If you want to be one of us, then become like us: The evaluation of naturalization applicants by host nationals

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Imagine that one day the number of naturalized people endorsing distant religions and cultures becomes so important that our laws are modified according to their ideas, by means of the instruments of direct democracy. It would be too late then to call to safeguard our values and identity. The only way to prevent such an insidious threat to our homeland is by restricting naturalizations rather than extending them even further.

(A. Glarner, Swiss national Councilor, 18 January 2017. Our translation)

1 INTRODUCTION

Globalization and increased migration have challenged the ability of receiving societies to incorporate immigrants from diverse origins (Benhabib, 2004; Bloemraad, Korteweg, & Yurdakul, 2008). As a result, many European countries have adapted their citizenship regimes and naturalization procedures, and introduced integration programs to assess the eligibility of immigrants who wish to obtain national citizenship (Fassin & Mazouz, 2009; Gibson & Hamilton, 2011; Ossipow & Felder, 2015; Schinkel, 2010). Although European countries used to be relatively open to cultural diversity (Favell, 2003; Koopmans, Statham, Giugni, & Passy, 2005), such contemporary practices imply interventionist forms of assimilation, evidenced by naturalization procedures screening immigrants’ cultural conformity and individual allegiance to national norms and values (Brubaker, 2001; Grillo, 2007; Joppke & Morawska, 2003; Wieviorka, 2005).

Naturalization procedures in Europe have gradually combined two criteria of evaluation, reflecting the combination of “neoliberal communitarian” ideologies (Schinkel, 2010; Van Houdt, Suvarierol, & Schinkel, 2011). According to Van Houdt and colleagues,
neoliberal communitarianism entails a social contract with the host society, a contract that engages naturalized applicants to earn (and thus to be deserving of) their citizenship and to devote themselves to the national community (Van Houdt et al., 2011). Neoliberal communitarianism can therefore be defined as the blending of individualized (i.e., citizenship deservingness) and deindividualized (i.e., attachment to the host nation) criteria of evaluation, implying that citizenship must be deserved by showing high levels of attachment to the host nation.

In the present research, we examine how exactly expectations of attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness explain assimilationist attitudes among host nationals. In the following pages, we first consider the current state of acculturation literature concerning host nationals’ acculturation expectations towards naturalization applicants. We then explain how neoliberal communitarianism may account for these expectations. In three experimental studies, we finally test the general hypothesis that host nationals negatively evaluate naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture, because they are seen as violating both the communitarian principle of attachment to the host nation and the neoliberal principle of citizenship deservingness. Boundary conditions under which the negative effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations is no longer observed are also identified. Overall, our research unveils the normative pressures placed on naturalization applicants to assimilate via the combination of neoliberal communitarian ideologies. That being so, we contribute to the growing social psychological literature on citizenship and citizenship acquisition (e.g., Bail, 2008; Condor, 2011; Kadianaki & Andreouli, 2017; Reijerse, Van Acker, Vanbeselaere, Phalet, & Duriez, 2013; Stevenson, Hopkins, Luyt, & Dixon, 2015; Wright, 2011).

1.1 | Acculturation expectations among host nationals

Expectations regarding acculturation shape host nationals’ attitudes towards immigrants (Bourhis, Barrette, El-Geledi, & Schmidt, 2009; Essentials, Medianu, Hamilton, & Lapshina, 2015; Ostfeld, 2017). These expectations encompass two dimensions: host culture adoption, that is, the perceived degree to which an immigrant endorses the host majority culture, and heritage culture maintenance, that is, the perceived degree to which an immigrant preserves his/her culture of origin (Berry, 2001; Bourhis, Moïse, Perreault, & Senécal, 1997). When immigrants are perceived to endorse the host culture, host nationals tend to evaluate them positively (Maisonneuve & Testé, 2007; Roblain, Azzi, & Licata, 2016). When immigrants are perceived to preserve their heritage culture, in turn, reactions among host nationals are more ambivalent (Bourhis et al., 2009; Wolsko, Park, & Judd, 2006). Indeed, host nationals tend to be skeptical about the compatibility between “distant religions and cultures” and mainstream society (Montreuil & Bourhis, 2004; Safdar, Dupuis, Lewis, El-Geledi, & Bourhis, 2008).

This article examines specifically how perceived heritage culture maintenance affects host nationals’ evaluations of naturalization applicants. In line with prior research (Andreouli & DashtiPouri, 2014; Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2013; Mazouz, 2012), we argue that host nationals negatively evaluate naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture. This negative evaluation can be explained with the Common Ingroup Identity Model (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000; Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman, & Rust, 1993). According to this model, when immigrants are incorporated within mainstream society, intergroup differentiation between culturally distinct immigrant minority and national majority groups gives way to an expected superordinate identity, defined by a unique cultural reference (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007, 2009; Kunst, Thomsen, & Dovidio, 2018; see also Staerklé, 2013). Accordingly, host nationals are likely to expect naturalization applicants to assimilate to the group’s prototypical values, thereby shunning those suspected of jeopardizing national homogeneity and cohesion (Devos & Banaji, 2005; Waldzus, Mummendey, Wenzel, & Boettcher, 2004).

1.2 | Neoliberal communitarianism as a new assimilationist ideology

As previously argued, the combination of neoliberal and communitarian ideologies is best suited to account for the assimilationist attitudes among host nationals (Schinkel, 2010; Van Houdt et al., 2011). On the one hand, communitarian criteria of evaluation prescribe cultural uniformity and cohesion among group members in their endorsement of a common ingroup identity (Davies, 2012; Delanty, 2002), thus implying that naturalization applicants are expected to show high degrees of attachment to the host nation (Roblain et al., 2016). Accordingly, Jasinskaja-Lahti et al. (2019) have found that host nationals perceive dual citizens (i.e., immigrants holding double allegiance with both the host country and the country of origin) as more disloyal towards the host nation than naturalized citizens who renounced their previous nationality (see also Kunst et al., 2018; Levy, Saguy, Halperin, & Zomeren, 2017). In contrast to those who seek to maintain their heritage culture, naturalization applicants who decide to shed their former markers of cultural affiliation are indeed seen as exclusively valuing the host nation, thereby truly becoming “one of us” (Kunst & Sam, 2014; Verkuyten, Thijs, & Sierksma, 2014). In other words, when naturalization applicants seek to maintain their heritage culture, majority members should perceive them as weakly attached to the host nation.

On the other hand, neoliberal criteria of evaluation prescribe agency and individual autonomy for naturalization applicants who are expected to be responsible for their own fate (Dean, 1999; Joffe & Staerklé, 2007; Miller & Rose, 2008), thus implying citizenship deservingness (Beauvois, 1994; Son Hing et al., 2011). Deservingness operates in individualistic societies where “it is deemed legitimate to judge people according to their unique qualities, aptitudes and contributions, rather than according to their belonging to social
categories” (Licata, Sanchez-Mazas, & Green, 2011, p. 898; see also Gale & Staerklé, 2019; Ward, Gale, Staerklé, & Stuart, 2018). However, when neoliberal and communitarian criteria of evaluations are combined, citizenship deservingness becomes conditional upon attachment to the host nation: The less naturalization applicants are perceived as being attached to the host nation, the less deserving of citizenship they are likely deemed to be (Schinkel & Van Houdt, 2010; Van Houdt et al., 2011). Hence, naturalization applicants’ high degree of heritage culture maintenance may impair perceived citizenship deservingness indirectly, via lower perceived attachment to the host nation. Citizenship deservingness should therefore be the ultimate criterion used by host nationals to evaluate whether naturalization applicants should be granted national citizenship.

