Italy's 'Second Generations': The Sons and Daughters of Migrants

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Abstract: This article provides the context for the contributions to this symposium on Italy's 'second generations' and to the conference which engendered it. It introduces the themes faced in detail in the contributions themselves. Both conference and articles seek to provide academic analysis and inform the debate among civil society organisations and policymakers. It considers the empirical and theoretical problems which the term 'second generation immigrants' creates in general and in Italy in particular. Despite the difficulties, the conclusion is that '2G' is indeed a useful term with a solid meaning. The article then considers the difficulties in defining 'Italian identity' both today and in the past. Even when Italy was a country of emigration, the identity was unsure and much debated. Today's immigration and above all the 'second generations' have provoked a lively debate on 'Italian-ness'.

This symposium is the result of a conference entitled, "Italy's 'Second Generations': The Sons and Daughters of Migrants", which took place at the American University of Rome in November 2009. The meeting was part of a larger cycle of events, on past and present racism in Italy, organised since 2008 by the university's Centre for Research on Racism. The events seek to bring together scholars, civil-society organisations and policy-makers in order to explore the issues of racism not only from an academic point of view but also with the hope of informing and influencing policy-making processes. Our aim with this conference was to provide a forum for activists and researchers to discuss an often neglected but increasingly critical issue in Italian politics and society: the experiences, struggles and expressions of identity of a rising number of people who have grown up in Italy and consider it their primary home but who are often denied treatment as 'real' Italians by their peers, in public debate and in legislation. These concerns are becoming ever more pressing as the 'second-generation'

population grows and as frustrations potentially escalate. While the situations of similar groups elsewhere in Europe are widely recognised as a major political issue, and while research is underway in some areas of Italian academia on the national situation, [1] it is only recently that international scholarly attention has begun to examine the Italian context in depth.[2] The conference and this symposium set out to bring this issue to the forefront of debates among English-speaking political and social scientists and Italianists about the changing nature of Italian politics, society and identity.

Public discourse about immigration in Italy, both in political campaigning and in the media, continues to focus largely on new arrivals and the security and cultural threats that they allegedly pose (Geddes, 2008; La Sapienza, 2009). Despite the fact that most illegal immigrants arrive with tourist visas and overstay, the images of boatloads of *clandestini*, highly diverse groups of migrants, many of them refugees, dominate the media as do images of immigrant protesters in various cities. This focus on recent migrants and the construction of their otherness within Italian society serves to perpetuate the myth of a clear split between a unified national culture and identity, and 'them', the foreigners. While Italy in recent years certainly has received large numbers of immigrants with respect to other western European countries and is still attracting new migrants, [3] this one-sided portrayal ignores the fact that many of the country's immigrants are long-term residents, some of whom have made Italy their home for over thirty years. In many cases, we are dealing not only with the sons and daughters of migrants, but often their grandchildren: second and third generations who have no personal experience of migration. This major demographic and social development is most evident in schools, where the number of children of foreign parents rose to 628,937 in 2008/09 (Caritas/Migrantes, 2009: 492). These youths are growing up with diverse and hybrid identities; they are often multilingual and well-travelled and have global competences which, if encouraged, could potentially make them part of Italy's future political and business elite. However, the experiences of older immigration countries such as Great Britain, France and Germany demonstrate that the potential for marginalising these youths and engendering intense resentment is high. Italy's more recent history of immigration places it in the privileged position of potentially avoiding repeating the mistakes of other European countries.

A key aim of our conference was therefore to take stock of the current situation in Italy, examining the numbers and legal status of the people involved; their own negotiations of identity and their priorities, and the responses in Italian public debate. Some of the specific questions addressed were: Who exactly are the people increasingly referred to as 'second generations' in Italy? Is the term a useful or accurate one and do the people

it aims to describe identify with it? How does the debate on Italy's 'second generations' fit with situations in other European countries and what can Italy learn from their experiences? To what extent do the sons and daughters of migrants have access to citizenship, both in the legal sense of nationality, and in the sense of participation in cultural and social life? How do Italy's restrictive immigration and citizenship laws affect how these people feel about Italy and their place in it? How do the 'second generations' represent and define their identities in relation to their parents and their peers? What are the primary fora and media through which they express those identities and concerns? What roles do religion, gender and country of origin play in what are generally very fluid and intricate processes for defining identity? What sort of responses are coming from national institutions, in terms of bills on immigration and naturalisation, and from local government?

