

THE TYROLESE SCHÜTZEN AND THE SOCIAL CAPITAL: A CASE STUDY

Alberto Bernini

Independent Researcher, Member of ADAFA
Casa Sperlari, via Palestro 32 – 26100 Cremona
Phone: (+39)3331847336
E-mail: famber3@virgilio.it

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Abstract. *The article concerns the phenomenon of the Schützen in relation to the creation of social capital in the territory of Tyrol. The topic is closely related to the development of the local democracy through the defense of the cultural heritage and the local traditions, that represent an efficacious system for the social inclusion. In particular, the effects of the Schützen activity on the social structure are evident in the ability to create a strong sense of community, so that the level of belonging is developed in different ways, that include a large part of population. This contribution examines the Schützen history, their organization on the territory of the Tyrol, the relation between social capital and their activities, and how the concept of Heimat can contribute to their aims.*

Key words: *Schützen, Cultural Heritage, Social Capital, Heimat, Local Identity, Tyrol.*

Introduction

The phenomenon of the Schützen is a unicum in the European history and culture, characterized by a peculiar relation between the man and the land, that creates the social bonds basic for the foundation of a solid civic structure. In particular, the role of the Schützen is connected with the defense of the local identity and heritage in relation to the need for preserving the collective memory to hand on the new generations.¹ The relevance of their activities is evident in the ability to create a social structure in which every member is part of a common project, that can represent a local model for developing social capital in a specific territory. They create civic bonds through collective activities, reclamation of old songs and dances, defense of the local dialects, in short all the actions that can preserve the heritage. All the projects are referred to the sense of *Heimat*² that is ascribed to the concept of homeland, a territory in which social bonds are created by the population, through the foundation of civic connections based on trust and solidarity. The article examines the role played by the Schützen in South Tyrol, the northern Italian region yielded by the Austro-Hungarian Empire to Italy after the First World War, where many tensions between the German majority and the Italian state developed.

1. Historical Outlines³

1.1. Who are the Schützen?

They have been the defenders of the local Tyrolese identity since the Middle Ages; born as a territorial army, they are now devoted to cultural, social and political issues. The history of the Schützen essence is so tied to the history of Tyrol that is impossible to think to a real existence of Tyrol without the Schützen. Their objective is the preservation of the Tyrolese identity and *Heimat*, a term that refers to the spiritual bond existing between German people and the territory in which they live. The history of the Schützen is divided into three periods:

- Before 1511 (promulgation of the *Tiroler Landlibell*)
- Between 1511 and 1918
- After the First World War

1 UNESCO, Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003), [interactive]. [accessed on 10-12-2014]. <<http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/en/convention>>.

2 Prahl, E. *Das Konzept Heimat: eine Studie zu deutschsprachigen Romanen der 70er Jahre unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Werke Martin Walsers*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1993.

3 Südtiroler Schützenbund [interactive]. [accessed on 10-12-2014]. <<http://www.suedtirolerschuetzenbund/aktuell/organedessb.it>>.

1.2. Before 1511

The Tyrol's history originates in the Middle Ages, more precisely at the turn of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when the county of Tyrol was established in the area including today's Trentino-Alto Adige and Austrian Tyrol. The first provision in the defense of the territory is the enlistment of young people to protect not only the county's boundaries, but above all the Tyrolese towns: this fact laid the foundations of a small army led by the prince, who, in this way, exercises his authority.

As in many parts of Europe, also in Tyrol the town has a strategic importance, since it becomes: 1. a stronghold for the defense of citizens and farmers; 2. a safe place for trading; 3. a local administrative center. In case of war all the towns show a common solidarity, in fact after a specific request for help from one of them, the others are immediately involved in its rescue. Because of the more and more frequent need, a defense force was created in 1335 by decree of the Prince, from 1406 the conscription was conducted also by local courts, and the first register of Schützen is written in 1410 in the town of Lienz.

1.3. Between 1511 and 1918

The year that marks the turning point for their organization is 1511, when Kaiser Maximilian promulgated the *Tiroler Landlibell*, the act establishing a regional conscription. Beginning from this moment this recruitment became an institutional duty, the non-fulfillment of which caused a punishment to the guilty.

The Schützen are divided according to the tasks assigned to each company by the riflemen to the selected departments prepared for possible military attacks; since the seventeenth century the commanders have been selected and prepared by local Tyrolese authorities, and each company have had its own banners and flags. *Welschtiroler* were founded in 1605 in today's Trentino, a territorial militia created specifically for defending the southern borders, in 1704 the whole army was divided into regiments, each composed of 12 company, and in 1714 the conscription was introduced. From 1736 the Schützen tasks began to be diversified, being divided into two different groups: the *standschützen* ('sharpshooters', 'snipers fearsome') and *landschützen* ('reservists', called up in case of enemy attack). The first substantial military intervention was carried out in 1796 against Napoleon's troops, and beginning from this year each company was given the name of the hometown, a feature that further bound the Schützen to the home territory. In 1809 the fight for independence began, that culminated in the defeat of 1810 and the subsequent division of the Tyrol into three parts: one to Italy, one to Austrian Empire, one to Bavaria. In 1848 the first companies composed of students driven by their own teachers were constituted, and from 1864 onwards the defense was based on the following points:

- extension to 6.200 units of the companies' components;
- enlistment of new volunteers;
- creation of assault troops.

