

Eva Veselková

B.A. Dissertation Evaluation

2012

*Porovnání integrace italských a mexických imigrantů ve Spojených státech amerických*

Eva Veselková has written her B.A. dissertation on the integration of Italian and Mexican immigrants to the United States. The study is comparative in nature and relies heavily on statistics. The treatise contains an Introduction, four main chapters, and a Conclusion. The main factors addressed are socioeconomic status and social mobility as well as the amount and nature of prejudice faced by both groups. Kryštof Kozák is a fine supervisor.

In the Introduction, Miss Veselková clearly and eloquently states that the aim of the work is to determine whether and, if so, how the integration potential of recent Mexican newcomers differs from Italian immigrants who came to the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The hypothesis is that today's Mexican migrants and their descendants have a lesser integration potential than was the case with earlier Italian migrants.

Chapter 1 addresses the relationship between the economic status of immigrants and their integration potential. The author's theoretical analysis is very thorough and eye-opening. Miss Veselková cites sociological research, which differentiates immigrants into two categories, namely working-class immigrants and immigrants with human capital. As both the Italians and the Mexicans for the most part represent working-class immigrants, it is most appropriate to analyze socioeconomic status and its effect on immigration potential. In addition to socioeconomic mobility, factors such as limited residential mobility and marriage within the given community need to be taken into account. Indeed, these are attributes present among both the Italian migrants then and the Mexican migrants now.

Chapter 2 deals with the basic characteristics of immigrants and prejudices on the part of those born in the United States. Miss Veselková correctly notes that the sheer number of Mexicans coming to the States was not matched earlier by the Italians or any other ethnic group for that matter. However, when analyzed statistically in terms of percentage of the total population, the number of Mexicans does not seem so overwhelming. The same holds true for the Italians who landed on American shores a century earlier. The chapter also deals with the level of prejudice that both Italians and Mexicans have faced both because of their economic status and their racial features.

Chapter 3 analyzes the socioeconomic status of both Italian and Mexican immigrants as well as that of their respective children. The analysis provided by the author is impressive as is the statistical referencing. The figures indicating education levels and professions indicate a similarity between both Italian-Americans then and Mexican Americans today. This chapter is very convincing in its argumentation.

Chapter 4 discusses intergenerational social mobility of Italian-Americans and Mexican-Americans. Indeed, the third generation of Italian-American population caught up with the rest of the main population. Miss Veselková points out the difficulties with measuring the success of Mexican-Americans due to the fact that massive Mexican migration started only after changes in American immigration legislation in 1965. However, the indicators suggest that the success rate has been increasing with successive generations.

In the Conclusion, the author recapitulates her findings in previous chapters. She emphasizes the similarities in hurdles faced by Italian-Americans then and Mexican-Americans today. She claims that, unlike then, today institutionalized discrimination is not permitted and therefore she believes that Mexican-Americans will catch up just like Italian-Americans did before them.

This work is of exceptional quality and surpasses by far the requirements for a B.A. dissertation. I recommend an **excellent** mark and I believe that Miss Veselková should receive a **Dean's commendation.**

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