University of Sussex

A University of Sussex DPhil thesis

Available online via Sussex Research Online:

http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/

This thesis is protected by copyright which belongs to the author.

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

Please visit Sussex Research Online for more information and further details

THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF MIGRANTS:
A STUDY OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITIES IN LONDON

GIUSEPPE SCOTTO

DPHIL CANDIDATE IN MIGRATION STUDIES

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

NOVEMBER 2012

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:………………………………………

To mamma, papà, Angelo and Bhavna

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

GIUSEPPE SCOTTO – DPHIL IN MIGRATION STUDIES

-

THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF MIGRANTS:

A STUDY OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITIES IN LONDON

-

SUMMARY

This thesis deals with the historical evolution, social networks, and – above all – the political participation of Italian citizens who are resident in London. The value of my research stems from an increasing interest – evident in the literature – in migrant transnational identities and in the political participation of migrant groups both in their home and host countries. Also relevant is the growing importance of London as a destination for Italian migrants.

The study adopts a theoretical framework based on political opportunity structure and on the construction of social and community identity. It deploys a mix of methods that involve a questionnaire, ethnographic methods such as open and semi-structured interviews and participant observation, and some elements of discourse analysis, in order to analyse the social and political activity of three components of the Italian communities who are resident in London: the "old" migrants who arrived in the UK between the end of World War Two and the late 1970s; their descendants, the British-born Italians; and the "new" migrants, who have moved to London since the mid-1980s. Comparison across these three waves produces important insights into the development of Italian identity in London over more than half a century.

In the three main empirical chapters the thesis examines (1) what characterises the Italian presence, in terms of socio-economic characteristics and identification; (2) how an Italian institutional and associational network, active in London, influences the building of a collective identity in the Italian communities and helps mobilise them; and (3) to what degree and how London Italians think they may contribute to political, social, and cultural change in their home and host countries.

The primary data that I present show that belonging to one of the three generational groups outlined above has a great impact on the ties with both the UK and Italy and, in particular, with the Italian institutional and associational network in London; that this network plays an important role in the emergence of a new discourse on "Italianness" among recently arrived Italian migrants; that different forms of Italian identity are constructed and performed by Italians from the three different groups in their interaction with the social and political opportunity structure they experience in London; and finally that all this affects local and transnational political loyalties and behaviour.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

research, go to my two supervisors, Russell and Shamit, for their academic and human support and encouragement.

Finally, I am grateful to all those who, in any way, have demonstrated their care for me and believed in me in these years; I hope that this thesis will be rewarding also for them. I cannot conclude these acknowledgements without saying a word for all those who criticised or could not understand my choice of leaving a paid job and starting a PhD: their attitude was a great incentive to do my best and complete this thesis.

The responsibility of what I wrote and any possible mistakes are solely and exclusively mine.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF BOXES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis deals with the historical evolution, social networks, and political participation of Italian citizens who are resident in the Greater London area, and is based on fieldwork and research conducted in London between 2009 and 2011.

My aim in this work is to understand more about the Italian presence in London today – a topic which has been so far overlooked in the academic literature – and how Italians in London participate in Italian politics. In this way, by using a mixed-method approach, and combining the institutionalist, social network, and constructivist-interpretivist frameworks, I examine (a) how "Italianness" is constructed, performed and evolves in the different groups which make up the Italian population in the British capital, and (b) how these different types of Italian identity influence their political interest and participation in Italian politics. I distinguish between "old" and "new" Italian migrants, the former mainly labour migrants arriving during the 1950s and 1960s, the latter more professional migrants, often graduates, arriving in the last twenty years. A third group is made up of the now-adult children of the "old" migrants, the so-called second generation.

Data have been collected by means of a questionnaire, two different panels of interviews – one with key informants and one with members of the three different groups of Italians in London, participant observation of events organised in London, and discourse analysis of media articles and associations' web-sites on new Italian professional migration. These data allowed me to find out – among other things that I will discuss more in depth throughout the thesis – that:

- "Old" and "new" waves of Italian migrants differ as regards their socio-economic characteristics and educational background, but the reasons for their migration – mainly economic – are similar, and their critiques of Italian politics, society and economy often coincide as well.
- Italianness presents different characteristics for the two groups but, in both cases, identity comprises elements deriving on the one hand from having an Italian background, and on the other hand from being resident in London. To paraphrase a metaphor about middle-class Indians in the USA cited in Morawska (2003), 'their bicultural identities resemble… a "salad bowl" composed of a dominant [Italian]… ingredient and other elements [typical of London], some of which the immigrants

incorporate themselves and others that they absorb unselfconsciously' (Morawska 2003: 138). The metaphor of the "salad bowl" works well also to describe the third group under study, that of the British-born Italians, but in their case the proportion of the ingredients is the other way round, with the British element as the dominant one.

- The different ways the three groups exploit the institutional and discursive opportunity structure they face in London, and the opportunities offered by the availability of low-cost means of transport and communication technologies, help in explaining the different forms of Italianness and the different level of political interest and involvement in Italian politics, which emerge among the different generations and waves of Italian migrants.

- The contingencies and the evolution of opportunities and identity make the interplay between the participation in home-country and host-country politics – an issue long debated in the literature – a very complex relationship; thus, no definitive position on the direction of this relationship can be endorsed on the basis of this study.

In this introductory chapter, I first explain the rationale of my research, stressing its originality and value (section 1.1); in section 1.2 I present the main concepts used in this study, and introduce my research questions. Finally, section 1.3 summarises the contents of each chapter of this thesis. Before moving to these topics, I find it necessary, as a preamble, to briefly tell the story behind my choice to work on this topic and how my ideas developed into a DPhil project.

In the academic year 2005-06, I followed a Master's degree in Asian Studies at the University of Amsterdam. At that time, I was twenty-four and I already lived five years away from my family, as I had left my hometown – Foggia, in Southern Italy – to move to Milan for my bachelor degree; but I can still remember the moment when I said goodbye to my parents at the airport of Naples: they were moved more than usual, as their older son was going to live abroad for the first time.

During that year, two episodes happened that influenced my choice of doing a DPhil on Italians abroad. During the first term of the Master's programme, I took a course on 'Citizenship, Identity and Belonging', which introduced me to the meaning of these concepts in the social sciences. Secondly, after some weeks in Amsterdam, I started attending mass in the Italian language for the local Italian community. In the past, I already had the chance to talk with many relatives and family friends who had migrated to the USA in order to improve their socio-economic condition, as two of my grandfather's brothers had left for New York for this reason,

but this was the first time I came to know about "new" types of migrants from Italy and their life abroad.

When one year later I decided to apply for a doctoral programme, in the beginning I was thinking to link my interest in East Asia with my interest in migration and study the political involvement of the Chinese diaspora in some European or American setting. While working on my draft proposal, I realised that it would have been hard to pursue this project, not knowing the language and given the relative closure of many Chinese communities. Influenced by my experience in Amsterdam, I changed my original plan and prepared a proposal on Italians abroad. Because of my knowledge of the Italian and English languages, I decided to focus on an English-speaking country, and chose the British case, because – as I will show later in this chapter – I found there is more of a research gap to be filled in the literature on Italians in the UK than is the case for (North- and South-) America and Australia. In this way, in the past four years, I have been at the same time an Italian living in the UK and a researcher studying Italians living in the UK. That is why, during my fieldwork, I found it very necessary to read some literature on the role of the researcher and, more in particular, on being a migrant who studies migrants of the same national origin; I will discuss this issue in chapter 3, talking about reflexivity and positionality.

1.1 THE RATIONALE OF MY RESEARCH: ORIGINALITY AND VALUE

Besides my own personal interests, I chose to study the political participation of Italians in the UK because of the contribution my work can offer to both the literature on Italian migration and to that on migrant identity and the political participation of migrants.

In fact, most of the analyses on the social, associational and political life of the Italians living in Britain are studies on the old "economic" migration and their second and third generations. Even most of the recent works tend to have a historical nature and do not deal directly with the new types of Italian migration. This is due mainly to the shift of Italy from being a country of emigration to being a country of immigration, as stressed by Zontini in the following quote.

> Italian emigration…is an issue that is no longer studied by social scientists and is now considered scarcely relevant by them. Most of the work produced in this field is done by historians who are uncovering specific aspects of the still little known experience of Italian mass migration…The era of mass emigration is considered to have ended in the 1970s and emigration is not seen any longer as a social problem needing to be investigated (Zontini 2006: 22).

The rapid growth of Italian migration to London in the past twenty years has nevertheless attracted the attention of Italian and international media, mainly interested in telling their audience stories about lack of meritocracy in Italy and the consequent phenomenon of brain drain, but, with few exceptions (such as the work of Bartolini and Volpi 2005, Seganti 2007 and 2010, and Conti 2011), the most recent waves of Italian migration have not yet been analysed in depth by academic works.

According to the British Census of 2001, the Italian-born residents in the UK were around 107,000, of which 99,000 lived in England. About half of this population was resident in London. If we compare these data to those of the previous census (1991), we can notice on the one hand a drop in the number of Italians living in the areas characterised by traditional economic migration, due to natural causes and to return migration to Italy, and on the other hand an increase in the numbers of Italians who live in London, especially in high-income boroughs such as Kensington and Chelsea (+70% in 2001, compared to 1991). The reason for these changes is that Italian migration to the UK presents new characteristics. According to a document published by the Italian Embassy in London,

> mobility flows have changed and are mainly linked to the characteristics of London as an international financial and commercial hub. Italians who come to London are mainly experts in the economic-financial sector, medical doctors, officials who spend periods of 3-5 years in the British capital (working in banks, insurance companies and services), researchers, scientists and artists. Yet a flow of Italians involved in the catering sector still exists. Moreover, many young people live in the country, even for longer periods, to improve their knowledge of the English language and a significant part of them settle for several years, finding jobs in the services sector (Ambasciata Italiana Londra 2006: 1-2).

If we look at the more recent Italian data (that include also British-born Italian citizens), the number of people registered with AIRE (the register for Italians abroad) in the London Consular Constituency at the beginning of 2010 is around 150,000, with around 60,000 of these resident in the Greater London area. The majority of the population (around 55%) is male, while, as regards the area of origin in Italy, 38% of the AIRE residents in the Greater London come from the North, 33% from the Centre, 18% from the mainland South and 11% from Sicily and Sardinia (my analysis of AIRE data). This distribution broadly reflects the geographical weight of the Italian population in Italy, indicating that Italians in the London area come from all parts of the origin country. As for the year of arrival, according to the journalist Marco Niada more than half of the 90,000 Italians who moved to London in the past fifty years, arrived during the last twenty (Niada 2008: 237).

Moreover, Italians in London enjoy the status of being European citizens with a white background living in another EU country. Most of the studies on the political integration and participation of migrants and minorities in the UK focus on the relationship between race, participation and representation, and deal with the South Asian and Afro-Caribbean communities. Clear examples of this tendency are provided by Adolino: 'I will now refer to Britain's non-white population as its ethnic minority population' (Adolino 1998: 22); and by Modood: 'in this chapter "ethnic minority" means people of non-European descent (nonwhites)' (Modood 2005: 457). This is in contrast with what is stated by scholars who have studied the old waves of Italian migration to the UK, like Medaglia, according to whom 'Italians constitute an ethnic group although they are European, white and Christian. Their ethnicity is signified by their use of Italian language, their social customs and their religion' (Medaglia 2001: 1). And the issue of being an invisible-white group, but at the same time trying to keep their own visibility is one of the main themes examined by Fortier in her *Migrant Belongings* (2000). This links closely to quite long-running debates on the Irish as an ethnic group in Britain, as witnessed by the recent publication of two papers written by Hickman (2011) and Walter (2011). Thus, the identity project and the political involvement of people from one EU country who are resident in another EU country is a topic that has not been widely addressed yet, and my research aims to partly fill this gap.

The last paragraph has brought in the topic of Italian identity, which is at the core of this research. The contemporary presence of different Italian groups – characterised by different experiences of migration and settlement, different socio-economic backgrounds, and different ties with Italy – and the presence and evolution of an Italian network made up of institutions and associations, set the context for the construction and development of different forms of Italianness among Italians in London. This is an aspect that will be examined in depth throughout the whole thesis.

In fact, the notion of identity has become indispensable to contemporary political discourse (Heyes 2012), one of the reasons for the success of this term being the emergence of identity politics, as I will discuss in the next chapter. Moreover, as stressed by Bleich (2008), immigration 'can be developed as a core element of the comparative politics of identity, defined as the study of just how and how much identity matters in political life' (Bleich 2008: 510-511). Thus, in this study ample space will be given to the analysis of the impact of the different forms of identity developed by Italians in London on their political interest and participation.

In the past decades, linked to the ongoing process of European integration, the political agenda of Italians living abroad has emerged – as described by Fortier (2000) – with a focus on voting rights and political representation that is often seen by migrants as a substitute for the "myth of return" – the mythology that migrants are in the host-country to save, invest and eventually return to their villages back home, which has often been discussed as the cause of their resistance to change and non-participation on an individual level in the host-country institutions, as explained by Anwar in his seminal work on Pakistanis in Britain (Anwar 1979: 9). As I will show in chapter 6, a number of boards and commissions have been set up to deal with emigrant issues and, finally, Italians abroad obtained the right to vote for Italian general elections with the law 459/2001.

The right to vote in Italian elections has opened further space for the engagement of Italian citizens living in the UK in transnational political activity, and for new forms of cooperation between Italian political parties and their English counterparts (as European citizens, Italians can also register to vote in British local elections and vote in the British constituency in EU parliamentary elections). In fact, the 2001 law has also increased the interest of Italian institutions and political actors in the life of their compatriots who live out of Italy, and is reinforcing the attempt to include the transnational political activity of Italians abroad in a more institutionalised and bureaucratic framework.

Thus, it is probably in the realm of the political identification and participation of migrants and, more in particular, of political transnationalism, that a study of the political activity of Italians in London can provide a greater contribute to the literature. Needless to say, in a historical period that scholars like Stephen Castles and Mark Miller (2009) have defined as the "age of migration", the political involvement and the political rights of migrants are gaining increasing attention, as I will show in my literature review in chapter 2. Scholars have directed their attention to both the opportunities offered by low-cost means of transport and new communication technologies (see Koslowski 2005, and Vertovec 2009), and to the recent tendency by many states to increase the links with their diasporas (for example, Itzigsohn 2000, Bauböck 2008).

Italy is considered a classical example of a sending's state intervention in the economic, social and cultural life of its migrants since the late 19th century until now (Choate 2007); in 2007 it was one of only 13 states granting the vote from abroad for their own representatives (Collyer and Vathi 2007). Moreover, although with different characteristics, emigration from Italy never stopped completely, thus Italian "colonies" abroad include old and new waves of migrants and

their descendants. For these reasons, following Lafleur, studying the political transnationalism of Italians abroad can offer a big contribution to understand 'why do states enfranchise citizens abroad?' – to cite the title of his recent paper (2011), but also can offer important insights on why citizens abroad still follow and participate in their home-country politics, and how states and citizens interplay in this process.

I would like to conclude this section by stressing the value of conducting an inter-generational study, which takes into account different waves and generations of migrants. In fact, most of the studies on the political participation of migrants in American and European literature compare the integration of different ethnic groups in the same location or the integration of the same ethnic group in different settings. These two approaches are an expression of methodological nationalism, a tendency of many studies in migration which has been criticised in the past ten years (see Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2003), and present one major limitation: they provide a static representation of a particular moment and do not take into account changes over time. Moreover, the historiography of many migrations has pointed out that ethnic and national communities themselves are divided by class, religion, or politics among members of the "same" group (Cieslik and Nowicka 2012). This leads Bueker to suggest in the conclusion of his work on the source-country effect on the political incorporation of immigrants in the USA that 'future research must explore how the patterns of civic integration identified here compare to earlier trends for the same immigrant groups, in order to understand whether immigrants from the same countries of origin have seen changes in patterns and predictors of political integration over time (Bueker 2005: 135).

By the same token, most studies do not consider different "waves" or "cohorts" of migrants, arriving at different times; nor do they draw distinctions between different genealogical generations of migrants. In particular, insufficient attention has been given to the cross-generational processes of transnationalism, from the primary migrants to second and subsequent generations.

In this way, making an intra-group comparison and focusing on different sub-groups of Italian citizens in the same setting (following the example of the study by Cherti 2007 on Moroccans in London) will allow us to discover changes in patterns among generations. For example, it will allow me to firstly examine whether transnational political practices are, in most cases, a concern of the first generation only, which may still persist among their children if they acquire dual nationality at birth, but will eventually fade away over subsequent generations of immigrant descent, as argued by Bauböck (2003: 706), and secondly to take into account the

year of arrival and the amount of time spent by migrants in the UK, thus offering new insights in the study of this topic.

1.2 MAIN CONCEPTS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.2.1 Main concepts

The title of this thesis is 'The political participation of migrants: a study of the Italian communities in London'. Before introducing my research questions, it is useful to provide some definitions of identity, a notion that is fundamental in this thesis, and of the terms that make up this title.

Identity: Field (1994) directs our attention to four different notions: (1) self-concept, which denotes the inclusive self-definition reflecting the overall framework within which each individual evaluates him- or herself as a physical, social, and spiritual or moral being; (2) social identity, which derives from attributions and identifications made by others attempting to situate actors as social objects; (3) personal identity, referring to attributions and identifications the individual makes about him or herself during interaction; and – more specific to the field of migration studies – (4) ethnic identity, which indicates the degree to which the individuals think of themselves, organise the meaning of their social relationships, and interpret their experiences in terms of their national background, and the individuals' images of the "ideal" immigrant from a certain origin (Field 1994: 433). In chapter 2, I will discuss in detail the approach I follow in deploying the concept of identity in this study.

International migration: According to the IOM (International Organization for Migration), international migration is defined as the 'movement of persons who leave their country of origin, or the country of habitual residence, to establish themselves either permanently or temporarily in another country. An international frontier is therefore crossed' (IOM 2004: 33). By following this definition, I will consider as international migrants also those mobile professionals who often prefer not to be labeled "migrants", as I was informed by some of my interviewees.

Political participation: Axford et al. define political participation as 'the actions by which individuals take part in the political process' (Axford et al. 2002: 120). I chose to use such a broad definition of political participation because it may include both conventional (see Milbrath 1965) or unconventional (see Dalton 1988) types of participation, attitudes – such as

being attentive to politics, and more passive forms of behaviour, like conversations about political issues or reading certain kinds of books etc. (see chapter 3 for the comprehensive list of the forms of political participation which I consider in this study).

The political participation of migrant groups can be directed either towards their host country or towards their country of origin. In the first case, scholars talk about political integration, in the latter of political transnationalism. I will define and discuss these concepts in depth in the next chapter.

Community: According to Anthony Cohen, community indicates 'members of a group of people [that] (a) have something in common with each other which (b) distinguishes them in a significant way from the members of other putative groups' (Cohen 1985: 12). Burrell adds that 'these people typically cluster around formal structures, institutions and organisations, creating clearly visible signifiers of community for those within and outside the group' (Burrell 2006: 141).

The notion of community takes into account not only geographical proximity, but also a sense of "we-ness", the sharing of beliefs and values, and 'a whole range of attitudes and assumptions about everyday life, which are related not only to the traditions inherited from the old country but also the habits and behaviour acquired in the new country' (Tosi 1993: 89). According to Terry Colpi, who authored a major documentary study on Italians in the UK and stressed the lack of homogeneity between diverse groups that characterised the Italian presence, 'the Italian word *collettività* – collectivity – is more apt since it contains the idea of many distinct groups less cohesively comprising a whole' (Colpi 1991: 16). Given the complexity of the term collectivity, that can have different political implications, in my work I will use the term community, keeping in mind the differences between the various Italian groups in London, and trying for this reason – when possible – to use the plural form "communities".