To sum up, this article tests the following general hypotheses (Figure 1):
1. Host nationals negatively evaluate naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture.
2. This negative evaluation is explained by the combination of neoliberal and communitarian criteria. Accordingly:
   a. When naturalization applicants maintain their heritage culture, host nationals perceive them as weakly attached to the host nation.
   b. The less host nationals perceive naturalization applicants as attached to the host nation, the less they perceive naturalization applicants as deserving citizenship.
   c. The less host nationals perceive naturalization applicants as deserving citizenship, the more negative their application evaluations.

These hypotheses are tested in three experimental studies. The negative effect of naturalization applicants’ high degree of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations, together with the mediating role of perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness, are assessed in Studies 1 and 2. The causal relationship between attachment to the host nation and perceived citizenship deservingness is tested in Study 3. Additionally, the three studies examine contextual boundary conditions under which host nationals tolerate heritage culture maintenance. More specifically, the moderating role of diversity policies (i.e., assimilationist vs. multicultural diversity policies) is examined in Studies 1 and 2, and the impact of national origin of the naturalization applicant (i.e., devalued vs. valued national origin) is examined in Studies 2 and 3.

2 | STUDY 1

The first experiment examined whether host nationals negatively evaluate naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture, and investigated the expected underlying processes involving perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness. Assessing a first boundary condition, Study 1 also tested whether diversity policies promoting multiculturalism increase tolerance towards heritage culture maintenance, as compared to diversity policies promoting assimilation. A number of studies have indeed shown that opinions towards immigrants who maintain their heritage culture vary as a function of the political environment in which opinions are embedded (Green & Staerklé, 2013; Guimond et al., 2013; Guimond, de la Sablonnière, & Nugier, 2014). As compared to assimilationist policies, under multicultural policies host nationals should therefore tolerate heritage culture maintenance to a greater extent.

To sum up, we expect that host nationals should negatively evaluate naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture (Hypothesis 1). Nevertheless, this negative effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations should be attenuated when diversity policies promote multiculturalism (rather than assimilationism; Hypothesis 2). Moreover, a moderated mediation was also expected: Host nationals should perceive that naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture are weakly attached to the host nation (Hypothesis 3a); the less host nationals perceive naturalization applicants as attached to the host nation, the less they should perceive naturalization applicants as deserving citizenship (Hypothesis 3b); the less host nationals perceive naturalization applicants as deserving citizenship, the more they should perceive that naturalization applicants maintain their heritage culture to a greater extent (Hypothesis 3c). However, under multicultural policies, the negative relationship between heritage culture maintenance and perceived attachment to the host nation should be attenuated (Hypothesis 4a), as should the indirect effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations through perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness (Hypothesis 4b).
2.1 | Method

2.1.1 | Participants

Four hundred and three students attending an introductory social psychology course at a university in the French-speaking part of Switzerland participated in the study. Only Swiss nationals were retained (73% of the original sample, n = 293). Age ranged from 18 to 40 (M = 20.43, SD = 2.37), although 99% of participants were under 27 years old. A majority of participants were women (77%, n = 226).

2.1.2 | Procedure and materials

During class time, participants responded to a questionnaire administered in French, which included the experimental manipulation and the dependent measures described below.

Experimental manipulations
Participants were randomly assigned to one of six conditions, defined according to a 3 (diversity policy: multiculturalism vs. assimilationism vs. control) × 2 (heritage culture maintenance: low vs. high degrees of heritage culture maintenance) between-subjects experimental design. In order to manipulate diversity policy, we provided a bogus description of naturalization directives made by legal authorities (Guimond et al., 2013, 2014). Depending on the experimental condition, participants were exposed to naturalization directives valuing either multiculturalism or assimilationism. No directives were present in the control condition. In both the assimilation and multicultural policy conditions, “the naturalization directives encouraged applicants to demonstrate their attachment to Switzerland and their respect for its laws through their behavior”. In the assimilation policy condition, naturalization directives also encouraged applicants to adopt Swiss traditions by stating that “the well-being of future generations derives from the ability of new citizens to preserve the cohesion of our country around its core values”. Conversely, in the multicultural policy condition, the naturalization directives encouraged naturalization applicants to maintain their heritage traditions by stating that “the well-being of future generations derives from the ability of new citizens to promote pluralism around the different cultures that animate our country”.

Because the diversity policy manipulation comprised three levels (i.e., multiculturalism, assimilationism, and control), two orthogonal contrasts were created to capture the difference between the multicultural policy condition and the other two conditions jointly (Contrast 1), as well as the eventual difference between the assimilation policy and the control conditions (Contrast 2). Because migration policies in Switzerland strongly tend towards assimilation (Goodman, 2010; Koopmans et al., 2005), we were not expecting any difference between the assimilation policy and the control conditions. Therefore, Contrast 1 was used to test our hypotheses comparing the presence of assimilation versus multicultural policies (referred to as such below), whereas Contrast 2 was simply controlled for (and results are reported where relevant).

In order to manipulate the naturalization applicant’s degree of heritage culture maintenance, we used the vignette method (Van Acker & Vanbeselaere, 2011; Verkuyten et al., 2014). Each participant was exposed to the bogus Commission Report of a male immigrant from Kosovo. In both conditions, profiles were anonymized and no picture of the applicant was provided. Furthermore, both profiles revealed the same level of host culture adoption, measured in terms of mastery of French (B2 level, which certifies the capacity to achieve most goals and express oneself on a range of topics), knowledge of Swiss institutions and history, and length of residence in Switzerland (12 years, which is the minimum legally required to apply for Swiss citizenship). In the low heritage culture maintenance condition, the applicant “never needed the support of the Kosovar community to adapt to Switzerland”, spoke “French as his main language at home”, and “claimed to consider himself more Swiss than Kosovar”. Conversely, in the high heritage culture maintenance condition, the applicant “needed the support of the Kosovar community to adapt to Switzerland”, “spoke Albanian as his main language at home”, and “claimed to consider himself both Swiss and Kosovar”.

Manipulation checks

Following the experimental manipulation, two sets of items were used as manipulation checks: perception of diversity policies promoted by Swiss authorities and perception of acculturation strategies employed by the naturalization applicant. Items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from not at all (1) to absolutely (5).

Perception of diversity policies was measured using four items. The first two (r(196) = .19, p = .008) verified whether respondents thought the naturalization directives promoted cultural assimilation, for example, “the guidance material prescribed applicants to endorse Swiss traditions”. The other two (r(196) = .72, p < .001) verified whether respondents thought naturalization directives promoted multiculturalism, for example, “the guidance material encouraged applicants to maintain their heritage traditions”.

2 According to the Swiss Federal Office of Migrations (OFM), the Kosovo Albanian diaspora represents one of the major and most devalued immigrant groups in Switzerland (Burri Sharani et al., 2010; Wanner & Steiner, 2012). The first migration wave in the 1960s was composed of seasonal workers, followed by a second wave during the 1990s, mainly composed of asylum seekers. Their arrival during a period of economic downturn, along with the involvement of young Kosovar Albanians in drug deals, built the image of a community that burdens the economy and abuses the Swiss asylum and welfare system (Fibbi & Truong, 2015).

3 Until 2003 some municipalities in Switzerland used referenda with closed ballots to decide on naturalization requests. Local voters received official voting leaflets that explained the pending naturalization request with a detailed description of each immigrant applicant. The experimental material was created to mimic these official voting leaflets (see Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2013; Hebing, 2008).
Perception of acculturation strategies was measured using four items divided into two separate dimensions. The first two items verified whether respondents perceived that the naturalization applicants adopted the host culture ($r(290) = .55, p < .001$), for example, "the naturalization applicant adopted the Swiss culture". The other two items verified whether respondents perceived that naturalization applicants maintained their heritage culture ($r(291) = .75, p < .001$), for example, "the naturalization applicant maintained his heritage culture".

