democratization illustrates that pressures for greater democracy almost emanate from oppositional civil society, rarely or never from the state itself (1996: 476). Civil society is thus an alternative site for the pursue of democracy and contentious politics.

What about the concept of civil society? Civil society is an inexact concept, used in different ways by different authors (Chambers and Kymlicka, 2002; Keane, 1998 and 2006; Walzer, 2002). For Edwards (2004), the concept is an ideal-typical category that both describes and envisages.

A definition that may provide a detailed description of primordial characteristics of a civil society is given by the same author, stating that “non-legislative, extra-judicial, public space in which societal differences, social problems, public policy, government action and matters of community and cultural identity are developed and debated” (2004: 55). Rueschmeyer (1992: 35) adds the type of organisations that give form to the civil society, that is, the totality of social institutions and associations, formal or informal. For Schmitter (1993:54), a civil society has four main characteristics that distinguish it from other spheres of action: 1) independence from public authorities and private units of production; 2) capacity of deliberation and collective action in defence of their interests; 3) not replacement of state agents; and finally 4) the willing to act within pre-established rules of a civil or legal nature. The access of civil initiatives, social movements and organisations to the political system is another central condition for the development and functioning of the civil society.

Minkoff states that civil society is not only multidimensional, but it is also multipurposeful (2001: 192). This is a non-constrained sphere, where all kind of issues are debated freely, under any governmental and official control or self-inflicted pressure.

As Edwards describes, civil society often serves to fragment rather than unite society, accentuating and deepening already existing cleavages (2001: 37). As Baumgartner and Leech (1998: 67) explain, group struggle can not be fair. There are differential intensities of preferences from the State that are reinforced through the group system. Some interests would be always more equal than others. Some groups, such as business-oriented or some social classes, have more power than others, especially non-economic groups such immigrants.

Societal cleavages find their best expression in civil society, which is an arena of competition of status quo frames and ideologies versus emancipatory perspectives: “competing discourses challenge prevailing understandings, so that assumptions previously exempt from contestation will have to be publicly argued out” (op.cit, 113). For Habermas (1998 and 1991), civil society is a site of resistance and emancipation where the exemplary actors are social movements although all citizens can participate. There is the recognition that the marginalised, the powerless and minorities are disadvantaged in the political system. Voice should be, rather than vote, the vehicle of empowerment.

Social movements are part of the civil society. They find their actors, organisations and networks in this sphere. Moreover, in their efforts to create change in larger society, social movements enter into relationships of coalition, competition or conflict with other political actors, becoming embedded in a wider set of social and political networks that structures activists’ opportunities and choices. Civil society is thus one good starting point for investigating these relationships (Purdue, 2007: 71).

In a nutshell, when investigating a particular issue that is influenced by civil society, it is necessary to consider the array of actors and the spectrum of positions in order to understand the configuration of the issue and potential success and implications at the state level.

Civil society has thus several functions as a mediator, a countervailing power, a vehicle for participation by citizens, a promoter of social cohesion and social equality, a stimulator of plurality and as a creator of social capacity (See Alexander, 1997: 18).

When studying civil society, the structure of the state can not be ignored. Civil society is context-dependent, in the sense that the role of the state, individual rights and the effectiveness of the rule of law function as an institutional and cultural construct (Armony, 2004: 37). As Tarrow (1994: 62) reminds, differences in state centralisation produce differences in the political opportunities of social movements and civil society. The dominant model is that “strong states

associated to weak civil societies lead to constrained participation, punctuated by violent outburst of movement, while weak states in strong civil societies lead to open participation and conventional collective action” (op.cit, 63).

Civil society and the state have always been interdependent. States provides the legal and regulatory framework a democratic civil society needs in order to function. Moreover, the outcome of civic engagement is dependent upon the response of the state to citizen demands.

How states are organized turns out to have major implications for the democratic vitality and survival of civil society.

In other words, political institutionalization plays a crucial role in shaping the character of civil society and its impact on political development. State is simultaneously the target, sponsor and opponent to civil society actors (Odmalm, 2005).

The gain in entering the state sphere can only be acquired when the defining interest of entering group can be connected quite directly to an existing or emerging state imperative. Groups, whose inclusion coincides with no imperative, will not easily acquire the tangible goods they value. They may be allowed to participate in the policy-making process, but outcomes will be systematically skewed against them. Furthermore, they will loose any possibility of independence and internal democracy, since interaction with the state will require internal hierarchy and leadership.

The dynamics of democratization reveal a subtle interplay between inclusion and exclusion, the state and civil society.

What about the role of state? There are two ends of the spectrum: an exclusive or inclusive state, a passive versus active state, or a friendly or non-friendly state.

A passive state reacts to whatever groups happen to emerge. In this case, it is the interaction of different groups that lead to public policy. Groups organize around interests and defend their position in the realm of the state without its direct intervention.

In contrast, a reactive state does take measures to control the power of organized groups and their claims.

An inclusive active state is a state that plays an active role in sponsoring and certifying groups, removing obstacles to their exercising political influence and creating channels for that influence to be perceived in government. In particular, inequality of representation should be remedied by state promotion of the organization of disadvantages and powerless groups. Large institutional patrons of political action, including the government itself, affect the abilities of groups to mobilise (Baumgartner and Leech, 1998: 80).

As Walzer (1995: 35) explains the state-sponsored pattern of representation advocated in the associative democracy have more in common with corporativism than with liberalism. Corporatism as a form for the organization of national political systems may be defined as a “system of interest representation in which the constituent units are organized into a limited number of singular

compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchical ordered and functionally differentiated categories, recognised and licensed (if not created) by the state and granted a deliberative representational monopoly within their respective categories” (Schmitter, 1993: 45).

The problem with this sort of interests organization is that it is exclusive. It points to the domination and co-optation of specific sectional interests by the state and the mediation of section dispute through the organs of the state (Karan, 2008: 177). It presupposes a strong directing state over policies areas. It shapes the ways of formulating and implementing public policy. Interests defined on a noneconomic basis are shut out completely. The state act as an entrepreneur in relation to the centralization and disciplining of social movements and other actors, controlling, centralising, and taming (op.cit., 177). The equal consideration and respect of interests are neglected and the state has the hability to favor or marginalise one interest over another. In this case, civic organisations may work against their interest, may loose their accountability and the representativeness of their members (op.cit, 180). This does not go into the direction of one important assumption in civil society literature, that is, a civil society presupposes a strong and self-limiting state (Dryzek, 1996). Strong states may suffocate civil society.

Moreover, this sort of state arrangement simply ignores the public association in civil society by offering no channels of access to the state. A transformation of this tripartite public policy concertation with the inclusion at the table of noneconomic actors may be an open window. An exclusive active state implies a state that attacks and undermines the conditions for public association in civil society. Passive exclusion implies a state that simply ignores civil society (Dryzek, 1996: 482).

The level of development of state structures also play a fundamental role in the importance, vitality and survival of civil society. When state institutions are strong and channel civil society actors interests to its core, civil society will buttress political stability and democracy by placing its resources and beneficial aspects in the service of the status quo. If, on the other hand, political institutions are weak and/or existing political regime is perceived to be illegitimate, then civil society activity may become an alternative to politics (Edwards, 2001: 40).

As the cited author explains, most contemporary states in developed societies are not strongly corporatist, instead falling somewhere on a continuum between corporatism and pluralism (op.cit, 483). It has to be said, however, that civil society actors do have an active role concerning the entry to the government apparatus. In fact, entry into the state may be a pragmatic necessity, not a free strategic choice. Depending on the level of state concentration of the issue in question, actors may have to negotiate directly with the state and abdicate of some free and independent positions.

Still regarding institutions, we may add the political opportunities structures in the traditional social movements sense. As Tarrow expresses, people act on opportunities: “when reform is pending, when institutional access opens, when alignments shift, when conflicts emerge among elites, and when allies become available” (1994: 87). As Giugny and Passy alert (1999), different policy areas in a same country yield different sets of opportunities. We will focus the policy area of immigration and immigrant policies that we will consider as a subsystem.