The issue of the fragmentation among Italians in London – that I will discuss more in depth in chapters 4 and 5 – leads me to briefly outline the three groups that are object of my inter-generational study. Here I consider generations in both a genealogical and historical meaning and I consider three groups of Italian residents in London:

- the representatives of what I will define as the "old" migration, who arrived in the UK after WWII, mainly in the 1950s and the 1960s, to work either in the industrial areas in the Midlands and North of England, or in the catering and services sector in London;

- the descendants of the "old" migration, second and – in few cases – third generations who grew up and were educated in the UK;

- the "new" waves of migrants, who arrived in the past twenty to thirty years, mainly since the second half of the 1990s, and are employed as professionals, or as academics, or are young people who come to improve their knowledge of English language while working in casual low-skill jobs and then often stay longer than expected for either sentimental or professional reasons.

1.2.2 Research Questions

Having explained these concepts, I can now introduce my research questions and sub-questions:

- What characterises the Italian presence in London today?
    - Which are the characteristics of the different Italian communities in London and how are they related to each other?
    - How is "Italianness" constructed and performed among the first and second generation, "old" and "new" waves of Italians?
    - What is the role played by the Italian institutional and associational network which is active in London?
    - How does this network interplay with migrants in the construction of different forms of Italian identity?
- How do Italians in London participate in Italian politics?
    - Which factors affect the transnational political activity of Italians in London?
    - What is the role played by parties and movements in mobilising Italians in London?
    - How is the London Italians' participation in Italian politics linked to their involvement in British politics?

In the final section of this introduction, I will explain how these topics will be dealt with in each chapter of this thesis.

1.3 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on migrant identity and the political participation of migrants. After showing the growing relevance of these topics and introducing the different theoretical approaches that I will use in this study, in section 2.1 I will discuss the concept of political transnationalism. In the next three sections I will present three frameworks that will be used in this work: in section 2.2 I will examine identity politics and the constructivist-interpretivist approach of identity construction and performance, focusing in particular on the work of Anne-Marie's Fortier; in section 2.3 I will show how migrant associations and networks have been studied to explain the political participation of migrants and ethnic minorities, especially by those scholars following a social capital approach; while in section 2.4 I will introduce and discuss the concept of political opportunity structure. Finally, in section 2.5 I will review the literature on the relationship between political integration and transnationalism, which is one of the most long-lasting and heated debates in this field.

Chapter 3 introduces the methodology I chose to collect and analyse my data and answer my research questions: in section 3.1 I discuss methodological pluralism; in section 3.2 I describe and problematise the different methods I use to collect my data; finally, in section 3.3 I focus on the issues of reflexivity and positionality in my research.

Chapter 4 is the first of my empirical chapters. The chapter starts with a brief historical background of the Italian migration to the UK, focusing on the 19th and, above all, on the 20th century. In section 4.2 I focus on the group that I define as the "old" wave of migrants, and I discuss issues such as the reasons for their migration to the UK, their settling down in the host country, their social and associational life, and their past and ongoing links with Italy. In the following section (4.3) I examine the same issues, but focusing on the "new" waves of migrants that reached the UK since the 1980s and in particular in the past twenty years. The factors affecting their decision to migrate, their settling and socialisation in London and their links with Italy will be analysed, taking into account individual factors such as level of education, knowledge of English and professional background. Particular attention will focus on the use of new technologies to be connected among each other, with Italy and with other Italian communities abroad. In section 4.4 I portray the second generation who grew up in the UK. As regards the British-born Italians, I focus on aspects such as education (with a particular emphasis on language), socialisation with Italian and British peers, identification with Italy and the UK, and their connections with their country of origin. The chapter ends with a discussion on the similarities and differences between the three groups, comparing how their Italian

identity is constructed and develops as a consequence of their relationship with both Italy and the UK.

Chapter 5 deals with the Italian network in London. After relaying the history of the origin of this network, in section 5.1 I offer a critical description of institutions and organisations, which assist migrants in their religious, welfare and linguistic needs. In section 5.2, I speak about the fragmentation and decline of traditional associations, while section 5.3 examines the emergence of new forms of associational life, often based on the interactive use of the web. Finally, in the last section of this chapter I discuss the contribution of this network to the creation and performance of a new form of Italianness among "new" Italian migrants, by means of a discourse that makes use of off-line and on-line spaces to emphasise aspects such as "meritocracy", "transparency" and respect for the rule of law, which are considered more constitutive of British society, as opposed to the Italian one. This emerging discourse provides Italian migrants with the basis to express their voice in Italian political debates.

Thus, in chapter 6 the political participation of Italian citizens resident in the Greater London area will be analysed in depth. The chapter starts with a review of the literature on the political involvement of Italians in the UK since the 19th century, thus setting the context for my own research. In section 6.2 I discuss the topic of the right to vote for Italians abroad, while in the following three sections I examine, for each group under study, their interest and information about politics (section 6.3), their electoral behaviour (section 6.4), and their involvement in other forms of political participation (section 6.5). Section 6.6 analyses the reasons behind the choice whether to participate or not in Italian politics, highlighting the differences between the three groups. Finally, in the last section of this chapter, I focus on the other side of migrant political participation, that is the involvement of Italian citizens in British politics.

The final chapter, chapter 7, will synthesise my findings, and discuss the relationship between the interest and involvement in Italian and British politics – thus linking my findings with the existing debate in the literature. I then suggest some possible areas for future research. I will also reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of my research project as it has turned out in the form of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2: MIGRANT IDENTITY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

> Identity is bound up with geography and place: as homeland (nation) and home place (community) and in relational terms as one's 'place' in the world. In other words, identities are defined and limited by borders and boundaries (McHugh 2000: 85).

> Migration raises more complex questions about political membership. The underlying problem is how to resolve the mismatch between states as territorially bounded jurisdictions and citizenship as an intergenerational status of membership in a political community. Democratic citizenship has a sticky quality: it clings to individuals, and they cling to it as well when moving across international borders. But democratic states are organised as non-overlapping territorial jurisdictions. Migration between states therefore produces citizens abroad and foreign citizens in the territory (Bauböck 2010: 297).

International migration deeply affects identity and political membership, as stressed by McHugh and Bauböck in the previous quotations. This is reflected in an increasing interest – evident in the literature – in migrant transnational identities and in the political participation of migrant groups both in their home and host countries.

For migrants, national identity may be portable across international boundaries; migrants inhabit multiple places, thus their identities may be multi-sited, multi-layered, diachronic and syncretic, and may be activated and de-activated according to circumstances and contexts, as I will show later.

The migrant (or ethnic) identity usually emerges after the migration experience, when migrants start interacting with the host society. This interaction causes two effects: on the one hand, migrants contribute to the development and changes in the character and identity of places and host societies; on the other hand, migrants develop some identity construction strategies, in order to cope with their new environment. An example is provided by Field (1994) who, in his study on the Irish in the USA, shows that Irish immigrants did not passively accept the identity that had been originally assigned to them in the US context, but they actively constructed and negotiated identity, as they interacted with others (Field 1994: 447).

Field follows the classification of Hewitt and lists three main identity construction strategies: exclusivity, pragmatic identification and autonomy. Exclusivity, pragmatic identification and autonomy are commonly deployed by different groups of migrants resident in both American and European settings: as I will document in chapters 4 and 5 when speaking about the Italian communities in London and their networks, these strategies are adopted – either entirely or

combining elements from each tactic – also by the members of the different Italian communities which are the object of this study.

The importance of migrant identity and belonging in understanding the political behaviour of migrants is stressed by several scholars. According to Favell and Geddes, the politics of belonging is

> an interesting framework precisely because it encompasses both the formal institutional and symbolic dimensions of political tensions about these questions. In part it is about the formal rules and laws that enable membership or exclude minorities from the national community. But it is also about the informal symbolic, linguistic and cultural processes by which majority groups react to new groups, and by which these newcomers organise and defend their interests (1999: 11).

Migrants may mobilise around a whole host of issues, the main types of which are, according to Eva Østergaard-Nielsen: immigrant politics, homeland politics, emigrant politics, diaspora politics and translocal politics (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 762). The literature offers several typologies of migrant involvement, but the different forms taken by the political participation of migrants can be summarised in their involvement in the politics of their host country and in that of their country of origin:

> On the one hand, immigration poses the question of the terms of inclusion of immigrants within the imagined national community of the receiving state and its legal and political order. On the other hand, immigrants create social and political linkages with their country of origin, establishing institutions that transcend the political boundaries of the sending and receiving countries - this is the question of immigrant-based transnationalism (Itzigsohn 2000: 1127).

Però and Solomos outline the history of migrants' activism in their introduction to a special issue of *Ethnic and Racial Studies* on migrant politics and mobilisation. According to them, until the end of the 1970s, migrants' mobilisations in the industrial society of Western Europe were for the most part about issues of material justice. However, in Britain, migrants – in particular those coming from the Commonwealth, who benefited from citizenship rights – soon began to mobilise also about other questions that negatively affected their lives, such as racism and discrimination, lack of inclusion in structures of representation, and cultural rights. After Western European societies increasingly turned into post-Fordist economies centred on the service economy, a political discourse centred on ethnicity and ethno-cultural recognition has been established as the main political discourse through which to address questions of integration of migrants and minorities (Però and Solomos 2010: 3-4).

A consequence of the historical development of migrant mobilisation in Europe is that European-based research has tended to focus on immigrant political participation – their efforts to better their situation in the receiving country (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 764), and there is noticeably less attention to and research available on migrants' transnational politics in Europe than on the other side of the Atlantic. This view has been recently shared by Bermudez, according to whom:

> while the study of migrant political transnationalism has developed mainly out of research on Latinos in the United States, the issue of political participation in the host society has been discussed mostly in reference to long-established ethnic minority groups, both in the United States and Europe. In the European context, there is an ongoing public debate about migrants' political rights, especially in relation to voting (Bermudez 2010: 76).

For this reason, most of the classical studies and definitions of transnationalism derive from US-based research, and only in the past decade has a European-based scholarship on migrant transnationalism been emerging, as I will show in the next sections of this chapter.

Moreover, while scholars were used to focusing on receiving states, the role of sending states in the mobilisation of their migrants has gained increasing attention only in recent years. Although, in some cases, governments are cautious and sceptical about their diasporas abroad, 'recent scholarship is full of interesting examples of how sending countries' political elites actively try to tap into the resources of the communities abroad' (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 766), by affording political rights to their nationals abroad and creating programmes to strengthen links with the diaspora (Bermudez 2010: 77).

In studying migrant political participation, researchers from different disciplines have adopted different theoretical approaches (e.g. positivist vs interpretative), and focused on different levels of analysis – either on the macro level, by adopting a neo-institutionalist approach based on opportunity structure, or on the meso level, analysing social capital and the networks which are active in migrant groups. In both traditions, personal characteristics and attitudes have been taken into account, either as control variables, additional motivation factors or potential interpretations. Moreover, most studies have shown the importance of migrant identities in determining migrants' political behaviour. Again, a review of the literature shows how this relationship has been studied from different theoretical standpoints and making use of different methodologies.

As I explained in chapter 1, in this thesis I examine how an Italian institutional and associational network, active in London, influences the building of a collective identity in the

Italian communities and helps mobilise them; and to what degree and for which reasons London Italians think they may contribute to political, social, and cultural change in their host country.

I argue that the best way to understand the meaning attributed to being an Italian in London and how this influences political involvement is to look at my case study from different theoretical standpoints. Here I follow Dryzek's claim for critical pluralism, stating that it is only in the engagement across research traditions that the shortcomings or indeed strengths of particular approaches and styles of inquiry can be explored (Dryzek 2002: 13). In line with critical pluralism, this study has an inductive nature and Italians in London have been studied by a range of different approaches and methods.

Therefore, in this chapter, after providing in section 2.1 the different definitions and typologies of political transnationalism, I will present three frameworks that will be used in this work. In section 2.2 I will examine identity politics and the constructivist-interpretivist approach of identity construction and performance, focusing in particular on the work of Anne-Marie's Fortier; in section 2.3 I will show how migrant associations and networks have been studied to explain the political participation of migrants and ethnic minorities, especially by those scholars following a social capital approach; while in section 2.4 I will introduce and discuss the concept of political opportunity structure. Finally, in section 2.5 I will review the literature on the relationship between being interested and involved in the home- and in the host-country politics.

Before moving on, I should highlight here that these different theories and methods will be deployed to study Italians who belong to a different generation or migration wave. As I explained in the introduction chapter, in this thesis I consider generations in both a genealogical and historical meaning, considering two groups of first-generation Italians and one group of second-generation Italians. Generation plays a crucial role, not only because belonging to one of these three groups usually implies a certain socio-economic status and specific socio-demographic characteristics that may facilitate or impede Italians from having an interest or participating in politics. This is what is often referred to as the resource model of political participation, developed by Verba, Schlozman and Brady (cf. also Eggert and Giugni 2010: 179-180). But also, belonging to one of the two waves of migration taken into account, or being born/growing up in the UK, has very different consequences in terms of the relationship with the home and host country, thus influencing the construction and the

performance of identity, and the interest and participation in what happens in London, in the UK and in Italy.

2.1 POLITICAL TRANSNATIONALISM: DEFINITIONS AND TYPOLOGIES

Transnationalism can be defined as a phenomenon or scientific concept, and political transnationalism is one of the sides that are part of it. This view is shared by Bauböck, who states that the "-ism" sends a wrong signal, as transnationalism 'is mostly employed as an analytic concept in academic discourses and only rarely comes up in political discourses. Transnationalism is...an optic, but it needs not be associated with any particular ideology' (Bauböck 2010: 309-310). Waldinger (2008) explains that today's mass international migrations entail not only some migrants who move to settle and others who settle despite initial plans to the contrary, but also movements of other types, including return migration, repeat migration, and circular migration. These flows leave large numbers of persons moving back and forth, with connections between "here" and "there". By reviewing the literature, he shows that changes in technology are crucial, as today's migrants can communicate with the stay-at-homes in any number of ways, doing so with a speed and immediacy that, in the view of many experts, keeps migrants and stayers firmly connected. It must be said – though – that there is a danger of technological determinism in wholly attributing the formation of transnational communities to shifts in technology: technology might have facilitated and enhanced, rather than caused, transnational networks.

Moreover, shifts in sending and receiving societies also facilitate the expression of home-place attachments. Whereas ties to home and host country were previously seen as mutually exclusive, today's environment appears to many scholars as more relaxed politically and ideologically and has legitimated the expression of and organisation around home-country loyalties (Waldinger 2008: 4). Both Itzigsohn (2000) and Bauböck (2008) stress how immigrant transnationalism is not a new phenomenon, but at the same time they explain how 'we are witnessing new forms of intervention by the states of origin in the politics of the country of reception' (Itzigsohn 2000: 1127), and that the present scope and pace of transnationalism is due on the one hand to new technology, and on the other hand to a profound change in the attitude of states towards their migrants (Bauböck 2008: 3). With a similar tone, Vertovec explains that until recently there was a 'prevalent distaste' for dual nationality in states around the world; now, particularly after the end of Cold War, that distaste is dissipating and we may be witnessing a long-term shift toward a more universal acceptance of dual nationality and

that the loosening of rules concerning dual citizenship represents a global trend, particularly among migrant-sending countries (2009: 90).

As regards the definition of transnationalism, a well-known and often cited one is provided by Glick Schiller and Fouron:

> Transnational migration is a pattern of migration in which persons, although they move across international borders, settle, and establish relations in a new state, maintain ongoing social connections with the polity from which they originated (Glick Schiller and Fouron 1999: 344).

According to Martiniello and Lafleur, this definition 'contains three major elements in the apprehension of immigrant transnationalism. First, it implies that the links between the individual and the nation-state are not exclusive but multiple [...] Second, the space within which migrants work, conduct their social, political and religious lives or even raise a family cannot be clearly divided between the home and receiving country [...] Third, this definition implies that transnationalism potentially concerns every aspect of a migrants' life. Yet, the intensity of transnational political activity may vary substantially from one individual to another' (Martiniello and Lafleur 2008: 648-649).

In this way, another concept that comes into play is transnational social fields, which are defined as

> a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices and resources are unequally exchanged, organized and transformed (Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2004: 105).

According to Landolt, the concept of transnational social fields 'extends the analysis of transnational migration beyond specific border-crossing practices or the direct experiences of migrants as it seeks to theorize domains of interaction without propinquity' (Landolt 2008: 56). This implies that movement is not a prerequisite for transnational activities. Levitt explains that 'these are also individuals whose lives are rooted primarily in a single sending or receiving-country setting, who move infrequently, but whose lives integrally involve resources, contacts, and people who are far away. And there are those who do not move but who live their lives within a context that has become transnationalized' (2003: 179).

Not only 'transnational practices may be constant, periodic, or just occasional; likewise, they may occur consistently across multiple social domains – politics, economics, or culture – or may be limited to just one' (Waldinger 2008: 5). This leads me, after this brief introduction on

transnationalism as a general concept, to focus now on the domain of political transnationalism.

There are several definitions of political transnationalism, which emphasise different aspects of it. For example, Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt define political transnationalism as follows:

> the political activities of party officials, government functionaries, or community leaders whose main goals are the achievement of political power and influence in the sending or receiving countries (1999: 221).

Itzigsohn (2000) instead analyses the political linkages between diasporas and their states of origin and defines the political transnational field as

> a realm of recurrent and institutionalized interactions and exchanges between, on the one hand, immigrants and their social and political organizations and, on the other hand, the political institutions and the state apparatus of the country of origin (1129-1130).

Drawing upon Guarnizo (2000) and Levitt (2001), Østergaard-Nielsen explains that 'migrants' transnational political practices are clearly not to be equated with participation in elections only, and distinguishes between "narrow" and "broad" forms of political transnationalism: '"narrow" refers to actual membership of parties or hometown associations while "broad" refers to the (occasional) participation in meetings or events. In a similar vein, the concept of "core" transnationalism defines activities that are a regular, patterned and an integral part of an individual's life, while "expanded" transnationalism refers to more occasional practices' (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 761). According to the author, this distinction helps identify the more durable patterns of transnational political participation; core and expanded transnationalism are not mutually exclusive, thus Østergaard-Nielsen opts for a definition of political transnational practices which is rather wide and includes

> various forms of direct cross-border participation in the politics of their country of origin by both migrants and refugees (such as voting and other support to political parties, participating in debates in the press), as well as their indirect participation via the political institutions of the host country (or international organizations) (2003: 762).

Another typology is provided by Steven Vertovec, according to whom the politics of homeland can take a variety of forms, and entails:

> exile groups organizing themselves for return, groups lobbying on behalf of a homeland, external offices of political parties, migrant hometown associations, and opposition groups campaigning or planning actions to effect political change in the

homeland. Some migrant associations also manage to carry out dual programmes of action aimed at both sending and receiving countries (2009: 94).

Itzigsohn and Villacrés distinguish between two forms of transnational political engagement: the first form of transnational engagement is electoral participation, which involves the common activities of representative democratic politics, such as membership in political parties, monetary contributions to campaigns and participation in campaigns and rallies. The second form of transnational engagement is non-electoral political participation, which encompasses membership in home-town associations, contributing money for projects in the home country and membership in charity organisations active in the home country (Itzigsohn and Villacrés 2008: 668).

This classification exemplifies the criticism expressed by Collyer (2008: 690), according to whom investigations of transnational political activity have typically focused on institutional participation, relating to both electoral politics (Itzigsohn 2000; Bauböck 2003; Smith and Bakker 2005) and rather hesitant analyses of transnational developments of predominantly non-electoral civil society organisations (Faist 2000; Collyer 2006). Collyer offers the example of the temporary mobilisations that develop following particular dramatic events and explains that these are perhaps more typical of transnational political involvement than formalised electoral participation, and provides a challenge to the more institutionally focused approaches to political transnationalism. Thus Collyer suggests to look at the literature on social movements, which provides a way of explaining these less structured mobilisations (Collyer 2008: 690-691). Among these, it is important to cite the works of Robin Cohen (1998), on the reasons why transnational communities should be considered as transnational social movements, and Della Porta and Tarrow (2005) on transnational protest and global activism.

Finally, the last typology that I cite here is provided by Koopmans and Statham (2003), who focus on transnational claim-making. This classification is relevant to this study, because it takes into account the involvement in both home- and host-country politics:

> We distinguish three types of transnational claims-making. The first type might be called "transplanted homeland politics". In this type, claims are made by migrants in the country of settlement, but they refer in all other respects to the country of residence […] The second type consists of claims whose ultimate political aim is oriented towards the homeland, but which mobilize country of settlement-based organizational networks or political opportunities to these ends […] Thirdly, the claim structure may also be the reverse, namely when homeland-based groups mobilize homeland-based organizational resources and opportunities to intervene on behalf of

> the group's interests in the country of settlement (Koopmans and Statham 2003: 224-225).