In 1870 the Schützen were divided into 10 battalions, each one made of 4 or 6 companies, and for several years all the males aged between 18 and 42 years were obliged to attend a military course.

1.4. After the First World War

During the First World War Schützen fought against Italy, but the defeat of the Austro-German alliance led to the annexation of South Tyrol to Italy. They were abolished in 1919 and exhumed in 1943-1945 by the Nazis (who took advantage of the resentment against the Italian nationalism) in order to throw out the Italians. In 1958 in Bolzano the *South Tyrol Schützenbund* was founded, in 1959 in Innsbruck there was the first public demonstration in which the Schützen appeared, but in 1962 the parades with uniforms were abolished and also all the activities of the Schützen were suspended until 1968. In 1970 in Merano was organized a great gathering to which around 4.500 Schützen participated, but 1975 was probably the most important year, because a federation of mountain Schützen that joined the companies of South Tyrol, Tyrol and Bavaria was created. The 1984 parade in Innsbruck involved 10.000 Schützen and 25.000 upholders: the main event was the procession of *Dornenkrone* (crown of thorns), symbol of the sorrow for the division of the Tyrol. Two years later the Schützen leadership criticized the Südtiroler Volkspartei (the party traditionally supported by the South Tyroleans), too far from the needs of the German community. In 1995 a company for the study of Tyrolese culture and traditions was founded in Innsbruck, and in 1996, during a demonstration in memory of Franz Innerhofer (killed by Fascists in 1921) there were clashes with the Italian nationalists, forcing the police to intervene. An important summit for a greater protection of linguistic minorities, involving Italy, Germany, Austria and the EU Parliaments, took place in 2003, and the following year a delegation of Schützen was received by the President of the Republic of Austria and the President of the Austrian Parliament. In 2006 the *Schützen-Petition*, a public act by which the Austrian Government was prompted to protect the German minority in South Tyrol created a big sensation, causing harsh reactions by the Italian Government. In 2008, during the celebration for the 50 years of the *Südtiroler Schützenbund*, many demonstrations in favor of the self-determination of South Tyrol took place.

2. Organization Chart

The Schützen organizational structure in South Tyrol (Südtiroler Schützenbund)⁴ is the following:

4 Südtiroler Schützenbund [interactive]. [accessed on 10-12-2014]. <<http://www.suedtirolerschuetzenbund/aktuell/organedesssb.it>>.

- 1) *Bundesleitung* (Federal Executive), whose duties are: admitting or expelling companies, establishing guidelines, carrying out regulations, approving the budget. It consists of:
 - *Landeskommandant* (Territorial Commander)
 - *Landeskommandant-Stellvertreter* (Deputy Commander)
 - *Bundesgeschäftsführer* (Federal Guide)
 - *Bundeskassier* (Federal Treasury)
 - *Landeskurat* (Religious Assistant)
 - *Bezirksmajore* (Major of the District)
 - *Referenten* (Public Relations)
 - *Vertreter der ladinischen Kompanien* (Representative of the Ladin companies)
 - *Bundessekretär* (Federal Secretary)
 - *Adjutant des Landeskommandanten* (Aide to the Commander)
- 2) *Bundesausschuss* (Federal Committee), whose aims are: establishing and training companies, and judging the efficiency and the utility of the same companies. It consists of:
 - *Mitglieder der Bundesleitung* (Members of the Federal Executive)
 - *Bataillonskommandanten* (Commanders of battalions)
 - *Delegierten* (Delegates of the companies)
- 3) *Bundesversammlung* (Federal Assembly), responsible for approving the budget, for judging the members' work and the companies' commanders, choosing the auditor, approving the companies' motions, amending the articles, melting the Südtiroler Schützenbundes. It consists of:
 - *Hauptleuten der Schützenkompanien* (Commander)
 - *Obleuten der Schützenkapellen* (Chaplain)
 - *Delegierten des Bundesausschusses* (Delegates of the Federal Committee)
 - *Mitglieder des Bundesleitung* (Members of the Federal Executive)
- 4) *Schützenkompanie* (Schützen Company), responsible for enlisting the residents of a place, managing the lever locally, organizing youth activities. It consists of:
 - A) *Hauptversammlung* (General Assembly) responsible for writing out the companies' minutes, electing the companies' commander, choosing the auditor, determining the members' motions, conferring honors, approving and amending the articles, dissolving companies.
 - B) *Kommandantschaft* (Command). It consists of:
 - *Hauptmann* (Captain)
 - *Oberleutnant* (Higher Lieutenant)
 - *Fahnenleutnant* (Flagship)
 - *Leutnant* (Lieutenant)
 - *Fähnrich* (Flag-Waver)
 - *Oberjäger* (Sniper)
 - *Jungschützenbetreuer* (Charge of the Youth)