A first theme of debate is the issue of labelling. The very term 'second generation' is disputed by scholars and commentators and there still appears to be little consensus regarding those to whom the term applies in Italy (see the article by Thomassen in this issue). As a result of this lack of clarity, obtaining an accurate statistical overview of the situation is difficult (see appendix). While in its broadest use it is generally taken to refer to any person who has at least one foreign-born parent, the term is methodologically opaque because it does not distinguish between individuals born in Italy or abroad; those who have Italian citizenship or not; whether they have grown up within the Italian school system or are native speakers of Italian. It fails therefore to help clarify either the great diversity that exists among the sons and daughters of migrants, in terms of their ages, forms of integration and identification within the multiple contexts of Italian society, or the ways they combine and negotiate Italian and other cultures. Indeed, for many Italians with foreign-born parents, the term continues to have very little meaning. To quote Taiyo Yamanouchi, a 'second-generation' participant at the conference, 'I have been Italian-Japanese for thirty years and 'second-generation' for about four, since the term started to spread in Italy'. The term is also increasingly beginning to take on negative connotations, particularly in the media. A study of Genoese local media portrayals (Macciò, 2009), presented at the conference, highlights that coverage of 'second generations' is massively concentrated on topics related to crime and urban safety, reflecting trends within the Italian media's discussion of migrants and minorities more generally, with sons and daughters of migrants frequently inserted within the 'undifferentiated mass of foreigners' (Macciò, 2009: 10). Again, typical of national-level mainstream media is the shortage of journalists of immigrant origin and the tendency to give very little voice to non-institutional and non-Italian actors. A particularly interesting development is the growth, in recent years, of references to gangs (*bande*) of youths of Latin-American

origin, presumably reflecting influences from the American media. Media discourses thus clearly contribute to the construction of the 'second generations' as foreigners and 'others' in terms of Italian society, and further study of this aspect is necessary.

As Berrocal and Thomassen's contributions to this issue show, part of the debate is therefore currently focused on attempts to find a more appropriate phrase to describe those whose parents were not born in Italy. One of the suggestions is to refer to them as 'first-generation Italians'. This, however, raises the issue of formal citizenship and its role in facilitating access to other forms of social participation. As Marchetti and Berrocal discuss in depth, Italian citizenship law privileges *ius sanguinis* over *ius soli*, making naturalisation based on residence a drawn-out and complex process, particularly for non-EU citizens. It currently does not recognise the children of two foreign parents as Italian nationals until their eighteenth birthday, when they have one year to request citizenship, and requires that applicants demonstrate uninterrupted residence in the country since birth (see also Zincone and Basili, 2009). Thus, the children born to foreign parents in Italy are likely to be culturally integrated with their legally Italian peers, yet they lack the passport which would guarantee them the same freedoms and mobility.

Formal citizenship is now also becoming a criterion for access to education, thanks to the Berlusconi government's recent cap of thirty percent on the number of 'immigrant' children to be allowed in the classroom. While there is some doubt as to whether this restriction will be applied systematically, as many as 100,000 children growing up in the Italian state education system risk being excluded from going to schools near their homes from September 2010 (*la Repubblica*, 19 March 2010). For those 'second-generation' adults who lack documents qualifying them for citizenship, the barriers to participation multiply: they have no formal political voice and they are excluded from access to employment in much of Italy's still very large public sector. Moreover, the current Bossi-Fini immigration law makes their right to reside in Italy dependent on a legal work contract, thus exposing those who are unemployed, on temporary job contracts, or part of Italy's large unofficial job market, to the constant risk of deportation to a country they may never have lived in. To call these people 'first-generation Italians' would mean camouflaging the fact that many of them do not have the legal freedoms of 'real' Italians. The assumption of biological otherness implicit in the *ius sanguinis* framework concretely impedes certain forms and expressions of cultural insider-ness. There is therefore a very clear need to reform Italian citizenship legislation in ways that recognise these concerns, and this is a primary focus of campaigning on the part of associations of 'second generations', such as the *Rete G2* network, whose discourses and strategies are discussed in the contributions to this symposium by Zinn and by Berrocal.