Given the variety of definitions and typologies presented above, in this study I have chosen to make use of a broad definition of political transnationalism, which entails the notion that

> political institutions and practices that transcend the borders of independent states are transnational if they involve simultaneous overlapping affiliations of persons to geographically separate polities (Bauböck 2003: 705).

In more detail, I operationalise this definition building on Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995: 42) and taking into account a wide range of transnational political activities. Following other authors (e.g. Barnes and Kaase 1974, Axford et al. 2002, Berger, Galonska and Koopmans 2004), I include political interest among the different forms of political participation (expressed by acts such as "talking about politics" and "following news about politics") and look at nine forms of political activities (besides voting): (1) contact a politician/a government or local government official; (2) be affiliated with a political organisation; (3) work in a political party/contribute to a campaign/political cause; (4) attend a political meeting; (5) sign a petition/collection of signatures; (6) take part in a public demonstration; (7) donate money to a political organisation or group; (8) take part in a strike; (9) contact the media.

These types of political participation will be studied by looking at the role played by national identity, migrant networks, and the institutional and discursive opportunity structure for Italian citizens in London. In the next section, I will introduce the concept of identity politics and discuss some theoretical approaches based on the construction of identity.

2.2 IDENTITY POLITICS

The concept of identity links the individual and the society in which he or she lives, and it is during social interaction that individuals acquire, enact, and respond to definitions of self and others. To use Sarup's words, identity is 'the story we tell of ourselves and which is also the story others tell of us' (1994: 95).

Identity, as awareness of belonging to a collective "we", is a pre-condition for political participation, as it defines the borders between those social actors who are part of a group and those who are excluded (Della Porta and Diani 1997: 105). In this way, migration scholarship has the potential to make a tremendous impact on the study of the comparative

politics of identity, defined as the study of just how and how much identity matters in political life (Bleich 2008: 510-511).

Politics is based on systems of solidarity, on belonging to a group, and the process of participation requires the building of collective identities, which are at the basis of action (Della Porta 2002: 80). According to Lee (2008), there should be a clearer differentiation of five key processes that are bundled together when we consider the identity-to-politics link: (a) definition: the construction of the categories and labels used to define polities into identity groups, (b) the identification of individuals with these categories and labels, (c) the presence of shared beliefs and group consciousness based on this identification, (d) the coordination and agreement over the appropriate venue for a group's pursuits, and (e) the coordination and agreement over collective choice itself (Lee 2008: 471).

Identification is pivotal in this research since it refers to the degree to which (a particular kind of) Italianness is thought of as a basis of political sentiment and action. According to Snel et al. (2006: 290),

> operationalizing the concept of 'transnational identification' is based on some elementary notions from socio-psychological, sociological and anthropological literature... social identities indicate how people define themselves in relation to their social environment. It is not about what distinguishes one individual from the other, but about what is shared with others. The social identity of a person refers to two basic questions in life: (1) to whom do I belong? and (2) how should I behave? These two key questions relate to the group dimension and the normative dimension of social identity respectively.

Although substantial disagreement exists over what constitutes identity politics (Bernstein 2005: 48), popular writers, political activists, and scholars in many disciplines have in the last two decades devoted increased attention, both normative and empirical, to issues related to racial and ethnic politics; women's politics; politics and religion; immigrant politics; indigenous peoples' politics; gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) politics; globalization; cosmopolitan citizenship; transnational social movements; and so on (Smith R.M. 2004: 303). What is common in the emergence of these political movements is that they are based on claims about the injustices done to particular social groups; identity politics is intimately connected to the idea that some social groups are oppressed (Heyes 2012). More broadly, as Heyes explains, 'what makes identity politics a significant departure from earlier, pre-identitarian forms of the politics of recognition is its demand for recognition on the basis of the very grounds on which recognition has previously been denied' (Heyes 2012: online).

In this way, in my research, more than from oppression, the politics of identity among Italians in London is spurred by the desire to be recognised by the Italian state as Italian citizens who have the full right to participate in Italian politics in virtue of their Italianness, and who think they can contribute to the political life of their home country on the basis of their migration experience (that is the ground on which their rights were and still are not fully recognised).

According to Bernstein, identity politics is 'primarily descriptive rather than explanatory [and] does not set out to explain the emergence of social movements (in this case, movements organized on the basis of status identities) or other aspects of their development' (Bernstein 2005: 66). For this reason, in part, identity politics has been criticised by both leftist (and Marxist) and post-modernist scholars.

For many leftist commentators, in particular, identity politics represents 'the capitulation to cultural criticism in place of analysis of the material roots of oppression' (Heyes 2012: online). In fact, Roger Smith argues, 'scholars are concerned that, analytically, an undue focus on racial, ethnic, religious, cultural and gender identities misses deeper, often economic causes of political action' (Smith R.M. 2004: 303). Despite these critiques, it must be said that identity politics shares with Marxism and other radical political models the view that individuals' perceptions of their own interests may be systematically distorted and must be somehow freed of their misperceptions by group-based transformation (Heyes 2012).

Another common criticism is that identity politics hardens rather than redefines differences in status identities that are the basis for inequality; these approaches view organising on the basis of those identities as ultimately essentialist (Bernstein 2005: 56). But – as I will show more in depth later in this section – recent literature has stressed the social construction of identities:

> though it may prove to be the case that such identities actually do emerge seamlessly from extra-political social sources—perhaps inherited languages, ancestral and kinship groups, geographical clusters, initially apolitical religious and cultural associations, or economic structures—it is unlikely that any realm of human collective life operates so automatically. It seems more plausible to assume that, out of the multiple possible identities that human existence presents to most people, political activities of various sorts play important roles first in creating many of those identities, and then subsequently in determining which established senses of membership become salient political identities that command allegiance and shape values (Smith R.M. 2004: 304).

At this point, it is necessary to introduce the definition of social identity which I will follow in my work. According to Tajfel (1981), social identity is

that part of the individual's self-concept which derives from his [sic] knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership (Tajfel 1981: 255).

This definition incorporates cognitive, evaluative and affective meanings and takes into account three distinct aspects of the representation of persons in groups. First, the composition of group identity: which people belong to the in-group, and, by extension, what defines the boundaries of the group, and who does not belong. Second, the content of group identity, that is what attributes, symbols and values describe the prototypical member of the group and the defining content of the group more generally. Finally, the role of identity, meaning that social identity is used to refer to the relationship between the in-group and out-groups within a structured network of social groups (Herrmann and Brewer 2004: 6).

Hermann and Brewer stress that this definition also has a behavioural component, which makes social identification a potential resource for collective action (Herrmann and Brewer 2004: 6). Many political and religious institutions are active agents of change and play a direct role in creating and engaging corresponding social identities among their constituencies. As social identity is recognised as a potentially valuable resource that can be drawn on to achieve legitimisation, engage group loyalties, and energise collective effort, deliberate efforts may be undertaken to build social identification through the creation of symbols of collective identity. Examples of this are propaganda emphasising common interests and values, or shared history or future destiny; and persuasive campaigns to enhance the perceived legitimacy and importance of the institution itself. Identity-building efforts are aimed at both the "what" and the "who" of social identity – what does the social group stand for, and who is included in the definition of the group or community (Herrmann and Brewer 2004: 15-16).

Identity as a historical and social construct has been discussed by several scholars, who follow a constructivist approach. Constructivists claim that people do one thing and not another due to the presence of certain "social constructs": ideas, beliefs, norms, identities, or some other interpretive filters through which people perceive the world (Parsons 2010: 80). In particular, a turning point in this field took place in the beginning of the 1990s, with the work of Stuart Hall (1990) on cultural identity, and with the publication of Imagined Communities by Benedict Anderson (1991), where he defines a nation as 'a community socially constructed, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of that group' (Anderson 1991: 6-7).

Hall claims that collectivity does not exist, and the reason why one needs the narrative is to make a unity out of that which is not yet a unity (Hall 1996: 131). For Hall identity is not as

transparent or unproblematic as we think; he argues that, instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, identity should be seen as a "production", which is never complete and always in process (Hall 1990: 222). Hall explains that there are at least two different ways of thinking about "cultural identity":

> The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one, shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self'... Within the terms of this definition, our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history [...] Cultural identity, in [the] second sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power (Hall 1990: 223, 225).

In this second perspective, cultural identity is always constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative and myth. Cultural identities are the points of identification, the unstable points of identification or suture, which are made within the discourses of history and culture. Hence, Hall argues, there is always a politics of identity, which has no absolute guarantee in an unproblematic, transcendental "law of origin" (Hall 1990: 226).

Stuart Hall was influenced, among others, by the work of Michel Foucault, probably the best known writer in the post-modernist or post-structuralist strand, deriving from the constructivist-interpretivist tradition (see Foucault 2000 for a collection of all of the French philosopher's courses, articles and interviews). Foucault claims that experience is acquired within a prior discourse. Thus, to understand an object or action, researchers have to interpret it in the wider discourse of which it is part. This means that, as Bevir and Rhodes stress, it is the social discourse, rather than the beliefs of individuals, which are crucial to Foucault's version of the interpretivist position (Bevir and Rhodes 2003: 23). The identification of that discourse, and the role it plays in structuring meanings, is thus the key concern of those adopting this approach (Furlong and Marsh 2010: 202).

Among these scholars, I privilege (also because she studies Italians in London) the study of cultural identity, migration and diasporas of Anne-Marie Fortier, who draws upon the work of Judith Butler and views identity as performative, namely identities '[that are] constructed by the very "expressions" that are said to be [their] results' (Butler 1990: 45). In her research on

Italians in London, Fortier approaches institutional discourses and practices through which an Italian émigré culture is produced as performative acts (Fortier 1999: 43). Ethnicity is more than a mere social construct:

> cultural identity is embodied, and memories are incorporated both as a result of iterated actions. And these in turn are lived as expressions of a deeply felt sense of identity and belonging […] Identity, here, is formed and continually reinforced via individual practice within culturally defined spaces, which are themselves in turn continually constituted out of the same practices (Fortier 1999: 48).

Part of Fortier's research on Italians in London is focused on the role of the Scalabrini Centre in Brixton, South London, in producing a "portable Italianness" (Fortier 2006: 73). At the time of Fortier's visits (in the late 1990s and then again in 2003), the Church was experiencing a shift from being an "ethnic church", securing for migrants a smooth transition into the host society, to an "émigré church", that is a multicultural centre 'where people would keep their own identities, but also meet and share with other Catholic "ethnics"' (Fortier 2006: 69). The Scalabrinian Fathers (an order of emigrant priests) consider the migration experience as the basis of the distinct identity of Italians abroad, and they attempt 'to create a new identity for Italians at a time where "ethnicity" alone could no longer play a definitional role' (Fortier 2006: 64). In this way, organisations like the church not only sustain a community, as stated above by Herrmann and Brewer (2004), but also recreate it by means of events, rituals and practices that reinforce and reshape the sense of belonging. In Fortier's analysis, the Scalabrini Centre in Brixton is the physical space reflecting the new community, 'a performative site for the construction and display of a particular version of Italian ethnicity' (Fortier 2006: 68), and *La Voce degli Italiani* (the main Italian publication in the UK at the time, which is also edited by the Scalabrinian Fathers) is its visual and textual representation. This project of visibility is part of the politics of Italians abroad, to which Fortier dedicates a chapter of her Migrant Belongings. She focuses on the politicisation of emigration by London Italians and the starting point of her analysis is the status of "invisible immigrants" of the [old wave of] Italians in London, a cultural minority absorbed within the white European majority. In this way, on the one hand European integration would, according to Italian leaders, 'liberate Italians from their status as second class citizens by virtue of their (white) "Europeanness", while on the other hand the central political issue became identity preservation and self-determination' (Fortier 2000: 72). Therefore, in her analysis of the debate on the granting of votes for Italians abroad, Fortier explains that:

> [while in Italy] politicians speak of emigration in terms that consistently seek to assert Italian national integrity over claims of both a local (for example London or British

Italian) and an international relationship without compromising the European community spirit, [...] London Italian leaders are fighting for the recognition of emigration as the basis from which a distinctive identity may emerge (Fortier 2000: 78).

This divergence between the view from the central state and that held by migrants is evident also considering the work of Tintori (2011), according to whom Italy's state-sponsored policies had the effect to produce a ''re-territorialisation'' rather than a ''de-territorialisation'' of the political practices of emigrants. Instead, for Fortier, cultural identity in migration is at once deterritorialised and reterritorialised; in fact, imagining a community is both that which is created as a common history, experience or culture of a group – a group's belongings – and about how the imagined community is attached to places – the location of culture (Fortier 1999: 42). Belongings refer to both possessions and appurtenance. That is, practices of group identity are about manufacturing cultural and historical belongings which mark out terrains of commonality that delineate the politics and social dynamics of "fitting in" (Fortier 1999: 42); in the case of Fortier's research, a certain type of Italians in London.

In this study I will apply Fortier's performative identity theoretical framework; this approach allows me to understand how the Italian institutional and associational network in London is active in creating and performing an identity among the new Italian community in London, as it was for the old Italian community at the time of Fortier's research. Off-line and on-line spaces and events are used in order to create a discourse behind this identity. This new identity is created including those "fitting-in" and excluding other kinds of Italian migrants (such as "old" migrants and those involved in casual low-skilled jobs) and is a mobilising factor in the transnational political activity of young highly-skilled and highly-educated Italians in London.

2.3 MESO-LEVEL APPROACHES EXPLAINING MIGRANTS' POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The analysis of the role played by the Italian network in London in the construction of Italian identity and in the mobilisation of Italian migrants brings me to discuss in this section the meso-level approaches that have been adopted to explain migrant political involvement.

According to Diehl and Blohm, the factors associated with the political participation of migrants 'identified so far can be divided roughly into three groups: macro level factors, most importantly the institutional and political setting in which participation takes place; meso level factors, such as the nature of an ethnic group's internal integration; and micro level factors, basically individual traits and characteristics' (Diehl and Blohm 2001: 403).

These competing explanatory factors have been confirmed by several scholars, among which Eggert and Giugni (2010) in their recent study on the political interest and participation of three immigrant groups in Zurich (Italians, Kosovars and Turks); here the authors focus on the role played by: (1) the structure of institutional and discursive opportunity structures at the local level; (2) the networks of ethnic and cross-ethnic organisations; and (3) the individual characteristics of migrants (Eggert and Giugni 2010: 177).

So far, most of the literature is focused on the first two kinds of factors as main sources of political involvement: the study of the institutional and political setting – exemplified by the analysis of the role of states – is at the basis of the political opportunity structure approach, while analyses focused on meso-level factors usually look at migrant networks and organisations and often deploy a social capital approach.

Studies which adopt a meso level of analysis usually take migrant networks as the main explanatory variable of migrants' participation. According to Portes, Escobar and Radford (2007), organisations are transnational when their goals and activities are partially or completely located in countries other than where their members reside.

For example, in Østergaard-Nielsen's analysis, migrant organisations and their transnational networks stand at the centre. She explains that this methodological choice is in some ways a double-edged sword, as it may give a biased understanding of the degree of engagement within the migrant group as a whole. In fact, the organisation's leadership will usually engage in "narrow" or "core" transnational practices, but may not be very representative of the wider group of immigrants and refugees. However, Østergaard-Nielsen remarks that migrant organisations are very relevant units in research on how migrants negotiate their transnational, often multilevel political institutional environments, and negotiation takes the form of a multilevel process of institutional channelling (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 779-780). It is important to stress how for Østergaard-Nielsen this approach should not reduce the agency of migrants by presenting them as weak players easily modified by their surrounding political institutional environments. Instead, she argues for further consideration of how different institutional environments may explain the different strategies and modes of engagement which characterise migrants' transnational practices (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 780).

Also Mügge (2011), who studies the political transnationalism of the Surinamese in the Netherlands, chooses to analyse the entire Surinamese organisational network in the Netherlands. She not only considers those migrant organisations that are transnationally active, but also those that are not. In this way, Mügge claims that her article addresses one of the

main ''usual suspect criticisms'' of research on migrant transnationalism, to use Vertovec's words (2009: 16), that is relying on single case studies that, due to selection bias, consistently find high levels of transnational involvement (Mügge 2011: 53).

To date, meso-level approaches have been employed more in studies on political integration than on transnationalism, and the social capital approach is a typical example of this. It has been adopted in several studies on the political participation of ethnic minorities (for example: Jacobs and Tillie 2004, Cherti 2007, Morales and Giugni 2011) and a well-known model has been developed by the Dutch political scientists Fennema and Tillie (2001), building on the work of Robert Putnam (Putnam et al. 1994). They operationalise the concept of social capital in a strict sense as being embedded in a social network through associational life, and see it as an important factor influencing the level of political trust and the intensity of political participation (both formal and informal) of citizens (Jacobs and Tillie 2004: 419).

Tillie has tested his theoretical approach studying the determinants of the political participation of immigrants in Amsterdam, and his findings lead him to conclude that:

> organisational membership as such is only a partial indicator of individual social capital. At least two additional indicators should be taken into account: the social network of the (ethnic) citizen and the social capital of the organisation as reflected in the connectedness of the organisation or the density of the organisational network of the (ethnic) community (Tillie 2004: 540).

This model presents some limitations. First, factors such as cross-cultural social capital and the relationship with ethnic social capital have not been taken into account; second, potential differential effects according to the type of organisations are disregarded; third, forms of social and cultural capital that stimulate the formation of bridging social capital, like language proficiency or education, are not acknowledged; fourth, the issue of why there is a link between social capital and political participation is not addressed; and finally, the effects of association should be analysed, taking into account also the political opportunity structure at the local level (Jacobs and Tillie 2004: 422).

In 2004, a special issue of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* was published, with the contributions of several scholars who analysed the link between ethnic social capital and political participation, testing the hypotheses of Fennema and Tillie in different European settings. Togeby focussed on Denmark; Berger, Galonska and Koopmans reported their findings on Berlin (and Italians were among the ethnic groups they chose to analyse); Jacobs, Phalet and Swyngedouw discussed the link between associational membership and political

involvement in Brussels; Odmalm analysed civil society, migrant organisations and political parties in the Swedish context, and Tillie investigated the situation in Amsterdam (Jacobs and Tillie 2004: 420).

Making use of a common procedure, all the contributions tried to test whether it is correct that (ethnic) associational membership is an incentive to political involvement in their respective case-studies. In doing so, other potential explanatory factors at micro level, such as gender, education, language proficiency and employment status were taken into account (Jacobs and Tillie 2004: 423-424); use of these controls is critical because (a) these can help understanding of political behavioural difference, and (b) the comparator is much clearer.

The findings of this first attempt of comparative research showed that within each of the countries under study, differences between ethnic groups as to the degree of political integration and the impact of comparable independent variables could be observed; despite the (local) differences with respect to patterns of political integration and the significance of ethnic civic community, important similarities between the four countries also emerged (Jacobs and Tillie 2004: 424). In the concluding remarks of this comparative attempt, Jacobs and Tillie argued that the ethnic civic community argument needed more elaboration in an international comparative perspective and the relationship with other variables needs to be addressed in more depth (Jacobs and Tillie 2004: 426).

The aforementioned 'Multicultural Democracy and Immigrants Social Capital in Europe: Participation, Organisational Networks, and Public Policies at the Local Level' (Localmultidem) project was launched in 2006, with the aim to fill this gap in the literature. The main objective of this project is to study the degree of political integration of the foreign-origin or immigrant population in several European cities – Lyon in France, Budapest in Hungary, Milan in Italy, Madrid in Spain, Zurich in Switzerland, and London in United Kingdom – and therefore to study multicultural democracy at the local level, by analysing to what extent the immigrant population is politically integrated into the local life of their cities; whether there are significant differences in the degree to which different ethnic, cultural or national groups are politically integrated into the local life; and if such differences exist, what factors help explain the variations in the degree of political integration from one immigrant group to another, and with non-immigrants (Localmultidem website).