3. Basic Principles of the Schützen Philosophy

3.1. Heimat

The Schützen aim at defending the Tyrolese culture and keeping local traditions alive through a series of activities, such as the commemorations of the dead and the restoration of monuments, the revival of the dialects, the publication of works concerning local culture, and finally the recovery of old songs and traditional costumes. The defense of one's identity is important to know one's own past in order to pass it down to future generations:⁵ in this way human heritage,⁶ cornerstone of society, does not vanish and can be handed down. The *Heimat* is presented as the synthesis of the dialectic between two elements: *woman* and *nature*. Only the combination of both creates the man, understood as a tension towards the infinite, which in an instant finds the fleeting moment to determine its essence. The visceral connection between woman and nature is the synthesis of life, the instant in which the *becoming* (*panta rhei*) joins to the *being* (*carpe diem*), thus creating man: it is the infinity that permeates the finished.

The word *Heimat* has a precise connotation in German *culture*, being used to indicate the native country (*Vaterland*), the place where the ancestors built the nation, different from the concept of *civilization* present in the English and French political doctrines: this concept is linked to politics and economy, whereas the German concept of culture refers to spiritual, artistic or religious phenomena. Moreover, while the civilization refers to an evolution process, to a condition that in time has been gradually progressing and reducing the differences among peoples, the culture stands in relation to the production of the human intellect, exalts the national diversities and suggests an ethnocentric vision of the social progress.⁷

3.2. Fatherland and Religion

For the aforementioned reasons, the concept of *Heimat* has attracted much attention. In particular, some studies on the Austrian Tyrol have pointed out a strong connection between the Enlightenment, anti-Enlightenment and nationalism around 1790, a period characterized by political turmoil.⁸ The relationship between the reforms carried out by the Austrian state and national pride affected the history of the Habsburg monarchy in the late eighteenth century;⁹ in particular, the pressure

5 Lenzerini, F. Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Living Culture of Peoples. *The European Journal of International Law*. 2011, 22(1), p. 102.

6 Pasinato, A. *Heimat: identità regionali nel processo storico*. Roma: Donzelli, 2000.

7 Elias, N. *La civiltà delle buone maniere*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1982, p. 110.

8 Cole, L. Nation, Anti-Enlightenment, and Religious Revival in Austria: Tyrol in the 1790s. *The Historical Journal*. 2000, 43(2), p. 475.

9 *Ibid.*

exerted by the central Austrian state, in order to impose a conformity of Enlightenment matrix, produced a nationalistic resurgence.¹⁰ A part of society did not accept the new social model imposed by the emerging middle class, increasingly inclined to the Enlightenment ideology,¹¹ and gave rise to movements for the preservation of national identity,¹² that opposed to the new system. In the Habsburg monarchy the Enlightenment thought and politics coincided with the local nationalist claims,¹³ and generated social tensions¹⁴ especially in the county of Tyrol, where the opposition to the Enlightenment was exerted by nobility and clergy.¹⁵ The Tyrol became a Habsburg possession in 1363 while maintaining a substantial autonomy, but it was affected by Maria Theresa and Joseph II's reforms,¹⁶ such as the mapping land which took place between 1760 and 1774 thanks to Peter Amich¹⁷ and Joseph Rohrer's ethnographic study (dating back to 1796).¹⁸ He was the first to use the terms *tirolische Bergnation*, *Vaterland*, *Bergvolk*, *Gebirgsland* (respectively: Tyrol Mountain Nation, Fatherland, Mountain People, Mountainous Country), and on the basis of these studies Joseph II divided the Tyrolese people in *wälsch* and *deutsch*,¹⁹ recognizing the conservative will of the Germanic Tyrol.²⁰ Rohrer used a method of study focused on the neutral and common well-being,²¹ and highlighted the bond between the social change and

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- 10 Evans, R.J.W. Joseph II and nationality in the Habsburg lands. In: Scott, H.M. (ed.). *Enlightened absolutism: reform and reformers in later eighteenth-century Europe*. University of Michigan Press, 1990, p. 209-19.
- 11 Beales, D. Social forces and enlightened policies. In: Scott, H. M. (ed.). *Enlightened absolutism. Reform and reformers in later eighteenth-century Europe*. Houndmills: Macmillan, 1990, p. 37–53.
- 12 Gellner, E. *Nations and nationalism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1983.
- 13 Stauber, R. Natur und Politik: Aufklärung und nationalis Denken im italienischen Tirol, 1750–1820. In: Albrecht, D.; et al. (eds.). *Europa im Umbruch, 1750-1850*. München: Oldenbourg, 1995, p. 103-23.
- 14 Balázs, E. H.; *Hungary and the Habsburgs, 1765-1800: An Experiment in Enlightened Absolutism*. Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998.
- 15 Schulze, W. *Ego-Dokumente: Annäherung an den Menschen in der Geschichte*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1996, p. 319-325.
- 16 Klingenstein, G. Riforma e crisi: la monarchia austriaca sotto Maria Teresa e Giuseppe II. Tentativo di una interpretazione. In Schiera, P. (ed.). *La dinamica statale austriaca nel XVIII e XIX secol*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1981, p. 93-125.
- 17 Mühlberger, G. Absolutismus und Freiheitskämpfe (1665-1814). In: Fontana, J. (ed.). *Geschichte des Landes Tirol*. Bozen: Athesia, 1985, p. 446.
- 18 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 477.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 Riedmann, J. Die deutschen Tyroler sind auf ihre Vorurtheile und alten Gebräuchen sehr versessen: Betrachtungen Kaiser Josephs II über Land und Leute von Tirol. *Veröffentlichungen des Tiroler Landesmuseums Ferdinandeum*. 1990, 70, p. 235-246.
- 21 Robertson, R. Joseph Rohrer and the bureaucratic Enlightenment. In: Robertson, R.; Timms, E. (eds.). *The Austrian Enlightenment and its aftermath*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991, p. 22–42.

