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Transnational Everyday Lives:
Second Generation Italians
in Switzerland

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Abstract

Many descendants of migrants grow up in the context of lively transnational social relations to their parents' homeland. Among southern Italian migrants in Switzerland, these relations are imbued with the nostalgia for return, a dream fostered since the beginning of their migration after the Second World War. Members of the second generation have developed different ways of negotiating the transnational livelihoods fostered by their parents on the one hand, and the longing for local attachment and rootedness on the other. This paper discusses how second-generation Italians have created their own cultural spaces and repertoires of *Italianità* and belonging within Switzerland and with co-ethnic peers, and how, for some, this sense of belonging evokes the wish for 'roots-migration', the relocation to the parents' homeland.

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You used to go down there [to Italy] every year, it was your second home ... and I consciously say 'second home', because the first one is here [in Switzerland] for me, because I think what you experienced during childhood affects you the most.

Luca was born in Switzerland in 1972. His parents migrated from southern Italy to the German part of Switzerland in the 1960s, and although they had dreamed of returning since the beginning of their migration, they stayed in Switzerland for economic reasons. Although Luca and his parents maintained lively transnational social relations to southern Italy and visited their homeland every year, Luca feels at home in the Swiss town in which he grew up. Despite his parents' dream of returning and the family's transnational everyday life, Luca cannot imagine living in southern Italy. While maintaining transnational ties, he feels clearly rooted in Switzerland. Luca represents the majority of second-generation Italians in Switzerland who feel at home where they grew up and have no intention to relocate to southern Italy. However, some second-generation Italians decide to migrate to their parents' place of origin once they reach adulthood. They feel a similar nostalgia for the country of origin as their parents, and despite harsh economic and structural conditions in southern Italy, they see life its villages as attractive alternative to their lives in Switzerland. I have conceptualised this relocation as 'roots-migration' because of its nostalgic characteristic (Wessendorf 2007a).

This paper discusses such diverging kinds of local attachments among members of the second generation[1] who grew up in lively 'transnational social fields' (Basch, et al. 1994; Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004).[2] It asks why, despite similar cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, second-generation Italians have developed a variety of ways in which they relate to their parents' homeland, to Switzerland, and to the social arenas in which they live. For some members of the second generation being of migrant origin does not play an important role in their everyday lives and they have developed social networks dominated by people of non-Italian background (Wessendorf 2007b). In contrast, others strongly relate to co-ethnics and actively foster their transnational relations to Italy.

This paper focuses on the latter. It discusses how members of the second generation have transformed their ethnic affiliations and their strong sense of integration in co-ethnic peer groups into a life-style choice, celebrating their Italianness. This ethnic reification and the creation of their own cultural repertoire is motivated by a shared cultural background and experiences of growing up in Switzerland, shared interests as well as a youth-cultural wish for trendyness, style and fashion. This phenomenon has also been observed in other contexts, for

example among South Asians (Hall 2002) and black youngsters in Britain (Alexander 1992) and South Asians in North America (Maira 2002; Purkayastha 2005).

The integration into co-ethnic peer groups and the celebration of Italianità, or Italianness, provides some members of the second generation with a strong sense of belonging and attachment to the locality in which they grew up. For others, however, the sense of belonging to the Italian social world in both Switzerland and, during holidays, in Italy, led to their wish to relocate to their parents' place of origin. Although only a small minority among second-generation Italians in Switzerland, the roots-migrants are an interesting example of how the parents' nostalgia and longing for the homeland can be transferred to the second generation, especially in the context of transnational everyday relations.

The paper describes the reasons why some members of the second-generation feel strongly rooted within the Italian peer groups and social networks in Switzerland which give them a sense of home, while others decide to leave Switzerland behind and start a new life in a place where they are from, but where they have never lived and where, up until today, structural conditions are insecure and economic realities harsh. It thereby demonstrates the subjectivities of notions of belonging and place in the context of everyday transnationalism, and the importance of both social networks and shared interests regarding feelings of home and rootedness.

While much research on the second generation has originally focused on the different patterns of socio-economic, political and cultural integration and assimilation in the country of immigration (Alba and Nee 1997; Heckmann and Schnapper 2003; Juhasz and Mey 2003; Portes and Zhou 1993), the second-generation's transnational relations to the parents' homeland have attracted increasing attention in recent years (Levitt and Waters 2002). Of particular interest are those studies which look at the interrelationships between transnationalism and integration and how one affects the other (Haller and Landolt 2005; Levitt 2002; Menjívar 2002:548; Morawska 2003; Smith 2002; Vickerman 2002; Wolf 2002:258). Such studies have, for example, shown how different factors such as race, class and the life-course lead to and influence both patterns of integration and transnational activities among members of the second generation. Importantly, they recognise a 'third space' for the articulation of identity, the parents' country of origin (Charsley 2004).