The research considers the potential influence of four types of factors on the political integration of migrants: immigrants' individual characteristics; the structuring of immigrants' organisations along ethnic, national or geo-cultural cleavages; the structure of institutional and

discursive opportunities; and the characteristics of the immigrant groups within the host society. In this way, data have been collected at three different levels of analysis: the individual or micro level, through a survey of immigrant residents of different origins, with a control group of national-born citizens; the organisational or meso level, through the study of immigrants' organisational structures and networks, carried out with surveys of immigrants' associations; and the contextual or macro level, through the use of secondary sources and interviews with political and administrative authorities (Morales and Giugni 2011).

2.4 POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURE APPROACHES

As regards macro-level factors, Patrick Ireland (1994) and Yasemin Soysal (1994) were forerunners of this trend in their focus on how domestic institutions shape and constrain immigrant political mobilisation (Bleich 2008: 515). In an influential book published in 1994, Ireland introduced and applied to the field of migration studies the political opportunity structure approach (Però and Solomos 2010: 8). According to Bleich (2008), over the past decade it has become increasingly common in immigration and integration studies to draw on recent developments in the study of institutions. One reason for this tendency is a change of approach of states towards their migrants, which I will discuss later in this section.

Political opportunity structure approaches have been adopted in many studies on the political participation of migrants and ethnic minorities, not only at the national level, but also at the local level. There are several definitions of political opportunity structure. According to Bauböck,

> the political opportunity structure consists of laws that allocate different statuses and rights to various groups of migrants and formally constrain or enable their activities, of institutions of government and public administration in which migrants are or are not represented, of public policies that address migrants' claims, concerns and interests or do not, and of a public culture that is inclusive and accepts diversity or that supports national homogeneity and a myth of shared ancestry (Bauböck 2005: 2).

From this perspective, the political opportunity structure consists of incentives and disincentives that help to explain a certain choice of migrants' political strategies. This view would face one of the critiques outlined by Però and Solomos (2010: 9), according to whom the political opportunity structure has been conceived so far in static, rigid, ethnicist and formal terms. However, Bauböck (2005) points that there is an alternative research perspective that regards the political opportunity structure not as given but as instead

interested in explaining how structures change over time, also as a consequence of migrant mobilisation on issues such as cultural and religious values and voting rights, and in comparing structures across countries, regions or cities. As a consequence, in a more recent work, Bauböck (2010) advocates that the institutional perspective on citizenship "from above" must therefore be matched by studying the same set of phenomena "from below".

Another example of combining a top-down and a bottom-up approach is provided by Penninx et al. (2004). In their project on multicultural policies and modes of citizenship in several European cities, Penninx et al. examined the ways in which immigrant and minority groups have gained access to – or have been impeded from accessing – decision-making processes and other forms of participation in the municipal public sphere (2004: 7). The authors consider three analytically distinct dimensions of citizenship – the legal-political dimension, the socio-economic dimension and the dimension of cultural and religious rights – and identify two potential motivating factors in immigrant citizenship and participation, the institutional framework of the society of settlement ("channels of activation"), and the initiatives taken by the immigrants, ethnic minorities and their own organisations ("channels of mobilisation"), and look at the interaction between these two processes (Penninx et al. 2004: 8). By taking into account both the activation and the mobilisation processes, this study is an example of a research that makes use of different levels of analysis, not focusing only on the macro level, but considering also group and individual agency.

In order to avoid too static and rigid a view of political opportunity structures, discourses should also be taken into account. Koopmans introduces the concept of discursive political opportunity structure:

> The political opportunity structure consists of an institutional side, which includes the structure of the political system and the composition of power in the party system, and a discursive side, which includes established notions of who and what are considered reasonable, sensible, and legitimate…Opportunity structures, whether institutional or discursive, vary to some extent from one policy arena to another, and from the point of view of one collective actor to that of another (Koopmans 2004: 451).

Koopmans et al. (2005) apply this double-sided concept of political opportunity structure in their analysis of political contention in the migration and ethnic relations field. Koopmans and Statham (2003) see the interplay of three factors: the first entails the opportunities and constraints set by national citizenship regimes and integration models; the second determinant of migrant claims-making, which they label as "homeland influences", includes the sending country's policies with regard to its emigrants; while the final component of the

triad of determinants of migrant claims-making are the collective identities of migrant groups themselves, which – according to the authors – are not fixed and stable attributes, but are influenced by both other explanatory variables in their model (Koopmans and Statham 2003: 203-206). Opportunity structures may affect the claims making of collective actors both directly and indirectly. In the first case, identities and aims of collective actors are considered as given, thus 'we may expect the same actor to mobilise differently and with diverging success according to the opportunities and constraints offered by its political environment' (Koopmans et al. 2005: 20); in the latter case, 'opportunity structures affect how people define themselves and their aims, as well as their relation to the wider society' (Koopmans et al. 2005: 21).

Following Koopmans, Vogel (2008) argues that the political opportunity structure includes both an institutional and a discursive element. In her work, Vogel is interested in the recruitment process, thus she directs her attention to the behaviour of actors in the receiving society and broadens the definition of opportunity structure, including also the social opportunity structure. Social opportunity structure comprises some elements that are relevant both for natives and immigrants, such as the current institutional structures and the perception of activism in public and private discourse. Moreover, it includes some migration-specific elements, such as the legal framework for immigration and residence, the current structure of migrant institutions, and the perception of immigrants and immigrant activism in public and private discourse. In this way, societal opportunity structure influences not only the options to become active, but also the motivation (Vogel 2008: 22-23).

In this way, Vogel seems to tackle two of the most common critiques to the political opportunity structure approach: one suggesting a rethinking of the notion of political opportunity structure in broader and looser terms; the other suggesting a "decentring" of political opportunity structure from the position of grand monocausal explanation for mobilisation that seems to be attributed to it (Però and Solomos 2010: 9).

Landolt (2008) states that contexts of exit and reception impact the character of migrant group identity, and she expands this proposition to consider the interplay of national and city-level factors. The territorial orientations of political practice are best captured by taking into account both narratives of belonging, which may include ties to both the home and host society, and institutional trajectories that identify the actual dialogues taking place – locally and across borders (Landolt 2008: 72-73). In this way, it is important to take into account also the institutional and discursive opportunity structure provided by the countries of origin. An

example of this is the extension of citizenship rights beyond the boundaries of the nation-state and into the transnational and supranational sphere.

Bauböck suggests that transnational citizenship should then also be regarded as a political opportunity structure that enables or constrains individual choices about membership status and identities as well as collective claims about rights, and he thinks that this perspective on transnational citizenship opens up a broad research agenda ranging from naturalisation motives to diaspora involvement in homeland conflicts (Bauböck 2010: 299).

Alan Gamlen defines diaspora policies as 'state institutions and practices that apply to members of that state's society who reside outside its borders… by incorporating the diaspora into the state, these policies redefine or reconfigure what it means to be a member of "national society" (2008: 5). Gamlen samples over 70 migrant-sending states and distinguished three broad areas of "diaspora engagement policies": (1) capacity-building policies aimed at producing a state-centric "transnational-national" society (including political rhetoric that symbolically includes expatriates in the national imaginary, the creation of ministries for overseas nationals, and supporting transnational media for consumption in the diaspora); (2) extending rights to the diaspora (such as dual citizenship, voting rights, parliamentary representation and special consular services); and (3) extracting obligation from the diaspora, based on the presumption that emigrants owe loyalty to their nation-state of origin (from urging participation in transnational lobbies, through creating "brain circulation" programmes to bring expatriate expertise back to the homeland, to extracting taxes from the diaspora) (Gamlen 2006).

As the focus of this research, Italy is a good example of the role played by states towards their communities abroad. As shown by Choate (2007), since the end of the 19th century, Italy adopted diaspora policies which belong to all the three areas outlined above, and the Italian state can be considered a classical illustration of a sending state's intervention towards its migrant communities.

> Italy's state-sponsored policies have promoted a set of transnational institutions that have created a transnational site of political engagement and determined a disjuncture between politics and territory. The fact that this was a result of state drives to reach out for the population abroad had the effect to produce a ''re-territorialization'' rather than a ''de-territorialization'' of the political practices of emigrants (Tintori 2011: 181).

One of the major policy trends showing this change of attitude concerns external voting. Two different surveys carried out by IDEA/IFE (2007), and by Collyer and Vathi (2007), showed that

115 states had granted the right to vote from abroad to their citizens (while in 1945 there were only 6 countries that had introduced absentee voting for soldiers, sailors and public administrators). As I mentioned in chapter 1, according to Collyer and Vathi, only 13 states grant the vote from abroad for their own representatives, and Italy is one of these countries. It must be noted that, in spite of the trend outlined in this section, the outcomes of these attempts by the states are not always clear and 'literature on migrant transnational practices questions whether migrants' transnational practices challenge state institutions or serve their interests' (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 779). Bauböck argues that a bottom-up approach would help understand whether migrants' own modes of transnational political or nation-building (or at least local community-building) practices usually developed first, with 'governments jumping onto the bandwagon only when their importance and economic potential became evident', as suggested by Portes et al. (cited in Vertovec 2009: 99). By adopting different approaches and levels of analysis, I will try to understand whether this is the case for Italians in London.

Finally, one more aspect that should be highlighted regards the action of supranational institutions. In the European context it is important to take into due account the case of intra-EU migration, with migrants from other EU countries enjoying voting rights at the local and European levels, but not in regional and national elections (Koopmans and Statham 2003: 206).

On the basis of what has been said in this section, the opportunity structure for Italians in London consists of an institutional side, made up firstly of the social and political rights they benefit from as Italian citizens living in another EU country (including the right to vote in local elections in the UK and in general elections in Italy), and secondly of the institutional Italian network which is active in London. This is accompanied by a discursive side, based on the discourse of new Italian professional emigration, something that has emerged in Italy and among Italians abroad: most of the young Italians who arrived recently in London in search of better professional opportunities define themselves as "mobile people" more than as "migrants". They "exited" the home-country, but still express their "voice"; they are very critical of the Italian political and economic situation and stress the importance of values such as meritocracy, fair competition and respect for the law, which they claim are lacking or scarce in Italy, compared to the UK.

2.5 POLITICAL INTEGRATION VS POLITICAL TRANSNATIONALISM

The discussion on the possible explanations of migrant political behaviour has shown how most of the studies on migrant political participation look at their involvement in receiving countries, or at their involvement in countries of origin. I mentioned earlier that much work on post-war immigration in Europe has approached the question in terms of integration of these groups into their dominant host societies (Favell and Geddes 1999: 10), while the role of the sending country as a mobilising factor is at the forefront of US-based studies of transnational political practices (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003: 764). More recently, scholars like Michael Peter Smith argued that it is necessary to address the discourse on dual-loyalty and focus on both faces of transnational citizenship (Smith M.P. 2007: 1097).

The debate on the relationship between integration and transnationalism is one of the most heated and long running in the migration field. Before outlining the main points of this debate, it is necessary to provide a definition of political integration. According to Tillie,

> political integration is a multi-dimensional concept. At least three types of political integration can be distinguished: first, political trust (citizens trusting the democratic political institutions); secondly, adherence to democratic values like freedom of speech or the distinction between Government and Church; and finally political participation (2004: 530).

This definition has been refined by the scholars involved in the Localmultidem project, according to whom:

> political integration is defined as the combination of the degree of socio-political participation and the level of trust and acceptance of the political values, institutions and elites of the host society (Localmultidem website).

Being political transnationalism the focus of this work, there is no scope here to discuss the concept of political integration as in depth as it has been done for political transnationalism, but for the purpose of this section it should be added that, especially in the American context, some scholars – among which Alba and Nee (1997), Brubaker (2001) and Guarnizo, Portes and Haller (2003) should be cited – instead than using the term integration, often speak of "assimilation", that has got a stronger connotation.

Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) explains that while there is no doubt that migrants' transnational practices in many cases can contribute to democratisation of the country of origin, there is disagreement on the effect such transnational engagement may have on the host country.

In a recent paper, Tamaki reviews the three different theoretical alternatives in the interplay between political integration and transnationalism: (1) a classical assimilation perspective assumes that immigrants' interactions with native-born population would gradually replace those from their original society, therefore the assimilation hypothesis would predict a negative association between assimilation and immigrants' ties to their countries of origin (2011: 150-151); (2) the transnational perspective, by acknowledging the multiple identities and loyalties of immigrants, claims that establishing a new life in a destination country does not necessarily detract from immigrants' economic, political, and social commitments to their country of origin (2011: 152); (3) another line of the transnational argument narrows the definition of transnationalism and suggests a complementary relationship between assimilation and transnationalism, thus this third hypothesis predicts a positive relationship between the level of adaptation to the host country and the level of transnational engagement (2011: 152-153).

Among the scholars who argue that engagement in the politics of the country of origin is not necessarily incompatible with political integration in the country of settlement, Østergaard-Nielsen (2003) quotes Faist (2000), Fennema and Tillie (2001), and Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt (1999), who state that migrants' transnational political orientation gives them a voice that they would otherwise not have. Other research findings indicate a slight caution to such arguments, first because transnational political practices can also serve to disempower, as suggested by Glick Schiller and Fouron (1999) in their study on Haitians in the United States. And second, because processes of political mobilisation related to the homeland may serve to divert attention and leave no time for participating in rallies for better social and legal conditions in the host country, this being for example the case of Kurds in London (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003).

Among those who think that transnational activities have a negative effect on integration, I should mention also Jones-Correa who, in his research with Latinos in New York, argues that 'their low levels of naturalization and participation in formal politics in the US were the result not only of political marginalization, but also of their situation in a "politics of in-between" based on the "myth of return"' (Jones-Correa 1998, cited in Bermudez 2010: 77); and Samuel Huntington (1997), who speaks about the "disintegrative cult of multiculturalism", meaning that multicultural rights allow migrants to keep ties to their countries and cultures of origin, with a negative effect on their integration in the host society, and on the cohesion of the society itself.

Hungtington is – together with Appadurai (1996) – one of the targets of Michael Peter Smith (2007) in his work on the two faces of transnational citizenship. Smith first reminds readers that 'abundant research on the relationship between transnationalism and assimilation in migration studies makes clear that the two are not mutually contradictory social processes' and mentions his own previous research and the works of Smith and Bakker (2003), Guarnizo, Portes, and Haller (2003), and Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) (Smith M.P. 2007: 1099-1100). Then, Smith presents the findings of his research on Mexican migrants in California, and comes to the conclusion that

> when acting political subjects are emplaced both 'here' and 'there' in transnational networks and projects, the identities they experience and facets of selfhood they orchestrate, depend considerably on the contingencies of time and circumstances. Identities and social actions change over time, as human agents interpret timing and circumstances differently in the multiple venues and political spaces in which they are capable of acting. Transnational migrants, like everyone else, occupy multiple social locations, and are subject to the inner tensions and conflicts derived from their multi-positionality. Their lived experience engenders capacities and repertoires for social practice in geographic and social locations that cross borders, but how they will act, and when, are products of historical contingency (Smith M.P. 2007: 1105).

Smith's findings are along the lines of what is stated by Rey Koslowski, according to whom the migrant's act of taking on two nationalities 'can be indicative of neither assimilation nor homeland political identification but rather of an ambivalent political identity, multiple political identities or even an apolitical identity' (Koslowski 2005: 23); and by Rainer Bauböck (2002), who remarks that overlapping memberships in different political communities obviously need not imply true political recognition and participation in each nation-state. In most cases only the rights of the country of residence are "active" while rights pertaining to the other country remain "dormant" (Bauböck 2002) and are activated only when necessary.

"Loyalty" – Smith argues – is never unalloyed and always contingent, depending on historically specific circumstances. Depending on the questions posed, migrants express ambivalence about life in each nation and the modes of political participation in which they are engaged. On balance, however, because they tend to act politically on the basis of what they do not like in each country, they continue to act politically, both "here" and "there", and do so with a growing sense of transnational political efficacy (Smith M.P. 2007: 1114). In more recent studies on Latin American transnational and ethnic organisations in the United States, also Portes, Escobar and Arana (2008 and 2009) confirm that 'transnationalism and political

incorporation proceed simultaneously, as events and initiatives here and there interact seamlessly' (Portes, Escobar and Arana 2009: 132).

Finally, also Morales and Giugni (2011) and Lisa Mügge (2012) stress the importance of specific contingencies and circumstances (e.g. changes in legislation), in the interplay between home- and host-country policies; Morales and Giugni argue that:

> political transnationalism has an overall spillover effect on the political incorporation of European migrants in their countries of residence, [but] this positive spillover effect...disappears when the individual resides in a country with open naturalization rules. Hence, transnational political action is a mobilizing driver that will also lead to engagement in the political affairs of the countries of residence primarily for those migrants who live in countries with more restrictive naturalization rules (Morales and Giugni 2011: 165-166).

Mügge, instead, suggests to focus on the citizenship regimes in the sending country, as the findings of her study on dual nationality and transnational politics indicate that transnational orientations are not only responses to exclusionary or inclusive host-country citizenship regimes, but also – if not primarily – responses to exclusionary citizenship regimes in the sending country (2012: 15).

To sum up and expand on the previous classification by Tamaki (2011), three types of empirical relationships between the concepts of political integration and transnationalism are possible. First, the negative relationship view 'holds that transnational ties among migrants weaken their integration in the immigration country' (Vertovec 2009: 93). If integration requires an investment of time, effort and other resources, one could argue that strong commitments to the country of origin become an obstacle to integration. Conversely, as proposed in the foundational work on transnationalism (Basch et al. 1994), migrant's experiences of discrimination in the host society motivate them to sustain transnational attachments (Carling 2011).

Another view sees the relationship as a positive one and suggests that democracy is actually enhanced by public recognition and representation of migrants' multiple identities within and outside the country of residence' (Vertovec 2009: 93). Perhaps it is the "well-integrated" migrants who have the resources required to travel frequently, have multiple homes, and be engaged in transnational politics, and so on— while other, more marginalised migrants are neither transnational nor "well integrated".

Finally, it may be that transnationalism and integration are distinct spheres of migrants' lives, with no causal relationships between the two. If we start unpacking the concepts, we might also find that the multiple dimensions of both integration and transnationalism preclude any general statements about relationships (Carling 2011).

Similarly, Levitt argues that highlighting variations in scope, intensity and goals brings to light the multiple ways that migrants combine transnational and assimilative strategies and the diverse outcomes these produce with respect to home- and host-country mobility. In fact, in her opinion the relationship between transnational involvements and assimilation is shaped by the kinds of activities migrants participate in, the institutional arenas where these activities take place, and the class and lifecycle stage of individual migrants (Levitt 2003: 178).

After examining these aspects for Italians in London in my three main empirical chapters (chapters 4, 5 and 6), in the conclusion of this study (chapter 7), I will offer my own contribution to the debate on the relationship between migrant political integration and transnationalism.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I introduce the methodology that I chose in order to collect and analyse my data and answer my research questions. In section 3.1, I explain my use of a mixed-method approach, linking it to the theoretical frameworks that I outlined in chapter 2. In section 3.2 I describe in depth the methods of data collection which I employ in this study. Finally, in section 3.3 I focus on the issues of reflexivity and positionality in my research.

3.1. MIXED-METHOD APPROACH

In the previous chapter, I explained that here I follow Drizek's claim for engagement across different research traditions (Dryzek 2002) and the consequent deployment of different research methods (March and Stoker 2010). Thus, in my research, I use a mixed-method approach. The use of such a pluri-method research strategy has recently become widespread, especially in case studies. The idea behind the use of a mixed-method approach is that the biases inherent in any single method could neutralise or cancel the biases of other methods, as well as give complementary insights. According to Creswell:

> A mixed method approach is based on strategies of inquiry that involve collecting data either simultaneously or sequentially to best understand research problems. The data collection also involves gathering both numeric information as well as text information so that the final database represents both quantitative and qualitative information (Creswell 2003: 19-20).

According to Read and Marsh (2002), there are two main reasons for combining methods: first, it may be that using one method does not allow the researcher to address all aspects of the research questions; second, combining methods increases the validity of research, because using a variety of methods means that one method serves as a check on another.