The analyse of the subsystem of immigration civil society has to consider the more volatile aspects of the political side of the state (McCarthy, 1996), that are, electoral instability, influential allies, and divided elites (op.cit; McAdam, 1996). The literature shows clearly that those dimensions of the political opporutnities structures are essential for the political mobilization of non-state social groups. Electoral instability relates to the changing configurations of government and opposition parties, especially when they are based on coalitions. Uncertainty among political parties encourage challengers to try to exercise their power and may induce elites to compete for support from outside the polity. Influential allies are a condition for powerless groups to see their claims heard. In fact, allies can act as friends, as guarantors against repression or as negotiators. Changes increase if those allies are members of the polity. Moreover, the cooperation with allies may also condition the type of action challengers may favour. Traditionally, left-wing political parties have been strong allies of social movements actors but it is essential to consider two aspects: whether or not the left is divided between a major communist current and a social democrat one, and whether or not they participate in government (Kriesi, 1996; Giugni and Passy, 1997). Divided elites play also an important role. Social movements actors may see an opening when elites do have conflictual relation over an issue and, by the same token, it allows portions of elite to associate to social movements actors and to endorse their claims (Tarrow, 1994: 89). When analysing the relation of political opportunities structures with social movements actors and the civil society in general, it is essential to consider whether or not we want to study the realisation of aims, the timing of collective action or the collective action tout court. Opportunities differ in both dependent variables. In our analysis of the italian and portuguese civil society in the subsystem of immigration, we will search for both dependent variables.

Membership models, understood as the institutionalised scripts and understandings of the relationship between individuals, the state and the polity, condition the civil society and, subsequently, the organisations of immigrants: “politics and organisational arrangements concerning the incorporation of new migrant groups are isomorphic with the preeminent models of membership in host polities” (Soysal, 1994: 36).

We believe that each field of public debate has its own plethora of actors that have, by force of circumstances, to deal and negotiate with interest groups and political parties. Being so, we opt for a civil society that includes clubs, churches, business organisations, unions, voluntary organisations (see Odmalm, 2005), social movements, networks and individual initiatives (Keanes, 2006: 41).

Civic organisations do not and can not act in a vacuum but in an already existing network of state actors and organisations that can transform political claims into public policies. However, some civic organisations have more formal access than others. The public sphere is such that it favours access to elites over social movements actors and attempts to change the dominating political discourse. Hence, there is a fatal bias toward the view of the established elite.

Even in the same area or issue, those more concerned may face competition from other actors that might be more established and perceived as more legitimate and that offer more consensual definitions and solutions. Some civic organisations need to gain the sympathy of strong and influente allies and/or political actors to see their claims heard by the state. The rise and fall of political insurgencies, claims disruptive level and their ultimate success in obtaining their goals are a function of the amount of assistance they obtain from sympathetic third parties. The presence of potent allies may help to recruit followers and to risk engaging in potentially dangerous repertoires of action (Walker, 1991: 53). Furthermore, and still in the same vein of Walker (op.cit, 195), the attraction of potential allies and the possibilities of success are generally dependent on the level of area's controversy.

The struggle for rights, which are the main concern of civil society agents, is not only against the state, but also conflicts between competing forces within the civil society itself. A subsystem may have several competing forces, where frames, resources and liaisons to the state are object of battle. Several sub-networks in the same issue may emerge, which complicates the success of political claims to get heard and/or considered by official authorities.

The Political opportunities structures provided by the state are key elements in shaping the civil society configuration and its actors. In the case of immigration, and as Wong (2006: 3) suggests, the civic institutions' level of involvement with an immigrant community affects the level of members political mobilization: "institutions are not neutral actors in th process of immigrant mobilization, and their historical and political contexts, including incentives and the racial attitudes of the american public and elites, influence who gets to participate in the US political system".

The field of immigration actors is highly diversified, with more formal, multipurposed and professionalized organisations to informal, small, one purposed and non-professionalised actors.

The immigrant organisations are embedded in a multi-organizational field that condition their success and structure as well as their political mobilization. As the social movements literature alerts, opportunities are not solely political but are also found in societal structures such as the civil society (Koopmans, 2004; McAdam, 1996; Tarrow, 1994).

Pro-immigrant anti-racist organisations act as gatekeepers, controlling the access to political mobilisation avenues available for immigrants and being allies for the development of claims-making strategies (Ireland, 2000: 236). For a campaign or movement to arise and to survive, insurgents must be able to create a durable and enduring organisational structure to sustain collective action (McAdam, 1996: 13).

This paper gives an overview of the Italian and Portuguese pro-immigrant actors panorama and networking, its relation with the immigrant organisations; the relation with civil society's allies (seen as the volatile categories); and the type of collaboration with the state (considered as a non-volatile element). We focus then on political mobilization that goes beyond electoral politics. We try to respond to the 1) how, 2) why and 3) when of collective action.

Our data derived from interviews undertaken with activists from anti-racist and pro-immigrant associations. We will concentrate our analysis on the 1990s until the mid- 2000s for at least three reasons: 1) the discussion of the role of immigrants in Italy and Portugal brought to the public fore; 2) the rise of the extreme-right in Italy; 3) the pro-immigrant movement has consolidated its position within the respective civil society (see Giugni and Passy, 2006).

2 - Immigration and civil society in Italy

For the Italian case, we interviewed 10 main anti-racist and pro-immigrant actors at the national levels. The choice of actors was based on the data extracted from the newspaper *La Repubblica* analysis, informal contacts and the snow-ball method. First, we consider those civil society's actors that were more often cited in our newspaper analysis. They constituted the first circle of allies to interview. Then, during interviews to those actors, others appear as relevant or as having a particularity that was needed to complete the initial circle of allies. We decided to stop in our snow-ball method when we had a plethora of actors with different characteristics in the Italian civil society. With these possibilities, we could establish a first panorama of anti-racist and pro-immigrant actors in Italy, located in Rome, and a sub-system of networking, cooperation and/or conflict in political claims-making context.

In our research, there are three main types of actors: Church related organisations, namely Caritas, which has a central role in the process of integration of immigrants in the local and national structure of host society; trades unions and political parties that have a central role as an intermediate structure between the labour market rights and state authorities; and collective action actors with an extreme-left, libertarian connotation that are linked to the political party Rifondazione Comunista. These last actors are not very well-known or studied in the immigration political field. Parallely, there is a plethora of small organisations that are not really focused on campaigning. The most part of them are immigrant organisations. In fact, and following a study promoted by CNEL in 2001, that was observed that on the Italian territory, there were 900 organisations promoted by foreign nationals, ie immigrants themselves (750) or associations promoted by Italian activists (150 organisations).

Each type of actor has its own frames and repertoires of action as well as political claims. Due to their different political orientation, there is a sort of competition and rivalry among them, which does not facilitate the process of political mobilization and relation with state authorities: *“There is no unity. It is sometimes impossible to have a simple discussion with those social movements organisations. They are too tied to their ideologies. With political parties there is a collaboration, but our concern is another one”* (CGIL); *“we want to be independent. If we work with political parties, especially those in the centre and linked to the Catholic Church, we will loose our ideas and actions”* (SenzaConfine).

2.1 - Civil society's mobilising structures: a homogeneous sub-system?

What are thus the main instruments trades unions, political parties, church-based organisations, and collective action organisations have to define themselves as essential interlocutors or players? What are their mobilizing structures?

In the case of trade unions and left-wing political parties, they have been traditional allies of immigrants. Three main trade unions CGIL – Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, IUL – Unione Italiana del Lavoro, CISL – Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori – dominate the immigration issue and have established special politics. Two main reasons can be tracked back to the origins of trade unions interest for immigration issues. On the one hand, immigrants (regular and irregular) find themselves trapped in the Italian informal economy. On the other hand, they gather more members to join the lines and, by the same token, they renew their social exclusion

paradigm (Wihtol de Wenden, 1988: 252). Migrants' organisations find in trade unions precious allies, and above all, transnational contacts and access to European funds (Danese, 2001: 83).

Repertoires of action are mostly demonstrations and strikes, as well as lobbying: *"usually, we try to establish a dialogue with the government. Sometimes they want to listen and they give us some possibilities to negotiate some issues. Other times, and since 2001, there has been difficulties to establish a contact with them. But we do also manifestations with immigrants or not, we support strikes in the labor work place. It depends also on the issue. We can not be too radical if we want to be heard"* (CGIL); *"we prefer to dialogue with the formal entities. Sometimes we go to a manifestation, but we prefer to dialogue"* (CISL). Their frames are mainly economic and utilitarian ones. They see immigrants as a necessity of the labour market that have to be controlled in order to avoid competition with national workers: *"in a certain moment, italians were afraid that immigrants could enter in competition and damage the wages, but it was not the case. And in any case, we discussed the working conditions with the business unions and the government"* (CGIL). Both last immigration laws, the Turco-Napolitano and the Bossi-Fini are seen as problematic ones. They criticize the link between the stay permit and the labour contract and they also take position against the detention camps: *"very hard laws that have produced in the country forms of strong clandestine life and ostracism"* or *"because the residence permit requires very difficult things to obtain such as certain level of income etc. This creates a precarious situation that reflects in everything else (...). Finally, and with the Bossi-Fini the link between the stay permit and work contract is subject to censorship because the day you make a strike and loose the job after that you loose the possibility to be in Italy with the alternative of the expulsion or the centre for permanent stay"* (CGIL).