The findings presented here draw on ethnographic, qualitative research carried out during one year in the South-Eastern most region of Italy, the Salento (Apulia), and in the German part of Switzerland. Along with participant observation, twenty-three life-history interviews were undertaken with second-generation Italians who had moved to Italy between

the age of twenty and thirty-two. Furthermore, twenty-eight interviews were conducted with members of the second generation living in Switzerland. In contrast to a lot of research on the second generation which focuses on adolescents, the interviewees for this research are adults and reflect back on their lives, on their childhood and adolescence and on the choices they have made during their lives.

Post-war Italian labour-migration to Switzerland

After the Second World War, thousands of southern Italians migrated to northern Italy and to Western Europe to help build the booming post-war economy. Southern Italian migration to Switzerland resulted from both labour recruitment programs and chain migration and by 1970 more than half a million Italians lived in Switzerland. Due to return migration, numbers declined to approximately 300,000 by 2001, some 114,000 of whom were born in Switzerland (Niederberger 2003). For a country of seven million inhabitants in total, these numbers are considerable and Italians still form the largest migrant group in Switzerland.

The vast majority of Italian migrants were unskilled, landless farmers from rural areas in the very south who migrated to industrial cities in the German- and French-speaking parts of Switzerland. The recruitment of southern Italian labourers was originally aimed at the temporary residency of migrants, and southern Italians planned to stay in Switzerland only for a limited number of years, during which they hoped to earn enough money to buy a house and some land in their villages of origin (Braun 1970). However, because of a continuous economic need for labourers, and because only few migrants managed to save enough money to build a future in southern Italy, but also because of their children's education and better health care facilities, about two-thirds of Italian migrants ended up staying in Switzerland (Bolzman, et al. 1997). Nevertheless, the vast majority of them saw themselves as sojourners and continued to dream of returning to Italy. They therefore maintained strong transnational relations to southern Italy, undertaking the fifteen to twenty hour train-journey to their villages of origin at least once, but sometimes several times a year, together with their children. Most members of the second generation have positive memories of Italy, enjoying the time spent with large circles of relatives. The summer holidays and the presence of the homeland in both discourse and practice among southern Italians in Switzerland formed an integral part of the children's upbringing and impacted importantly on their integration in Switzerland. They spoke Italian or the regional dialect at home, and weekends were characterised by outings with or visits to migrant relatives, the Italian Mass on Sunday, and extended Sunday meals.

Italian children's upbringing, however, differed regarding the formation of social networks in schools and in the neighbourhoods. Since the majority of children in Switzerland go to the state school closest to their home, the ethnic composition of the schools is determined by that of the neighbourhoods. From the 1950s until the 1980s when second-generation Italians attended school, only a few urban neighbourhoods in Switzerland were characterised by a high concentration of immigrants. Therefore, in most schools, migrant children were a minority and Italian children developed friendships with children of Swiss and other national origins. However, in some urban areas with high numbers of Italians, classes were dominated by Italian children, and children going to such schools developed social networks primarily with co-ethnics. Social networks, however, often changed as the children grew older and entered secondary school.

All in all, and despite insecure residence status and discrimination in schools, in the housing and the job markets, second-generation Italians integrated rather well into Swiss society in terms of upward mobility. They were lucky in that they grew up during the post-war economic boom, a time when integration into the labour market was easier than for the second generation today. Thanks to the availability of apprenticeships and jobs, the strong support of their families, and their parents' emphasis on education and socio-economic achievement, most second-generation Italians have reached higher socio-economic status than their parents and their Swiss peers of the same socio-economic background (Bolzman, et al. 2003; Juhasz and Mey 2003; Mey, et al. 2005).

Their successful integration was further facilitated by the increasing acceptance of Italian migrants among the Swiss in the course of time and with the arrival of other immigrant groups perceived as 'more different' than Italians. In contrast to the 1960s and '70s, today, Italians are seen as the model minority among the Swiss and have become part of the Swiss imagined community (Hoffmann-Nowotny, et al. 1997; Wimmer 2004), even though many first and second-generation Italians' social networks are primarily Italian. Due to increasing Swiss tourism to Italy from the 1970s, the structural integration of the majority of Italian migrants, and positive images attributed to Italian life-style such as good food and fashion, this social (and sometimes cultural) non-integration is not seen as problematic (Wessendorf 2008).