the Tyrolese autonomist claims. They rejected many aspects of Maria Theresa and Joseph II's political program,²² also thanks to the support of clergy and nobility, that had a broad popular consensus in the region.²³ For this reason Joseph II tried limiting the local clergy,²⁴ by closing twenty-one monasteries between 1782 and 1787, thus causing a wide popular discontent;²⁵ the Prince-Bishop of Brixen, Count Joseph von Spaur, was very skeptical about the Enlightenment, unlike other intellectuals, such as Karl Schwarzl, professor at the University of Innsbruck, who accepted the new Austrian policy.²⁶ Besides, other two issues were contested by Tyrolese people: the reduction of autonomy, and the military district, which clashed with the territorial militia (the *Landesverteidigung*);²⁷ unlike other regions of the Austrian Empire, there was no standing army in the Tyrol, but only one force composed of volunteers.²⁸ Shortly afterwards, Joseph II revoked the unpopular measures because of the warnings by Sauer, the Governor of the south of the Empire.²⁹ In addition to nobility and clergy, also the bourgeoisie opposed to the reforms for merely economic reasons,³⁰ since the taxation affected especially the middle class,³¹ that was already facing a deep economic crisis. One of the staunchest opponents of the Enlightenment was Count Franz von Lodron, who supported the self-determination of the Tyrol, and declared that the Enlightenment was threatening the foundation of the state: religion.³² Another nobleman, Count Franz von Enzenberg, indicated the Tyrol by the terms *Vaterland* and *Nation*, recognizing the defense of the territory carried out by Andreas Dipauli, a commander during the war in 1796-1797, who belonged to the bourgeoisie (the peasants remained on the margins, although they fought).³³

22 Reinalter, H. Einwirkungen der Französischen Revolution auf die Innen und Aussenpolitik des Kaiserhofes in Wien. In: Reinalter, H. (ed.). *Die Französische Revolution und Mitteleuropa*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988, p. 75-138.

23 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 478.

24 Dickson, P.G.M. Joseph II's reshaping of the Austrian Church. *Historical Journal*. 1993, 36(1), p. 89-114.

25 Gelmi, J. *Kirchengeschichte Tirols*. Innsbruck-Vienna: Tyrolia 1986, p. 131-136.

26 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 478.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 479.

28 Fontana, J. Zur Geschichte der Tiroler Wehrverfassung in der Zeit von 1814 bis 1914. *Historische Grundlagen*. In: *Der Schlern*, 53 (1979), p. 269-279.

29 Hollerweger, H. Die Zustände in Tirol am Ende der Regierungszeit Joseph II. *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs*. 1968 16-30(21), p. 123-141.

30 Reinalter, H. *Geheimbünde in Tirol: von der Aufklärung bis zur Französischen Revolution*. Bozen: Athesia, 1982.

31 Köfler, W. *Land-Landschaft-Landtag: Geschichte der Tiroler Landtage von den Anfängen bis 1808*. Innsbruck: Universitätsverlag Wagner, 1985, p. 472-484.

32 Reinalter, H. *Aufklärung-Absolutismus-Reaktion: die Geschichte Tirols in der 2. Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts*. Wien: Schendl, 1974, p. 314-316.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 303-306.