In the study of politics, also Flyvbjerg calls for:

> a new political science that does not rely on sophisticated quantitative modelling alone but also uses qualitative approaches found more in the study of historical context, interviews based on people's experiences of politics and the attention to political and social meaning of text-based discourse analysis. Thus, [what he labels as] a phronetic approach calls for more methodological pluralism in political science, to create a political science that is responsive to real world problems (Flyvbjerg, cited in March and Stoker 2010: 253).

In the field of the political participation of migrants, Lee (2008) shows his preference for a mixed-method approach. In his opinion, one of the potential benefits of unpacking the identity-to-politics link is 'to better match and situate the methods we use to understand the process of the identity-to-politics link that we study' (Lee 2008: 473). In fact, while some of the processes (e.g. venue selection) outlined in chapter 2 are well covered in surveys, others (e.g. definition) are probably ill-suited to survey-based methods and better suited to other more qualitative kinds of methods. In this way, a mixed-method approach seems a better strategy to tackle the identity-to-politics link.

Creswell explains that combining methods can take three basic forms: a two-phase design; a dominant/less dominant design; and a mixed methodology design (Creswell 1994). In this research, the dominant method of collection is qualitative, including ethnographic methods such as participant observation and informal conversations, interviews and some elements of discourse analysis, supported by a questionnaire, the latter of which constitutes the less dominant design.

Although several studies on the political participation of migrants are based on surveys conducted by means of questionnaire, I chose not to use this as a primary method of collection. I made this decision both for practical reasons – most studies adopting large questionnaire surveys are big projects involving several researchers, while the time and financial constraints of an individual doctoral research made the number (N) of my respondents too small for inferential statistics analysis – and because I argue that qualitative methods are more useful to grasp the meaning of being an Italian in London and participating in Italian politics while living away from the home country.

In this way, I agree with Evergeti and Zontini (2006), who criticise the use of surveys where terms like "ethnic identities" and "social networks" are often used at different levels of abstraction. According to them:

> Notwithstanding the importance of statistical information, the problem with variable analysis is that it fails to capture the process of interpretation and the interactional order of human group life…Migrants' ethnic identities and networks involve both meanings and actions, none of which can be explored through a question/answer technique. Rather they require more sensitized approaches that are placed within the context of specific geographic and symbolic locales (Evergeti and Zontini 2006: 1033).

As explained by Vromen (2010: 256), some qualitative researchers see 'the main goal of research as interpretation of meaning and to provide understandings, rather than [casual] explanation'. In order to reach this goal, qualitative researchers usually focus on case studies,

which tend to involve the in-depth qualitative study of lived human experiences by means of on-site fieldwork and some combination of observation, interviews, and/or document analysis (Yanow, Schwartz-Shea and Freitas 2009: 4). Similarly, as I will show in the next section, in my case study on the political participation of Italians in London, I combine these three methods of data collection, in order to produce what Geertz (1993) calls "thick description". As Bevir and Rhodes put it (2003: 22), quoting Geertz, the aim is to establish 'our own constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to'. Of course, I should make clear here that 'what is produced is a narrative which is particular, to that time and space, and partial, being based on a subjective interpretation of the views of, most likely, only some of the actors involved. Consequently, any such narrative must be provisional; there are no absolute truth claims' (Furlong and Marsh 2010: 202). I will come back to this topic in section 3.3, where I discuss the issue of reflexivity and positionality.

3.2 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

I collected my data between March 2009 and December 2010, with a break between April and August 2010. During the first phase, I was living in Brighton and commuting to London for participating in Italian events and interviewing my respondents, while during the second phase I found it more practical to live in London for four months. This allowed me to face the same issues and challenges that many young Italians who move to London for work or study experience on their arrival. In this way, registering as an Italian resident abroad by the Italian Consulate, looking for an accommodation and settling in London was part of my ethnographic research, mainly based on participant (and – sometimes – not participant) observation.

McHugh (2000) stresses the potential of ethnographic studies to further our understanding of migration. He argues that at a time when many individuals and groups forge connections and social fields across expanses of space and time, ethnographic studies make it possible to capture different tempos and rhythms of movement and connection, illuminating their implications for both people and places. Moreover, ethnographies reveal lived experiences embedded within sociocultural contexts, constituting an interpretative science in search of meaning rather than an experimental science in search of law. Finally, ethnographic studies hold much potential to reveal the interplay of migration and sociocultural change, casting light on signature themes of modernity and postmodernity (McHugh 2000: 72). McHugh's argument is well related to my research. In fact, he emphasises four overarching themes in migration and

postmodernity, that can be profitably explored and advanced via ethnographic approaches, one of which is identity construction and change (McHugh 2000: 85).

BOX 1: EVENTS ATTENDED IN LONDON:

Scheduled monthly meetings of *Partito Democratico*

Primary elections of *Partito Democratico*

Meeting *Fabbrica di Nichi* Movement

Meeting *Popolo Viola* Movement

Demonstration *Se non ora, quando* for women's rights

Demonstration in favour of public school

Public meeting of *Partito Democratico* with Sen. Micheloni

Public meeting at *patronato* INCA-CGIL with Sen. Micheloni

Public meeting with Mario Adinolfi organised by *Partito Democratico*

Public meeting with On. Piero Fassino organised by *Partito Democratico*

Public meeting with Iacopo Iacoboni (journalist)

Public meeting with Giuliana Sgrena (journalist)

Public meeting with Marco Travaglio and Antonio Padellaro (journalists) at LSE

Public meeting with Stefano Benni (writer) organised by the Friends of Italian Studies at the University of London

Debate on migration organised by *Partito Democratico*, *Rifondazione Comunista* and *25 Aprile* Association

Debate on green economy organised by *Sinistra, Ecologia e Libertà*

Event *Ferragosto* 2008 organised by ItaliansofLondon

Event *Raiperunanotte* on press freedom

Debate on new Italian emigration with Claudia Cucchiarato and Sergio Nava at the Italian School

Event Pizza 100 – Italians with Beppe Severgnini (journalist)

Meeting Club of Old people at St. Peter's Social Club

Meeting Club of Old people at the Scalabrini Centre in Brixton

Meeting Club of Old people at the Mission in Enfield

Mass at St. Peter's Church

Mass at the Scalabrinian Church in Brixton

Procession of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Celebration of Republic Day at the Italian Embassy

Concert of Nicola Piovani organised by the Italian Institute of Culture

Bray (2008: 298) encourages the use of ethnography in political studies as a useful means to understand both macro-structures and stratification processes, and micro-level processes such as interactions within organisations and socialisation processes. My attendance at meetings and events organised by Italian institutions and associations, political parties and movements (see list in box 1) allowed me to observe directly the processes occurring in the communities under study, thus permitting me to gain a greater understanding of the social life of Italians in London, and to learn more about the migration experience through informal conversations.

As part and parcel of my analysis of the activity of Italian organisations in London, I also monitored the newsletter and the documents published on their websites. In this way, following the influence of interpretivism, I introduce some elements of discourse analysis and I make (qualitative) use of texts and documentary primary sources to make meaning from them by using them to 'tell the story' or recreate a historical sequencing of events (Vromen 2010: 262).

Moreover, travelling back and forth from Italy between 2008 and 2011 offered me additional chances to chat with other Italians who live and work or study in the UK; these informal conversations while queueing at the airport or during flights were useful to have a clearer picture of the migration experience of the new wave of migrants. At this point, it should be said that I am aware that my personal background and the use of participant observation may potentially bias my research and raise some issues of positionality, which I will discuss in the last section of this chapter.

Besides participant observation, I conducted interviews with two different panels of respondents. Following the approach of Vogel (2008), the first was made up of key informants, "highly active" and "highly informed" immigrants – which in her opinion play a critical role in migrants' activation process (Vogel 2008: 18), who helped me gain a deeper insight into the social and community life of Italians in London. The "highly active" and "highly informed" migrants interviewed were selected on the basis of their prominent role in the most significant Italian institutions and organisations including Churches, welfare agencies and associations, political parties and movements (a comprehensive list is provided in box 2).

These key informants were initially contacted through the e-mail addresses or the phone numbers of the organisations they represent. Their contacts were found through the web-sites of their organisation, through the telephone directory, through a directory published yearly by the Scalabrinian Fathers and through personal contacts. Following the practical advice provided by Goldstein (2002: 671), the first email clearly spelt out the basic outlines of my

research, and made clear what the ground rules for the interview would be, how the information gathered in the interview would be used and reported, and how much time I was requesting. The email also included a link to my official university web-page, besides my personal contact information.

BOX 2: INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS

March 16, 2009: Father Giandomenico (Scalabrinians)

March 16, 2009: Davide Morante (Italian General Consul)

March 17, 2009: Melchiorre Nola (*patronato* CISL; CGIE)

March 24, 2009: Ivan Scalfarotto (*Partito Democratico*)

March 30, 2009: Marisa Pompei (*patronato* INCA-CGIL)

March 31, 2009: Simona Milio (*Partito Democratico*)

April 18, 2009: Giancarlo Pelati (Italiansoflondon.com)

April 20, 2009: Lorenzo Losi (ACLI; CGIE)

April 22, 2009: Arturo Tosi (University of London; *Scuola Italiana* project)

June 12, 2009: Alessio Altichieri (*Corriere della Sera*)

June 12, 2009: Ornella Tarantola (Italian Book-store)

September 10, 2009: Stefano Scalzo (*patronato* UIL)

September 28, 2009: Marco Niada (*IlSole24Ore*)

September 28, 2009: Elisa Provini-Walker (*Il Circolo* association)

October 1, 2009: Father Carmelo (St Peter's Church)

October 8, 2009: Maurizio Morabito (*Popolo delle Libertà*)

October 8, 2009: Anna Mondavio (Italian Institute of Culture)

October 23, 2009: Ines Saltalamacchia (Italian School project)

November 23, 2009: Paola Dri (Director Italian Courses)

February 14, 2010: Gaspare Giacalone (*Sinistra, Ecologia e Libertà*)

February 18, 2010: Manfredi Nulli (*Italia dei Valori*)

March 12, 2010: Claudio (*Rifondazione Comunista*)

March 16, 2010: Marina Falbo (*25 Aprile* Association)

April 21, 2010: Lazzaro Pietragnoli (Labour Friends of Italy)

April 26, 2010: Sen Raffaele Fantetti (MP *Popolo delle Libertà*)

September, 2010: Ethel Chiodelli (Meet-up Beppe Grillo)

September 26, 2010: Emanuele Iorio (*La Fabbrica di Nichi*)

November 26, 2010: Sen Claudio Micheloni (MP *Partito Democratico*)

March 28, 2011: Federico Campagna (Through Europe)

Following Aberbach and Rockman, I decided to use a semi-structured interview asking mainly open-ended questions that gave the respondents latitude to articulate fully their responses and allowed them to engage in wide-ranging discussions. Among other reasons, this choice – usually preferred by elites or people in key positions who do not like being put in the straightjacket of close-ended questions – allowed me to get at the contextual nuance of response and to probe beneath the surface of a response to the reasoning and premises that underlie it (Aberbach and Rockman 2002: 674).

The topics examined in these interviews were the personal experience of migration, the activities carried out by the different associations/organisations/institutions, and the main features of the Italian presence in London (such as: composition of the community, identity, community events, social activities, and social and political interest and behaviour).

Obviously, as stressed by Berry, it should be kept in mind that 'it is not the obligation of a subject to be objective and to tell us the truth. We have a purpose in requesting an interview but ignore the reality that subjects have a purpose in the interview too: they have something they want to say' (2002: 680). As a consequence, it is important to confirm – as far as is possible – the accuracy of the information provided; this reinforces the need to use multiple methods and sources.

The second panel of respondents was made up of Italian citizens from the three groups I described in my introduction:

- people from the "old" first generation who arrived between the end of WWII and 1980;
- people from the "new" wave of migrants who arrived from the 1980s onwards and have been living in the UK for at least three years.
- people from the second and third generation offspring of the "old" wave of migrants.

All the participants were required to hold an Italian passport and be registered as Italian citizens resident abroad, as this is a legal requirement for being included in the overseas electorate in Italian general elections.

Even though this panel does not aim to constitute a representative sample of the Italian presence in London, in order to increase diversity, participants were selected in a mix of ways: by using the lists provided by the key informants mentioned above, by direct interactions during my participant observation, by advertising my research on the notice-board of the Italian Bookstore in Cecil Court, on Facebook groups and two web portals for Italians in London

(Italianialondra.com and Italiansoflondon.com), on the main forum for Italians abroad on the *Corriere della Sera* website, on *La Voce degli Italiani*, the main paper for the old migration group, and via the mailing list of the Friends of Italian Studies; moreover, snowballing was also used to boost the number of participants.

Following the ethical standards and guidelines that are requested for research in the social sciences, respondents were informed in detail about my study, and about the practical aspects of their participation in the research, were offered anonymity and confidentiality, and were asked to provide their informed consent (see annex 1). While key informants in this study are identified with their real names, the names of all participants from this panel have been modified.

First, in order to collect background information on the three groups, participants were requested to complete a questionnaire. The goal was to have at least thirty respondents from each group under study, trying to divide them equally in terms of gender and geographical area of origin (North-Centre and South of Italy, including Sicily and Sardinia). It was planned to contact back those who had showed their interest on a "first come, first served" basis, up to the achievement of the target for each group. In the end (see table 1), the objective was reached for the new first generation and the second generation (although in this case it was not possible to balance exactly between genders), while only twenty-seven respondents from the old first generation completed the questionnaire. It should be said here that, while among the old migrants it was easier to access men from the Italian South, the majority of respondents from the new generation were from Northern-Central Italy, and both among the new first generation and the second generation women who showed interest in taking part in the study outnumbered men.

Table 1: Respondents – Questionnaire Study								
	Old First Generation			New First Generation			British-born Italians		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
North/Centre	6	6	12	9	8	17	-	-	-
South/Islands	8	7	15	6	7	13	-	-	-
Total	14	13	27	15	15	30	14	18	32

With regard to the old first generation, the age of the participants at the time of completing the questionnaire ranged from 53 to 87, with an average of 74. Only four respondents were aged under 65. Their average length of time in the UK was 50 years; fourteen out of twenty-seven subjects who answered the questionnaire arrived in the country before 1960. With regard to the new first generation, their age spanned 21 to 70, with an average of 37 years.

Only two subjects were aged over 50 at the time they completed the questionnaire. Their average stay in the UK was 10 years, with nineteen out of thirty respondents having moved to the country in the 2000s. As I will show in section 4.1 in the next chapter, the age composition and years of stay of participants from these two groups follow roughly the pattern of Italian migration to the UK from the post-war period to now. Finally, with regard to the British-born Italians, their average age was 32 years, with sixteen out of thirty-two respondents born in the 1980s. All participants in this group were born from 1960 onwards, with only one outlier who was born in 1931.

Questionnaires could be completed either in electronic (sending a word file by email or filling an online survey) or in paper form, either in Italian or in English. While all respondents from the two younger age groups completed the questionnaire online, most respondents from the old first generation used the paper form and, because of their age (and lack of good reading skills in some cases), I was often requested to read them the questions and possible options, and in this way completed the questionnaire in my presence. Respondents were asked to answer three sets of questions: the first on their personal characteristics and on their links to Italy, the second on their social and associational life, and the third on their political interest and participation (see annex 1). Data collected through questionnaires were analysed by means of descriptive statistics and used as a basis for the main qualitative study.

In fact, afterwards semi-structured interviews were carried out with a sample from those who completed the questionnaire and had accepted to be contacted for a follow-up; the sample was made up of ten participants from each group, balanced for gender. The setting for the interview was left to the respondents: in most cases, people from group 1 opted to be interviewed at their own home or during the weekly meetings for retired Italians taking place at St. Peter's Church Social Club, at the Scalabrinian Church in Brixton and in Enfield; participants from groups 2 and 3 mostly chose to meet me in cafés, or in few cases at their work places. All interviewees from the old first generation were interviewed in Italian; among the new first generation two out of ten respondents preferred to speak to me in English rather than in Italian; while all British-born Italians preferred to be interviewed in English; all these interviews were tape-recorded.

The interviews allowed respondents to elaborate on the answers they provided in the questionnaires and to offer detailed reports of their views and experiences; in this way, I could interpret recurrent themes and analyse and understand more in depth the data obtained by means of questionnaires and participant observation.

Given the qualitative approach employed in this work and my background as an Italian living in the UK who studies Italians living in the UK, before moving to analyse the findings of this study in the next three chapters, in the next and final section of this chapter I will discuss the issues of reflexivity and positionality.

3.3 REFLEXIVITY AND POSITIONALITY

In a recent call for papers for a special issue on 'Researching migrants as a migrant researcher', Cieslik and Nowicka (2012) explain that:

> the growing transnational connectivity of educational institutions results in an increase in the number of students and faculty who study and work abroad...As a result, more and more studies are done on migrants and migrant communities by researchers who have migrated themselves...[this] pose[s] serious methodological challenges that have not been fully addressed in literature.

In the past four years, spent between Brighton and London, I experienced myself the pros and cons of being an Italian living in another EU country. Having lived more than three years in the UK and being registered as an Italian resident abroad, I meet the requirements to participate in my own research. Moreover, it happened several times that during some informal conversations or after I turned off my tape recorder at the end of an interview I was asked: '*E tu? Ti piace stare a Brighton? Che pensi di fare dopo'?* ('And what about you? How do you like living in Brighton? What do you plan to do after your PhD?'). Also, something that is even more related to my study, after four years in Britain I am still very well informed about the political events happening in Italy, while my knowledge of current affairs in Britain is rather limited. That is why I find necessary here to ponder briefly on the role of the researcher and, more in particular, on being a migrant who studies migrants with the same origin; this leads me to speak about reflexivity and positionality. This need is shared by several researchers who study the migrant group they belong to, and among them there are other young Italian scholars who have studied the Italian presence in the UK in recent years. For example, Francesca Romana Seganti, who conducted doctoral research on the social and cultural role of Italianialondra.com, an online community created to facilitate communication among Italians living in London, in forming and transforming Italian identities in a foreign environment, wrote:

> My research project was not only the outcome of my professional experience. It also came from the personal desire to deepen the understanding of the issues that face the latest generation of Italians in London, to which I belong. I was aware that I respond to

some of the criteria on the basis of which the sample was selected: I am Italian, thirty years old, and I was living in London to study for a PhD. Therefore…its participants were potentially my peers. They could have been colleagues of mine (Seganti 2010: 975).

Seganti (2010: 966-967) lists the pros and cons of being Italian like her respondents: on the one hand, she could understand references to stereotypes and was aware of regional differences, and had experienced differences between ordinary daily life in Italy and London; on the other hand her background biased the development of her research hypotheses and sampling strategies. For this reason, she resorted to reflexivity, not for obtaining complete objectivity, for this is, almost by definition, practically impossible, but to interrogate herself on the potential ways in which she could bias the outcome of her study (Seganti 2010: 980).

By focusing on the situated and negotiated nature of the research encounter, I realised that in some cases, my presence helped to project particular identifications…Their (=the participants') aim was to manifest their refusal of returning to the homeland (which I represented) and to convey an image of themselves "different" from ordinary Italians who live temporarily in London (like I was) (Seganti 2010: 977-978).

Also Deianira Ganga reflected on her positionality in studying Italians in the UK. She carried out a research on first- and second-generation Italians in Nottingham and, together with Sam Scott, a British scholar who researched British people in Paris, analysed the issues surrounding what they term the "insider" interview, and in particular, how these issues relate to research on contemporary international migration (Ganga and Scott 2006: 1-2).

Ganga and Scott define insider research as 'social interviews conducted between researchers and participants who share a similar cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national and religious heritage' (Ganga and Scott 2006: 2). Like Seganti (2010), Ganga and Scott recognise the advantages of being an insider, particularly in terms of negotiating access to migrants, in understanding the spoken and unspoken language of the interview, and in terms of the recognition of idiosyncratic cultural references, but they stress that any binary insider-outsider division is misleading (Ganga and Scott 2006: 6). This is because the insider status brings to the fore a range of social fissures that structure interaction between researcher and participant, fissures that may otherwise have remained hidden. They name this the phenomenon of "diversity in proximity" (Ganga and Scott 2006: 3).