Political claims are especially linked to immigration issues, such as stay permits, border controls, quotas, detention camps. Integration issues are also considered, like labour market contracts, work accidents, and diplomas recognition, however in a lesser dimension. They explain that the legal status of immigrants will condition the process of social, cultural and political integration in the host society: *"what is essential is to have the stay permit. The rest will come after that. Without a stay permit, they can not do much"* (UIL).

Political parties, especially those from left-wing, have also played an important role in the political mobilization of immigrants. left-wing political parties and extra-parliamentary ones organized the first public immigrant process of politicisation. They were the Partito Comunista Italiano (PCI), Democrazia Proletaria, Lista Verde. Nowadays, the main allies have been the Rifondazione Comunista, the Verdi and christian political parties from both sides of the spectrum. Frames diverge, depending on the political side of the actor. For Rifondazione Comunista and the Verdi, immigrants are human beings that have the right to enter european countries to find a job.

The Verdi has an humanitarian and anti-racist perspective of the phenomenon. Rifondazione Comunista expresses a western/marxist new left, pacifist and anti-racist position (Però, 2007). They are also highly skeptical about immigration laws in Italy and the utilitarian perspective of governments. Furthermore, they do not agree with the charity, and law and order perspective of christian political parties. Besides lobbying through their channels and networking in the Italian parliament, both parties are prone to demonstrations and support to other forms of action from immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations. As Della Porta (2003) explains a traditional strong communist party tended to co-opt all forms of protest and nowadays they continue to detain an important role in parallel with left libertarian movements.

It is usual to find a coalition of trade unions and left-wing political parties in demonstrations and public statements. For immigrants to have success in their political claims and development of projects, a stable and cooperative relation with political parties is essential. Local patronage is at the core of political mobilization in Italy and immigrants' organisations are thus obliged to submit to the rules (Della Porta, 1999).

Church-based organisations are also presented in the Italian research as main actors (Dorangricchia and Itçaina, 2005: 188). The confluence of the Catholic Church with the Christian democratic party had particular effects on church-based organisations. The Catholic Church and its organisations, in particular Caritas, is a pressure group that lobbies political parties from the left and the right-wing sides and national and/or local governments in favour of immigrants. It is also a direct actor and active participant in public platforms of political consultative bodies for immigration issues. What is striking is the changing nature of the frames adopted in the public sphere: “ la politisation de l' immigration a poussé l' Eglise à puiser dans des repertoires d' action et de justification différents, piochant tour a tour dans les logiques caritative, solidariste, utilitariste et directement politique” (Dorangricchia and Itçaina, 2005: 188). Besides their role as lobby actor, Catholic-Church based organisations are also directly involved with more direct actions, in particular demonstrations with other actors, namely immigrant organisations. Caritas, Migrantes and Acli – Associazione Cristiane Lavoratori Italiani – are cited more frequently as supporter actors of political claims-making (op.cit, 193; Danese, 2001: 79).

Voluntary organisations are also present in the field of immigration but in a less structured way. Some of those organisations are developed by Italians, others are a set of different nationality's immigrants. The most prominent in Rome, acting at the local and national levels, are Action, Casa dei Diritti Sociali, Senzaconfine, Forum delle Comunità Stranieri, Comitato Immigrati and Tavolo Migranti. Each actor has its own logic, frames, repertoires of action and goals, which derive from the first reasons of their creation. Their potential and capacity of

collective action was conditioned by immigrant laws and governmental conjunctures: *“The Italian immigrant anti-racist movement was stepping out from a very difficult situation of deep separation and division in Italy. There was a very strong anti-racist movement in 1992 and 1993, until the end of 1998. It was very strong because of the immigrant waves and immigration law modification. In 2001, we decided to separate and do something different”* (Tavolo Migranti). Another major event in social movements led to the creation of one group: *“2001, we started to speak about the committee after the preparation of the manifestation of the 19th January 2001, when the immigrants who worked in the social forum found themselves in a situation of exclusion. Five or six of us went away from the meetings and decided that we could not anymore participate in those meetings, because we were fed up of the way they were putting the question. We made a statute (...). We were a group from different nationalities: Tunisia, Morocco, Bangladesh, Equator, Peru and Venezuela”* (Comitato Immigrati).

Their claims are linked to immigration issues, but with a detailed character. A very particular issue, related to frontiers control, is the problematic of shipwrecks that occurred in 1996, the Yohan case, and in 1997, the Kater I rades case.

Their repertoires of action are transversal to all organisations, others are tied to the type of organization. In general terms, the repertoires of action are moderate. In spite of the fact they are not co-opted by authorities and the political opportunities structures are relatively closed, they do not use much violent and disruptive actions. We suppose that their relation with the Rifondazione Comunista may have conditioned the nature of the action. Rifondazione Comunista has access to the Italian polity and, as we will see, they are one fundamental node of the immigration subsystem. Manifestations are the more common. Several manifestations have been done during the 1990s and the 2000s. They were scheduled by several organizations simultaneously, with specific slogans such as *“Bossi-Fini finitela”* (Stop Bossi-Fini) or *“una altra legge è possibile”* (another law is possible). Some of those manifestations could mobilize more than 500.000 persons: *“the 19th February 2006, there was a manifestation in Rome, very big against the Bossi-Fini, with a large part of organisations and with more than 500.000 persons, with a lot of immigrants”* (Rifondazione Comunista).

Lobbying is another common repertoire for the Rete Antirazzista and Senzaconfine. They lobbied parliamentary actors at the national level with propositions to alter immigration laws, or to lobby regional and municipal entities in order to review integration plans.

Firms' collection under the initiative popular law is also part of the repertoire. The initiative popular law is a legislative instrument, which was established in the law n. 352 of 25th May 1970, which allows citizens, through the collection of firms (at least 50.000), to present to the Parliament

(or to local entity such as the region) a law project in order to be discussed and voted. This procedure is favored by four organisations: Action, Rete Antirazzista, Comitati Immigrati, and Senzaconfine, which means organisations led by Italian citizens. *“in 1996, we made a campaign to collect firms for the popular initiative law that pertained to the citizenship and nationality law and the right of vote, and we found also an expedient in order to ratify the Strasbourg Convention concerning the political participation and then the right of vote”* (Rete Antirazzista).

Press conferences are also common, namely by organisations led by Italian citizens.

Building occupations is a particular repertoire of action that is exploited by Action, Rifondazione Comunista and Comitato Immigrati. It is a confrontational action that is seen as useful in order to be heard by authorities. Confronts with police is thus common when it comes to expel people. The same actors, and in the case of permit issues, use hunger strikes or support hunger strikes made by immigrants.

The immigration collective action may be understood in a larger context of Italian social movements. In fact, the general evolution and success of Italian social movements have effects on the subsystem of immigration: *“During 2 or 3 years, we assisted to a decline, and then in 2000, there was a huge initiative in Brescia that re-aunched the movement. Basically 5.000 immigrants in Brescia made a sit-in in the main square for 45 days and nights to claim for stay permits and after one month and half, this has helped to rebuild the relations and the successive year during the days of Genoa Social Forum we could rebuild the relations and with new situations”* (Tavolo Immigrati). Nevertheless, and still considering the life-cycle of a social movement, the pro-immigrant political mobilization also suffered from the fracas of the Peace social movement: *“In my opinion, for the convergence of two situations: the defeat, in spite of the fact that dimensions in Italy were grandiose, one million of persons in the streets to impeach the Iraq aggression. In spite of the dimensions and the size of the tendencies in the peace movement, there was a fracas. And we obtained nothing positive in the other camps: a movement failed that way”* (Rete Antirazzista).