The local diet, the *Landtag*, faced three factors of tension: the absolute monarchy, the independence of Tyrolese Germans, and the claims of the Italians in Trentino.³⁴ This dynamic led scholars to attribute to the term *Nation* not only a political or ethnic meaning, but also a cultural one, and it was a reaction to the centralist model of the Enlightenment, which involved other European countries, too.³⁵ However, the changes were so deep as to involve different spheres of power; in particular, the Church worried about the persecution of the clergy in France so much that in 1793 the abbot of the Cistercian monastery of Stams, Alois Specker, invoked the Tyrolese national pride inciting his fellow citizens to carry out the prince's orders.³⁶ The religious aspect was so important that in 1796 the Tyrolese authorities honored the Sacred Heart of Jesus, given that the opponents to the Enlightenment were mostly priests or monks, such as the prior of the Capuchin Albert Comployer, who accused Christian civilization to have decayed, unleashed the divine punishment, encouraged the war against France,³⁷ condemned the revolutionary thought,³⁸ and declared the French to be enemies of the faith.³⁹ After Napoleon's advance into northern Italy, Tyrol became the bulwark to defend the borders of the Germanic nation, but the Tyrolese local militia (*Landesverteidigung*) was initially overlooked⁴⁰ because it was considered not enough prepared, being a popular army.⁴¹ From this time onwards the resistance was supported by spiritual principles and the Tyrolese people asked for the protection of the *Sacred Heart of Jesus*, at the beginning proposed by the abbot of the monastery of Stams, Sebastian Stöckl.⁴² In particular, the religious vow of this cult helped create a strong bond among the land, God and the local culture, and the Emperor's decision to recognize and celebrate it was able to reinforce the relations between Austria and Tyrol.⁴³ This decision, besides calming the situation within the borders of Austria, succeeded in accentuating the resentment against the French, considered enemies of the *Fatherland*. The situation of danger increased the sense of belonging and the desire to defend the identity of Tyrol, that appealed to the

34 Levy, M. J. *Governance and grievance: Habsburg policy and Italian Tyrol in the eighteenth century*. West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1988.

35 Vierhaus, R. *Zwischen Ancien régime und Revolution: die Krise des älteren Europas*. In: Csáky M. *Europa im Zeitalter Mozarts*. Wien; Köln; Weimar: Böhlau, 1995, p. 41-49.

36 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 482.

37 Comployer, A. *Predigt von der christlichen Pflicht der thätigen Theilnehmung an dem Feldzuge wider die heutigen Weltbeglucker: Vorgetragen am Feste des heiligen Josephs in der Stadtpfarrkirche zu Hall im Tyrol*. Augsburg: Merz, 1793.

38 Comployer, A. *Sieben Diskurse über Freydenkerey und Unglauben*. Augsburg: Veith, 1796.

39 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 482.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 483.

41 Reinalter, H. *op. cit.*, p. 96-119.

42 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 483.

43 *Ibid.*, p. 486.

common religious sense, as shown by Mayr's preachings⁴⁴ and by this Jakob Gepp's sermon, Capuchins' father, in the Brixen Cathedral: "Lob und Dank dem göttlichen Herzen Jesu! Denn erstens ist es für unse in Herz voll der Liebe, das erfahren wir beim Anfange der Landesgefahr".⁴⁵ The entire population was pervaded by a deep religious fervor, that included also alleged visions of the saints and the Virgin Mary, and during this period the Schützen companies affixed religious proclamations and symbols on their flags.⁴⁶

The movement in defense of local identity is based on three elements: the importance of the *Fatherland* and the religious principles, the solidarity with other Austrian regions, and the identification in the German culture.⁴⁷ This feeling is also present in the culture of the Italian province named Trentino, whose inhabitants have felt part of the Habsburg dominion,⁴⁸ and in turn the Tyrolese people considered themselves as belonging to the German nation.⁴⁹ The defense of the *Heimat* originated from two main causes: the opposition to the Enlightenment and to the French invasion, and the development of a strong Tyrolese identity joined with German patriotism.⁵⁰ At this point it becomes crucial to examine the *Pact with the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, dated to the 1st June 1796, when the Diet of Tyrol decided to celebrate every year the feast with the same name, hoping for divine help to resist to the arrival of the French Army. This decision did not have just a military value, but also a religious one, since it embodied the difference between the two cultures, on the one hand Germany, strictly bound to the spiritual relationship with the land, on the other hand France, inclined to limit the religious factor. The Pact with the Sacred Heart of Jesus represents the spiritual foundation of *Heimat*, evident in the sense of belonging to a specific territory, based on the relationship between *man* and *spirit*. The Capuchin friar Albert Comployer connected the cult of the Sacred Heart to St. John's Gospel, to the chapter regarding Jesus' crucifixion and death, where Jesus' suffering seems to represent the Tyrolese situation, in particular the suffering caused by the divisions and struggles for independence through the centuries.⁵¹

The 'Crown of Thorns' (*Dornenkrone*) put on Jesus' head symbolizes the disintegration of an essence, whose identity has been denied and every reference point

44 *Ibid.*, p. 488.

45 Gepp, J. *Aus den ersten Jahren des Tiroler Herz Jesu-Bundes: drei Herz Jesu-Predigten gehalten im Dom zu Brixen in de Jahren 1799, 1803, und 1804*. Verl. der Buchh. des Kath.-polit. Preßvereins: Brixen, 1896, p. 9: "Praise and thanksgiving to the Divine Heart of Jesus! Firstly because it is for us a heart full of love; we feel this at the beginning of the danger for our land."

46 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 490.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 491.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 493.