Dependent measures

Perceived attachment to the host nation was assessed using four items taken from Roblain et al. (2016) ($\alpha = 0.80$), for example, "I have the impression that the applicant feels attached to Switzerland". Items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from not at all in agreement (1) to completely in agreement (5).

Perceived citizenship deservingness was measured using four original items inspired by Davey and colleagues (Davey, Bobocel, Hing, & Zanna, 1999; $\alpha = 0.85$), for example, "I have the impression that the applicant deserved to become a Swiss citizen". Items were rated on the same 5-point scale.

Finally, the main dependent variable, application evaluations, was assessed using three original items constructed for the purpose of this research ($\alpha = 0.90$), for example, "Do you think that the applicant has a suitable profile for obtaining Swiss citizenship?" Questions were answered on a 7-point scale ranging from not at all (1) to absolutely (7).

2.2 | Results

Data analysis was carried out with SPSS, version 24. Manipulation checks were carried out first, then hypotheses were tested.

2.2.1 | Manipulation checks

Perception of diversity policies promoted by Swiss authorities

To check if participants perceived diversity policy in Switzerland differently, depending on the diversity policy (i.e., assimilation vs. multiculturalism) and the heritage culture maintenance conditions (i.e., low vs. high heritage culture maintenance), we ran a two-way full-factorial MANOVA. Because correlations between pairs of items were not always satisfactory, we tested effects of the manipulation conditions on all four items separately. As expected, the multivariate main effect of diversity policy was significant, $F(4, 191) = 83.19, p < .001$; Wilk’s $\Lambda = 0.36, \eta_p^2 = 0.63$. Conversely, neither the multivariate main effect of heritage culture maintenance, $F(4, 191) = 0.31, p = .87$; Wilk’s $\Lambda = 0.99, \eta_p^2 = 0.006$, nor the multivariate interaction effect between diversity policy and heritage culture maintenance, $F(4, 191) = 0.68, p = .61$; Wilk’s $\Lambda = 0.99, \eta_p^2 = 0.01$, were found. Univariate tests for between-subjects effects of diversity policy using Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons revealed that participants in the multicultural policy condition reported lower scores on the two items describing assimilationist naturalization directives ($M_1 = 2.64, SE_1 = 0.10; M_2 = 3.25, SE_2 = 0.10$) than participants in the assimilation policy condition ($M_1 = 4.36, SE_1 = 0.11; M_2 = 3.64, SE_2 = 0.11$), $p_1 < .001$; and $p_2 = .008$ respectively. Participants in the multicultural policy condition reported higher scores on the two items describing multicultural naturalization directives ($M_1 = 3.14, SE_1 = 0.09; M_2 = 4.02, SE_2 = 0.09$) than participants in the assimilation policy condition ($M_1 = 1.60, SE_1 = 0.10; M_2 = 1.80, SE_2 = 0.09$), both $p < .001$.

Perception of acculturation strategies employed by the naturalization applicant

The same two-way full-factorial MANOVA procedure was used to check if participants perceived naturalization applicants’ degrees of heritage culture maintenance and host culture adoption differently, depending on the three diversity policy (i.e., assimilation, multicultural, and control) and the two heritage culture maintenance (i.e., low vs. high heritage culture maintenance) conditions. As expected, the multivariate main effect of heritage culture maintenance was significant, $F(4, 283) = 76.74, p < .001$; Wilk’s $\Lambda = 0.48, \eta_p^2 = 0.52$, while the multivariate main effect of diversity policy was not significant, $F(8, 566) = 0.96, p = .46$; Wilk’s $\Lambda = 0.97, \eta_p^2 = 0.01$. A multivariate interaction effect was also found, $F(8, 566) = 2.28, p = .02$; Wilk’s $\Lambda = 0.94, \eta_p^2 = 0.03$. Univariate tests for between-subjects effects of heritage culture maintenance using Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons revealed that participants in the high heritage culture maintenance condition reported higher scores for the two items measuring perceived heritage culture maintenance ($M_1 = 4.02, SE_1 = 0.06; M_2 = 3.62, SE_2 = 0.06$) than participants in the low heritage culture maintenance condition ($M_1 = 2.70, SE_1 = 0.06; M_2 = 2.63, SE_2 = 0.06$), both $p < .001$. No univariate interaction effects between heritage culture maintenance and diversity policy were found on the two items measuring perceived heritage culture maintenance.

Conversely, participants in the high heritage culture maintenance condition reported lower scores on the two items measuring perceived host culture adoption ($M_1 = 3.33, SE_1 = 0.07; M_2 = 2.96, SE_2 = 0.07$) than participants in the low heritage culture maintenance condition ($M_1 = 3.99, SE_1 = 0.06; M_2 = 3.65, SE_2 = 0.07$), both $p < .001$. Although in both heritage culture maintenance conditions naturalization applicants showed the same linguistic level, the same knowledge of Swiss institutions and history, and the same length of residence in the country, participants perceived naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture as less willing to adopt the host culture. This result is in line with the negative relationship between heritage culture maintenance and host culture adoption evidenced by Van Acker and Vanbeselaere (2011).

A univariate interaction effect between heritage culture maintenance and diversity policy was also found on one out of two items measuring perceived host culture adoption, $F(2, 286) = 4.34, p = .01; \eta_p^2 = 0.03$. Yet, decomposition of the interaction term revealed no simple effects of diversity policy, meaning that participants inferred naturalization applicants’ low degree of host culture adoption from high degree of heritage culture maintenance, regardless of the diversity policy manipulation.
2.2.2 | Hypothesis testing

In order to test our set of hypotheses, we conducted a conditional process analysis (Hayes, 2018). First, we calculated the total effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations (Hypothesis 1), including interaction terms between heritage culture maintenance and diversity policy (Hypothesis 2). Then, we estimated the conditional indirect effects, by introducing perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness as serial mediators (Hypotheses 3a–3c) and by testing whether the indirect effects were moderated by the diversity policy manipulation (Hypotheses 4a and 4b). The full model was tested using PROCESS model 83 and reported in Figure 2. Frequencies, means, and standard deviations of all main variables decomposed by each experimental condition can be found in Table 1.

As a first step, application evaluations were regressed on the heritage culture maintenance manipulation (i.e., low vs. high heritage culture maintenance). The model was significant, $F(1, 290) = 20.15$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .06$. In line with Hypothesis 1, participants negatively evaluated naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture, $b = −0.57 (0.13)$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-0.81, −0.32]. At odds with Hypothesis 2, when multicultural policies were made salient in the experimental setting, evaluations of naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture did not improve, all $p > .25$.

As a second step, we tested whether the total effect of the heritage culture maintenance manipulation on application evaluations was mediated by perceived attachment to the host nation and subsequently by citizenship deservingness. Because we expected perceived attachment to the host nation to be causally related to perceived citizenship deservingness, the model allowed the two mediators to covary. Also, we inserted interactions between heritage culture maintenance and diversity policy manipulations. Indeed, we found a significant interaction between heritage culture maintenance and diversity policy manipulations predicting perceived attachment to the host nation (i.e., our first mediator), $b = 0.10 (0.04)$, $p = .02$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.19]. A test for simple effects confirmed that participants perceived naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture as weakly attached to the host nation, under the assimilation policy conditions (Hypothesis 3a), $b = −0.49 (0.08)$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-0.33, −0.65], but this was less the case under the multicultural policy condition (Hypothesis 4a), $b = −0.19 (0.11)$, $p = .08$, 95% CI [-0.40, −0.02]. When multiculturalism was promoted by legal authorities, the negative relationship between naturalization applicants’ high degree of heritage culture maintenance and perceived attachment to the host nation was attenuated.