Despite their socio-economic upward mobility and their successful integration into the labour market, many second-generation Italians went through negotiations of belonging during adolescence or in their early twenties. Such negotiations were directly shaped by the formation of social networks during adolescence, when they began to spend more time outside the home and develop different ideas of what it means to be of southern Italian origin and born in

Switzerland. Depending on the composition of the school classes and the neighbourhoods, some members of the second generation formed strong social affiliations with other second-generation Italians, while others developed friendships and peer groups with people of Swiss or other origins. Many of them began to question the strong ethnic and family ties which their parents sustained, as well as their parents' cultural values and practices. They particularly criticised the strong family relations under which they felt pressured (Wessendorf 2008). In this paper, however, I will focus on those who formed strong social networks with co-ethnics.

In the following sections, I will discuss why some second-generation Italians formed strong social affiliations to co-ethnics and how they created ways of 'being Italian' different to their parents, while at the same time emphasising their difference from the majority society.

Italianità as way of life and as life-style: co-ethnic peer groups and belonging among the second generation

> … these people [people of Italian origin] were confronted with the same situation, … they actually have had more or less exactly the same life course as me, and in the end of the day I preferred being with foreigners and southerners[3] or, well also with Swiss, it's true … in school, too, there were many Swiss. But the friends were really always more foreigners, definitely. … It's different, many things are different, the way you act, the mentality, the mentality was really different, especially at the time, now, of course, you grow up and get more mature and you communicate with other people, too. But at the time it was just the communication, the food maybe … and the Swiss were a bit colder and you could relate to them less. … I think it's just the interests you had, the same interests, and as I said, you are secondo, you are a foreigner after all, and then you look for contacts with these people, you know.

Luca's feelings of embeddedness among other 'secondos', referring to second-generation Italians and people of Spanish and Portuguese origin, is representative of many second-generation Italians' experiences during their childhoods and in the context of the Italian social networks and transnational engagements of their parents. Their social relations, cultural practices and identifications are shaped by the transnational social arenas in which they grew up and which continue to play an important role in their adult lives. They have not specifically fostered these networks, but have naturally developed friendships with people of the same origin through school, work, leisure activities and family relations. What Luca and other second-generation Italians describe as 'the mentality' is comparable with Bourdieu's (1977) concept of the habitus and refers to a system of dispositions consisting of durable and acquired schemes of perception, thought and practice. Luca's description of the shared mentality with people who have had 'exactly the same life course as me' could be described as 'transnational habitus' generated

through migration and shaped by the parents' transnational relations (Guarnizo 1997; Vertovec 2001). Dispositions and practices evoked by a transnational habitus have 'substantial impact on individual and family life course and strategies, …, the ordering of personal and group memories, patterns of consumption, collective socio-cultural practices, approaches to child-rearing and other modes of cultural reproduction' (Vertovec 2001:17). Importantly, members of the second generation not only refer to the mentality when emphasising their *belonging* and emotional connections to co-ethnics, but also when describing their feelings of *disconnection* from their family or from co-ethnics because of diverging cultural values and practices (Wessendorf 2007b).

Luca, on the one hand points to the mentality, but on the other, he emphasises the importance of shared interests which contribute to his strong social relations to co-ethnics. He not only engages in 'transnational ways of being' by sustaining social relations and practices with co-ethnics as regular feature of everyday life, but he is also active in 'transnational ways of belonging' by explicitly highlighting the ethnic elements of who he is through the celebration of his Italianness (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004). Similar to Levitt and Glick Schiller's distinction between transnational ways of being and belonging, Vermeulen (2001) distinguishes between 'culture as way of life' and 'culture as lifestyle'. Culture as way of life refers to the values and practices that we learn and internalise in the socio-cultural context in which we grow up. Culture as lifestyle involves the use of specific symbolic markers such as music, consumer goods or clothes which serve to distinguish ourselves from others. Culture as lifestyle is related to the concept of ethnicity which involves the belief in common descent and a sense of belonging and which can be used as conscious differentiation from other groups (Van Niekerk 2001; Vermeulen 2001).

Luca engaged in Italianness as life-style during his adolescence, and, together with his second-generation Italian peers, he created his own youth cultural style by way of fashion and the consumption and display of specifically Italian goods such Italian motor cycles and bags, or stickers with the Italian flag on clothes. Pasquale expresses the reasons why he publicly displays his ethnic background as follows:

> … you are not Swiss, you are not Italian, you are something in between, and it's still cool to, well it's like a trademark … with an Armani T-Shirt you show what exactly you represent, and with an 'Italia T-Shirt' I also want to show 'hey, look, this is how I am, this is my background and I am here anyway' (Pasquale, born 1975).