Marchetti's article demonstrates, however, that there is no single view among 'second generations' about what factors should constitute eligibility for Italian citizenship. For many, active participation in the economy, knowledge of Italian language and culture, and legal and fiscal rectitude are indispensible. Thus, many of Marchetti's interviewees see citizenship not as a simple legal status but as recognition of one's good behaviour and of one's intention to contribute to the country on a long-term basis. These findings are further highlighted by Colombo (2010),[4] who emphasises that Italian secondary-school students – both of autochthonous and foreign origin – view citizenship neither as something that should be allocated according to blood, nor as something that should be a universal status, but rather as something that should be earned through honest participation in 'normal' Italian society. What is particularly striking is the discrepancy between autochthonous youths who '[do] not accept the possibility of hyphenated Italians who can manifest differentiated loyalties and plural identifications' (Colombo, 2010: 145) and those of foreign origin who instead inevitably express much more complex and hybrid forms of identification. This would suggest that while Italian society and its citizens are increasingly becoming multiethnic, there are still strong elements resisting the country's development as a multicultural society where difference is represented in a positive sense (Grillo and Pratt, 2002).

A crucial part of the research on 'second generations' therefore focuses on the complex issues of identity and belonging. The cliché that 'second generations' are somehow suspended between two or more cultural worlds (*sospesi tra due mondi*),[5] in a limbo of conflicting identities and role models, does not adequately reflect the realities of people who instead constantly renegotiate and move between myriad identities in their daily lives. Various contributions to the conference explored in depth the very dynamic and intricate ways in which identities are defined, expressed and moulded by 'second-generation' youths. Pierluigi Taffon (2009), for example, discussed his in-depth study of the daily life of a teenage daughter of Moroccan parents, demonstrating that her various forms of belonging were a 'work in progress' in which she constantly elaborated, revised and represented different aspects of herself in a pendular movement between her Moroccan and Italian identities. Vathi (2009), in her discussion of intergenerational transmission between first and second generation Albanians in Tuscany, instead highlighted the role played by the legal context in which parents migrated to Italy and the way in which own experiences of integration affected the processes of communication and exchange of cultural values with their sons and daughters. Zinn, in her contribution to this symposium, explores the ways in which members of three different internet discussion groups use those virtual spaces to share their experiences and to come together as communities, but also to inform outsiders about their concerns and opinions. These fora are thus vital

arenas for promoting positive multiculturalism and are also important in generating political mobilisation.

While these 'second-generation' groups are actively participating in a debate on what Italian identity means today and are publicly challenging traditional images of Italian-ness, Marchetti and Berrocal's critiques of the discourses of legislators demonstrate that despite Italy's history and present reality of localistic, fragmented and conflictual identities, Italian-ness is still widely constructed as something culturally and socially homogenous. Underlying these discourses is still the tenacious assumption that being Italian is synonymous with being white and Catholic. The experiences of many 'second-generation' people in Italy confirm that those who do not conform phenotypically or in terms of religious identity are often not recognised as 'real' Italians.

Defining 'Italian-ness': a century and a half of debate

The question of who is a 'real' Italian is one which is at least as old as the unified Italian state. Italy is certainly not unusual in changing the elements of national identity; Ernest Renan's (1882) answer to the question, 'What is a nation?', his '*plébiscite de tous les jours*', is valid for just about everyone's definition of a nation, and the terms of the '*plébiscite*' change over time. Italy is different, however, in that it has never had a period in which there was general agreement on what constituted 'Italian-ness'. One of Renan's possible definitions of a 'nation' was 'race' but although the *ius sanguinis* implied an Italian ethnicity, it was not until 1938 with the Fascist regime's racial laws that an 'Italian race' was made explicit. Renan also suggested religion as one possible distinctive feature of a 'nation' but united Italy has always had a troubled relationship with Roman Catholicism.

It is a truism that national identity is constructed in opposition to something else. In the 1930s, disillusioned observers remarked that the only way that humanity would stop fighting was if the Martians invaded. From 1861 and even before the political unification of Italy there have been debates about who or what constitutes a real 'Italian'.