As analysed above, the subsystem of immigration in the Italian civil society is fragmented and hierarchically organized. Some authors are closer to channels of lobby with governments, namely Catholic-Church organisations, political parties and trade unions, while social movements actors act in a more independent way. Rarely they are considered by authorities and this may lead to more radical actions. Yet, they have been quite moderate, and have been highly fragmented among themselves. In terms of immigration network perspective (Granados and Knoke, 2005: 301), we distinguish in our analysis, three main actors that are the focus of three distinct block networks, ie, Caritas, Rifondazione Comunista and CGIL. In fact, they concentrate the most part of relations among organisations and are a main motor of political mobilization in the Rome tissue. Each of

them has a distinct type of actuation, frames and access to political mainstream. They have competing views of what should be the immigration phenomenon. They constitute also different sorts of advocacy coalition. A main question is to know whether or not we are in presence of a solidarity network social movement. If we consider the common definition of social movements, “networks of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups, or associations, engaged in a political or cultural conflict, on the basis of a shared collective identity” (Diani, 1992: 13), we are in presence of three specific networks. Moreover, it has to be remind that collective action may be associated with social movements or not (Diani and Bison, 2004: 283). As the authors explain “a social movement process is in place when collective identities develop that go beyond specific campaigns and initiatives” (op.cit, 284). If we consider the possible combinations of the three properties of the definition cited above, we can discern five types of collective action. Firstly, there is the consensus movement processes that mean “coalitional networking and identities both characterised consensus movements, as actors share solidarity and an interpretation of the world, enabling them to link specific acts and events in a longer time perspective. However, sustained collective action does not include conflictual element. (...) Prospected solutions may not require redistribution of power or alterations in social structure” (op.cit., 285). Conflictual coalition processes are the second element of the typology that is defined as “collective actors are densely connected to each other in terms of alliances, and may identify opponents explicitly, but those alliances are not backed by strong identity links” (op.cit, 285). Consensus coalitional processes perform the third element meaning that resources are used to pursue specific practical goals, “yet without a narrative placing the distinct episodes into broader frameworks, and without broader identities developing out of action” (op.cit, 286). It distinguishes itself from other elements for not identifying a special social or political target. The following model is the conflictual organisations processes. In this model, the organisation has a fundamental role in the process of collective action. The network between actors is low and the identity linking them is weak. Collective action is conducted in the organisational realm. Finally, the authors identify a consensual organisational processes model that differ from other organisational processes due to their lack of a conflictual element. Voluntary organisations are good example of this framework, in which the dominant trait is the production of services and other public goods without or with a weak process of networking. In this case, there is a reliance on institutions for fundings with competition dynamics among organisations that reduces the relevance of alliances.

The networks oriented by Rifondazione Comunista and CGIL present conflictual orientations with identified opponents. Their claims are not consensual in the political mainstream and they know exactly who is responsible for the social cleavage or grievance. Both have also a

dense network with informal and formal exchanges between individuals and organisations engaged in collective projects. Rifondazione Comunista is linked to some immigrant organisations, in fact, not all immigrant communities do recognise themselves in the political party framework; it is linked to immigrant informal groups that exist with a collective action purpose (for instance from Pakistan, India, or Philippines); works eventually with trade unions, particularly when it comes to join efforts to prepare massive demonstrations; and finally, are connected to civic organisations that are more close to a social movement definitions. In this sense, this network fulfils some of the dimensions of the social movements definition cited above. However, when it comes to collective identity, we are in front of a fragmented junction of identities that may be overcome in a nuanced solidarity frame. Following the typology of collective action models, we are in front of conflictual coalitional processes. The fact the several actors do not feel part of a collectivity but a junction of collectivities leads us to state that they do not form a social movement.

CGIL is also central because it has the ability to mobilise massively immigrants and non-immigrants. It has partnership with other trade unions, immigrant organisations that have in a way or another contacted for legal or labour market orientation, when necessary to left-wing political parties, and a plethora of pro-immigrant organisations. Similarly to Rifondazione Comunista, each partner has its own frames and collective identity that the trade union may overcome or not with a more general frame. Similarly to the case of Rifondazione Comunista we are dealing with conflictual coalitional processes.

Caritas has its own logic and network. It is firstly related to Catholic-oriented organisations that work in immigration issues, with Catholic Church hierarchy, state institutions and Catholic-oriented political parties. They also connect with immigrant organisations but with a different approach than the other two main nodes, which is more based on charity services providers. In this case, consensual organisational processes are at task. Actors do share a same identity, however there is no conflictual issues and no specific targets identification.

To sum up, immigration social movement in Italy does not exist. There is collective action as our data illustrate however with different networks and model types. This fact, in our assertion, may explain the difficulty they perceive vis-à-vis the Italian political opportunities as we will explain in the next paragraph.

2.2 - Civil society and Italian national POS: the role of the state

Civil society actors are also dependent on the political opportunities structures, more precisely, the political make-up of the government with which civil society tries to interact. There

are different models of inclusion of civil society actors into the policy-making process as our analysis illustrate. We will establish, through a political discourse analysis, the different patterns of inclusion employed by the centre-left Ulivo government of 1996-2001 and the centre-right Casa delle Libertà government of 2001-2006. The choice of the temporal construction of the law is based on the level of institutionalization of the issue. Solely in the middle of the nineties that immigration gained a structured presence in the Italian political public sphere (Statham, 1998).

Before giving those patterns, it is pertinent to see how immigration laws evolve, the internal debate and whether there were continuities between the Turco-Napolitano law, approved under the Ulivo government, and the Bossi-Fini law, under the Casa delle Libertà government. Those aspects relate with the stable features of the political system in a delimited time. Each government represents a stable component of the political system.

In 1996, a centre-left coalition government, Il Ulivo, is elected. The new government faced two main immigration dilemmas. On the one hand, illegal immigration was continuing while social integration of immigrants was a failure; on the other hand, actual entry of Italy in the Schengen area (in October 1997) was strengthening the government to alter entry and borders criteria. A controversial key tool that had the effect to split internally governing coalitions was the repressive strategy of temporary detention centres (Zincone, 2006: 353). The government apparatus was thus searching for a new alternative to immigration features and allowed civil society actors to enter into a deliberative form of cooperation. The civil society coalition was mainly formed by Catholic organisations, interest groups, in particular employees and business organisations and academic experts. As we can infer, they were professionalized actors. Their power and influence are greater due to their level of professionalization and their specific knowledge and skills. They could thus enter the process of cooperation, which was however conflictual.

Windows of opportunities opened because the government recognized its unfamiliarity with the domain (op. cit. 354). The role of those civil society actors was that of information provider. There was the promotion of dialogue with those actors at the national level particularly in relation to measures to facilitate the social integration of immigrants. There was thus a deliberative approach to immigration issue, searching for advice and consensus among the different interests.

As it is said in the social movements literature, fragmentation among policy elites can lead to greater opportunities for civil society organisations to influence the policy process (Gamson and Meyer, 1996; Guigni and Passy, 1998). In the case of the centre-left coalition, fragmentation was evident in relation to the issue of immigration, with the opposition of the Verdi and Rifondazione Comunista.

Notwithstanding, the government could not ignore the internal forces at the parliament, namely the forces of centre-right and extreme-right political parties. As Zincone explains, once the final draft was ready for legislative debate, the process closed itself: “this final closure (...) has been interpreted as a further sign of the government’s desire to have the bill passed very rapidly, so as not to disappoint its European partners” (op.cit. 354). The coalition advocacy for immigration issue could act until a certain point. Its effect was very limited since controversial issues such as the detention centres were passed in the law. As the final law shows, there was an approximation of the centre-left to centre-right norms on immigration policies, while they diverged on social and political integration policies. In fact, the attempt to introduce the right of vote at local elections was obstructed successfully by the right-centre formation, who pointed to the need for a modification of the Italian constitution in order to introduce such change (Bigot and Fella, 2008: 306). Pro-immigrant organisations thought that the fact that it was a centre-left government would be a favorable factor for them. It was, on the contrary, a counter-factor. Many organisations perceived the centre-left government as incapable to counter-act the claims of the more extreme right-wing political parties in the Parliament. Being so, it is difficult to see a direct link between a centre-left and a successful political mobilization. Furthermore, some actors see in the left-wing government a difficult ally that may be perverse for political mobilization.

In spite of the will the centre-left government demonstrated to learn from other actors, it had to confront public opinion pressure and right-wing political parties: “(...)and in the other hand with xenophobia feelings and campaigns of security in certain cities” (Tavolo immigrati).