The reification and performance of Italianness is based on three main factors: positive experiences of strong family relations both locally in Switzerland and transnationally, the integration into co-ethnic peer groups through schools and other institutions in Switzerland, and, just as importantly, the sharing of common interests with co-ethnics. I will here shortly elaborate on these three factors.

The transnational family

The family can provide members of the second generation with a strong sense of embeddedness and belonging. Luca emphasises that deep and sustained family connections distinguish Italians from the Swiss. He thereby asserts his ethnicity by 'doing family' (Purkayastha 2005). While the family provides some second-generation Italians with emotional security and stability, others experience the family as restrictive and as 'golden cage'. This can lead to the disconnection from co-ethnics altogether and the fading of transnational relations (Wessendorf 2008). However, depending on the social networks developed in schools and in the neighbourhood, conflicts within the family can also lead to the creation of second-generation Italian social arenas outside the home.

Important for the identification with and affiliation to co-ethnics in Switzerland are experiences during the holidays and the nature of the relationships to relatives and friends in Italy. Luca, for example, enjoyed the annual holidays immensely because he felt integrated in a big network of relatives. For Pamela, the integration in an extended network of kin even led to her decision to migrate to the parents' village of origin, an issue discussed further below. She compares this embeddedness with a feeling of isolation in Switzerland where she did not have as many relatives and where contacts with them were less regular.

But even if experiences in Italy were not positive, social networks with other second-generation Italians in Switzerland were sometimes maintained. Such negative experiences resulted for example, from problematic relations to kin. Maurizio's parents' relations to their relatives in Italy were characterised by financial conflicts. He also felt excluded by his relatives in Italy, one of who called him 'Svizzerotto' (Swiss, jokingly, but also a bit condescendingly). But rather than distancing himself from Italians altogether, Maurizio maintained strong connections with other second-generation Italians in Switzerland and continued to identify as Italian, although he stopped visiting Italy on a regular basis. Despite his criticism of his relatives in Italy, the Italian second-generation social world in Switzerland continued to provide him with a sense of belonging.

Thus, especially as adolescents, the affiliation to Italian transnational social arenas was shaped by peer groups in Switzerland. Schools and the neighbourhood were crucial in the formation of such second-generation Italian peer groups.

Schools, neighbourhoods and the formation of second-generation Italian social arenas

The formation of peer groups during adolescence was directly linked to the social networks developed in school. As described above, the ethnic composition of school classes depended on the neighbourhood. The transfer from primary to secondary school often led to a change of

social networks. While some second-generation Italians had continuous ties with co-ethnics because their school classes were dominated by other second-generation Italians in both primary and secondary school, others suddenly discovered a whole new world of other second-generation Italians when entering secondary school. Yet others lost their contacts with co-ethnics if they went to secondary schools with predominantly Swiss children or children of other backgrounds. With an increasing number of youngsters going to the centre of town and expanding their 'home turf' beyond the neighbourhood, some second-generation Italians only then became aware of how many other second-generation Italians were living in the same town. This expansion of the home turf and the development of social networks beyond the neighbourhood, not only in public space but also in the form of sports associations or youth clubs, led the development of new social networks. [4]

The formation of ethnic peer groups among adolescents and the expansion of home turf into inner-city areas was directly linked to the appropriation of public space and the creation of localities which were 'ethnically charged' and specifically defined as 'Italian'. This appropriation of public space among second-generation Italian youngsters formed part of a celebration of culture as life-style.

The 'double-tie': shared interests, youth popular culture and the celebration of Italianità

While some members of the second generation were naturally integrated into co-ethnic peer groups and family networks without publicly emphasising their backgrounds, others transformed being Italian into a life-style choice. This was the case for both second-generation Italians who had continuous ties to co-ethnics, and others who discovered a second-generation Italian social world during adolescence. Barbara, born in 1979, is an example of the latter. She had mostly non-Italian friends in school, until a second-generation Italian entered her school class in her third year of secondary school, when she was fifteen.

> Then … an Italian joined our class … Manuela, you know the kind [of Italian] who listens to Vasco[5] etc., and I didn't know until then who Vasco Rossi was [laughs], terrible … And she sort of brought Italian life closer to me again, sort of 'hey, hello, you are *Italian*!' And then we also went out together you know, dancing, and then always Italians Italians Italians.

Barbara's example shows how the discovery and reification of Italianness was directly related to sharing interests with co-ethnics, particularly in the realm of consumer culture, popular music and leisure activities such as football and clubbing. In fact, one of my informants described the sharing of both the ethnic origin and common interests as a 'double-tie' and emphasised that 'just being Italian' is not enough to sustain ethnic networks, but you need a 'double-tie'.