As for perceived citizenship deservingness (i.e., our second mediator), we found a residual main effect of heritage culture maintenance, $b = −0.16 (0.07)$, $p = .03$, 95% CI [-0.31, −0.02] and the predicted main effect of perceived attachment to the host nation, $b = 0.54 (0.06)$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.42, 0.67], thus confirming Hypothesis 3b: The less participants perceived naturalization applicants as attached to the host nation, the less they perceived naturalization applicants as deserving citizenship. No interactions between heritage culture maintenance and diversity policy were found on perceived citizenship deservingness, all $p > .09$. Compared to the model without mediators, perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness accounted for a significant increase of the total variance explaining application evaluations (Hypothesis 3c), $\Delta F(2, 288) = 140.23$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.42, 0.67]. Moreover, when all the variables were inserted in the model, perceived citizenship deservingness was the only significant predictor of application evaluations, $b = 1.08 (0.08)$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [0.93, 1.23].

In line with relative conditional process analysis described by Hayes (2018), we estimated indirect effects of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations for the assimilation policy conditions and the multicultural policy condition separately. The index of moderated mediation confirmed Hypothesis 4b and revealed that the conditional indirect effects significantly differed depending on the diversity policy manipulation, $index = 0.18 (0.09)$, 95% CI [0.03, .031].

\textsuperscript{5}In the online appendix we provided results of structural equation modeling where parallel and serial mediation models were compared. In line with our prediction, the serial mediation fit the data better than the parallel mediation.

\textsuperscript{4}When a 3 (policy) × 2 (profile) full-factorial ANOVA without planned comparisons was preferred, the estimate for the interaction term was only marginally significant, $F(2, 290) = 2.62$, $p = .07$.

\textsuperscript{6}As previously mentioned in the method section, the assimilation and control conditions were put together in the first contrast code reported here.
As expected, the serial indirect effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations through perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness was significant under the assimilation policy conditions, $b = -0.30 (0.07)$, 95% CI $[-0.44, -0.17]$, but not under the multicultural policy condition, $b = -0.11 (0.06)$, 95% CI $[-0.24, 0.07]$. However, the residual indirect effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations through perceived citizenship deservingness was not moderated by the diversity policy manipulation, $b = -0.16 (0.08)$, 95% CI $[-0.32, -0.01]$.

In other words, perceived citizenship deservingness mediated the effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations in both multicultural and assimilation policy conditions, further demonstrating its vital role in predicting application evaluations.

### Discussion

This first study provided evidence that heritage culture maintenance is a burden for naturalization applicants, as host nationals negatively evaluated naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture. Furthermore, perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness mediated the negative effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations, showing that maintenance of heritage culture decreased perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness attributed to the naturalization applicant. While host nationals inferred levels of citizenship deservingness from the degree of attachment to the host nation attributed to the naturalization applicant, perceived citizenship deservingness was the only significant predictor of application evaluations. This suggests that citizenship deservingness is indeed a key criterion by which potential future ingroup members are judged.

Our findings did not fully support the moderation hypothesis involving diversity policies: Neither the total nor the direct effects of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations were moderated by the diversity policy manipulation. Yet, when legal authorities promoted multiculturalism, differences between applicants in terms of perceived attachment to the host nation were attenuated, suggesting that acculturation policies influence application evaluations only indirectly. However, under the multicultural policy condition the negative effect of heritage culture maintenance on perceived citizenship deservingness remained, thus explaining why host nationals negatively evaluated naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture. Indeed, heritage culture maintenance impaired perceived citizenship deservingness regardless of whether evaluations occurred in a multicultural or in an assimilationist political environment. Heritage culture maintenance therefore likely made group-based cultural differences salient for host nationals, differences that are perceived as incompatible with the normative importance placed on individual autonomy and independence (Gale & Staerklé, 2019; Iacoviello & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2015; Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2002).

Alternatively, the multicultural condition may not have completely yielded the expected results because the manipulation was too subtle. Switzerland is considered highly conservative and assimilationist in terms of naturalization policies (Koopmans et al., 2005). The reading of a bogus outline containing naturalization directives may not have been enough to persuade participants about the value of cultural diversity in the naturalization process. Moreover, the heritage culture maintenance manipulation contained information about cultural maintenance in multiple domains (i.e., language, feeling of belongingness, and support seeking), and referred to a naturalization applicant only from a devalued country (i.e., Kosovo). These two components may have aroused a generalized suspicion against the naturalization applicant that was not offset by the multicultural political environment, inspiring the development of Study 2.

### Study 2

A second experimental study was designed with three basic objectives: (a) to replicate both the direct and the indirect effects of
heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations, (b) to examine if the effects could be found for naturalization applicants from both valued and devalued countries, and (c) to test the role played by diversity policies in a more credible and natural setting. In Study 2, we used a real world operationalization of diversity policies by comparing two countries, Switzerland and Belgium, that are located on opposite sides of the spectrum in terms of support of cultural diversity and access to nationality (Howard, 2009). According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), citizenship eligibility in Switzerland is highly restrictive, whereas it is moderately permissive in Belgium (Huddleston, Bilgili, Joki, & Vankova, 2015). Also, the Multiculturalism Policy Index (MPI) ranks Switzerland as highly assimilationist, and Belgium as rather multicultural (Banting & Kymlicka, 2013). Assuming that immigration policies shape the societal environment in which evaluations are embedded (Bourhis et al., 1997; Green & Staerklé, 2013; Guimond et al., 2014), heritage culture maintenance of naturalization applicants should be more readily accepted in Belgium than in Switzerland.

Assessing a second boundary condition, Study 2 also tested the relationship between heritage culture maintenance and application evaluations for naturalization applicants from either valued or devalued countries. Compared to naturalization applicants from devalued countries, host nationals should be more welcoming and accommodating towards naturalization applicants from valued countries who wish to maintain their heritage culture (Kunst & Sam, 2014; Montreuil & Bourhis, 2001; Safdar et al., 2008). Finally, we decided to use a more conservative manipulation of heritage culture maintenance, focusing only on linguistic aspects (e.g., reading and speaking in one’s mother tongue at home). Language maintenance is associated with high cultural identification (Geerlings, Verkuyten, & Thijss, 2015; Mu, 2015), but is generally more tolerated by host nationals because it pertains to private spheres of life (Arends-Toth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Navas, Rojas, García, & Pumares, 2007; Tip et al., 2015).

To summarize, we expected again that host nationals should negatively evaluate naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture (Hypothesis 1). This effect should be qualified by interactions between heritage culture maintenance and country (Hypothesis 2a), and between heritage culture maintenance and cultural origin of the naturalization applicant (Hypothesis 2b). In other words, maintenance of heritage culture should be more negatively evaluated in Switzerland (i.e., in a country with comparatively assimilationist policies) than in Belgium (i.e., in a country with comparatively multicultural policies), and reactions should be less accommodating towards naturalization applicants from devalued compared to valued countries. We also expected to replicate the indirect effect through perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness (Hypothesis 3a–3c), and to find these indirect effects only in Switzerland (Hypothesis 4a) and only for naturalization applicants from devalued countries (Hypothesis 4b). Indeed, when diversity policies promote multiculturalism, or when the target person comes from a valued country, host nationals should not perceive naturalization applicants who maintain their heritage culture as weakly attached to the host nation.