49 Schmidt, G. *Geschichte des alten Reiches. Staat und Nation in der Frühen Neuzeit 1495-1806*. München: Beck, 1999.

50 Cole, L. *op. cit.*, p. 496.

51 San Giovanni, *Vangelo*, 19,2. In: *La Sacra Bibbia*. Roma: Ed. Paoline, 1964.

has been removed in order to subdue it. The *Heimat*, in contrast, aims to infinity, since its ultimate purpose is the *universal* and it has no limit but its existential will: it is the image of Christ: the infinity that interpenetrate into the finite. The Pact with the Sacred Heart of Jesus shows how the religious spirituality and the protection of the territory have been fundamental for the creation of the state and also how they have helped to create a sense of belonging to the nation, well represented in the concept of *Heimat*. The Pact with the Sacred Heart of Jesus at this point takes on the characteristics of a real unifying element, evident in the relationship established between a people and the land on which it lives, thanks to which local traditions are handed down to posterity, thus keeping intact the cultural heritage of the past. The essence of the Pact is the bond that unites the man to the land, revealed in the relationship with Christ, a real *symbol* (etymologically ‘what bonds’, from Ancient Greek *syμβάλλειν*), in opposition to the *devil* (etymologically ‘what divides’, from Ancient Greek *διabάλλειν*). The nation’s enemies are the Christ’s enemies: it implies that for Tyrolese people the independence does not mean just defending the bond, but also respecting the Pact stipulated with God. The cult of the Sacred Heart did not cease its own function with Napoleon’s death, but remained alive later, opposing to the laicism that pervaded European society throughout the nineteenth century, and to Nazism and Fascism in the twentieth century.

3.3. Self-determination

During the years between the two world wars a movement in defense of national identity, known as *Heimwehr*, developed not only in the Tyrol but also in the rest of Austria.⁵² The creation of this armed group was due to the aggressive policy of Yugoslavia and the proliferation of *Volkswehr* (the progressive-oriented army).⁵³ Subsequently, the *Volkswehr* was replaced by the new *Wehrmacht*, whose members sympathized with the *Heimwehr* (the conservative-oriented army), which grew with the passing years, opposing to the socialist formations.⁵⁴ The main objectives of the *Heimwehr* were: 1. the protection of the productive forces, 2. the conservation of national identity, 3. the safeguard of human freedoms.⁵⁵ These principles can be found also in the foundation of the *Wehrmacht*, that, going away from the Nazi doctrine, followed the ideals of the *Volksgemeinschaft*, i.e. the principle of defense of the community (at that time opposed by the Marxist doctrine).⁵⁶ In this context

52 Macartney, C. A. The Armed Formations in Austria. *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*. 1929, 8(6), p. 617.

53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.*, p. 619.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 624.

56 Messerschmidt, M. The Wehrmacht and the Volksgemeinschaft. *Journal of Contemporary History*. 1983, 18(4), p. 719.

the relationship between *Volksgemeinschaft* and *Burgfriede*⁵⁷ (the social cohesion) developed, characterized by the need to defend the local community by supranational forces. In the 1920s in Austria the Schützen were considered as excellent local armed defenders, the best sharpshooters,⁵⁸ whose task was always the defense of Tyrolese identity and culture. For these reasons they also countered to the Fascist and Nazi ideology, and many of them distinguished themselves by fighting for freedom, such as Michael Gamper.⁵⁹ He had observed and analyzed the fascist South Tyrol since 1923, focusing particularly on the work of the cartographer Ettore Tolomei, who translated the place names from German into Italian,⁶⁰ in order to delete the original toponyms. Nazism was also criticized for abandoning the South Tyrol in the hands of the Italians, in order not to question the alliance between Germany and Italy, thus legitimizing Fascists' actions.⁶¹

The tensions developed until today show the importance of the recognition of the local identities, not only in the case of the South Tyrol in Italy, but also in all the other situations that are present in the European civic culture. In this regard, the European Union protects all the diversities,⁶² including the linguistic and cultural ones,⁶³ in order to foster greater cohesion among the peoples living in the European territory;⁶⁴ in particular the European Treaty (Art. 151, par. 4) states that: “[t]he Community should contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time preserve the common cultural heritage before”.⁶⁵ Besides the importance of preserving linguistic diversity, the European Union has the duty to defend the plurality of cultures and to ensure equal rights to all the people. For these reasons, the era of globalization opens with many uncertainties also for Europe, especially about the question of the relationship between religious freedom and laical state

57 Broszat, M. Soziale Motivation und Führerbindung des Nationalsozialismus. In: Michalka, W. (ed.). *Nationalsozialistische Aussenpolitik*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1978.

58 Macartney, C.A. *op. cit.*, p. 627.

59 Marzari, W. *Kanonikus Michael Gamper: ein Kämpfer für Glauben und Heimat gegen Faschistenbeil und Hakenkreuz in Südtirol*. Wien: Verlag Brüder Hollinek, 1974.

60 Marzari, W. *op. cit.*, p. 30.

61 Marzari, W. *op. cit.*, p. 118.

62 Euromosaic Studies I, II and III (2004), [interactive]. [accessed 10-12-2014]. <http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/policies/lang/languages/euromosaic/index_es>.