As exemplified by Barbara, part of the attraction to co-ethnic peers was the development of a specifically Italian youth cultural style which could also be described as 'Latino cool' and which many second-generation Italians subscribed to.[6] This celebration of Italianità evolved into a trend and contributed to peer-group solidarity and feelings of belonging. Although these youngsters specifically emphasised their Italianness, second-generation Spaniards and Portuguese were also included in the we-group.

Second-generation Italian youth popular culture is currently visible in Switzerland's urban public space. 'Latino cool' entails both the appropriation of public space and the consumption of goods which are seen as specifically Italian such as Italian motor cycles, fashion and Italian cars. In her study on South-Asian Americans, Purkayastha describes the emphasis on fashion, music and movies or what she calls 'ethnic consumption' as the main signifier of some of the South Asian youths' ethnicity (Purkayastha 2005). Second-generation Italians in Switzerland also use consumer goods as ethnic identifiers to show their distinctiveness. They thereby create an ethnic youth culture which draws on mainstream consumer culture, but they add a specifically Italian flair to it by being particularly stylish, by using Italian fashion labels such as Giorgio Armani or Dolce & Gabbana, and by displaying their Italian cars and scooters.

Wimmer (2004) describes these second-generation Italians as 'Casual Latins' because they emphasise a more spontaneous Latin art of improvisation as counter-discourse against what they see as 'petit-bourgeois' Swiss majority society, characterised by cleanliness and order. This counter-position against the Swiss majority society is also taken as reaction to the discrimination and social exclusion which some second-generation Italians found in schools, a phenomenon also described as 'reactive ethnicity' in the North American context (Portes and Rumbaut 2001). According to Claudia, born in 1969, the reification of difference among second-generation Italians rooted in the fact that …

> … you also felt better [than others] because if you have lived as a minority for years, and at the beginning, as children, it was not all that positive, I guess you just want to sort of confirm: 'we are better', because we had been suppressed for years. …. I don't know, but it is also alienating if you don't grow up where you are from.

However, 'reactive ethnicity' is too simple an explanation as only factor for the reification of belonging and the celebration of difference among the second-generation. For example, the creation of co-ethnic peer groups with their own cultural repertoires was also motivated by feelings of being different from the parents. This second-generation Italian social arena that is different to the social milieux of the first generation enabled members of the second generation to negotiate those values and cultural practices of their parents which they found difficult to deal

with, for example their parents' more traditional views on gender relations, without rejecting their Italian background altogether.

Belonging to the second-generation Italian peer group was further strengthened because of experiences during holidays in Italy. The nature of such experiences contributed to feelings of belonging and rootedness within Switzerland among some members of the second generation, and to feelings of longing and nostalgia for the parents' place of origin for others. In the following section, I will elaborate on these two different kinds of local attachments to either the Swiss town in which they grew up, or to the southern Italian region so origin.

Transnational everyday lives and attachment to place

Second-generation Italians in Switzerland grew up in a transnational social world which was imbued with the parents' longing for the homeland. This nostalgia has persisted among Italian migrants over several decades, and the wish of returning has evolved into what Ortner calls a 'key scenario' among Italian migrants in Switzerland, embodying a 'vision of success' and standing for an ideal, common future (Ortner 1973:1339).[7] The parents' wish to return was experienced in various and diverging ways by members of the second generation, some feeling a similar nostalgia for the country of origin, and others developing a strong attachment to the place in Switzerland where they grew up. In addition to the parents' wish of returning, other factors such as adjustment problems in schools in Switzerland, or experiences with relatives in Italy contributed to either the nostalgia for the country of origin, or local attachments in Switzerland.

Maurizio, for example, cannot imagine moving to another town, even within Switzerland, because it would imply starting all over again. After his difficulties of adjustment in different schools during his childhood, he enjoys the familiarity of his hometown. This process was also observed among members of the second generation of various origins in New York for who the tension of 'insider' and 'outsider' status 'makes them very much "New Yorkers"' (Kasinitz, et al. 2004:2). But such tensions can also lead to the wish to migrate to the parents' place of origin. What most second-generation Italians share, however, is a sense of attachment to one place, be it in Italy or Switzerland, even if this attachment is often paralleled by continuities of transnational practices.