The division of elites was relatively high: a coalition of centre-left trying to auscultate the civil society actors, a libertarian wing composed of the Verdi and Rifondazione Comunista and right-conservative and extreme-right parties.

Attacks also came from Italian courts, claiming the unconstitutionality of temporary detention centres and other repressive measures. Courts have been important for claims-making, especially for those groups organised around rights claims (Walker, 1991: 158). Based on those powerful difficult dimensions, the government changed its position. From a solidarist position (give immigrants’ access to rights), it moved towards a more identitarian (rights reserved to citizens and long-term residents) and legalitarian (repressive measures to face illegal entries) one: “*a problem of security and public order and all the rest is subordinated to that*” (Arci). The initial proposal of allowing immigrants to benefit from local vote rights was completely abandoned. Immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations remained highly critical to some of the policy choices. The centre-left was accused of being subordinate to the political culture of the right. As said before, there were no real links between the deliberative process and the decision-making process. Besides, it has to be

remind the role of political parties. In fact, their immediate goal is to respond to the expectatives of the public and to gain electoral advantage (Wong, 2006).

When the centre-right came into power – the centre-right coalition Casa delle Libertà – immigration issue became a centre task in the policy structure and was monopolized by the new government (Ginsborg, 2001: 317).

The specificity of this new law is that it took place in the political sphere, “behind doors”, and allowing very few political opportunities for civil society to make claims. The only exception was the channel opened by the presence of Catholic political parties (in particular the UDC – Union of Christian Democrats), that allowed, in an indirect way, a voice for Catholic organisations, namely Caritas. The centre-right demonstrated a striking unwillingness to enter into dialogue with civil society. As we can see, the style and form of engagement with civil society employed by the two governments differed significantly. The process of civil society entry was highly selective and almost determined by the own interests of the government. There was a sort of corporatist style, where the deliberation was closed to other actors, and where solely three forces were at play: the government, the economic forces and employers interests. The meetings promoted by the centre-left had become virtually non-existent after 2001 and those few that took place were without any intention of real consultation.

The law passed without significant opposition (Zincone, 2008: 14).

The level of fragmentation among centre-right actors seem, at a first glance, inexistent, however two actors – the Bossi’s Lega and the Fini’s Alleanza Nazionale – were in discordance. The Lega employed an ethno-populist rhetoric while the Lega was more pragmatic and committed to economic prerogatives. Forza Italia, in turn, had a more open approach on matters relating to social integration, and distanced itself from the ethno-populist approach of the Lega. In sum, in Italy, minority parties can sharply influence the legislation (Janoski, 2005: 281).

Negotiation between the government and the opposition was almost inexistent. This, and the fragmentation inside the government coalition, led to a sort of institutional paralysis, where potential civil society actors saw their possibilities to influence the decision-making process blocked.

To sum up, the degree of inclusion of civil society actors differ greatly between the centre-left and the centre-right governments. While in the centre-left government, a sort of cooperation was established with some openings, the centre-right government established a sort of corporatist paradigm with very limited channels of opportunities. However, in terms of influence in the decision-making process, civil society actors were put aside. There was a closure to civil society actors in both governments.

Moreover, it is possible to discern a line of reasoning which does not differ greatly between the centre-left and the centre-right governments. There is a relative continuity of immigration policies, in particular, the constant relying on the labor market to resolve immigrant needs – immigrants are subjects of the labour market and not of the law, the continuous avoiding of a complete integration policy, and the constant massive processes of regularization. For Zincone, this can be explained by the ubiquitous presence of Catholic parties in both centre-left and centre-right coalitions (2008: 1). Moreover, in the Italian parliament, there is a consensual sort of negotiation between political fractions (op. cit., 39; Giuliani, 2008: 23). There is also, among political parties, the acceptance of the functionalist perspective over immigration.

As Ritaine postulated (2005: 29-31), the main political discourse has three frames: security, identity and social exclusivity and subordination. Three political parties, in the Italian case, have structured the immigration discourse and have closed the discursive opportunity to reframe the issue. They are the Lega Norte, Forza Italia and Alleanza Nazionale. With different degrees of discursive closures, they could rearrange the debate in very particular terms, which seem difficult to overcome. These actors have taken a mixture of repressive-legalitarian and identitarian positions (Bigot and Fella, 2008: 306).

Following Soysal typology (1994), the Italian case is at the intersection between a corporatist and a statist model. It is a corporatist model because interest groups, especially business organisations, have been important actors in the provision of extraordinary legalisation processes and immigration law, and it is statist in the sense the state has concentrated and dominated the issue, given very few space for immigrant organisations to mobilise. Immigrant organisations do not have the institutional support to act under a common collective identity.

Faced with those challenges, civil society actors have a very limited legitimacy to intervene and to participate in the political contention and in the public field. It makes them very weak and invisible actors, especially immigrant organisations. In spite of the fact they have an infra-political activity and a rich networking, they are paralysed by the political system and the lack of professionalisation: *“the auto-organization of immigrants is very scarce because of the fear they have, because they know they do not obtain much and because they do not want to be exposed because they can risk a lot in front of this law”* (Action).

The few advocacy coalitions had reduced effects on policies and could not counterbalance the opposition fractions within left and right-wing parties and between the both sides of the political spectrum.

3 - Immigration civil society in Portugal

Similarly to the Italian case, we made 10 semi-structured interviews to pro-immigrant organisations, acting at the national level. The selection relies on the Portuguese newspaper analysis *O Público* and the snow-ball method. We started with those organisations that were more often cited in the articles and, through their contacts, we could establish the link with other organisations, which were not cited in the mediated public sphere.

3.1 - Immigrant organisations and the state: a process of institutionalisation

Contrary to the Italian case, Portuguese state established a process of institutionalisation of immigrant organisations.

A crucial piece of legislation for immigrant organisations was law n. 11/99, which approves the legal regime regulating immigrant organisations. Until then, immigrant organisations were not regulated by a special status, and were formed as non-profit cultural organisations or private institutions of social solidarity. The approval of the law paved the way for higher visibility of these organisations as political partners and legitimate representatives of the interests of immigrants in the public sphere.

The existence of interorganizational platforms in the immigrant associative movement is a signal of a high level of organisations and structuration, facilitating organisations' role as political actors vis-à-vis the state. The first example took shape during the special period of legalisation of immigrants (1992-1993) as the Coordinating Secretariat of Legalization Actions. This organization held the role of mediator between the associative movement and the government.

Contrary to the Italian case, immigrant organisations in Portugal are co-opted by the state, in order to implement projects and as consultants in the process of decision-making of immigration law. The Portuguese case is characterised by a corporatist style of government. The co-optation is made by a process in which each community organisations elected their representative that may be selected as a mediator under the supervision of the Academi.

This process and the immigrant organisations law are a form for the state to control, centralise and discipline the Portuguese immigrant collective action. In fact, in this way, the possibilities of disruptive actions are lower, as our newspaper analysis illustrated. The collaboration in projects and the dependence of fundings from the state make immigrant organisations non-independent and free actors. They have to adapt the government prerogatives to actuate. In the Portuguese case, the immigrant civil society sector is self-limiting by the state and self-limited by

leaders that have to comply with the rules. Their potential as countervailing power is limited since they are controlled. The state may control inequalities in the Portuguese civil society by redistributing policies, however, immigrant organisations will see their capacity of bargaining reduced. This strong relation with the state may also condition the level of vitality of immigrant political mobilization. In fact, Portuguese strong state institutions, as it is the case of immigration, influences the level of civil society's political mobilization.

We are in front of an inclusive-active state that establish channels for immigrant influence and claims to be perceived in government. It has also the deliberative representational monopoly that tries to favor one interest over other. However, the Portuguese state has the merit to include in the table of deliberation and decision-making non-economic actors.

3.2 - Immigrant civil society and national POS: the role of the State

Until the beginning of the 1990s, the Portuguese state had a passive attitude vis-à-vis immigration, both in the area of immigration control and integration in the host society.

At the beginning of the nineties, the immigration issue started to be object of public debate and contention, involving several actors and issues.