### 3.1 | Method

#### 3.1.1 | Participants

Data collection took place in Switzerland and in Belgium. Participants included 306 undergraduate students at a university in the French-speaking part of both countries. After data collection, only Swiss (n = 127) and Belgian (n = 93) nationals without immigration backgrounds were retained (72% of the original sample, n = 220). Age ranged from 18 to 63 (M = 20.79, SD = 4.92), although 98% of participants were under 29 years old. A majority of participants were women (69%, n = 152). We observed no statistical differences between the two countries in terms of age and gender.

**Experimental conditions**

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions, according to a 2 (heritage culture maintenance: low vs. high heritage culture maintenance) × 2 (origin: devalued vs. valued origins) between-subjects experimental design. In Switzerland, Kosovar and Spanish nationalities were used to represent naturalization applicants from devalued and valued countries, respectively. In Belgium, Turkish and Italian nationalities were selected to represent devalued and valued countries, respectively. The same information from Study 1 was given in the first part of the Commission Report. In the second part, the naturalization applicant’s degree of heritage culture maintenance was manipulated differently. In the high heritage culture maintenance condition, the report indicated that the (male) applicant “spoke French clearly and fluently, revealing [mother tongue] accent”. Also, “he reported speaking, reading, and writing a lot in [mother tongue] in the household, often encouraging his two children to express themselves, to read and to write in [mother tongue] as well”. Conversely, in the low heritage culture

8A statistical power analysis based on data from study 1 was performed using G*Power and Power Med (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007; Schoemann, Boulton, & Short, 2017). With α = 0.05 and 1−p = 0.80, the projected sample size needed in order to replicate both total and indirect effects of the serial mediation model were approximately N = 250.

9Countries of origin were pretested (N = 50) in order to select the most prevalent comparable immigrant origins in each country, differing significantly in the way they were ranked by host nationals in terms of social status and prestige. A pool of ten nationalities per country was selected on the basis of official statistics concerning the number of naturalization applicants per year. Countries sharing the same language as the receiving society were discarded. A single item adapted from Adler and colleagues (Adler, Epel, Castellazzo, & Ickovics, 2000) was used to assess the perceived status in society of the ten national groups, from very low status (-5) to very high status (+5). In the main study, the perceived gap between the two devalued and the two valued immigrant groups retained was significant (ΔM = 1.03, SE = 0.25), F(1, 219) = 16.96, p < .001; ηp2 = 0.08, and was not qualified by any two-way or three-way interaction between country, profile and origin.
maintenance condition, the report indicated that the applicant “spoke French clearly and fluently, revealing no [mother tongue] accent”. Also, “he reported speaking, reading and writings very little [mother tongue] in the household, and rarely encouraging his two children to express themselves, to read and to write in [mother tongue]”.

**Manipulation checks**

Following the experimental manipulation, the same two items were used to assess perception of host culture adoption, \(r(218) = .52, p < .001\), and perception of heritage culture maintenance, \(r(218) = .77, p < .001\).

**Dependent measures**

Participants then responded to the same three sets of questions as from Study 1 about the naturalization applicant: perceived attachment to the host nation \((\alpha = 0.71)\); perceived citizenship deservingness \((\alpha = 0.79)\); and application evaluation \((\alpha = 0.91)\).

### 3.2 | Results

Data analysis was carried out with SPSS, version 24. Results are reported in the same order as for Study 1.

#### 3.2.1 | Manipulation checks

**Perception of heritage culture maintenance and host culture adoption**

To check if participants perceived naturalization applicants’ degrees of heritage culture maintenance and host culture adoption differently, depending on the two heritage culture maintenance (i.e., low vs. high heritage culture maintenance), the two country (Switzerland vs. Belgium), and the two origin (devalued vs. valued origins) conditions, we ran a three-way full-factorial MANOVA. As expected, the multivariate effect of heritage culture maintenance was significant, \(F(4, 209) = 64.69, p < .001\); Wilk’s \(\Lambda = 0.45, \eta_p^2 = 0.55\), as was the multivariate effect of country, \(F(4, 209) = 4.60, p = .001\); Wilk’s \(\Lambda = 0.92, \eta_p^2 = 0.08\), and origin, \(F(4, 209) = 3.43, p = .01\); Wilk’s \(\Lambda = 0.94, \eta_p^2 = 0.06\). No meaningful multivariate two-way or three-way interactions were found, all \(p > .23\).

Univariate tests for between-subjects effects of heritage culture maintenance using Bonferroni adjustment for multiple comparisons revealed that participants in the high heritage culture maintenance condition reported higher scores for the two items measuring perceived heritage culture maintenance \((M_1 = 4.06, SE_{1} = 0.07; M_2 = 3.72, SE_2 = 0.07)\) than participants in the low heritage culture maintenance condition \((M_1 = 2.56, SE_{1} = 0.07; M_2 = 2.57, SE_2 = 0.07)\), both \(p < .001\). No univariate effects, neither for country nor for origin, were found concerning heritage culture maintenance, all \(p > .49\).

Conversely, participants in the high heritage culture maintenance condition reported lower scores on the two items measuring perceived host culture adoption \((M_1 = 3.53, SE_{1} = 0.07; M_2 = 3.08, SE_2 = 0.07)\) than participants in the low heritage culture maintenance condition \((M_1 = 3.86, SE_{1} = 0.07; M_2 = 3.46, SE_2 = 0.07)\), both \(p = .001\). A univariate effect of country was also found, showing that Belgian participants reported lower scores on one of the two items measuring perceived host culture adoption \((M_1 = 3.62, SE_{1} = 0.08; M_2 = 3.07, SE_2 = 0.07)\) than Swiss participants \((M_1 = 3.77, SE_{1} = 0.07; M_2 = 3.47, SE_2 = 0.06)\), \(p_1 = .15\); and \(p_2 < .001\) respectively. Finally, participants in the devalued origin condition reported lower scores on the two items measuring perceived host culture adoption \((M_1 = 3.57, SE_{1} = 0.07; M_2 = 3.11, SE_2 = 0.06)\) than participants in the valued origin condition \((M_1 = 3.82, SE_{1} = 0.07; M_2 = 3.43, SE_2 = 0.07)\), \(p_1 = .01\); and \(p_2 = .001\) respectively. Echoing Study 1 and extending results of Van Acker and Vanbeselaere (2011), participants inferred lower levels of host culture adoption among applicants from devalued origins (compared to applicants from valued origins), and among applicants with high levels of heritage culture maintenance (compared to applicants with low levels of heritage culture maintenance). What is more, the perceived incompatibility between heritage culture maintenance and host culture adoption persisted despite the fact that heritage culture maintenance only pertained to private spheres of life.

### 3.2.2 | Hypothesis testing

In order to test our hypotheses, we conducted a conditional process analysis using the same procedure as in Study 1. As a first step, we calculated the total effect of the heritage culture maintenance manipulation on application evaluations (Hypothesis 1), and inserted interaction terms between heritage culture maintenance and country (Hypothesis 2a), and between heritage culture maintenance and origin (Hypothesis 2b). We then estimated the conditional indirect effects by introducing perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness as serial mediators (Hypothesis 3a–3c), and by testing whether indirect effects were moderated by country (Hypothesis 4a) and by origin (Hypothesis 4b). The full model was tested using PROCESS model 86 (Hayes, 2018), and reported in Figure 3. Frequencies, means, and standard deviations of all main variables decomposed by each experimental condition, for each country separately, can be found in Table 2.