The architects of the Risorgimento did not address the issue of national identity because they took it as a given and perhaps also because they realised it was not a debate they wanted to hold at the same time as dealing with the political and military aspects of unification. The remark attributed to Massimo D'Azeglio – 'We've made Italy, now we must make Italians' – is recognition that indeed there was an issue. The issue, though, for most of the next 130 years or so was mostly one of internal unity rather than external threat or an outward projection of Italian-ness. Unification itself was an uncertain process with large swathes of the population either indifferent or actively hostile. The suppression of so-called banditry in the rural south cost more lives than the wars against the Austrians, and the

Southern Question immediately became a major issue in the new state, remaining close to the top of the national agenda for much of the next 150 years. The debate was over whether Italy was indeed a single country or whether North and South had irreconcilable cultural or even physical differences. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Cesare Lombroso[6] and others of his school suggested that there were measurable differences between northerners and southerners. Over the last thirty years, it has been parts of the North, led first by the Lombard League (Lega Lombarda) and then the Northern League (Lega Nord, LN), which have campaigned either for devolution or at times for secession. Neither Lombroso nor Umberto Bossi, or the Southern Question, have so far succeeded in splitting the country but they have inhibited the growth of a strong and clear national identity.

The other cement which normally creates a sense of national identity – that is, war – in Italy's case has always been fought in the presence of major divisions within the country over the justness of fighting the war. The Risorgimento wars only had the support of a portion of the middle and upper-middle classes. The colonial wars were opposed by many of those who had recently fought for Italy's own liberation from an imperial power and never provided either the prestige or material wealth which might have persuaded waverers of the wisdom of invading parts of Africa. Italy's entry into World War I again, was strongly opposed by probably the majority of the country and could only have generated unity had it been rapid and without major costs; as it was neither, it left the country even more divided than before. Mussolini hoped that Fascism would become the creative and binding force of 'Italian-ness': "Italian and Fascist, rather like Italian and Catholic, mean the same thing".[7] But Italians were only 'Italian' in a passive way and any possibility of the majority identifying with Fascism was destroyed by the failures of Fascism itself. Mussolini's wars were mostly opposed in a sullen sort of way, apart from Ethiopia which initially seemed to herald a period of glory but which was soon washed away first by intervention in the Spanish Civil War and then the disaster of World War II.

Even the partisan war from 1943 to 1945 failed to bring the country together; and although post-war rhetoric presented a united anti-fascist Italy, some other divisions transmuted into the Cold-War split and others resurfaced in 1994. Today, therefore, the partisan struggle is often referred to as a 'civil war' even on the left – which once presented it as a war of national liberation. Again, unpopular wars or even civil wars are not necessarily enough to destroy a state but they do not contribute to the development of a strong national identity.

In the same way, the fact that the near totality of Italians are nominally Catholic or at least were until recently, could have helped create a national identity. It is not by chance that '*cristiano*' also means 'human being'. But

once again Catholicism or rather clericalism and anti-clericalism have caused more divisions in the country than they have healed. From 1870 to 1929, the 'Roman Question' was at least as important an issue as the Southern Question and seemingly as intractable. In contrast to some of the presentations of 'Italian-ness' today, being a politically active Catholic in those years was in some ways anti-Italian. The small non-Catholic minorities like the Jews and the Waldensians were conversely 'more' Italian or at least more in favour of unification and the monarchy. Eighty years after the Lateran Pacts, and the reconciliation between Church and State, the power of organised religion is still divisive and it is ironic that it is only since the beginning of mass immigration that Italy's Catholicism and Christian roots have been put forward as a defining feature of 'Italian-ness'. The years since the turn of the century have seen debates in the courts and the press over the presence of crucifixes in public schools, euthanasia and public financing of religion but most of the debate has been within the traditional divisions of Italian society, between supporters and opponents of Catholic influence in public life. Only the LN has used virulent anti-Islamic rhetoric to win support, often following soon after anti-clerical rhetoric. On the rare occasions when Catholic leaders have called for encouraging 'Christian' over Muslim immigration, they have been severely criticised by their fellow church leaders as when Cardinal Giacomo Biffi delivered a number of sermons and speeches along these lines in 2000.[8] The Church has sought to emphasise the Christian elements in European culture but not explicitly to limit Muslim immigration.