Diversity in proximity helps in understanding wrong assumptions and preconceptions, which can bias one's research. In Ganga's case, 'the investigator had clearly made assumptions based upon a shared insider status that, in reality, was of little practical relevance…The idea of

"Italianness" for older Italians was different from, and based on different values to the investigator's idea of what it meant to be Italian' (Ganga and Scott 2006: 8). As a consequence, Ganga had to reflect on her position and make efforts to acquire the trust of the old first-generation respondents and being granted the status of "adopted insider", while she reworked her position and emphasised other shared factors, in order to gain access to younger generations. 'To summarise, Ganga – because of the nature of her investigation – found that she was continually negotiating an insider/outsider dynamic and that this dynamic varied according to age and generation' (Ganga and Scott 2006: 10).

These two examples make it necessary to discuss in more theoretical terms what reflexivity is and what it brings into the research process. According to Farhana Sultana:

> reflexivity in research involves reflection on self, process, and representation, and critically examining power relations and politics in the research process, and researcher accountability in data collection and interpretation…A reflexive research process can open up the research to more complex and nuanced understandings of issues, where boundaries between process and content can get blurred (Sultana 2007: 376).

The interest in reflexivity and positionality of researchers developed with feminism and the postmodern turn in the social sciences. These two important epistemological "turns" represented a serious challenge to the methodological hegemony of neopositivist empiricism, which specified a strict dichotomy between object and subject as a prerequisite for objectivity (England 1994: 242).

Given that social life is intersubjective and research is not a product, but an on-going process, the impersonal, neutral detachment of the researcher is not possible; fieldwork instead becomes

> a dialogical process in which the research situation is structured by both the researcher and the person being researched. Two issues flow from this point. The first is that the dialogical nature of research increases the probability that the research may be transformed by the input of the researched. The second is that dialogism means that the researcher is a visible and integral part of the research setting (England 1994: 247-248),

with his/her own different personal history and lived experiences, ideas, feelings and moods. Thus, Kim England (1994: 244) seems to stress the self-critical sympathetic introspection and the self-conscious analytical scrutiny of the self as researcher, viewing reflexivity as a form of self-discovery.

For Gillian Rose, instead, 'reflexivity may be less a process of self-discovery than of self-construction' (Rose 1997: 313). Rose concentrates on the anxieties and ambivalences that surround reflexivity, positionality and situated knowledges (Rose 1997: 306). In particular she explains the impossibility of the demand for transparently reflexive positionality (Rose 1997: 311). The contradiction arises because the researched must be placed in a different position from the researcher since they are separate and different from each other, but in this way the relationship between researcher and researched is mapped as a relationship of difference, articulated through an objectifying distance (that is not acceptable in feminist and post-modernist views); otherwise the researcher should occupy the same place as the researched, but this is impossible because she is not the same as her research subjects. Thus, situating knowledge through transparent reflexivity gives no space to understanding across difference (Rose 1997: 312-313).

One technique to avoid this trap is for scholars to define their position as in between the "field" and the "not-field", between theory and practice, but also between researcher and researched, and this sense of "betweenness" problematises that distance, and allows to articulate in other ways the situatedness of researched knowledge. In this way, reflexivity as a process of self-construction comes in (Rose 1997: 313-314).

It is worth noting that this vision of research as a process of constitutive negotiation is in large part influenced by Judith Butler's (1990) work on identity as constructed and performed, which inspires the theoretical approach of Anne Marie Fortier (1999, 2000 and 2006), which I outlined above.

This leads me back to my own research and to conclude this section and this chapter by trying to link what I said earlier in the introduction chapter about my personal and intellectual journey, to what I have been discussing here on the issues of reflexivity and positionality. My awareness of the risk of being misled by my own assumptions and preconceptions as described by Seganti (2010), and of the impact of me being Italian on respondents, made me choose to use the aforementioned written questionnaire – thus reducing the bias due to my physical presence – in order to collect contextual information and identify the main themes to be discussed later in the follow-up interviews. Moreover, in dealing with the old first generation and with the young second generation of British-born Italians, I faced the same challenges described by Ganga (Ganga and Scott 2006) and I tried to adopt her strategies to gain their trust and be accepted by members of these two groups.

In conclusion, I have to recognise that, in spite of all my efforts, I could not avoid that being a young Italian temporarily living in the UK allowed people to place me in certain categories and to "other" me, to use the words of Sultana (2007: 378). And, above all, I found myself in the same in-between situation outlined by England (1994) and Rose (1997): I am aware I started my fieldwork with my own biography, ideas, feelings and moods and they all influenced my fieldwork, and I am aware my fieldwork experience influenced and changed some of them and had an impact on my research. Thus, these aspects should keep this in mind in reading the outcomes of this study.

CHAPTER 4: THE ITALIAN COMMUNITIES IN LONDON

In this chapter I analyse the different Italian communities that are present in London today. As I explained in my introduction, even though the UK was not one of the traditional destinations for Italian migrants during the era of mass emigration from Italy, since the second half of the 19th century London has attracted tens of thousands of Italian citizens. According to the Registry for Italians Abroad (AIRE), in Greater London there are now more than 60,000 Italian citizens, but most of my respondents involved in Italian institutions and organisations estimated that today in London there are between 100,000 and 200,000 Italians.

I start this chapter by providing some historical background on the Italian migration to the country, focusing on the 19th and, above all, on the 20th century; then, in the next three sections, I examine the three main communities that are the object of this study. First, I focus on the group that I define as the old wave of migrants, discussing issues such as the reasons for their migration to the UK, their settlement in the host country, their social and associative life, and their past and on-going links with Italy. Then, I debate the same issues for the new waves of migrants that have reached the UK since the 1980s and in particular in the past twenty years. The factors affecting their decision to migrate, their settling and socialisation in London and their links with Italy are analysed and compared with the old wave of migrants, taking into account factors such as level of education, knowledge of English and professional background. Moreover, I take into consideration the use they make of new technologies and low-cost means of transport and communication which enable them to be connected with Italy virtually and physically. Next, I talk about the third group of the British-born Italians who grew up in the UK. Again, I focus on aspects such as education, socialisation with Italian and British peers, identification with Italy and the UK, and their connections with their country of parental origin. Finally, in the last section of the chapter, I discuss the findings of my analysis and try to emphasise not only the differences between the different groups, but also some similarities that are often overlooked by the literature.

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Since the Middle Ages, a small-scale elite migration consisting of merchants, bankers, artists, musicians and scholars has been documented by scholars such as Lucio Sponza (2005: 4). In the 19th century the first larger-scale migration of Italians to Britain was characterised by the

arrival of craftsmen and wandering migrants, mainly street musicians and later ice-cream sellers. The centre of the Italian community in the 19th century consisted of the areas of Holborn and Clerkenwell in London. At the end of the 19th century, with the arrival of new waves of migrants and the employment of many Italians in the catering sector, the epicentre of the community shifted to the district of Soho; because of these reasons, the 1880s are defined by Sponza (1993) as a "turning point" in the history of the Italian community in London. The 1881 British Census enumerated 6,382 Italian-born residents in the UK, rising to 10,934 in 1891 and 24,383 in 1901; at that time almost half of them, about 11,000, were living in London (Fortier 2000: 181).

The inter-war period is defined by Terri Colpi (1991: 71) as the "Golden Era" for Italian migrants as it saw the consolidation of the colony: 'this was the time when the migrants from the old emigration – *la vecchia emigrazione* – really settled in, progressed and became an integral part of the fabric of British society' (Colpi 1991: 71). Moreover, as I will show later, Italian institutions in London were strengthened and many welfare initiatives were organised as part of Mussolini's project of expanding fascism among Italian communities abroad (Baldoli 1999 and 2003). The presence of fascists and anti-fascists caused also strong tensions within the community (Bernabei 1997), but the darkest period Italians in the UK had to suffer was Italy's entry into the war against the Allies. As a consequence, Italian citizens became enemy aliens, Italian economic activities were under attack and thousands of Italians were interned in prison camps in England and other areas of the British Empire (Palmer 1977, Colpi 1991, Bernabei 1997, Sponza 2005).

After the end of the conflict, a new wave of mass immigration took place in the 1950s and 1960s: these decades saw a change in the characteristics of Italian emigration to the UK. London, which was the main destination until then, became secondary compared to the industrial cities of central England, notably Bedford and Peterborough. It should be said that, in sharp contrast to the great interest which has been focused on the Bedford Italians – from the pioneering work by King (1977), to the classic study of Colpi (1991), to a very recent book edited by Ledgeway and Lepschy (2012) – the Italian presence in Peterborough had never been studied before the 1990s, when Tubito and King (1996) published a paper on the identity, characteristics and organisation of this community, which they portrayed as economically integrated but socially encapsulated. Of course, Bedford and Peterborough did not have an absolute monopoly over Italians migrating to places outside of London in these early post-war decades: many other industrial cities received their quotas too, especially where there was factory employment in booming industries. Coventry, Leicester and Nottingham were cases in

point – the last two being the focus of recent studies conducted respectively by Burrell (2006) and Ganga (2006 and 2007).

The migration toward the industrial cities of England was due first to a series of agreements between the British and Italian Ministries of Labour ("bulk recruitment" scheme) and then to the initiative of individual employers ("group recruitment" scheme) as part of the European Voluntary Workers scheme, followed by a process of chain migration and family reunification, that had the consequence that for the first time in the 1951 Census Italian women in Britain outnumbered men (on the recruitment schemes and the migration towards industrial cities see: King 1977, Palmer 1977, Colucci 2002, Sponza 2005). It is interesting to note that some old Italian migrants who arrived in those years revealed in the interviews I carried out their opposition to the current immigration of thousands of people from outside the EU without any job or place to live; when I reminded them of their migrant status and of the similar hardships they had to face at the time of their arrival, they were very firm in stressing that they arrived in this country already with a job-permit and with an accommodation that was part of the agreement.

As shown by Palmer (1977) and Colpi (1991), London was still the main concentration of migrants who were active in the catering sector. Palmer (1977: 258) explains that many Italians who entered Britain as European Voluntary Workers, once their 4-year contract in the industrial factories of central England had expired and they had been granted permanent residence, moved to London to find a job, typically in the catering sector, a situation that was confirmed in some of the interviews I carried out. According to Palmer, the success of Italians in this economic niche was due to the cheap prices of the basic ingredients of Italian cuisine and to the fast-growing spending power of young people in Britain in the 1950s and 1960s (Palmer 1977: 259). His analysis is shared by Daniele Tricarico (2007), who discusses the emotional and symbolic role played by national cuisine and how it influenced the shaping of the image of Italians in the UK; according to Tricarico, food is 'a vehicle for the empowerment of minorities, which allows immigrants to obtain immediate economic return thanks to the use of the family as a labour force' (Tricarico 2007: web). Following Colpi (1991), Tricarico shows how the 1950s can be considered the decade of cafeterias (more than 2,000 were listed at the end of the decade), while the 1960s was that of *trattorie*, small family restaurants. It is important to note that, even though nowadays the catering sector is still one of the main areas of activity of Italians in the UK, the consumption of Italian food is not seen any more as an exotic experience, as it was in the first two decades after WWII.

As a consequence of these different inflows, at the end of the 1960s there were more than 100,000 Italian-born residents in the UK. But in 1969 for the first time more Italians returned from Britain than migrated to that country, and the 1970s saw the end of classical economic migration from Italy to Britain.

Since then, many young people arrived in Britain, for the study of English or because they were attracted by a system of life considered freer and more fulfilling. Many of them have stayed and others have continued to arrive, facilitated by Britain's entry in the EEC in 1973 (Sponza 2005: 18). Writing in 1979, De Blasio reports the sub-classification of Italians in the UK between the early arrivals originating from the Centre and North of Italy, the subsequent economic arrivals after the Second World War from Southern Italy, and finally the recent movement of young people entering the country under the category of visitors and students, who come from all parts of Italy. She states that this fragmentation allows the "established" and the "diplomats" to distance themselves from the derogatory label of immigrants, by stressing their area and time of arrival or their status as diplomats or highly educated people (De Blasio 1979). I will come back to the important issue of fragmentation among the Italians in the UK later in this and in the next chapter, where I will show how today the new professional migrants tend to distance themselves from old migrants and their descendants.

Since the 1980s, the intensification of economic and trade relations between the two countries has prompted a large number of Italian business-persons, managers, technicians and clerks to settle in Britain. This process intensified further after European integration in 1993 and the boom of low-cost flights since the end of the 1990s. These new forms of mobility have caused a reversal of the net migration trend: the decline of the Italian presence in traditional destinations such as Bedford and Peterborough has been more than offset by the new wave of migration to London, and the main feature is a 'return to the elite class with the to-and-fro movement of professionals, business migrants and students' (Tubito and King 1996: 6). As a consequence, while in 1977 Palmer could write that 'the London collectivity remains small in comparison to the great centres of Italian expatriation – New York, Boston, Toronto, Montreal, Sao Paulo, Buenos Aires and Sydney' (Palmer 1977: 242), 'according to reliable estimates, today London hosts a community of more than 100,000 members, the second biggest consular constituency after Buenos Aires, with numbers similar to those of Stuttgart and Zurich' (Scotto 2010: 399).

4.2 THE OLD FIRST GENERATION

The protagonists of this section are those Italians who arrived in the UK between the end of WWII and the late 1970s. According to Enrico Pugliese, these are the years of the second wave of mass emigration from Italy, after the one that took place between the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. While the earlier wave was mainly a transoceanic one, with the Americas as main destinations, the post-war one was mainly directed towards European countries (Pugliese 2006: 19). Between 1946 and 1970 around 4.5 million people left Italy and migrated to other European countries; as was mentioned earlier, the UK was not one of the main points of arrival for Italians at that time. In fact, only around 200,000 reached countries that were not either EEC countries (at the time: Germany, France, and Benelux), or Switzerland (CSER 1975).

With these above-mentioned destinations, the UK had in common the area of origin of most Italian migrants. In fact, in his *Storia d'Italia dal Dopoguerra a Oggi* Paul Ginsborg shows how 73.5% of the net migration in the period 1958-1963 (the peak time of the post-war outflow) was from the South (Ginsborg 1989: 293). In the same way, Sponza (2005: 15) underlines that, while most of early Italian migrants to the UK came from rural areas in Northern and Central Italy (in particular from Emilia), post-war migration was essentially a process regarding the South of Italy, and above all the regions of Campania and Sicily. The reasons for this phenomenon were primarily economic and regarded above all the lack of industrialisation and the incapacity of agriculture to sustain the demographic pressure in the South. Pugliese explains:

> The imbalance between population and resources, and the hunger for land by farmers,…the partial and limited character of the agrarian reform and the low level of salaries perpetuated the traditional condition of poverty with no alternatives (Pugliese 2006: 22).

This analysis is echoed by the words of several of my respondents:

> I come from the countryside…life was terrible here, under that sun that would burn you, there was nothing,

Matilde answered, when I asked why she left the mountainous region of Abruzzo with her husband in 1953. And, like her, others explained that their decision to move to the UK was due to the lack of jobs in Italy, especially if they were from rural areas. For example Gino, who is from Sicily, told me that he lost his father when he was 14 and since then he had to bear the economic responsibility of his family; being unemployed, in 1955 he moved to England to

work, first in a greenhouse and then in a factory, and he was then followed by his family, four sisters and one brother. About half of the old first-generation respondents who completed my questionnaire indicated that the main reason, or one of the main reasons, for coming to the UK was job-related.

As already Palmer (1977) had documented for the earlier migration of Italians to the UK, chain migration was quite typical, and several respondents arrived after some relatives had already settled in the UK: one out of three people in this group answered that they left Italy for the UK because of family reasons, to visit friends, or to join their fiancé or husband, who had already migrated. For example, Mr Cassetta, who arrived in 1962 in the area of Croydon, explained to me that he left Italy out of frustration and came to the UK because:

> I had a brother here…I had to enlist in the Italian police cadets (but then it did not happen for political reasons)…and then I was angry, I was disillusioned with this situation in Italy, and I came to England. After two weeks I wanted to go back, I didn't like it. On the day I was leaving, we had a car accident with my brother in law, and I stayed some more weeks. I started a job in the hospital and employers took a liking to me, so I decided to stay.

Luca, from the province of Parma (an area with historical migration links with the UK preceding WWII), had an uncle and an aunt already in London, so he 'came out of curiosity', to visit them when he was only 14, he decided to stay and attended school till he was 16, then he found a job and never moved back. In other cases, the presence of relatives abroad was a means to avoid the military service, which at the time was mandatory in Italy. This was the case for Bernardo:

> I had a sister here, I came on holiday. I had to do the second check for the military service and there was a wait for that, so I told my sister <<let me come to England 3-4 months>>, and I never went back.

Because most of those who came in the 1950s and 1960s moved out from rural areas at a young age as they were in need of a job, it is not surprising that most of my respondents in this group had attended only a few years of schooling. The relative majority of them – ten out of twenty-seven – had as their highest level of education, lower level secondary education or the second stage of basic education (*diploma di scuola media*), while three did not complete any cycle of education, seven completed only primary school, four terminated their studies with upper secondary education (*diploma di scuola superiore*), and only three obtained some tertiary education qualification.

Sometimes, the economic needs of their families stopped the aspirations of people who would have preferred to follow a different path and go on studying. Mr Ballarino, who left the province of Potenza (Southern Italy) in 1966 when he was only 17, shared with me his regret:

> My dad arrived here before us, in October 1965, my mum came in December with the other three kids, and then I came. I didn't want to come because I wanted to study in Italy; I had to leave everything, some dreams I had in particular...I was on the train from Dover to London and I said: <<*Mamma mia*, I left everything in Italy, my studies, everything; if I marry and I have kids, they must go to university>>.

Mr Ballarino now runs a successful car business in Surrey and was proud to show me his big and nice house in a residential neighbourhood in Epsom, but the moment when he seemed most satisfied was when he told me that he could afford to send all his three children to university and two of them had already got professional job positions.

The low level of education usually implied a complete lack of knowledge of the English language, which was indicated by most of my interviewees as the main hardship to face, once they reached the UK. Fundamental in improving their English was the chance some migrants had to live or work with local people, like in the case of Matilde, who was staying with a Scottish lady and when she was not able to understand what the lady was saying, she would make signs with her hands to grasp the meaning of the conversation. Other Italians did not have this chance, because either they were staying at home and taking care of their kids (notably, Titty remembered: 'I suffered a lot, because I had a baby and it was not easy to go to English school with a baby, and I couldn't speak, I was always at home'), or because they were employed in the catering sector and thus spending most of their time with other Italians. Quite a few British-born Italians I interviewed revealed that it is hard to believe that their parents or grandparents still speak very little English after many decades now of living abroad: this finding resonates with what Tubito and King (1996) reported about the social encapsulation of Italians in Peterborough.

Besides language and aspects such as the different food and the bad weather (especially for those coming from Southern Italy), the main adversity to face for many Italians was the different attitude and mentality. Mr Cassetta described well his initial disorientation:

> Coming from an Italian village where everyone would say good morning, we laughed, we joked, here in London no one would look at you in the face, neither say good morning, good evening, except those people who knew you from work...it seemed very weird to me.

Because of these initial hardships, as indeed it happened in most destinations of Italian migration, Italians would turn to Italian institutions, Churches and associations to make friends and get useful information and help. In his study on migrants from Calabria to the UK, Bottignolo (1985: 139) argued that 'Italian immigrants trusted and felt more at ease with the Italian institutions…For the Italian immigrants, only an Italian entity as an ideal point of reference could mobilise their commitment'. In this way, besides groups related to the Catholic missions, Italian associations were set up on a local or regional basis, to help fellow citizens or *paesani* (people from the same village) who arrived in the new country and to offer financial support to projects in the hometown. The establishment of the regional authorities in Italy in 1970 caused a boom in the number of locally based associations, thus inducing Colpi (1991: 241) to state that the development of associative life, particularly in London, had been one of the most significant developments within the Italian community over the previous fifteen years.

Mr Cassetta, who has been contributing to the activities of associations linked with his home region (Basilicata) since 1972, told me:

> Before, we would go to the station to meet these people, who arrived with a bag, a suitcase tied with string, and accompany them to the houses where they had to work or to the institutions, but now with the new technology...At the time there was the need, the need to have a club to meet with people, now it is no "more as it once was".