The main effects of heritage culture maintenance (low vs. high heritage culture maintenance), country (Switzerland vs. Belgium), and origin (devalued vs. valued origins) on application evaluations were estimated first. The model was significant, \(F(3, 214) = 8.35, p < .001, R^2 = .14\). In line with Hypothesis 1, participants negatively evaluated naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture, \(b = -.62 (0.13), p < .001, 95\% CI [−0.89, −0.36]\). Moreover, naturalization applicants from valued countries were evaluated more positively than applicants from devalued countries, \(b = .32 (0.13), p = .01, 95\% CI [0.07, 0.58]\). Only a marginal main effect of country was found, showing that Belgian participants evaluated naturalization applicants similarly to Swiss participants, \(b = .25 (0.14), p = .07, 95\% CI [−0.52, 0.02]\). Contrary to Hypothesis 2a, the interaction between heritage culture maintenance and country did not improve the model fit, \(\Delta R^2_{adj} = .00\). In line with Hypothesis 2b, however,
the interaction between heritage culture maintenance and origin did improve the model fit, $\Delta F(1, 212) = 9.71, p = .002, \Delta R^2_{adj} = .04$. A test for simple effects showed that participants negatively evaluated naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture, in the devalued origin condition, $b = -1.00 (0.18), p < .001, 95\% CI [-1.36, -0.64]$, but not in the valued origin condition, $b = -0.21 (0.18), p = .24, 95\% CI [-0.58, 0.15]$. When naturalization applicants originated from valued countries, the negative relationship between naturalization applicants’ high degree of heritage culture maintenance and application evaluations became non-significant.

As a second step, we tested if the total effect of the heritage culture maintenance manipulation on application evaluations, as well as the interaction between heritage culture maintenance and origin, were mediated by perceived attachment to the host nation and subsequently citizenship deservingness. Because we tested for a serial mediation, the model allowed the two mediators to covary. Also, we inserted all meaningful interactions between heritage culture maintenance and origin and between heritage culture maintenance and country. Because neither main effect of country nor interactions between heritage culture maintenance and country resulted in significant estimates, all $p > .61$, we maintained country as a covariate. Conversely, we found the expected significant interaction between heritage culture maintenance and origin predicting perceived attachment to the host nation (i.e., our first mediator), $b = 0.27 (0.12), p = .03, 95\% CI [0.02, 0.51]$. A test for simple effects confirmed that participants perceived naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture as weakly attached to the host nation, under the devalued origin condition (Hypothesis 3a), $b = 0.36(0.09), p < .001, 95\% CI [0.19, 0.53]$, but not under the valued origin condition (Hypothesis 4b), $b = 0.09(0.09), p = .28, 95\% CI [-0.08, 0.27]$. When naturalization applicants originated from valued countries, the negative relationship between naturalization applicants’ high degree of heritage culture maintenance and perceived attachment to the host nation became non-significant.

As for perceived citizenship deservingness (i.e., our second mediator), we found a residual main effect of heritage culture maintenance, $b = -0.16(0.07), p = .01, 95\% CI [-0.29, -0.03]$, and a main effect of perceived attachment to the host nation, $b = 0.51(0.07), p < .001, 95\% CI [0.38, 0.65]$, thus confirming Hypothesis 3b: The less participants perceived naturalization applicants as attached to the host nation, the less they perceived naturalization applicants as deserving citizenship. No interaction between heritage culture maintenance and origin was found on perceived citizenship deservingness, $p = .40$.

Compared to the model without mediators, perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness accounted for a significant increase of the total variance explaining application evaluations (Hypothesis 3c), $\Delta F(2, 210) = 52.34, p < .001, \Delta R^2_{adj} = .28$. When all variables were inserted in the model, both perceived citizenship deservingness, $b = 0.91(0.11), p < .001, 95\% CI [0.70, 1.15]$, and perceived attachment to the host nation, $b = 0.28(0.13), p = .03, 95\% CI [0.03, 0.54]$ predicted application evaluations. Moreover, the direct effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations, $b = -0.27 (0.11), p = .02, 95\% CI [-0.48, -0.05]$, and the interaction between heritage culture maintenance and origin, $b = 0.44 (0.21), p = .04, 95\% CI [0.02, 0.86]$, shrunk, although they remained significant.

In line with conditional process analysis (Hayes, 2018), we estimated indirect effects of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations for applicants coming from valued and devalued countries separately. The index of moderated mediation confirmed Hypothesis 4b, revealing that the conditional indirect effects differed substantially depending on the origin of the applicant, index = 0.13(0.06), 95\% CI [0.01, 0.27]. Indeed, the serial indirect effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations through perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness was significant for applicants coming from devalued countries, $b = -0.17(0.06), 95\% CI [-0.30, -0.07]$, but not for applicants coming from valued countries, $b = -0.04(0.04), 95\% CI [-0.12, 0.02]$. In line with Study 1, a residual indirect effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations through perceived citizenship deservingness remained significant regardless of the origin of the naturalization applicant, $b = -0.15 (0.07), 95\% CI [-0.29, -0.03]$.

### 3.3 Discussion

This second experiment replicated and extended results from Study 1. By manipulating heritage culture maintenance in a more conservative
way, we confirmed the detrimental effect of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations even when maintenance only referred to private domains of life. The desire to maintain one’s own culture was indeed associated with lower perceived attachment to the host nation and with reduced citizenship deservingness attributed to the naturalization applicant. Moreover, host nationals negatively evaluated naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture only when naturalization applicants originated from devalued countries. Applicants from more valued countries paid no price in maintaining their culture, as attachment to the host nation was perceived as less incompatible with heritage culture maintenance. Moreover, the same processes were at play in countries with very different support of cultural diversity and access to citizenship. Our hypothesis about differences between Switzerland and Belgium in terms of tolerance of heritage culture maintenance was indeed rejected. Although slightly underpowered, the negligible effect sizes of the interaction terms for total, direct and indirect effects suggest the moderations would not have been found with a larger sample either. Naturalization applicants from devalued countries were expected to renounce their inherited markers of identity, regardless of the degree to which cultural diversity was promoted by legal authorities and official procedures in the country.\(^{10}\)

\(^{10}\)The slightly inconsistent findings between Studies 1 and 2 in terms of diversity policy may be due to its different operationalization. In Study 1 diversity policy was manipulated in the experimental setting and was therefore salient to participants. Conversely, in Study 2 diversity policy was inferred from the broader political environment and was presumably less salient to participants.

The two experimental studies converged in highlighting the indirect effects of heritage culture maintenance on application evaluations through perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness. While the negative effect of heritage culture maintenance on perceived attachment to the host nation was moderated by policy (Study 1) and origin (Study 2), the effect on perceived citizenship deservingness remained stable throughout conditions. Also, the two studies were consistent in showing that perceived attachment to the host nation preceded perceived citizenship deservingness in the causal chain between heritage culture maintenance and naturalization applicant evaluations. Nevertheless, in both experimental designs, perceived attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness were endogenous variables and no causal link between the two dimensions could be formally established. These causal limitations led us to design a third experimental study.