Apart from the role of the Roman Catholic Church in both uniting and dividing Italy, religion combined with racism in an explicit legal attempt to define 'Italian-ness'. The 1938 Racial Manifesto and subsequent racial laws postulated that a 'pure Italian race' existed and that Jews (and colonial subjects) were not part of it. The Manifesto explicitly excluded religion and belief (*intenzioni filosofiche o religiose*) but the legislation only defined 'Jewishness' as being the descendant of Jews. The intention of the racial laws was of course to exclude and discriminate against Jews and Africans so there was no definition in the law of what constituted 'the pure Italian race'.[9] The combination of the colonial and anti-Semitic experiences did reinforce the concept of *ius sanguinis* and create an idea of Italian-ness in contrast to Jews and colonial subjects, imitating some of the ideas of racial superiority which had been used by other Europeans.

Previous legislation which had no overt racist intentions however, still based citizenship on blood links rather than civic qualifications. Italy never went through the debate – either as a constitutional monarchy or during the Republic's Constituent Assembly – around who might have the right to citizenship; the debate only began with large-scale immigration and in practice when these immigrants began to have Italian-born children, the 'Second Generation'.

The 1912 law which is still one of the bases for claiming Italian citizenship allowed emigrants to maintain their Italian nationality. A century ago with huge numbers of Italians emigrating, there was a concern by the state to maintain some sort of link with those who had left. Italian-ness in some ways was defined by the Diaspora, which placed Italian immigrants in contrast with those from other nations and from the earlier Anglo-Celtic or Iberian immigrants who had become the residents and 'natives' of the Americas (Gabaccia, 2000). After World War I and during World War II, Italian expansion into the Adriatic enhanced the supposed blood link with those of the population presumed to be 'Italian' and the rest due to be 'Italianised' in name, language and culture. The 1992 law and subsequent amendments allow descendants of Italian emigrants an automatic right to citizenship.[10] More recently, the blood and political links with Italians abroad was reinforced when in 2001 Italian citizens resident abroad were given the right to elect six Senators and twelve Deputies.

Even though the flow of immigrants intensified heavily in the 1990s there was very little debate then about whether the new arrivals might become Italian and if so how. Over the decade, there was a great deal of very different heart-searching about the perennial question of what 'Italy' and 'Italian' meant. The discussions revolved around the dual forces of the LN, and the end of the Cold War. The LN had become a political force to be reckoned with and was polling around 10 percent nationally (8.65 percent in 1992 as the Lega Lombarda; 8.36 percent in the 1994 general election, and 10.07 percent in 1996) and between a fifth and a quarter in the large northern regions.[11] For some years, their policy was one of outright secession and there was sufficient concern to analyse 'Italian-ness'. On the other side, the certainties of the previous forty years had dissolved. The country had been divided on Cold-War lines but all within an Italian identity. At the same time, the presence in government of a party, the National Alliance (Alleanza Nazionale, AN), with its roots in the neo-fascist tradition and outside the 1948 constitutional consensus, removed the Republic's anti-fascist founding myth based on the Resistance. The titles of some of the analyses were explicit and included: *Se cessiamo di essere una nazione* (If we stop being a nation) (Rusconi, 1993), *La morte della patria* (The death of the fatherland) (Galli della Loggia, 1996), *La grande Italia* with its telling subtitle, *Ascesa e declino del mito della nazione nel ventesimo secolo* (Great Italy. Rise and fall of the national myth in the twentieth century) (Gentile, 1997). Along with other historians all three authors had taken part in a conference in Trieste in 1993 chaired by Giovanni Spadolini, who was not only an eminent historian of the Risorgimento but also President of the Senate. Despite the title of the conference proceedings, *Nazione e nazionalità in Italia (*Nation and nationality in Italy*) (*Spadolini, 1994), none of the published papers addressed the question of acquiring Italian nationality. Only Rusconi (1993: ch. VI) touched on the issue in a final chapter which

dealt with immigration into the whole of Europe in general and a called for a civic national identity.