63 Urrutia I.; Lasagabaster, I. Language Rights as a General Principle of Community Law. *German Law Journal*. 2007, 8(5), p. 481.

64 Toggenburg, G. A Rough Orientation Through a Delicate Relationship: The European Union's Endeavours for (its) Minorities. *European Integration online Papers (EIoP)*. 2000, 4(16), p. 1-31.

65 Bernier, I. La preservation de la diversité linguistique à l'heure de la mondialisation. *Le Cahiers de Droit*, 2001, 42(4), p. 945.

neutrality⁶⁶ in the now secularized Western world.⁶⁷ Therefore, to guarantee the citizens' freedom, it is necessary to protect the local identities and to sustain their essence, from which the new modern state was originated, and from which the democratic Western state was born.

4. The Social Implications of the Schützen Activity

4.1. Social Capital and *Heimat*

The concept of *Heimat* is a valid tool to understand the degree of integrity of a community and its ability to create strong social bonds; more precisely, the will to create a series of relationships among individuals, aimed at cooperation and maintenance of social stability, is present in the essence of *Heimat*. The connections binding together a group of people, include duties of reciprocity and establish rules of conduct in order to create a series of relationships that take place in everyday life.⁶⁸ The binomial individual-local identity warrants the importance of historical memory as a heritage to be preserved for future generations.⁶⁹

Robert Putnam has examined the crisis of the American society since the 1970s, the period in which the social decay of the Western world began, characterized by a decline in civic engagement and interpersonal relationships. In particular, Putnam asserts that social capital, foundation of the social structure of the community, is characterized by generalized reciprocity, solidarity, responsibility and trust.⁷⁰ The concept of social capital highlights the distinction between free associations and administrative institutions,⁷¹ since it follows closely the distinction between state and civil society already developed by Hegel.⁷² The theme of social capital is relevant for the Schützen, because their objectives, aimed at the preservation of Tyrolese usages and customs, favor the social aggregation, and also keep alive the sense of belonging to the homeland. Through their activities, involving not only men but also women and young people, the Schützen establish a solid political culture, that takes on the characteristics of the civic virtue and of the devotion to the moral

66 Ladeur K. H. Augsberg, I. The Myth of the Neutral State: The relationship between state and religion in the face of new challenges. *German Law Journal*. 2007, 8(2), p. 143.

67 Marramao, G. *Die Säkularisierung der westlichen Welt*. Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1996.

68 Szreter, S. The State of Social Capital: Bringing Back in Power, Politics and History. *Theory and Society*. 2002, 31(5). In: Putnam, R. *Bowling Alone. The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000, p. 20-21.

69 Bernini, A. *Un esempio di Democrazia Urbana: l'associazione Monumenta di Parma*. Napoli: Scriptaweb, 2009, p. 17.

70 Szreter, S. *op. cit.*, p. 574.

71 Woolcock, S. Social Capital and Economic Development. Toward a Theoretical Synthesis and Policy Framework. *Theory and Society*. 1998, 27(2), p. 161-182.

72 Avineri, S. *Il pensiero politico e sociale di Marx*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1968, p. 33.

principles shared by the members of a group, in turn determining the evolution of social capital inside a community.⁷³ This collaboration is based on the trust⁷⁴ among components; in particular, it has been observed that over the centuries the social actors have created complex fiduciary bonds for the establishment of organizations based on solidarity and structured in a voluntary and horizontal way.⁷⁵ Through their activities, the Schützen demonstrate the importance of their political role: here the term ‘political’ refers to no party, but rather to the development of a true civic culture (in the same way, the Greek word *polis*, from which ‘political’ derives, is strongly linked to the need to establish a strong social cohesion, in order to generate an important dimension of civil society).⁷⁶ The *Heimat*, the bond with the land, acts as a social glue, thus instilling in the citizens a greater civic engagement;⁷⁷ it is based on generalized reciprocity, defined as a widespread confidence among members of a large social group, within which bonds of solidarity are created, involving an increasing number of individuals.⁷⁸ The concept of *Heimat* is referred to the spiritual foundation of the state, as *order of things as such*, whose essence is the result of the synthesis between the *family* and the *community*. On the contrary, the materialist doctrine has always opposed to all that does not derive from material relations of production, limiting its vision to a reality in which everything that is not materially measurable is less important. For this reason, the *Heimat* as a spiritual element is fought and denied, also because it is the result of the Judeo-Christian culture based on the person and opposed to the materialist ideology, based on the masses. The organization of each Schützen company points out the importance of the commander, a true *civic leader* who takes the form of moral guide for the community, as example of rectitude and correctness: an outstanding civic example for all.⁷⁹

73 Bourdieu, P. The Forms of Capital. In: Biggart, N. W. (ed.). *Readings in Economic Sociology*. Malden Mass.: Blackwell, 2002, p. 286.