As I will discuss in the next chapter, traditional associations are declining and are not much attended by the new wave of migrants or by young British-born Italians, in a similar way as the Church attracts fewer people than in the past. In spite of this, regional and Catholic institutions still play a significant role for the old first generation:

> it's important, and you spend a day together with many friends, you have a chat, play cards; before we used to dance, then when you get older you don't dance any more,

says Matilde, whom I met at the weekly meeting of the Club for retired Italians associated with St. Peter's Church in Clerkenwell.

Meeting friends with whom they shared the same migration experience is important, also because after many years in the UK the relationship of this group of migrants with Italy has changed. Deianira Ganga discusses the concept of "home" in relation to migrants in her article on Nottingham's older Italians (Ganga 2006). The transnational space which is created as part of the migration process modifies the meaning of home, which can no more be fixed, but should be rethought considering not only the place of origin, but also the everyday life of

migrants in the country of destination, with new places of affiliation and kinship solidarities. In this way, 'home is defined in relation to feelings of attachment: on one side, home might be the "homeland", the place of birth; on the other, the definition of home…can be centred on the family and social relations in the place of residence' (Ganga 2006: 1398).

With ageing making travelling more difficult, the passing away of relatives in Italy and – above all – the settlement of their offspring in the UK, many migrants changed their original plans to go back to Italy after retiring from work. And, when they go for holidays, they are often seen as strangers:

> When I go to Italy they call me the foreigner, I am always the migrant; they don't consider us, now we're English...and I feel bad about that...and I don't like that, because I am a foreigner in this country, in England, and then I go to my country and I am still a foreigner (interview with Titty).

Stefano, who works for a *patronato*, used similar words and explained that whenever he goes back to his hometown, he feels like a stranger, he is defined as the "English guy", in the same way as in London he is defined "the Italian guy"; for this reason, with a powerful metaphor he stated that people who are in a situation like his live in a "limbo" between two countries.

Mr Ballarino depicts clearly the dual situation of being emotionally attached to Italy, but preferring to live in the UK:

> Italy is like a dream, as a child, walking in the field, free, but not as regards work. When I go back to Italy now, there is a huge gap between Italy and England in terms of social life, working life, everything. Here there is much more respect, institutions have more respect, there is more future for our kids; you are at home, in your small world and no one bothers you. I meet with Italians at parties, at weddings and baptisms, always united, always the same people. I feel I am Italian, as I was born there, but I would never go back to live there: forty-four years made me realise that England gave me my future, a job, hope for my kids, gave me everything. Going back to Italy is not so bad, but you know, the mentality, we are so different now, things are still how they used to be and as we were used to …the problem is that the Italian system doesn't work.

This quote describes how after many years old migrants still meet with fellow Italians and watch Italian television, but they are no longer used to the Italian attitude in dealing with everyday affairs, and are very critical about it. This is evident in the words of several of my respondents; interestingly, I will show later in the chapter how these words are echoed by those of the new wave of migrants.

Mr Cassetta, who worked for many years in the health sector, puts it very succinctly and explains that in England there is much more seriousness in offices and definitely more meritocracy. Similarly, Franco complains about the lack of efficiency of Italian bureaucracy, characterised by waiting times much longer than in the UK:

> In Italy when you need something they make you wait, <<come today>>, <<come tomorrow>>, <<come the day after tomorrow>>.

Matilde goes more in depth and explains that this inefficiency is due to the importance given to personal contacts in Italy:

> In Italy, when you go to an office, you always end up being after someone else, because he knocks at the door (and he knows someone)…you go to the bank, you go to some office, wherever you go, the one who is known always enters first, and then they tell you <<wait>>. Here not, here you queue, who is first go as first, who is second go as second, you can't jump the queue!

This is a very typical complaint I heard time and time again during my interviews, and at the same time it is one of the aspects more appreciated about British society. Vincenzina and Luca are very clear about this:

> The best thing here is that for whatever issue, you take the phone and solve the problem on the phone, because they listen to you; if you go to some office and you need a certificate, soon, in 5 minutes it's all done…in Italy there still exists the famous *raccomandazione*, you need someone to know…and jump the queue (interview with Vincenzina).

> Here I appreciate much more the fairness and coherence of English people and that they have much less bureaucracy than we have, and here it's not always about whom you know, as in Italy; in Italy if you don't know someone you can't move on, in whatever sector (interview with Luca).

And for many migrants, who still have to deal with Italian institutions in order to renew their documents and get their pensions, this situation is immutable. The following quotes from my interviews with Titty and Matilde, who are both more than 70 years old and have lived in the UK for more than fifty years, allow me to introduce the new wave of Italian migrants:

> I prefer the English mentality. Yes, I am Italian, I accept also the Italian one, but I prefer the English one, because Italy is always the same, it never changes (interview with Titty).

> [In Italy] change has not happened yet, since the times of war till now it's still the same! (interview with Matilde).

4.3 THE NEW FIRST GENERATION

The migration inflow from Italy to London has not stopped. Indeed, even if the characteristics of the migrants have changed, the factors that push them to leave the home country are still the same. In this section I deal with the second main component of the Italian presence in London, which is made up of those who arrived since the 1980s, and in particular since the 1990s, and are employed mainly in the professional and academic sector. Indeed, given the current and on-going economic crisis in Italy, one can confidently predict that this emigration will continue, or even accelerate in the future.

The so-called new Italian migration is characterised by a wave of young and educated, often highly-skilled, workers and students, who make use of the opportunities opened up by new technologies and low-cost means of transport and communication, aiming to obtain better job positions, that could not be reached in their countries of origin, because of the absence (or scarce presence) of meritocracy, flexibility and investments in the job market.

These new types of migrants are often simply labelled with the English word "Italians": in 1998 the journalist Beppe Severgnini created on the *Corriere della Sera* an online forum called 'Italians', a meeting point for Italians living abroad; as a consequence of the immediate and growing success of the forum and of the socio-economic characteristics of its users, the use of the term Italians instead than the Italian word "*Italiani*" came to mean that the reference is to the newly-emerging professional migration.

This new kind of migration has recently attracted the attention of media – as witnessed by the increasing number of newspaper articles dealing with brain drain and professional migration and the recent publication of books on Italians in traditional and new areas of emigration and settlement, such as New York (Molinari 2011) and Shanghai (Alabiso 2011) – but few academic studies have analysed the characteristics of the Italian citizens who arrived in the UK in the past twenty years. Among these, it is important to cite the work of Adrian Favell (2008), who included several young professional Italians among the so-called "eurostars", the protagonists of his acclaimed book *Eurostars and Eurocities*; the work of Bartolini and Volpi (2005) on Italian youth in the UK; the research of Francesca Seganti on the use of cyberspace by Italians in London (2007 and 2008); and finally the very recent thesis by Francesca Conti (2011) on Italian graduates' mobility patterns, both internally within Italy and internationally, towards the UK.

In November 2009, Pierluigi Celli, director general of Rome's LUISS University, one of the most prestigious private academic institutions in Italy, wrote an open letter to his son, published in

la Repubblica newspaper, where he advised him to leave Italy, because 'this country, your country is no longer a place where it's possible to stay with pride…That's why, with my heart suffering more than ever, my advice is that you, having finished your studies, take the road abroad. Choose to go where they still value loyalty, respect and the recognition of merit and results' (Celli 2009).

This sentence was quoted in October 2010 in a report in Time Magazine entitled '*Arrivederci Italia*: Why Young Italians Are leaving'. The article, authored by Stephan Faris, besides reporting the views of several Italians who moved abroad in the past ten years, provides some data to understand the dimension and the causes of the phenomenon.

> The number of Italians ages 25 to 39 with college degrees registering with the national government as living abroad every year has risen steadily, from 2,540 in 1999 to about 4,000 in 2008. The research-institute Censis estimates that 11,700 college graduates found work abroad in 2006 – that's one out of every 25 Italians who graduated that year. According to a poll by Bachelor, a Milanese recruitment agency, 33.6% of new graduates feel they need to leave the country to take advantage of their education. A year later, 61.5% feel that they should have done so (Faris: 2010).

The article stresses the importance of economic push factors, highlighting how the Italian economy has been in a state of stagnation for many years and how the unemployment rate among Italian college graduates aged 25 to 29 is 14%, more than double the rate in the rest of Europe. The reason for the difficult access to the job market, together with the aforementioned lack of meritocracy, is "gerontocracy", or rule by the elderly. This is evident at all levels of Italian society, from the government to academia and even show business – all fields "ruled", with a few exceptions, by elderly men. Too much of the economy is geared toward looking after older Italians, maintaining some of the highest pensions in Europe, while the country spends relatively little on housing, unemployment and child care, expenditures the young depend upon to launch their careers (Faris: 2010).

Sergio Nava, host of the radio show *Giovani Talenti* ('Young Talents') and author of the blog and book *La Fuga dei Talenti* (*The Flight of Talent* 2009), has been collecting accounts of professionals forced to leave a country where, in his opinion, clienteles and family matter more than merit. As a consequence, 'lawyers run way, managers, doctors, those who should be our leading class. In this way, Italy dies' (Nava, cited in Valdambrini 2010). In an article published in *Il Sole 24 Ore*, the main Italian economic newspaper, Nava estimates that around 60,000 Italians who are aged less than forty leave the country every year, and around 70% of them are graduates.

Here the reasons are fairly recurrent, and all focus on the advantages that many European countries and the US - in particular - offer them: higher salaries on average, positions of responsibility despite the young age, transparent and meritocratic selection (without the need of "push"), clear and defined career prospects, a welfare state closer to young people, especially if unemployed (thanks to the minimum wage). Not to mention the presence of a less gerontocratic system. The Italian situation is a bit like a reversed mirror: it is surprising that many of the young expatriates, when they try to return with a highly respected international CV, find the doors locked (Nava 2010).

In 2010 Claudia Cucchiarato, herself a freelance journalist who moved to Barcelona, published a book on the new professional emigration from Italy, trying to explain the motivations of the exponential growth of this type of migration: the mobility of graduates in search of better job positions or new experiences is a phenomenon common to almost all Western countries, but what is peculiar in the Italian case is that this pattern is 'exclusively one way: highly-educated youngsters leave Italy massively, but few foreigners with the same background come to replace them, and even less are those who decide to come back after a long period abroad' (Cucchiarato 2010a).

According to Cucchiarato, this phenomenon is mostly hidden to the Italian authorities because many of these new migrants do not register with the AIRE. Together with the *la Repubblica* newspaper, she launched a survey to collect the stories of this new Italian migration and in few weeks, astonishingly, more than 25,000 online questionnaires were received.

The analysis of the questionnaires confirmed that 54% of new migrants were not registered with the AIRE (that has some important political implications, as I explained in the previous chapter), but what is more important here is to note some of the personal characteristics of the respondents: 52% are aged 25-35 and 30% are aged 35-44, 53% have a master or old Italian *laurea* (equivalent to a master's degree) and 21% a PhD. More than 70% have been living abroad for more than three years and the vast majority of them are based in Europe (Cucchiarato 2010b). Of course, the results of an online survey, however large, can never be free of bias because of the selectivity of the characteristics of those who respond, which cannot be checked against the demographic and educational characteristics of the "target" population since this population is unknown. But, nevertheless, the results are pretty striking.

Recently, a first attempt was made to analyse more analytically the phenomenon of the new professional emigration from Italy, with the ITalents online survey on '*Italia diffusa'* ('Spread Italy'), coordinated by Prof Alessandro Rosina (Catholic University, Milan), with whom I had an interesting conversation as part of my fieldwork. Around 1,400 questionnaires have been

collected, around 1,200 of which from Italians who are currently resident abroad and 200 from young professional returnees, and the preliminary findings were presented at a press conference in Milan in April 2012.

More than 80% of the respondents indicated that the lack of meritocracy and transparency was the main motivation why they chose to leave Italy; the second main reason for migrating was the chance to find better means to do their job abroad; and the third incentive was the possibility to obtain higher income out of Italy. Other explanatory factors mentioned in the survey were the scarce lack of trust in Italy, the stability of job positions and better welfare abroad (ITalents: web).

The sense of a lack of meritocracy in Italy is something that results in a shared identity for members of this group, as I will show more in depth in chapter 5. These issues were addressed by many of my respondents and discussed both in political meetings I attended and in informal conversations I had during my stay in London and during my trips to/from Italy. "Meritocracy" and "fair and transparent competition" are indeed keywords repeated by most of the young Italians who have arrived recently in London in search of better professional opportunities, as these principles 'give Italian youngsters the advantage, with few limitations, to follow their individual needs, so that they are free to express more their self-determination' (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 99).

Veronica, who now works as a translator and writes scripts, portrays the lack of meritocracy and the importance of knowing someone in Italy:

> I appreciated very much that here there is a lot of meritocracy in my opinion. They don't care about who you are, where you come from, which language you speak: if you can do what they need, you're the top. In Italy instead it's all about who you are the son of, all these things…I always had the aspiration to work in the entertainment sector and in Italy if you weren't recommended you could not even clean toilets, and as a principle I never wanted recommendations.

Piero, instead, criticises the job culture and the low level of wages young workers have to face in Italy:

> As regards the job market, Italy is much worse than England, without any doubt. The working culture: [in Italy] there is this culture that people have to work without being paid!

Professional and youth migration are well described by a term created by Adrian Favell (2008). He calls "eurostars" the new generation of European citizens, highly-mobile people, who make

a pioneering use of the opportunities opened up by European integration and move inside the European Union, aiming to obtain better job positions, that could not be attained in their countries of origin, because of the absence (or low level) of meritocracy, flexibility and investments in the job market. Overall, around three out of five new first generation who completed my questionnaire answered that the main reason, or one of the main reasons, for coming to the UK was job-related, and another fifth of them revealed that their main motivation was study-related. Interestingly enough, no respondent in this group indicated family or partner among the main factors influencing their decision.

Like many of my respondents from this group, Leonardo and Alessia can be considered two examples of eurostars in the academic and professional fields. Leonardo explains his decision to move to London to do a PhD in engineering in this way:

> I wasn't thinking specifically of England, but I was thinking to go away. Let's say that I was a bit worried that, wanting to do research, it seemed to me very hard to have a career in Italy, especially considering that my interests were in a very small, a very narrow field…it seemed to me very hard to do a PhD and then start a career in Italy, so I thought to try directly abroad.

Alessia left her job in a law firm in Rome to work as a lawyer in London:

> I came here because I was already 33, I was called by a client of the firm I was working for in Italy, and they offered me a permanent job, that is something that I had been looking for years in Italy, but no one could offer that to me, with normal working hours, from 9.30 to 5.30 pm, a good salary, some days off etc…I think that at my age I have the right to have a salary that allows me to live and buy a house, because it's absurd that a person who has been working for ten years in Italy cannot buy a house.

The economic situation in Italy has recently gotten worse with the Euro crisis, with a subsequent increase in the migration of young graduates. According to both Nava, and Beda Romano, another journalist of *Il Sole 24 Ore*, around 80,000 Italians per year cancelled themselves from the register of citizens resident in Italy in 2009 and 2010, while before 2008 this number was around 50-60,000 per year.

More recently, also British media have started paying attention to the new migration from Italy, and from other Southern European countries. On 4 November 2011 a programme called 'The Young Italians' went out on BBC Radio4, and in the presentation of the programme it was remarked how 'Italy is losing its young talented professionals, driven out by a stagnant economy and an entrenched employment market riddled with patronage and nepotism…[As a

consequence] more and more young Italians are choosing to find work, recognition and respect abroad' (BBC 2011).

A few weeks later, the *Guardian* published an article in its 'Europe: migration after the crash' series, entitled 'Economic standstill sets Italians on the move'. Also in this case the stories of some Italian expats are told and data are provided, to explain that 600,000 highly-educated young Italians have gone abroad in the past ten years, mainly because of the lack of economic progress since the turn of the century and frustration with political inertia, and 'according to the government statistics office, Istat, the outstanding change has been an increase in the proportion of graduates, which almost doubled between 2002 and 2008' (Hooper 2011).

The reason for this spate of interest from British media is undoubtedly linked to the objectively high and growing number of Italian residents in the UK, in London in particular: in 2008 around 142,000 Italian citizens were registered in the London Consular Constituency, this number rose to 149,000 at the end of 2009, and to 155,000 in December 2010. The importance of London as a new destination for this graduate emigration is confirmed by the above-mentioned survey carried out by *la Repubblica*, according to which 16% of the 25,000 respondents were from the UK, followed by France and Spain each with around 10%, and Germany and the USA each with around 9% (Cucchiarato 2010b). Similarly, also looking at the ITalents survey, the UK emerged as the first country of residence, with 17.1% of respondents, followed by the USA (9.2%), Belgium (9.1%), France (8.4%), Germany (8%), Spain (7.9%), Netherlands and Switzerland (5.4% each), Canada (3%) and Ireland (2%) (ITalents: web).

As I wrote in the introduction to this thesis, London represents today the main destination of the so-called new Italian migration: being an international financial and commercial hub, London attracts experts in the economic-financial sector, as well as medical doctors, researchers, scientists and artists. This is confirmed by some data on the level of education: among the thirty Italians from the new migration who answered my questionnaire, twelve completed a second stage of tertiary education (equivalent to Master's or above), nine a first stage of tertiary education, four some post-secondary, non-tertiary education, and other four upper secondary education. Only one person in this group indicated as his highest educational achievement lower level secondary education or second stage of basic education.

Moreover, for young Italians London is an easy destination to reach, because as EU citizens they are not required to have any document other than a national ID or passport, and low-cost flights have made the trip affordable, indeed often cheaper than travelling from the South to the North of Italy. According to Bartolini and Volpi (2005: 92-93), the UK is also an ideal place

for searching for a first job (although the economic situation has deteriorated since the time of their study), especially for people younger than twenty-four, who can find temporary or part-time positions in the catering and trade sectors, where no particular skills are required. In fact some of my respondents explained to me that they arrived in the UK with no qualifications, like Veronica, or with little knowledge of the English language, like Piersilvio, to 'give it a try'; in the first years they survived through being employed in a low-skilled job, and once they reached the required qualification and mastery of the English language, they moved to jobs that could better fulfil their expectations.

The journalist Marco Niada (2008: 235) speaks about "re-creative" migration to describe this phenomenon; that is, the mobility of many young Italians of different geographical and socio-economic origins, who go to London to try new experiences in an environment that they find more international, intellectually stimulating and competitive. We can find this element also in the words of Piero and Marcella.

> I left Italy as a personal choice, I had a very good job in a bank, but I wanted something more, above all I aspired to travel, work abroad, in Europe, and I would consider it as an improvement (interview with Piero).

> More than professional reasons, for me what was stronger was the wish to live abroad, to change; I see living here as an experience: I am here by myself, I do what I want, no one helps me, I have no family here, all my family is in Italy, and I am ok with that…When you are a foreigner, you can choose what you want, you are an Italian in London and you can choose what you like more of English culture, and keep what you like of Italian culture (interview with Marcella).

Leonardo and Alessia explain which aspects they appreciate about living in London, compared to the reality of Italy:

> I found more openness for some things here, especially as regards the moral judgement, it seems to me that they are more open to discuss what is right and what is not in moral terms, while in Italy there is more closure in that regard (interview with Leonardo).

> I don't miss the narrow-mindedness, the discrimination towards coloured people, or homosexuals; as a woman I have also been discriminated; once I did not get a job just because I was a woman, and another time I found out that a male colleague with exactly my same CV was earning 400 euro [per month] more than me, without any reason (interview with Alessia).