Such discussion as there was concentrated on the idea that Italy and Italians were different from other Europeans and somehow immune from the racism and anti-immigrant violence that the British, the French, the Dutch and the Germans exhibited. It was a period of innocence in a sense. The stereotype of the 'good Italian' prevailed and for much of the time, it did at least partially correspond to reality. There was the presumption that 'Italians are not racist'. There was little racially motivated violence and little explicit racism. The Italian flag-bearer at the 2000 Sydney Olympics was Carlton Myers, whose father is Caribbean and whose mother is Italian. On the other hand respectable newspapers like *La Stampa* were blithely referring to the Japanese motor industry as *l'auto gialla* ('the yellow car'),[12] thirty or forty years after a phrase like 'yellow peril' was totally unacceptable in mainstream newspapers in Britain or the United States. New euphemisms appeared like *extracomunitario* (non-EU person) or *vu cumprà* (a distortion of the street-sellers' supposed sales pitch, '*Vuoi comprare?*,' 'Do you want to buy?') the first normally meaning someone who is poor and usually darker or physically different, the second used for sub-Saharan Africans. It is over the last decade that the consciousness of racism and immigration being issues has grown.

In common with the rest of Europe, explicit, genetic racism is for the most part no longer acceptable in public discourse. Silvio Berlusconi was exceptional when he said that Milan 'seemed to be an African city because of the number of foreigners' (*La Stampa*, 4 June 2009). But on that occasion and when he called Obama 'suntanned', the criticism came primarily from abroad rather than from sources at home. The sense of Berlusconi's remark is that a person cannot be Italian and black, a concept which is obviously very relevant to the second generations especially but not only if they are physically distinguishable from the majority of Italians. There still appears to be a strong undercurrent of biological racism based on a combination of Fascist and pre-Fascist racism together with a much older link with a single city, town or village. The common Italian question, 'Where are you from?' assumes a unity of birthplace and origins. The plaintiff in the European Court case to remove crucifixes from Italian schools is usually referred to in the mainstream media as a 'Finn with Italian citizenship', which distinguishes between the legal reality and a presumed essence of Italian-ness – as well as suggesting that the action was not really 'Italian'. The question 'Where are you from?' is not necessarily asked in a hostile manner but the simple answer expected ill-matches the reality of immigration and especially the second generation. There are certainly plenty of examples of hostility, though; the Milanese writer, Pap Khouma speaks for many when he describes the presumption that someone cannot be black and Italian.

Police and officials stop him continuously and demand his residence permit; he is often presumed to be a thief (*la Repubblica*, 12 December 2009).

More frequent than explicit racism – the presumption that someone is deterministically and inevitably created in a certain way – is the more subtle cultural or 'neo-'racism (Balibar, 1991). This is the *a priori* judgement, normally negative, which essentialises people through assumptions of insurmountable differences and incompatibility of lifestyles, based on their culture, nationality or religion, a non-genetic feature. It may and often does morph into genetic racism, though. In Italy the LN has used cultural prejudices at the same time as the more blatant forms of racism and fear-mongering. In the 1990s, Umberto Bossi screamed at the Government at a Northern League congress saying 'In the next ten years, they want to bring into Padania thirteen or fifteen million immigrants in order to keep this damned Padanian race, a pure race of chosen people, part of the Roman-Congolese colony' (Stella, 2009: 76). This speech and many other declarations and actions do not come from a minority extremist fringe but from the LN. A party which was in government in 1994, again from 2001 to 2006, and which since 2008 has held the Ministry of the Interior, its interior minister, Roberto Maroni suggested that Roma and Sinti, including children, should be identified and fingerprinted.

This is the Italy in which the probably more than five million immigrants and almost one million 'second generation' are living. The conference held at the American University of Rome in 2009 and the four articles that follow this one seek to analyse this context further in order not only to contribute to the academic debate but to provide information which can be useful for policymakers. Our contributors do not always agree with one another, which makes for an articulated debate and underlines the often contrasting views about how to study and interpret the current situation and, especially, how to resolve its problems. This issue of the *Bulletin of Italian Politics* therefore in no way sets out to be definitive. On the contrary, we consider it an introduction to a discussion which promises to become more complex as the situations of Italy's 'second generations' develop, and as research about them multiplies.