74 Sabetti, F. Dalla cultura civica al capitale sociale: progresso nella scienza politica comparata. *Rivista Italiana di Scienza Politica*. 2006, 36(2), p. 188.

75 Tarrow, S. Making Social Science Work Across Space and Time: A Critical Reflection on Robert Putnam’s Making Democracy Work. *The American Political Science Review*. 1996, 90(2), p. 393.

76 Berezin, M. Politics and Culture: A Less Fissured Terrain. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1997 (23), p. 366.

77 Szreter, S. *op cit.*, p. 574.

78 Szreter, S. *op cit.*, p. 574.

79 Hart D.; Grant, N. A Partnership in Virtue among All Citizens: The Public Service and Civic Humanism. *Public Administration Review*. 1989, 49(2), p. 103.

4.2. Social Activities

The Schützen engagement in creating social capital is evident in the political, cultural and social fields:⁸⁰

Politics:

- self-determination and peaceful reunification of Tyrol (within the European context)
- safeguarding of the local toponyms
- preservation of nature and monuments
- defense of the minority rights

Culture:

- maintenance of historical consciousness
- revival of traditional customs and usages
- preservation and revival of the dialects
- maintenance of old songs

Socialization:

- preservation of camaraderie without distinction of rank
- neighborhood solidarity in the village communities
- engagement in charity organizations
- integration of the people in the community

The relationship between the *Heimat* and the social capital is referred to the ability to found the Schützen activities on the principles of trust, solidarity, reciprocity, and respect, elements that characterize the communities and orient their aims to the constitution of a local governance, based on a strong sense of belonging that stimulate the defense of the public interests: the consequence is the foundation of the *community governance*.⁸¹ In particular, the preservation of the local culture and the common heritage is important in creating social capital, because people, in this way, develop civic connections among the members of the community and avoid the social fragmentation, so that the civic cohesion is maintained permanent and continuous.

The Schützen consider important to protect their identity and their culture in order to prevent the homologation, an increasingly evident phenomenon caused by a globalization based on materialism. In this way, the *Heimat* moves closer and closer to the concept of *Dasein* ('being there'), a stable presence in a place in which *inhabiting, living and creating a local identity*, with its own characteristics. This prevents the uprooting from the homeland and protects the sense of belonging that is the source of the community: for this reason the *Heimat* is the spiritual essence of life. The *Heimat* is also linked to the concept of *Genossenschaftum* (sense of community), according to which the community is the foundation of the associative Germanic

80 Südtiroler Schützenbund [interactive]. [accessed on 10-12-2014]. <<http://www.suedtirolerschuetzenbund/aktuell/organedesssb.it>>.

81 Bowles, S.; Gintis, H. Social Capital and Community Governance. *The Economic Journal*. 2002, 483(112), p.424.

spirit (at the basis of the German liberal state), characterized by three main features: the origin in the associative Germanic spirit, his essence as a whole, the autonomy towards its members and its participation in the public activities of the state, as asserted by the Prussian jurist Georg Beseler.⁸²

One of his student, Otto von Gierke, continued studying the communitarian doctrine of the state, which is the basis of the liberal thought, that considers the state as an organic entity and not a mass of individuals.⁸³ This communitarian doctrine is at the same time expression of a general theory of the civic associations, in which the relationship between state and society is not dichotomous but osmotic, claiming that the state is the higher community that includes itself all other associations.⁸⁴ The development of social capital is crucial for the preservation of the associative reality, from which the concept of state originates, in contrast with the theories of the mass society derived from the materialist doctrine. The *Heimat* and its spiritual implications represent the cornerstone for the protection of the state, which has not just a merely administrative value, being above all the result of a strong relationship between the man and the land.

Conclusions

Nowadays the European context is characterized by the loss of importance of the national states, in turn leading to an increase of power in favor of the local and supranational institutions, a fact that is changing deeply the European society; in parallel, people lose interest not only in politics but also in the social engagement. The phenomenon of the Schützen is founded on principles such as *Heimat* and *Vaterland*, that give a great importance to community, perceived not just as an institution, but as a group of persons: therefore, the focus is on the cultural (historical, linguistic, religious) aspects, as development of the person, in opposition to the masses, in which the individuals lose their identity. This model is relevant for creating social capital at the local level, in order to implement the civic cohesion and to support the social strengthening, thus decreasing the tensions among the citizens. The philosophy of the Schützen is not a mere vestige of the past, but represents a thread binding together the generations from the Middle Ages to contemporary times, and proposes itself as a pattern for the future, since it does not focus on the temporary ideologies but on the person.

82 Böckenförde, E. W. *La storiografia costituzionale tedesca nel secolo decimonono* (It. trans. by P. Schiera). Milano: Giuffrè, 1970, p. 183.

83 *Ibid.*, p.185.

84 *Ibid.*, p.188.

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Alberto Bernini. Independent researcher, Bachelor and Master in Philosophy at Parma University, Italy. From 2010 to 2013 Assistant Lecturer in Social Sciences at Parma University. Research interests: Sociology, Philosophy, Humanities, Sociolinguistics.