The state attitude changed with the pressure, on the one hand, of immigrant organisations, media, opposition political parties, Catholic Church organisations and, on the other hand, of the Schengen Treaty, to which Portugal adhered in 1991. The centre-right government (PSD), with a parliamentary majority, saw the first signs of politization of the immigration issue under a very specific frame, that is, the security of borders. The parliament debate is made under the auspices of security frames, the preservation of the Portuguese national identity and the consolidation of the economic and political links with Palop countries and Brazil. In order to respond to civil society pressure, an extraordinary process of regularisation is implemented in 1992 and 1993 (Decree-law n. 212/92, of 12 October). This first procedure prefigured the first step towards a political and public sphere of immigration. The socialist party, at that time, was the main ally and the main vehicle for immigrant associations to reach the public debate. This role is traditionally an attribute of left-wing political parties. The Portuguese socialist party took the first steps and gained visibility as a fundamental ally for immigrant organisations.

While restricting the access and permanence in the country, they take measure for a more open policy of integration, which is a tendency orientation in European countries with the exception of Italy, where the erosion of civil rights is constant (Hollifield, 1999: 59).

Besides a security frame, there was also another one, specific to the Portuguese case. There was a vector of reconstruction of the immigration phenomenon with an universalist-lusotropicalist frame. The universalist frame is linked to the emigration past, which is present in the discourses of the socialist party. The lusotropicalist frame is related with the positive discrimination that is made regarding Palop countries and Brazil.

The 1995 year and the venue of socialists in power is seen as a turning point in the area of immigration (Machado, 2005: 124). The issue of immigration gained a stable visibility in the public sphere and as an element of political contention. At the national level, immigrant organisations begun to be direct partners of state institutions such as the Acime or the Foreigners and Borders Services. Platforms of dialogue were created, which allowed immigrant organisations to have a direct voice in the field, and, by the same token, to enter a phase of professionalization.

At the state level, the socialist government continued to promote actions of integration. In 1996, a new law is approved by the Republic Assembly (Assembleia da Republica), designed by the socialist party, which allows the right of vote at the local level, for certain nationalities under reciprocity conditions (law n. 50/96). The initiative had the support of the Republic President at that time and the President of the Republic Assembly. Thus, in 1997, immigrants from the chosen nationalities could vote for the first time. Their vote was of particular attention from the socialist party in certain cities, in order to win the elections against the right-wing political party – PSD or even the communist party – PCP. Moreover, all the political parties in Portugal with a parliamentary representation included foreign candidates in their electoral lists. Right-wing political parties, even those with a more extreme connotation, tried to identify themselves with immigrant interests. Thus, at that point and at that moment, immigration was not an issue of contention between political parties. Elites were not divided, which would lead to a closure of opportunities for immigration actors subsystem to make political claims. Yet, in the Portugal case there was an alignment of co-optation and dialogue. In this sense, elites non-division was an open window for immigrants.

At the national political decision-making level, all measures were approved by political parties in the Portuguese parliament. The main frames cited above continued to guide policies. In spite of their supremacy in the political discourse, another frame arose, mainly in the mediated public sphere, which associated immigration with criminality. What is striking is that this discourse was stipulated by both major political parties: the PS and the PSD. Once again, there was a political alignment in immigration issue in Portugal, but it did not prevent immigrant organisations and pro-immigrant organisations to participate in the deliberative process.

In 2002, the first minister resigned and new national elections took place. During the campaign and accordingly with Machado (2005: 143), the issue of immigration is not object of a strong political contention among the different political parties. Contrary to Italy, there is a minimum level of consensus, which is also facilitated by the fact that extreme-right political parties are not present in the parliament. Once more, the state searched for the collaboration of civil society actors to implement its policies. A four years' plan of integration is promoted that integrated national and local entities as well as immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations. In this larger framework, immigrant organisations saw the possibility to be considered legally as non-governmental organisations and potential partners with the state. Contracts are established between immigrant organisations and the state in order to promote concrete policies. Moreover, there was the support to the creation and manutention of immigrant organisations. This right centre government reforced the collaboration with civil society actors, taking the leading role in the platform of decision-making activities.

3.3 - Immigrant civil society's mobilising structures

What are thus the main instruments trades unions, political parties, church-based organisations, and social movements organisations have to define them as essential interlocutors or players? What are the mobilizing structures of the pro-immigrant organisations?

Portuguese trade unions have had an ambiguous role in the immigration issue. The two main organisations the CGTP – Intersindical Geral dos Trabalhadores Portugueses (General Inter-Trade Union of Portuguese Workers) – and the CGT – Confederação Geral do Trabalho (General Confederation of Labour) have been present in the field, but as lobby actors in the labour area. Their relation with immigrant organisations have been weak and based on doubts. However, in some cases, they have had a public presence with few demonstrations and lobby. Their claims relate to economic prerogatives and worker rights and the revision of immigration law. Contrary to the italian case, trade unions have some specific demands relating to integration processes. They do not focus solely immigration issues.

As we could discern in the above analysis, political parties have had a constant presence in the field. In fact, there are not main dissension between the centre-right and the centre-left political parties. They have followed a same lign of reasoning in terms of immigration and immigrant policies, namely the positive discrimination of Palop immigrants and the constant restriction of the immigration law. The frame of traditional emigration country has also conditioned political parties

preferences, in the sense that governments compensate their restrictive immigration laws with integration initiatives. Both political sides of the spectrum have opened windows of political opportunities specifically through co-optation and collaboration in integration policies. Contrary to the Italian case, there were no extreme-rights parties, which would probably led to compromise initiatives to satisfy their requests.

Yet, the communist party – PCP – has been more critical to immigration laws. In the several and numerous moments of legislative debate, they voted against.

Catholic Church organisations are central elements of the Portuguese civil society. They act at different levels, as service providers, as lobby actors and religious action. There are two elements that are more relevant in the immigration Portuguese subsystem: the Catholic Charity Work for Migrations and the Jesuit Refugee Service. They are central elements since they are a link between immigrant organisations and the state. The Catholic Charity Work for Migrations has a pragmatic-utilitarian frame which is the defense of workers right. In parallel, they promote the evangelism, the social doctrine of the Church, which is blurred with human rights discourse.

Social movements actors in Portugal are few and weak. Portuguese society has little history of independent organisations before the 1974 military coup, but with the consolidation of democracy, the civil society could reorganize fairly (Hamann and Manuel, 1999: 73), and as a result, political parties and interest groups became increasingly important political actors. Nevertheless, and accordingly with Sousa Santos and Nunes (2004: 11), other civil society actors did not follow the process of civil society construction, which led to an absence of a strong, organized civil society, and an absence of social movements and citizens organisations. For the authors, “the authoritarian mode of relationship between the state and citizens has persisted despite the change in political regime and the advanced framework of rights (...). The absence of spaces for public debate and deliberation outside the formal settings of parliament, local government, legislatures and courts of law is conspicuous. Non-state public spheres are still foreign to portuguese society” (op.cit., 12). In fact, the Portuguese state in the field of immigration is strong because the deliberative process is concentrated by interest groups (business organisations) and political parties. Moreover, decisions are taken in parliament and in its corridors. As Ferreira states, there is a high level of administrative centrality of the Portuguese state (2004: 8). The co-optation of immigrant organisations is a good example of the power the Portuguese state has in the immigration subsystem.

Pro-immigrant organisations that are integrated in a Portuguese immigration collective action make the counter-power role in a field dominated by the Catholic Church. As other civil

society actors, they receive funds from governments to develop social activities. However, they manage to have an independent voice and political action.

Their repertoires of action are twofold: manifestations, media letters, and/or petitions: “*after seven years (since I am here), that I saw the first immigrant manifestation*” (Sos Racismo); “*there are several forms. Manifestations, petitions, documents and letters delivered. The law of racial discrimination was an area for petition that we already gave to the government*” (Sos Racismo); “*we participated also in an european petition to regularise all immigrants in the european space*”; “*sometimes, we make the manifestation alone, other times, in collaboration with immigrant organisations or other pro-immigrant organisations*” and lobbying. When they want to make an awareness campaign, their frames are Catholic discourse oriented: “*to make the public opinion aware of their problems, and we know that the portuguese population is strongly Catholic, then we made a special discourse and a vigil in a church*” (Solidariedade imigrante).

Rarely they make disruptive sort of actions. Their lobby role is facilitated by the co-optation to the Acidi institution, where they have a seat in the council.

One important diagnostic frame is the lack of political representation and independent space for immigrants: “*some nationalities have no space of political affirmation*” (Sos Racismo). Moreover, they criticise the level of dependence immigrant organisations have with the state.