Diasporic rootedness

Although most second-generation Italians who engaged in Italianness as life-style in Switzerland during their adolescence immensely enjoyed the holidays in Italy, many of them developed a critical view of life in southern Italian villages as they grew older. This feeling was caused by an

increasing discomfort with the cultural practices and values experienced during their holidays, especially gender relations, social control, clientelism and corruption. In this process, they realised that they had internalised different cultural values and practices while growing up in Switzerland, which made them different from their southern Italian relatives. Experiences of exclusion during the holidays in Italy, described earlier in this paper, further contributed to an awareness that home was elsewhere and that being Italian in Switzerland was different from being Italian in Italy.[8]

For some, this feeling of alienation from the country of origin led to a certain 'diasporic rootedness' in Switzerland. Despite their discursive and symbolic references to Italy in their everyday discourse and practices, they feel a strong attachment to the Italian transnational social arenas within the town or region in Switzerland in which they grew up.

Italianità thereby forms an integral part of living in Switzerland. Paulo (born 1975), who grew up in Basle, a Swiss industrial city, defines Italianità as follows:

> Italianità for me is: to be Baselian and to feel Italian, and to be Italian and to feel Baselian. I feel at home in Basle, as I said I actually am Baselian, but I am Italian.

The strong connectedness to a specific town rather than Switzerland is also emphasised by Annamaria, a young woman with southern Italian origins, born in Basle in 1976:

> I can say I am Baselian, I am born here, and after all, I have done everything in this town. In Italy I go on holiday, what shall I say, I'm from C [southern Italian town] … I don't even know these places, so I always said, hey, I am Italo-Baselian! … At the beginning I did it because, I went to Italy and was told 'no you are Swiss', and I went up to Switzerland and was told I was Italian, then I thought 'hello, I'm from nowhere wherever I go!' and then I thought my connectedness is Basle, and the rest is not so important … I got to this point because you are like a ping-pong [table tennis] ball, getting thrown back and forth, never knowing where you are … so I decided that I am 'Italo-Baselian', not Swiss, I wanted to fix it somehow.

Annamaria's identification with Basle as a specific place is evoked by her experiences in Italy, but also by her strong embeddedness with peers who are primarily of Italian origin. In fact, she describes this connection to Basle as her main reason to apply for Swiss citizenship.[9] She wanted to have the fact that she felt a Baselian on paper.

The town and the social arenas in which members of the second generation grew up, informed transnationally, but clearly rooted locally, transformed into what Olwig (1997) calls 'cultural sites'. Olwig explains the emergence of cultural sites as a consequence of highly transnational lives. While she describes the importance of the family land and house in the country of origin for first-generation migrants, for the second generation, the cultural site can shift to the country of immigration. For example, while Italian migrants invested all their savings into a family house in southern Italy, many of their children invest in property in Switzerland. Their strong sense of belonging to the town or region where they grew up could be explained

as a consequence of their transnational childhoods, but also of their parents' dream of returning. For many second-generation Italians, their cultural site is characterised by a certain 'institutional completeness' (Breton 1964), the existence of a diverse array of institutions with co-ethnics. In these anchored transnational social arenas, they can share Italianness as way of life and as lifestyle.

Despite this attachment to the region where they grew up, most of these second-generation Italians continue to maintain their transnational relations to Italy by way of regular visits. Thus, their attachment to place is paralleled by transnational relations. However, other members of the second generation do not feel this strong attachment to Switzerland. Rather, they feel drawn to the country of origin where they wish to settle down and build their future.

Roots-migration

> I used to have two hearts. When I was there [in Switzerland], I wanted to be here
> [in Italy], when I was here on holiday, I wanted to be there (Rosa, 1963).

Rosa is a second-generation Italian who migrated to southern Italy at the age of 34. Her memories of having had 'two hearts' before she migrated to Italy show how her transnational everyday life led to the wish to settle in one place. While the second-generation Italians described in the previous section feel at home in Switzerland and see Italy merely as a holiday place, for some second-generation Italians, Italy has always, or at some stage in their lives, represented an option for a life different from that in Switzerland.

Migration to the parents' country of origin has gained little attention in research on the second generation. Only recently have there been some studies focusing on second-generation migration to the parents' homeland, for example Greeks from North America (Christou 2006; Panagakos 2004), Caribbeans from Britain (Potter 2005), and second-generation Japanese from Brazil (Tsuda 2003). These studies describe the relocation to the country of origin as 'return'. Christou (2006:833) argues that the concept of 'return' 'reflects the participants' phenomenology of their agency which they themselves describe as return migration'. In contrast, second-generation Italians from Switzerland who now live in Italy emphasise that they could not 'go back' to a place where they had never lived.

Influenced by their parents' narratives of return and longing for the homeland, their migration to Italy has a nostalgic characteristic. I therefore call their relocation 'roots-migration' (Wessendorf 2007a). Referring to their parents' indecision regarding the return, their migration could be interpreted as a counter-reaction to highly transnational childhoods and adolescences and to the narratives of belonging which accompanied their parents' deterritorialisation and their 'sojourner mentality'. In fact, one of my informants who has migrated to southern Italy

emphasised that she did not want to go through the same experience as her parents, which was to live in one place, but dream of the other.