The articles by Marchetti and Berrocal consider the legal constraints of citizenship and the ways of revising them being discussed in Parliament. Whatever 'Italian identity' really consists of, formal citizenship is certainly a part of it. Other articles put the second generation issues into wider contexts. As Thomassen writes, there is a 'problematisation' of immigration. While he questions whether the term 'second generation' actually has any meaning, Zinn analyses the new media through which second-generation youths mobilise around the term. Thomassen discusses the other forms of generational conflict and suggests that gender might be an even more important division than the division between 'Italian' and immigrant. Both Berrocal and Thomassen bring a personal and

ethnographic angle to the issues; Berrocal argues that having a distinguishable physical type is the distinctive feature whereas Thomassen suggests that often it is the normal tension between generations that dominates. All the contributors try to address the question of what it means to be Italian today and to look to the future. It is a concept which is difficult to pin down but becomes ever more essential both in practical and legal terms and in terms of academic analysis. Tony Judt (2010: 15) criticises the whole concept of 'identity' especially when it is linked with the rights of citizenship:

> 'Identity' is a dangerous word. It has no respectable contemporary uses […] Being 'Danish' or 'Italian', 'American' or European' won't just be an identity; it will be a rebuff and a reproof to those whom it excludes. The state, far from disappearing, may be about to come into its own: the privileges of citizenship, the protections of card-holding residency rights, will be wielded as political trumps. Intolerant demagogues in established democracies will demand 'tests' – of knowledge, of attitude – to determine whether desperate newcomers are deserving of British or Dutch or French 'identity'. They are already doing so.

Now with approaching ten percent of the population being of foreign origin, Italy is asking the same question: What is Italian identity and who deserves it? But as Italians question the actual significance of 'Italian-ness', they are also modifying the concept of Italian identity, and at the forefront of this debate are the 'second generation'.

Notes

1. Some of the key works in Italian are: Ambrosini and Molini (2004); Bertain and Di Nicola (2009); Besozzi, Colombo and Santagati (2009); Bosisio et al. (2005); Braccini (2000); Colombo (2007); Colombo (2009); Colombo, Domaneschi and Marchetti (2009); Coluccia and Ferretti (2010); Frisina (2007); Gilardoni (2008); ISMU (2008); Leonini and Rebughini (2010); Pattarini (2007); Queirolo Palmas (2006); Tieghi and Ognisanti (2009); Valtolina and Marazzi (2006).

2. One of the earliest works on this subject in English is Andall (2002).

3. There were approximately 440,000 new regular migrants in Italy between 2008 and 2009 (Caritas/Migrantes, 2009). See the statistical appendix to this set of articles.

4. The article is part of a special issue on 'Schools, Migrants and Generations' which can be accessed at www.ijse.eu/index.php/ijse/issue/view/6/showToc

5. The term appears in numerous contexts, ranging from studies on health (www.provincia.bologna.it/sanitasociale/Engine/RAServeFile.php/f/immigrazio ne/PremioSassatelli/Gioacchino_CutrupiaT9-28V.pdf), to literary conferences (www.secondegenerazioni.it/forum /view topic.php?f=11&t=1238&p=8282 #p82 71) to discussions about young Muslim women (*Corriere della Sera*, 19 September 2009).

6. For a survey of positivist thought see Demarco (2009).

7. Speech in June 1925, cited in Morgan (2007: 17).

8. See for example http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/7283.

9. See De Donno's (2006) discussion of the ways racial theories informed ideas and legislation on citizenship under Fascism.

10. The field of immigration is governed by Law no. 91 of 5 February 1992 as amended by Law no. 94 of 2009, along with the provisions of the Presidential Decrees 572 of 12 October 1993 and 362 of 18 April 1994.

11. Piedmont: 17.06% in 1992, 15.7% in 1994 and 18.22% in 1996. Lombardy: 24.33% in 1992, 17.67% in 1994 and 25.53% in 1996. Venetia: 17.31% in 1992, 21.6% in 1994 and 29.27% in 1996. Friuli: 13.62% in 1992, 16.92% in 1994 and 23.19 in 1996.

12. The first reference we have managed to find is from 8 September 1993; 'Auto gialla, è allarme Garuzzo: la Cee deve fare di più', http://archivio.lastampa.it:80/LaStampaArchivio/main/History/tmpl_viewObj.jsp?objid=1142743.

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