In general terms, their frames are progressist and universalist since they based their assumption on personhood and rights. However, this personhood is based in a host society as the main space of integration, with a main focus on the labour market.

Moreover, they also claim for the end of nationality differentiation that the lusotropicalist frame constructed in the law. Finally, their claims culminate in the revision of the nationality law in order to naturalize all the second and third generations in Portugal.

We believe that immigrant organisations have had a low level of confrontational political mobilisation in the contentious politics, besides the process of co-optation, because they integrate a non-fragmented surrounding (see Oberschall, 1973, in Odmalm, 2005). If we follow the typology developed by Diani and Bison (2003) that we retrace above, the portuguese collective action does function differently regarded to the italian case. The centrality of the Acidi element that concentrate the most part of organisations channels and networks in portuguese civil society indicates that we are in front of consensual organisational processes. The conflictual element is not present as the process of co-optation and the political claims analysis illustrate. The target actor, the government, is simultaneously target and part of the collective action process. The Catholic Church oriented-network presents a collective identity and no conflictual orientation. Moreover, their link with

public and state institutions may lead us to claim that they are embedded in consensual organisational processes as well.

They perceive political opportunities structures as essential for immigrant and pro-immigrant political mobilisation, with moments of openness and others where immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations collective action is latent.

An important role of political opportunities structures was the nationality stratification that the immigration laws and the lusotropicalist frame made inside the immigrant movement. In fact, the stratification and positive discrimination towards Palop and Brasil citizens led to rivalities and fragmentations among immigrant organisations. It can be interpreted as a partial closure of political opportunities structures.

The moments immigrant and pro-immigrants choose to act politically are the moments of political debate and competition between political parties for legislative and presidential elections. In the last decade, the political Portuguese panorama witnessed the emergence and development of an extreme-right political party that is seen as the future cause of problems for the immigrant social movement.

In general terms, it is explained that the changing and successive immigration laws have been conditioned partly by the immigrant movement world. This is striking because, as we saw above, the Portuguese civil society is quite weak and oriented towards service provisions and state collaboration. This is also the case with immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations, but they could manage to have a certain level of influence over the political parties in parliament. They were able to take advantage of the collaborative type of political opportunities structures, however, they were also disciplined and controlled as the choice of repertoires of action illustrates.

4 - Portugal and Italy in a comparative perspective. Some main conclusions.

In a nutshell, the relation between the Portuguese political system and the immigrant civil society is characterised by interdependence, compromise and agreement. Conflict is highly institutionalised. Public disputation is present in pro-immigrant organisations that are the base of the collective action. Immigrant organisations and Catholic church oriented organisations are considered as legitimate political and deliberative actors. There was since the beginning of the 1990s a progressive inclusion of immigrants in the Portuguese public sphere. In our case, and contrary to what reports the civil society literature, the state has been the main agent of equality promotion. Portuguese immigration subsystem is encompassed by the state. In the Italian case, the

political system and the civil society at large is based on interdependence, with Catholic-Church organisations and on conflict with social movements organisations. Immigrant organisations are not seen as legitimate and deliberative actors. Those attributes are perceived by governments, trade unions and Catholic-Church organisations, which have a good deal of negotiation in social issues. Contrary to Portugal, there has been no inclusion of immigrants in the Italian public sphere. The state does not have the role of the main agent of equality promotion. This is mainly made at the civil society level. The state is the central element of deliberative and decision-making processes.

In Portugal, immigrant civil society has been an agent of replacement of state actors rights' attribution area. Accordingly to Schmitter (1993) definition of civil society, we are in front of a structure that is partly dependent from public authorities and willing to act within pre-established rules of civil nature. However, they do not fulfill all criteria of a developed civil society. This seems a special characteristic of the Portuguese immigration civil society. In Italy, immigrant civil society has been also an agent of replacement of state agents as service providers, but this has been performed mostly by Catholic-Church organisations and some civic organisations. They receive funds from national, regional and local authorities to deal with immigrants, but social movements actors do not necessarily want to act within pre-established rules. Some more direct actions have been taken, especially by left libertarian groups.

The portuguese subsystem, understood as a stable relation structure among actors coming together around a special issue, is an heterogenous space, relatively divided, multidimensional and multipurposal. In spite of the fact that they are fragmented, they have not deepen existing cleavages in the immigration field. The italian case does not differ greatly from the portuguese case, however, the competition between the different advocacy coalitions is vivid. In fact, the three main actors Caritas, Rifondazione Comunista and the trade union CGIL do have different frames and channels of communication with the state. The italian network – or the mesomobilisation level (Tarrow, 1994) - in Rome is dense as interviewees explained. Immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations have cooperative and auscultation links. However, as said before, there is competition among the three main actors of the immigration network. Trade unions have an economic, utilitarian perspective while Rifondazione Comunista has an humanitarian and anti-racist approach. The Caritas is more committed to human rights frames. This stark division turns more difficult the possibility of alliances, even if political parties and trade unions may act together in manifestations. Rifondazione Comunista and collective action organisations have been the counter-vailing power even if not effective. Interest aggregation, instead of competition and dissension, would be enhanced if there was an dense network of organisations. The immigration civil society in Italy is more vital and independent however this is not because the state relegate authority to them. On the

contrary, the Italian state has acted in an exclusive-corporatist-active way. This is particularly evident during the centre-right coalition in the mid of the 2000s.

In Portugal, claims are consistent and focused on the legal status, the nationality law and social and political rights. Agendas of the several organisations are not really disconnected. Moreover, they are a step forward in claiming rights compared with Italy. Yet, they are still dealing with first processes of integration as the lack of non-material and cultural claims illustrate. They are still focused on material and citizenship fundamental rights which is an attribute of old social movements (Tarrow, 1994). In Italy, claims revolve around the legal status, the detention camps and the level of repression of the state. There is a feature of the new social movements, namely the denunciation of the state control over the individual autonomy (Cattacin et al, 1997: 63). Social and political rights are still in the infancy. Basically, civic rights are claimed by pro-immigrant organisations. We could thus conclude that they are in a basic level of political claims-making compared to Portugal. Nonetheless, in both cases, there is a movement around civic rights and left-wing thematics such as worker's exploration or socioeconomic rights.

As the network highlights, there are relations of coalition between immigrant organisations and pro-immigrant ones as well as with Catholic-oriented organisations. Competition may come from anti-racist organisations as their progressist frames illustrate. The Portuguese civil society have not acted really as a counter-vailing power. The mix of open and closed political opportunities associated to a strong and active state led to a relatively softened civil society and an incipient social movement. The absorption of claims and actors towards the state structures led to a lesser vitality and independence of a possible social movement. The Portuguese state has been an inclusive-active agent, sponsoring and certifying groups with the removing of obstacles and with the creation of channels for their influence being perceived. Contrary to Horta (2003) conclusions, there is a system of interest representation, which makes the Portuguese state a corporatist one, with the inclusion of noneconomic interests groups. However, this does not mean that the civil society elements do not make rational choices and do not act, as we could realise.

In the Portuguese case, immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations have had the sympathy of the socialist and communist parties. Other political parties from the right-wing have also contacted and even included immigrants in their ranks but have not been constant allies. In spite of the fact that immigration has a relatively high level of controversy, political parties, in the Portuguese parliament, have been relatively open to immigrant claims and have been in alignment in what concerns the immigration laws. There has been a certain level of stability of the broad set of political elites with the strong presence of the socialist party as an ally, which led us to conclude that the Portuguese policy-specific political opportunities have been relatively open to immigration

claims. In the words of Kriesi (1996), there has been a full procedural integration, but, contrary to what he claims, the Portuguese state has been strong. The Italian case gives us a completely diverse picture. Political opportunities structures have been more open under a centre-left coalition than a centre-right one. During the Il Ulivo government, pro-immigrant organisations could access the deliberative and decision-making political sphere as councillors. However, as we saw previously, the channels closed abruptly. There was thus a mix of open and closure of political opportunities structures. Moreover, the lack of elites alignment made that the government had to respond to opposition claims, namely Lega Norte and Alleanza Nazionale. Detention camps are the emblematic example of such process. At that moment and under this particular political configuration, an actor made the counter-power, that is, Italian courts that tried to remind the government that the level of repression was unconstitutional. Left-wing political parties in Portugal and Italy have diverse role vis-à-vis the immigration subsystem. In fact, the socialist party in Portugal, which has governed the country for two legislatures in our analysis timing, has had a sympathetic role with immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations, while the left-wing coalition in Italy during the deliberation of the Turco-Napolitano law has had a problematic role, not always in favour of immigrant claims, in the immigration political mobilisation. This fact confirms the assumption that legislators have a high level of autonomy from pressure (Wilson, 1990: 15). The Portuguese case goes in the direction, on the one hand, of social movements assumptions regarding the importance of left- libertarian political circles (Giugny and Passy, 2006, Tarrow, 1994), and on the other hand, immigration political mobilisation studies (Eccarius-Kelly, 2008; Wong, 2006). The Italian case does not support those results. In both countries, communist-libertarian parties have maintain a positive role in the sector as supporters and cooperation actors. Instability among elites has been stronger in Italy than in Portugal. In fact, the Portuguese case is characterised by some level of consensus among political parties in parliament and few parties in the party system. This is striking since few parties in the party system should have led to a closure of opportunities. We may explain this fact with the electoral instability. In Italy, the left-coalition and the right-coalition had to respond to right-wing destabiling parties. The electoral instability functions differently in both countries. While in Portugal, the electoral stability has allowed immigration civil society to promote political action and claims-making, in Italy the instability among political parties has paralyzed civil society sector.