The nostalgic characteristic of the second-generation's migration resembles what Basu (2004; 2007) calls 'roots-tourism' to describe North American tourists who visit their ancestors' homeland in Scotland. This heritage-tourism is motivated by the search for one's roots and the quest for belonging and homecoming (Basu 2004:151). Similar to the roots-tourists, the roots-migrants are in search of a place which provides them with a sense of belonging. However, in contrast to the roots-tourists, their connections to the homeland are based on concrete transnational involvement as part of their everyday lives. Although ideas of 'rootedness' have been contested because of implied notions of territorially bounded, fixed ethnic entities and identities, in the context of second-generation roots-migration, the term 'roots' not only reflects the roots-migrants' own interpretation of where they come from, but also their aspiration to settle in just one place and to cease to lead lives characterised by mobility or 'routes' (Clifford 1994).

However, roots-migration is not only motivated by the parents' nostalgia for the homeland and the wish to end transnational lives, but also be the degrees of integration in Italy, by socio-economic considerations and by the choice of a partner.

Positive experiences during holidays and a feeling of embeddedness within a network of relatives and friends in southern Italy are among the driving factors leading to roots-migration. Furthermore, professional opportunities play an important role in the decision to migrate. Restricted professional possibilities in southern Italian villages are among the reasons why many of the second-generation Italians described in the previous section decide to stay in Switzerland. They have white-collar jobs and do not see any professional possibilities in southern Italy. Gabriela, who migrated to Apulia in 1999 and who had previously worked in a factory also emphasises that the decision to migrate really depends on your education and your job. Referring to second-generation Italians in Switzerland with white collar jobs, she simply asks 'why should they go to Italy, to do what?' Thus, the majority of roots-migrants had worked in manufacturing and in the service sector prior to migration. Although they emphasise that they were satisfied with their lives in Switzerland prior to migration, the relocation to Italy opens up new professional possibilities such as opening a shop or a business.

Because of restricted professional possibilities, more women than men migrate to southern Italy, male second-generation Italians feeling responsible for family income, while women have the option to become housewives should they not find work. Marriage is thus, a further important factor leading to roots migration. Ten of the women and three of the men

who participated in my research were married or engaged at the time of migration, five of whom joined their partners in Italy, while the rest migrated with a second-generation partner. However, they emphasised that their decision to migrate was not, or only partly, influenced by their partners.

But what happens to their nostalgia and their 'roots' once they migrate to Italy? There are two different patterns of roots-migration. One of them is characterised by idealised images of the homeland and difficulties of integration after the migration, related to professional difficulties and gender relations. The other pattern is characterised by more realistic images of the homeland and relatively satisfying integration in Italy. These two different patterns depend on the stages in the life-cycle when people migrate, the expectations regarding the migration, the financial preparations and marital status.

For the younger and primarily female roots-migrants in their twenties, the transformation of the homeland from imagined to real can be uprooting, and their longing can evolve into a struggle to belong. They have difficulties of integrating into a society and a culture which they had until then perceived as their own. This shock is caused by existential fears of economic and social insecurity, and by the cultural values and practices of the communities in which they settle. Gender relations and social control are perceived as particularly challenging and have a major impact on the integration in the local communities (Wessendorf 2007a). Although only few can afford to sustain their transnational relations, some of them develop a new kind of nostalgia for Switzerland, a phenomenon that could be called 'reverse nostalgia'.

In contrast, those who migrate in their thirties and are married find it easier to settle in southern Italy because they have acquired enough savings to ensure financial security, and many of them manage to open a business. Furthermore, the women are less subject to social control because they are married and therefore have a well-defined status (Wessendorf 2007a).

Roots-migrants form a small minority among second-generation Italians in Switzerland. Nevertheless, it is interesting to examine what determines roots-migrants' choices to live in the parents' homeland. These choices are on the one hand based on the attachments they feel 'for the inventions of their imaginations' (Anderson 1983), on the other hand, they are motivated by concrete transnational ways of life during their childhoods and adolescences. Although before their migration, many of them were strongly integrated into Italian social arenas in Switzerland and celebrated their Italianness, some of them only become aware of the differences of being Italian in Switzerland and being Italian in southern Italy once they have settled there.