4 | STUDY 3

We designed Study 3 to determine whether perceived attachment to the host nation (i.e., the first mediator) predicted perceived citizenship deservingness (i.e., the second mediator) that in turn explained application evaluations. In order to assess the causal relationship between attachment to the host nation and the subsequent endogenous variables of the model, we manipulated naturalization applicants’ degrees

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Experimental manipulations</th>
<th>Low heritage culture maintenance</th>
<th>High heritage culture maintenance</th>
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<td>Devalued origins</td>
<td>Valued origins</td>
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<td>Perceived attachment to the host nation</td>
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<td>(n)</td>
<td>31</td>
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<td>(M (SD))</td>
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<td>Perceived citizenship deservingness</td>
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<td>(n)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(M (SD))</td>
<td>4.24 (0.58)</td>
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<td>Application evaluations</td>
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<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>(M (SD))</td>
<td>6.37 (0.80)</td>
<td>6.23 (0.96)</td>
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Belgium

| Perceived attachment to the host nation |
| \(n\)                             | 25             | 21             | 23             | 24             |
| \(M (SD)\)                        | 3.55 (0.46)    | 3.73 (0.31)    | 3.38 (0.57)    | 3.54 (0.43)    |
| Perceived citizenship deservingness |
| \(n\)                             | 25             | 21             | 23             | 24             |
| \(M (SD)\)                        | 4.23 (0.46)    | 4.11 (0.44)    | 3.83 (0.48)    | 3.92 (0.45)    |
| Application evaluations |
| \(n\)                             | 25             | 21             | 23             | 24             |
| \(M (SD)\)                        | 6.08 (0.68)    | 6.16 (0.73)    | 5.20 (0.94)    | 5.79 (0.89)    |
of attachment to the host nation (i.e., low vs. high attachment to the host nation) and estimated a mediation model that explained application evaluations through perceived citizenship deservingness. Study 2 did not show any moderation of the applicant’s origin on the causal process from perceived attachment to the host nation to application evaluations. Therefore, no differences were expected between applicants from valued and devalued origins. Nevertheless, we maintained this second manipulation in order to ascertain that the effect holds for both national groups. To summarize, we expected that host nationals should positively evaluate naturalization applicants who are highly attached to the host nation (Hypothesis 1); that high degree of attachment to the nation should increase perceived citizenship deservingness (Hypothesis 2); that perceived citizenship deservingness should explain why host nationals positively evaluate naturalization applicants who are highly attached to the host nation (Hypothesis 3), so that the indirect effect between attachment to the host nation and application evaluations through perceived citizenship deservingness should be significant (Hypothesis 4).

4.1 | Method

4.1.1 | Participants

One hundred and fifty-eight students attending an introductory social psychology course at a university in the French-speaking part of Switzerland participated in the study. After data collection, only Swiss nationals without immigration backgrounds were retained (74% of the original sample, \( n = 117 \)). Age ranged from 19 to 31 (\( M = 22.41, SD = 1.92 \)), although 99% of participants were under 28 years old. A majority of participants were women (81%, \( n = 95 \)).

4.1.2 | Procedure and materials

During class time, participants responded to a questionnaire comprising the experimental manipulation described below and the same dependent measures as used in Studies 1 and 2.

Experimental conditions

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions, according to a 2 (attachment to the host nation: high vs. low) × 2 (origin: devalued vs. valued origin) between-subjects experimental design. Again, Kosovar and Spanish were used as devalued and valued origins respectively. The same information used in Studies 1 and 2 was given in the first part of the Commission Report. In the second part, the naturalization applicant’s degree of attachment to the host nation was manipulated. In the high attachment condition, the applicant revealed high motivation to obtain Swiss citizenship. Moreover, the Commission claimed that “his motivation to naturalize seems to come from feelings of affection towards the country. In general, the applicant is strongly attached to the Swiss community and seems very identified with the country”. In the low attachment condition, the applicant still revealed high motivation to obtain Swiss citizenship. Nevertheless, the Commission claimed that “his motivation to naturalize does not seem to come from feelings of affection towards the country. In general, the applicant is weakly attached to the Swiss community and seems to identify weakly with the country”.

Manipulation checks

Following the experimental manipulation, the same four items used in Studies 1 and 2 were used to assess perception of attachment to the host nation (\( \alpha = 0.94 \)).

Dependent measures

Participants then responded to the same two sets of questions as in Studies 1 and 2 about the naturalization applicant: perceived citizenship deservingness (\( \alpha = 0.83 \)) and application evaluations (\( \alpha = 0.88 \)).

4.2 | Results

Data analysis was carried out with SPSS, version 24. Results are reported in the same order as in Studies 1 and 2.

4.2.1 | Manipulation checks

Perceived attachment to the host nation

To check whether the manipulation of attachment to the host nation and the two origins predicted perceived attachment to the host nation, we ran a two-way full-factorial ANOVA. Only a univariate effect of attachment to the host nation was found, \( F(1, 116) = 272.16, p < .001; \eta_p^2 = 0.71 \). In line with the manipulation, in the low attachment condition participants attributed less attachment to the host nation to the naturalization applicant (\( M = 2.54, SE = 0.08 \)) than in the high attachment condition (\( M = 4.30, SE = 0.07 \)). Indeed, neither origin nor the interaction between origin and attachment to the host nation resulted in significant effects, all \( p > .31 \).

4.2.2 | Hypothesis testing

In order to test our set of hypotheses, we conducted a process analysis (Hayes, 2018). First, we calculated the total effect of attachment to the host nation on application evaluations (Hypothesis 1). Then, we regressed attachment to the host nation on perceived citizenship deservingness (Hypothesis 2). Finally, we
estimated the conditional indirect effects of attachment to the host nation on application evaluations, by introducing perceived citizenship deservingness as mediator (Hypotheses 3 and 4). We used PROCESS Model 4 (Hayes, 2018) in order to test total, direct and indirect effects where the manipulation of attachment to the host nation predicted application evaluations through perceived citizenship deservingness (Figure 4). Origin was inserted as a covariate because no interactions were found. Frequencies, means, and standard deviation of all main variables decomposed by each experimental condition are reported in Table 3.

Confirming Hypothesis 1, the model testing the total effect of attachment to the host nation on application evaluations was significant, \(F(2, 114) = 16.88, p < .001, \ R^2 = .23\). Indeed, host nationals positively evaluated naturalization applicants who were highly attached to the host nation, \(b = 1.11 (0.19), p < .001, 95\% \ CI [0.94, 1.49]\). No interactions between origin and attachment to the host nation were found, \(b = −0.06 (0.39), p = .88, 95\% \ CI [−0.82, 0.71]\), confirming that the same processes were at play for naturalization applicants coming from both valued and devalued countries.

Confirming Hypothesis 2, naturalization applicants’ high degree of attachment to the host nation increased perceived citizenship deservingness, \(b = 0.42 (0.12), p < .001, 95\% \ CI [0.20, 0.66]\). Compared with the model without the mediator, perceived citizenship deservingness accounted for a significant increase of the total variance explained of application evaluations (Hypothesis 3), \(ΔF(1, 113) = 88.67, p < .001, ΔR^2_{adj} = .34\). As expected, the more participants perceived that the naturalization applicant deserved citizenship, the more positive were their application evaluations \(b = 1.09 (0.12), p < .001, 95\% \ CI [0.86, 1.32]\). Finally, an analysis of indirect effects using the bootstrapping method confirmed Hypothesis 4. Indeed, the indirect effect of attachment to the host nation on application evaluations passing through perceived citizenship deservingness was significant, \(b = 0.47(0.13), 95\% \ CI [0.23, 0.72]\). Also, the direct effect of attachment to the host nation on application evaluations shrank in magnitude, although it remained significant, \(b = 0.64(0.15), p < .001, 95\% \ CI [0.33, 0.94]\).