The conventional forms of protest, which characterise the portugual immigration collective action, attest the centrality of the state and its relative openness to claims and its implementation. In spite of the fact that demands have been proactive, that is, they have not fit the dominant ideology

by involving rights, privileges and means to which the immigrant groups are not entitled to, the Portuguese state has had the ability to channel their demands and to avoid more negative and violent confrontational forms of protests. As the literature states (Tarrow, 1994: 89), “strong states have the capacity to implement the policies they choose to support; when these policies are favorable to the claims of movements, the latter will gravitate to conventional forms of protest; but when they are negative, violence or confrontational ensues”. This first combination applies to the Portuguese case while the second possibility is closer to the Italian case.

In the Italian case, forms of protest are less moderate than in Portugal, with some punctual violent or confrontational cases. This is striking because the closure of the system should have led to more confrontational and violent actions. The presence of Catholic-centre political parties in Italian parliament and senate may explain that. In fact, even when windows are not available, pro-immigrant organisations, namely Caritas, may channel their political claims. However, compared with the Portuguese case, they have been more frequent and with huge dimensions, which attests the closure of the state and its political system. In accordance with the dominant model that argues that strong states associated to weak civil societies led to violent outbursts and that weak states associated to strong civil society lead to open participation and conventional collective action (Tarrow, 1994: 62), we discern two different and contradictory situations. In Portugal, the strong state associated to a weak civil society did not lead to violent action but to open participation and conventional forms of action. In the Italian case, the strong state associated to a relatively weak civil society lead to both situations: violent moments and conventional forms of action.

To sum up, Italy and Portugal presents two diverse immigration civil society and political opportunities structures. If we consider the different dimensions of political opportunities structures, we can state that, in both countries, the closure of opportunities did not prevent collective action nor the total opening. Collective action was stratified in accordance with moments of closure and opening, in a sort of mix system. In both countries, collective action actors have taken advantage of the changing fortunes of government and opposition parties. This was especially evident in the Portuguese case.

Above all, we can discern two strong state institutions with different approaches to immigration civil society. While in Portugal the state has been open to co-optation of immigrant and pro-immigrant actors, in Italy we found a closed centred state with an exclusive approach. Compared with other European countries, the Portuguese case is closer to the Sweden and Netherlands situation, while the Italian is more similar to the Germany case (Odmalm, 2006). In

Sweden and the Netherlands, immigrant organisations are equal partners alongside the state and the market. In Germany, there is no special provision granted towards immigrants on the national level. Both countries have a corporatist approach to migration but with different actors. In Portugal, immigrant and pro-immigrant actors are absorbed into state structures, phenomenon that is also called tokenism (Karan, 2008). Those actors have a parallel and almost a similar role as business-oriented interest groups, which leads us to affirm that, in the Portuguese case, immigrant and pro-immigrant organisations have been transformed into an interest group. In fact, their configuration is similar to the common definition of interest groups, that is, organisations with an institutional character, separate from government though often in close partnership with government attempting to influence public policy (Granados and Knoke, 2005: 288; Wilson, 1990: 2). Moreover, interest groups allow minorities to prevail over majorities to whom the issue, too detailed or specialised, matters little (op.cit., 4). Andersen (1990) is critical regarding those institutions. They are seen as mere consultative channels with a limited political power. They are supposed to serve also as a form to avoid or diminish immigrants political rights.

In Italy, the immigration issue has been handled in a corporatist manner with a triangle of actors: trade unions, business-oriented interest groups and the government. There are relatively few and centralised interest groups representing major economic interests. We have however to add the Catholic-Church organisation that has had a fundamental role in immigration policies. Its influence is felt through Christian political parties. For Karan (2008) this leads to state hegemony and class domination (op.cit., 182). Interpretations of the issue is biased towards the view of the established elite. There is an influence of the prevailing structures and conditions on the immigrant organisations' choices and on what extent they are able and are prepared to put on the table questions and issues. In addition, in the Portuguese case, organisations are forced to behave as a branch of the government with a tight economic control over their activities, which promote dissension among organisations rather than solidarity. Immigrant organisations abandon the goal of making fundamental changes in economic, cultural and political institutions. This goes in the direction of our newspaper analysis. Claims are mostly around the civic immigrant status. Moreover, and in the view of Taylor (1994: 54), there is no immigration civil society. Civil society exists when there is free organisations, which are not under the tutelage of the state. Furthermore, there is the risk that the creation of an immigrant or pro-immigrant organisation becomes a goal in itself rather than a mean of political action.

In the Italian case, there is a reproduction of immigrants' powerlessness while in Portugal there is a certain level of empowerment.

We can state that in the Italian case, it is difficult to establish a causal relation between immigrant and pro-immigrant political mobilisation and political reforms. As several historical studies on immigrant collective action say (Wittol de Wenden, 1988), there can be a strong political mobilisation without the extension of rights to foreigners and there can be a weak or almost inexistent political mobilisation and the extension of foreigners rights. In the Italian case, we see the first possibility. In fact, there are been moments of strong political contention without the extension of foreigners rights. The Portuguese case illustrates the opposite situation. In fact, immigrant and pro-immigrant political mobilisation is weaker than the Italian one, however, there have been some integration policies and the attribution of political rights to certain immigrant groups.

Our final question is to evaluate whether or not there is a pro-immigrant and immigrant social movement in Italy and Portugal. Following Wieviorka, there is an social movements around the issue of immigration if there is the following conditions: “an ethnic mobilisation belongs to the category of ‘social movements’ if its particular assertion of identity (in terms of language, history or religion) is not separate from its willingness to fit into a bigger picture with room for universal values. They can come together if the sense of group specificity is associated with the ideas of human rights, equality or individualism. An ethnic mobilisation has an impact like a social movement if it refuses being bounded with the ethnic limits; if it links its assertion of ethnicity to social and political demands shared with other excluded groups; if it accepts to advocate demands other than its own in the narrowest sense” (1994: 29). And based on the social movements definition, it takes place when “there are collective challenges towards political authorities, led in the name of a group or a population that has not – or few – access to traditional political arenas, and conducted principally by non-conventional means” (Tarrow, 1994).

In the Portuguese case, we are in presence of punctual and non- unified campaigns led by non-immigrant organisations with diverse framing processes. We do not find an unified collective identity among organisations, which is not in consonance with the social movements definition. Furthermore, as we have seen, non-conventional means are not recurrent. Pro-immigrant and immigrant groups are included in the political system via the national public council. Finally, pro-immigrant and immigrant organisations do not claim universal rights but yes particularistic rights which are peculiar to the immigration field.

The Italian case is striking because, at a certain point, there is moments of quasi-social movements. As in Portugal, there is not a unified collective identity and pro-immigrant organisations have diverse frames to perceive the social phenomenon. However, in the moments of large manifestations, there is an active and large network that embraces pro-immigrant and immigrant organisations, formal or informal, well-established or recently formed. In our case, we are in front

of punctual campaigns that share certain characteristics with social movements but are not social movements in their form and nature (Tarrow, 1994: 20).

To sum up, immigrant collective action is made around diverse allies with diverse frames and repertoires of action. In the side of civil society mobilisation, we are in front of a set of objects rather than a specific object (see also Siméant, 1998).

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