Conclusion

Members of the second generation create various forms of social affiliations, some characterised by transnational references to the country of origin and by strong ethnic peer groups, and others shaped by non-ethnic forms of affiliation defined by, for example, shared interests or political ideologies. This paper focused on the former, second-generation Italians who have sustained strong affiliations to co-ethnics, and who reified their ethnicity as teenagers and in their early twenties, creating their own youth popular culture. As adults, some of them have decided to migrate to their parents' region of origin.

Experiences within the family both in Switzerland and in Italy, the composition of the school classes and the neighbourhoods, and experiences of exclusion from the majority society are among the most important factors which contributed to creating and sustaining networks with co-ethnics and to the reification of Italianness. However, just as important was what one of my informants called a 'double-tie', the sharing of common interest in addition to a shared cultural background. Many second-generation Italians related to others of Italian origin not only because of what they describe as the shared southern European 'mentality', but also because of their shared interest in consumer culture, Italian popular music and bodily style. In the course of these relationships and the shared interests, the reification of ethnicity evolved into a trendy and publicly celebrated Latino label which contributed to peer-group solidarity and feelings of belonging.

For some of them, the peer group and the possibilities Switzerland offered in terms of socio-economic upward mobility led to their attachment to the place in which they grew up. Despite or, in fact, as a reaction to their parents' dreams of returning and the lively transnational relations to the homeland, they developed a 'diasporic rootedness' in Switzerland. This rootedness was further enhanced by the awareness of the limited professional possibilities in the rural areas of southern Italy, and by experiences of exclusion on the grounds of cultural difference during their holidays in the villages of origin.

In contrast, other second-generation Italians see southern Italy as an alternative to their lives in Switzerland and decide to relocate. Their experiences during the holidays have mostly been positive and they feel strongly integrated into networks of kin in southern Italy. Furthermore, most of them have not been as upwardly mobile as other second-generation Italians and therefore hope for better professional chances in Italy. Because their relocation is motivated by a similar nostalgia for the country of origin as that of their parents, I have called them 'roots-migrants'.

Roots-migration is a rare phenomenon among second-generation Italians in Switzerland. In fact, those second-generation Italians who stay in Switzerland can mostly not relate to the roots-migrants' decision to live in Italy. To them, structural differences between southern Italy and Switzerland are simply too big for the migration to be a realistic option. But even if economically, roots-migration was easier, many second-generation Italians emphasise that home is where they grew up, and that they are not prepared to start anew in a different place.

The example of second-generation Italians in Switzerland and Italy shows how members of the second generation develop different perceptions of home and belonging. These are shaped by various forms of embeddedness and integration in the social arenas in which they grow up, some characterised by transnationalism and the parents' nostalgia for the homeland, and others anchored locally in Switzerland. The majority of second-generation Italians have created their own cultural sites and local attachments within Switzerland, characterised by a range of ethnic and non-ethnic social affiliations and by various degrees of transnational engagement. On this spectrum of different forms of local and transnational embeddedness, the roots-migrants' courageous relocation to the parents' homeland could be interpreted as ultimate outcome of their highly transnational everyday lives.

Notes

1 There is not a common agreement on how to define the 'second generation'. In this paper, I use 'second generation' to describe the descendants of migrants who were born in the host country or who migrated during early childhood and attended school in Switzerland.

2 Conceptualising migrant transnationalism, Basch et al. (1994) draw on Bourdieu's notion of 'social fields', defining it as 'a set of multiple, interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources are unequally exchanged, organized and transformed'. A transnational social field connects actors across borders and includes those who do not move (Levitt 2004:1009).

3 With southerners, he refers to people of southern European background from Spain, Portugal and Italy. Although smaller in numbers, second-generation Spaniards and Portuguese were often included in the second-generation Italian peer groups.

4 Of course, the degree in which members of the second generation could spend time outside the home and engage in peer networks outside the neighbourhood was also determined by the freedom given by parents, with some second-generation Italian girls seldom being allowed to spend time outside the home (Wessendorf 2008).

5 Vasco Rossi is a famous Italian pop singer.

6 This Italian youth culture of a consumer culture with an Italian flair also provided the framework against which other second-generation Italians who did not share this interest developed a counter position to what they saw as 'typically Italian' (Wessendorf 2007b).

7 See also Wolbert's (1995) study on Turkish migrants in Germany and Brettell's study on the Portuguese migrants' nostalgia, the *saudade* (Brettell 1998; 2000).

8 Such processes have also been observed in other contexts, for example among British Bangladeshis who feel 'more British' when they visit their ancestral homeland (Gardner and Shukur 1994).

9 The children of migrants born in Switzerland do not automatically get Swiss citizenship. On Swiss citizenship and the second generation see Bolzman et al. (2003) and Juhasz and Mey (2003).

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