4.3 | Discussion

Study 3 assessed the causal relationship between (manipulated) attachment to the host nation and perceived citizenship deservingness, and tested whether the relationship between attachment to the host nation and application evaluations was mediated by citizenship deservingness attributed to the naturalization applicant. Results confirmed our hypotheses and corroborated the findings of Studies 1 and 2, showing that attachment to the host nation preceded citizenship deservingness in the causal chain from heritage culture maintenance to application evaluations. Furthermore, no difference was observed between applicants from valued and devalued countries. Regardless of the origin, attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness represent core requirements that all immigrant communities must fulfill in order to be fully accepted as citizens of the country.

5 | GENERAL DISCUSSION

In this research we examined naturalization preferences among host nationals with three experimental studies. Our findings consistently showed that national majority negatively evaluated naturalization applicants who maintained their heritage culture, thereby demonstrating the pressure to assimilate that immigrants face when undergoing the naturalization procedure. Heritage culture maintenance was indeed perceived as incompatible with the two evaluative dimensions underlying neoliberal communitarian representations of citizenship—attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness—that mediated the relationship between heritage culture maintenance and evaluations of naturalization applicants. Moreover, members of the national majority expressed different expectations of naturalization applicants depending on whether they originated from valued or devalued countries (Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2013). Naturalization applicants from valued countries were not sanctioned when they maintained their heritage culture. However, naturalization applicants from devalued countries were treated differently as a function of their degree of heritage culture maintenance: Those who renounced their heritage culture were more positively evaluated than those who maintained it (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2019; Kunst et al., 2018; Levy et al., 2017).

The two dimensions of attachment to the host nation and citizenship deservingness are not unfamiliar concepts to social psychologists, but they are marginal constructs in acculturation research (Roblain et al., 2016). Also, they have never been combined into a joint ideology to empirically explain the rise in assimilationist
attitudes in contemporary societies. The present studies provide a first step in integrating representations of citizenship (Andreouli, Kadianaki, & Xenitidou, 2017; Kadianaki & Andreouli, 2017; Reijerse et al., 2013) into a multidimensional framework for acculturation research (Schwartz et al., 2015; Schwartz, Unger, Zamboanga, & Szapocznik, 2010). Going beyond the classic conceptualization of ethnic, cultural and civic conceptions of citizenship (e.g., Brubaker, 1992; Howard, 2009; Joppke, 2010; Koopmans et al., 2005; Kymlicka, 2001), we demonstrated that different conceptions of citizenship can be combined into more complex configurations, so that neoliberal criteria of evaluation (i.e., citizenship deservingness) may depend on communitarian criteria of evaluation (i.e., attachment to the host nation). The robustness of our results across two national contexts differing substantially in terms of integration and citizenship policies—Switzerland and Belgium—corroborates the contention that neoliberal communitarianism is asserting itself across Europe (Davies, 2012; Schink & Van Houdt, 2010; Van Houdt et al., 2015).

Acculturation research has shown that immigrants’ high degree of heritage culture maintenance elicits different reactions depending on the life domain at stake (Arends-Toth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Navas et al., 2007), private forms of heritage cultural maintenance being generally more tolerated than public forms (Tip et al., 2015). However, our second experiment provided evidence that heritage culture maintenance is detrimental for naturalization applicants originating from devalued countries, even when maintenance pertains solely to the private sphere of life (e.g., speaking, reading, and writing one’s own mother tongue at home). Also, the differential treatment applied to naturalization applicants based on their ethnonational group membership—devalued versus valued origin—highlights the fact that ethnic criteria still condition social inclusion of immigrant groups in the national community (Kadianaki & Andreouli, 2017; Reijerse et al., 2013). The comeback of ethnicity as an exclusionary factor in public opinion across European countries may be even more important in the near future, due to the increased number of resettled asylum seekers, and the related threat mobilized by right-wing populist parties (Green, 2009; Green, Visintin, & Sarrasin, 2018; Staerklé & Green, 2018). In addition, we found only scant evidence of a mitigating effect of multicultural policy on the assimilation pressure faced by naturalization applicants from devalued countries. When inclusion of new ingroup members in the national ingroup is at stake, diversity policies promoting multiculturalism do not necessarily improve majority members’ tolerance for heritage culture maintenance (but see Bourhis, Montaruli, El-Geledi, Harvey, & Barrette, 2010; Guimond et al., 2013, 2014).

Even though our findings illustrate the complexity of the ideological, social, and psychological dynamics at work in the evaluation of naturalization applicants, a number of limitations need to be addressed. Indeed, our participants were all university students, and the experimental design comprised uniquely attitudinal measures within a fictitious vignette scenario (Hainmueller, Hangartner, & Yamamoto, 2015). Although a homogenous sample within a controlled experimental setting reduces external disturbances and allows for in-depth investigations of the underlying processes involved, it may undermine the generalizability of our findings to the general population (Henry, 2008; Sears, 1986). Nevertheless, previous studies conducted on representative samples of the national population (Turper, Iyengar, Aarts, & Gerven, 2015) and using behavioral measures (Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2013) are consistent with our conclusions that host nationals negatively evaluate naturalization applicants originating from devalued countries who refuse to assimilate.

To extend the present findings, future research should not only focus on members of the national majority group, but also include individuals with an immigrant background in the sample (for a similar argument, see Sarrasin, Green, Bolzman, Visintin, & Politi, 2018; Sarrasin, Green, Fasel, & Davidov, 2014). Compared to nationals, the latter may in fact focus on different dimensions of acculturation (e.g., more favorable attitude towards heritage culture maintenance and lower importance granted to attachment to the host nation), thereby disclosing different evaluations of naturalization applicants. Recent research also suggests that individuals with an immigrant background perceive significantly more compatibility between principles of individual justice (e.g., perceived citizenship deservingness) and collective justice (e.g., heritage culture maintenance), compared to host nationals (Gale & Staerklé, 2019). Therefore, the evaluation of naturalization applicants who demonstrate high levels of heritage culture maintenance may even be positive among individuals with an immigrant background.

Finally, a number of practical implications follow from these results. Although there is no clear consensus among scholars regarding whether current naturalization regimes are practically

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<tr>
<td>Low attachment to the host nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devalued origins</td>
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<td>M (SD)</td>
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<th>Application evaluations</th>
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connected with cultural assimilation or not (Joppke, 2017), our findings indicate that heritage cultural maintenance can be detrimental for naturalization applicants (Fassin & Mazouz, 2009; Politi & Staerklé, 2017). The general backlash of multicultural policies, intertwined with the concurrent rise of neoliberal communitarian ideologies, fosters shared representations of citizenship in which assimilation becomes de facto prescriptive. Naturalization offices and institutions accompanying naturalization applicants throughout their integration process should be made aware of risks and possible drawbacks that this implicit assimilation pressure represents for the incorporation of naturalized citizens (Politi, Chipeaux, Lorenzi-Cioldi, & Staerklé, 2020). Although legal inclusion in the national majority group may not be formally related to the level of heritage culture maintenance of naturalization applicants (but see Andreouli & Dashtipour, 2014), host nationals are very skeptical about any marker of cultural difference expressed by candidates from devalued countries, thereby jeopardizing their social inclusion and acceptance (Politi, Green, Lueders, & Staerklé, 2020). Given the central role of deservingness as a dominant, individual justice principle in the allocation of rights and resources, national majorities should be encouraged to perceive this Western meritocratic ideal as compatible with cultural diversity (Gündemir, Homan, Usova, & Galinsky, 2017; Ward et al., 2018), so that they may accept former immigrants as fully-fledged ingroup members even when they maintain their cultural distinctiveness.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS
The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

ETHICAL STATEMENT
The manuscript adheres to APA Code of Conduct ethical guidelines, as well as the Swiss National Science Foundation principles and procedures of integrity in scientific research.

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Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section.