It should be made clear that highlighting the negative sides of Italy does not mean that they reject Italy completely or that they accept uncritically every aspect of their life in the UK. On

the one hand, aspects such as the food, the weather, the friendlier attitude of people in Italy were mentioned in my interviews, and at the same time it is made clear that London is a place that offers big opportunities, but 'it is not an Eldorado here: because in Italy there is this tendency to think that everything outside Italy is perfect'!, to use Marcella's words. In her experience of working in the NHS, she found out that the health system in England faces many more problems than she expected when she left Italy; similarly Leonardo explains that surely merit in the UK is valued more than in Italy, but adds that cases of nepotism also exist in British academia. In their study, Bartolini and Volpi (2005) documented also the instability and transience of the experience of many young Italians in London; an aspect linked to the flexibility of the job market and also to the social dispersion typical of a metropolis, which makes it more difficult to create close friendships, as portrayed by Chiara:

> Personally, I think that the good thing about Italy is having family or friends, friends you have known for a long time. I think the quality of life is a lot better in Italy, in terms of everything really…but I think in terms of opportunities there is lots more here; I think you can work based on merits, maybe not on other things…but then again if you are in trouble, it is good to have a network of people who can help you out, that is more difficult here…because it's London, and London it's so big, and I feel so alienated sometimes here, and then you meet people, and they come and go (interview with Chiara).

Chiara's words lead me to the last point of this section, which is about the social interactions of Italians in London. The time necessary to travel from one area to another in London, which cannot be compared with any Italian city, is an aspect that was recurrent in the interviews I carried out, and that affected above all those coming from small towns, who found it hard to create connections during their early days and months. Moreover, with the exception of those who experienced a relationship with an English partner, who acted as a gatekeeper, my respondents usually found it easier to create close friendships with either Italians or with people from other nationalities, than with English people. As I will explain more in depth in the next two sections, this is mainly due to the need of spending time and networking with people with whom they have something in common, for example with other "eurostars" with whom they share the experience of migration to a multi-ethnic metropolis like London.

Thus, my findings confirm those of Bartolini and Volpi, according to whom 'the attention of young Italians is geared towards establishing contacts, often targeted to their own interests, with people who are similar in terms of socio-economic and cultural background, natives or from other nationalities, but not necessarily Italians' (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 96). This aspect

has also a considerable impact on the evolution of the network of Italian associations, as I will show in depth in the next chapter.

4.4 THE BRITISH-BORN ITALIANS

The third community I am going to talk about is the group of the British-born Italians. Most of their accounts start with the stories of their parents and the reasons that brought them over to the UK. As I documented in the earlier section about the old first generation, the decision to migrate was usually economic, due to the chronic lack of jobs in Italy. In some cases, couples moved together from Italy, as in the case of Concetta, whose parents were married, emigrated from Naples in the late 1960s and moved to the UK, where she was born. Other relationships started instead in London, as in the case of Lucia's parents:

> My dad, I don't really know when he came over, my mum came over in probably about 1947; she is from Bologna; she came to work as they had a restaurant here in London, and it was here that she met my father, who is also from Bologna, but they met here, they had my sister and many years later they had me.

Other British-born Italians I interviewed have one of the parents who was born in Italy, while the other is herself a British-born Italian; technically we should perhaps regard these respondents as "2.5 generation", mid-way between second and third generation (on the differences between the 2.0 and the 2.5 generation, see the analysis of Ramakrishnan 2004). Mirko was one of these; he said:

> My parents are both Italian; my dad was born in Italy and lived there for twenty-five years, he's from the province of Salerno. He moved here for work reasons. My mother was born in London, but then moved to Italy for five years when she was one year old, lived with her grandparents, and then moved back to London.

Most stories emphasise how the main concern of their parents was to work hard, in order to achieve economic success and provide their children with education and financial security; this confirms what I have been told by respondents from the old first generation, and what has been stressed by other scholars, such as Anne-Marie Fortier (2000). A good example is offered by Pina, the second of three British-born children, who has completed post-graduate education thanks to the support of her parents, who work in the catering sector:

> [My parents] started a catering company, baking cakes and delivering cakes to restaurants, and then they opened up their own *café/patissere*. Then they bought another place, which was a somewhat *rosticceria*, you know, a table place, and the

patisserie they turned into a restaurant…Then they lost the restaurant. Actually, before that, they did fish and chips. A lot of people in my family began doing fish and chips, that was good money, as English people like fish and chips and we know about food, so that worked…Now we have a *patisserie* in Kentish Town.

British-born Italians also emphasise how maintaining their links with Italy and Italian culture was a main concern for their parents, as already documented by King (1988), and influenced their upbringing deeply. This happened mainly in three ways: by visiting Italy regularly, by speaking Italian and being educated in an "Italian way" at home, and by attending Italian classes, the Italian Church and events organised in the Italian community.

The memories of summer trips to Italy are vivid in the stories told by most of my respondents. They enjoyed those periods of time spent in their country of origin, because these visits usually happened during holidays, they often had cousins of similar ages, and they were allowed much more freedom, because their parents trusted their villages' safe environment more than London. In some way, Italy was seen as a sort of summer play-camp. Moreover, many villages in Southern Italy were transformed in summer by the presence of many migrants, coming back for holidays with their kids to visit their relatives, thus making the stay easier and more enjoyable:

> My village is quite unique, because it's a village of people who emigrated to Germany, Australia, England, America, so every year they all come back and it becomes this cosmopolitan mix, and it's quite amazing, because it's more British people there than Italians (interview with Caterina).

Education was different from the one provided by British families. Most of my respondents confirmed the findings of earlier studies, reviewed by Zontini (2004), according to which Anglo-Italian families were characterised by the strong reciprocal links between kin members (Colpi 1991), inter-generational cohesion (Bottignolo 1985), but also by an asymmetric relationships among members (Cavallaro 1981) and some tension between parents and children over contrasting values (Colpi 1991). This last point has been stressed more recently by Bartolini and Volpi:

> The second and third generations are a concern for families...In fact, young people, because of socialisation occurred abroad, are carriers of a cultural diversity, compared to their parents, which produces friction and tension, if not open conflict, between the parties. The first generations (the fathers and mothers who were expatriates in the postwar years) are often strict in defending the traditional values and family, while the descendants, having grown up with British peers, have absorbed their tolerant and flexible, emancipated and independent style, and are generally intolerant of authority and of parental control (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 94).

This appears still to be true, especially for those whose parents' origin was in the more "traditional" Southern Italy and for women, and had a considerable impact on daughters' childhood and teenager years. Here I again quote Pina, whose parents are from Campania:

> I struggled really, and the reason why I struggled was because my family were foreigners, they didn't trust the person next door, they didn't integrate within the English community very well, we went to Italian Church, Italian community […] my house had a *bidet*, there were tiles on the floor, all the people were Italian. At school I spoke and conversed with people from different cultures; but then after school it was Italy, you know […] My family was very strict in comparison to English families, so I couldn't go out and spend the night over at other people houses, something that is very typical for English culture...I never did that...It was only until 16+ when I had my own independence that I managed to socialise away from the Italian church.

And similarly Lucia, who lost her father when she was very young:

> I was not allowed out, I was not allowed on school trips and things like that, my mum wanted me at home…It was less strict for me than it was for my sister, but my sister had both parents.

Concetta, instead, underlines the mediating role played by her brothers:

> [Education] was stricter in terms of where I was going out, being able to do other things, but because I had older brothers, I'd always just go out with them.

In fact, through their children, parents came to know some of the institutions of the place of residence that they had never taken into account. English schools are for these youngsters 'the vehicle of transmission of the norms and values of the host society (and their attendance) implies a process of assimilation in the foreign country' (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 96-97); through education children learnt new cultural models, which were different from the traditional values of their parents, resulting in a clash and in a new role played by the second generation. In this way, the above quote confirms what is suggested by Ganga, that children became 'mediators between their parents' culture and that of the place they now live in' (Ganga 2007: 50).

Moreover, Pina explained to me that things were different for her brother, who was granted more freedom from their family (and who 'opened a few doors' for her), but then she added that things were different also for her younger sister, who has more English friends, went to a school which is not Catholic, was raised not so much in the Italian Church, and now 'she's absolutely rebellious'. The reason for this change in the education is that her parents have become more accustomed to British culture and trust more the environment where they live;

this means that the behaviour of parents should not be seen only as fixed and unchangeable, but open to some evolution.

Anglo-Italian families are much more complex than suggested by common stereotypes and by the mainstream migration literature, 'which have been long criticized by feminist scholars [because] in such accounts, women were described as traditional, passive, subordinated to male migrants, and limited by their culture' (Zontini 2004: 19). Medaglia, whose study is based on the assumption that what distinguishes Italians in Britain from mainstream society is a different system of patriarchy, with women oppressed at work, at home and culturally, admits that 'younger cohorts of immigrants are more readily integrated within the mainstream British institutions due to their wide exposure to the formal education system and media in the host country and peer group socialization' (Medaglia 2001). In her study on Italians in Nottingham, Ganga analyses the contrasts and negotiations in the process of intergenerational transmission and speaks of the "silent revolution" of the women of the (old) Italian community. In fact, in the very gendered and patriarchal context of the first generation, women played an important role of mediators, by supporting their daughters' wishes for more independence while not officially rejecting their culture and values of origin (Ganga 2007: 49). As I showed, the stories of Lucia, Concetta and Pina confirm this complexity, where tradition and modernity mix, and where the number of years of residence in the country and the experience of older children's upbringing make a difference.

If parents were responsible for the socialisation of their offspring in their childhood and – sometimes – teenager years, the turning point for many British-born Italians was the moment when they left their parents' house to attend higher education. This experience allowed them to socialise with people from different backgrounds and to look more critically at their relationship with the British-Italian community and at their Italian cultural heritage.

After their years at university, Mirko and Concetta appreciated better some aspects of the Italian way of life, like the closer proximity with family and friends; as a consequence even in their adult years they followed up by attending Italian organisations.

> So, there was the Italian Church obviously in Clerkenwell; you know, it has got a Church there and a social club upstairs, so you know either after Mass or they have regular events…and then up in Finchley there is the Finchley Italian social club, and my dad was always very involved with that. I still go up to the Finchley Italian Club, and probably on a more regular basis, I help out at the Club…because there is a new generation of Italian children who are growing up; I want to make them have the same

Italian experience I had when I grew up, because I really enjoyed myself (interview with Mirko).

Concetta, who was away from London during her university years, once back started attending again the events of the Pallotti Youth Club:

I got to meet up with lots of friends I used to see at the Italian school when I was younger and then I kind of lost touch with them when I went to university and started working, and haven't seen them for a long time. The thing I like about that is that it was a way to see them all again and have fun together.

She is also involved in the organisation of other events that are part of community life, such as the Italian Youth Olympics, a competition for Italian kids and teenagers, run by the Pallotti Youth Club, which happens every two years over the Bank Holiday in May:

they have all different age groups, and you obviously play within your age group, and you can do all normal Olympic events…and it's for teams, and there are lots of other regional groups, all the areas in London that are populated by quite a lot of Italians have their own group, and it was a good way to meet with a lot of other Italians.

Other respondents, instead, became more critical about their Italianness after attending university, as in the case of Pina:

Now I feel, before I would say I am Italian, I am not English,…whereas now, becoming more educated, becoming less patriotic…I don't really get along with Anglo-Italians. The reason is because a lot of them are very patriotic about Italy, but they are very English in the way they live. So, the difference from me is that I am probably more Italian the way I live, but I am not very patriotic. I can be very traditional, I mean, I can be a housewife, since I understand the language better than the Anglo-Italians I know, they talk the dialect, whereas I try not to talk the dialect…I try to be contemporary, whereas they are stuck in the past of their grandparents.

Or they censor the attitude of other British-born Italians, as in the words of Sandro:

When I went to uni, that made things different for me, because at uni you got everyone, you don't have just Italians, you've got Italians there, but they're from abroad. And that's the other thing I want to talk about, because the Italians who are doing very well here are the ones who come from Italy…I have become very disappointed in us British Italians, I just think we could do a lot better in terms of education, a lot more of us could go to Oxbridge, a lot more of us could get better jobs than we do, it's just the mentality…it's because they refuse to embrace the British culture, in a way they are going backwards...you live in this country, if you want to have social mobility, you need to embrace it.

In spite of this gloomy picture, data on the level of education from the questionnaires I collected reveal a different reality: seven of the thirty-two British-born Italian respondents completed a second stage of tertiary education, thirteen a first stage of tertiary education, five some post-secondary, non-tertiary education, and another six upper secondary education. As for the new wave of Italian migrants, only one person in this group indicated as his highest educational achievement lower level secondary education or second stage of basic education.

With the attainment of the adult years, also the relationship with Italy changes. As I mentioned above, Italy is seen more as a place for holiday, good to raise children or to move after retirement, in the same way as more and more British people plan to move to Mediterranean countries in their old age. But when asked if they would move to Italy and work there, most British-born Italians I interviewed started talking about the problems of the Italian job market and the differences between the (more rigid) Italian and British mentality, which they experience whenever they go back. This dual feeling is well summarised by Pina, who lived for few months in Rome after completing her bachelor degree:

> I think my ideal dream is to do six months there and six months here, and to have career connections here and there…, as I don't see career options in Italy for me […] In Italy you're kind of exploited in the way of the amount of hours you work for the wage, but also it's who you know, that comes from because Italians are so family orientated, whereas in England it's not about family as much, it's more about how you can prove yourself in that moment.

Lucia, who describes Italy as a place where 'everything is laid back, the food is good, the people are lovely, warm, welcoming, everybody is very expressive, it's very nice, and I love that', states:

> What I like about London or here, as opposed to what infuriates me about Italy, is that any sort of business transaction you have to do there always seems to be somebody who wants to backhand, there is always something…I just feel that everything takes ages, I can't go into a shop and just buy something without having to have a conversation with somebody.

And she concludes her reasoning saying:

> Sometimes I think: <<Oh it would be lovely>>. You go there and you just think it's wonderful. But then when you think: <<Oh my goodness, I have all this bureaucracy to go through, no I stay here>>!

Ciro, who lived in Italy between the ages of five and fifteen and again for six months in 2006 to attend a course on cinema in Rome, links the problems and inefficiencies of the Italian

economy and job market to the arrival of thousands of young Italians who look for a job in London:

> Because a lot of those Italians, they cannot find the right job in their fields, and knowing that in the UK there has always been work in the past and people have become successful…a lot of the Italians of the new wave, of the new generation, they come to England by word of mouth, trying to achieve something.

The British-born Italians I interviewed appear well aware of the presence of thousands of Italian citizens of their similar age, who moved to London in the past few years. But when asked about the points of contact between themselves and the newly arrived, most of my second-generation respondents answered that there is little connection, at least through Italian channels.

This is a situation common to many other Italian communities around the world. For instance, it is witnessed by the journalist Beppe Severgnini (2008: 60-61) who, speaking about the Australian case, affirms:

> It is not easy to be a young Italian-Australian in the 21st century. Hundreds of associations are vital, but they reiterate rites, customs and local ties; they preserve memories and rivalries but are not bridges towards today's Italy. Institutions – the embassy, consulates, and institutes of culture – struggle to attract this third generation, mobile and self-sufficient. Professional migration – the young Italians who arrive for a working holiday and then stay longer – is a parallel universe, and contacts are occasional.

Going back to the British context, there are three main reasons why the two groups find it hard to meet. The first is about their relationship with Italy: 'since the new arrivals are likely to originate from the economic conditions and cultural aspirations of a new Italy…the opportunities for these groups to interact socially and linguistically are remote' (Tosi 1993: 94), and being Italian and expressing one's Italianness means something different for the two groups. The second reason is the relationship between the two groups and London: for British-born Italians London is their hometown, the place where they grew up, lived most of their life and already have their circle of friends, whereas for the newly arrived London represents a new experience, a very different one from the life in Italy. In this way, as stressed by Bartolini and Volpi, the two groups try to consolidate the ties with those they consider similar to them (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 113). Finally, the third reason is language, as Concetta – who is married to a "proper" Italian, to use her words, explained to me:

> I tried to get them to join, I tried to bring them to the Italian parties, at Pallotti's
> parties, and they would literally, the Italians would stay in one corner and the English
> would be in another, mainly it's a language thing, because the Italians of my
> generation all speak English, whereas the Italians of Italy they speak Italian.

4.5 DISCUSSION

The differences between the three communities that I have analysed in this chapter can now be summarised and pinpointed; some of these points have been discussed by other scholars who studied the Italian presence in the UK.

In the past, the main feature characterising the Italian community in the UK was the lack of homogeneity between diverse local-origin groups. The Italian word *campanilismo* (literally "the spirit of the bell tower") has been used to explain a certain state of mind and social attitude that induces people to see no further than the interest of their own local community. In her study on the Italian community in Bedford, Colpi emphasised the role of this force and stated that *campanilismo* 'does not just lead to social enclosure and exclusiveness of groups, but it also puts these groups into direct competition with each other' (Colpi 1991: 75-76).

The conflict between different waves of migrants is the more recent line of fragmentation inside the Italian population in the UK. In 1993, Tosi argued that most second-generation Italians in England could have more social and cultural affinities and social interaction with English people than with the new wave of Italian migrants. That is indeed what emerged also from my research, as I explained in the previous section. Some years later, speaking about the identity project of the leaders of the (old) Italian community, Anne-Marie Fortier wrote that

> Italian emigrants have a particular experience that shapes their identity in a way that
> distinguishes it from Italian adults coming from Italy; their relationship with Italy and
> with Italian culture is distorted and transformed from years of living abroad and of
> settlement (Fortier 2000: 82).

These differences are transmitted to their second generation, thus the interaction between members of the two groups (i.e. British-born Italians and new young-adult arrivers) is more likely to start randomly, in the job place or because they belong to the same age group and share a common interest (like playing in the same amateur rugby team in the case of Mirko, one of my respondents) and not because of the common Italian heritage. Something similar is described by Ganga in the account of her fieldwork in Nottingham, as I mentioned in chapter 3, talking about positionality. She was attempting to gain access to the younger members of

Italian families via first-generation members of the association, but she found out that the idea of Italianness for older Italians was different from, and based on different values to the investigator's idea of what it meant to be Italian, and thus she was considered an outsider. When Ganga managed to have access to second- and third-generation migrants through snowballing, she found out that second- and third-generation respondents could relate to her because of their closeness in terms of age/generation, even though they felt far enough removed from her because of the fact that she was Italian-born and they were British-born (Ganga and Scott 2006: 8-10).

On the other hand, my analysis has found some similarities between the three groups that have been overlooked by the literature on Italians in the UK. Although it is true that old and new migrants left Italy in different historical periods, with different levels of education, and certainly the home country underwent deep changes in the past fifty years, it cannot be denied that the main reasons leading young Italians to leave are still job-related. The words of my respondents confirm the analysis of the aforementioned article by the Time Magazine:

> The motives of those leaving haven't changed much since the last wave of economic migrants struck out to make their fortunes a century ago. But this time, instead of peasant farmers and manual laborers packing themselves onto steamships bound for New York City, Italy is losing its best and brightest to a decade of economic stagnation, a frozen labor market and an entrenched system of patronage and nepotism (Faris 2010).

In fact, the old wave of migrants were forced to leave by an absolute lack of job opportunities, while the new wave is in search of positions which can value their qualifications and skills; but these are expressions of the same problems, listed by respondents from all my three groups: the excessive bureaucracy, the inefficiency of offices, the importance of knowing someone to get things done, the lack of meritocracy and the bottlenecks in the job market.

Also, both the old and new first generations overall have a better opinion of British, more than Italian institutions; one general reason can be found in the discourse on Italian national character, one of whose elements is to be self-critical while at the same time comparing Italy to other countries (Patriarca 2010); while a more specific one is that my respondents have all lived in the UK for at least three years, which means they have succeeded economically and are somewhat settled in the country. This does not imply that they accept uncritically British society or that they consider their migration experience as an easy one: old migrants stress their hard work in a country where they arrived without knowing the language and the habits, while representatives of the more recent professional migration remark proudly that in the UK

they could develop themselves because of their merit and skills in a highly competitive international environment.

Finally, another aspect that should be taken into account is the relationship with English people. Fortier wrote that the relationship with the local English culture is 'complicated by the experience of migrations, as well as by the legacy of an inherent spirit, or mentality, that only Italians and their descendants can possess' (Fortier 2000: 82). I reported that most of my respondents from both the old and new first generation expressed their difficulties in making close friendships with locals. As I have shown, for the old migrants socialisation happened mainly with fellow citizens or – even more often – with people from the same village or the same region, while the newly arrived tend to meet with other professionals: in both cases, the need to fulfil is the same, that is meeting with people with whom to share a similar experience and network for both personal and professional reasons. This has an effect on the evolution of the Italian associational world in London as well.

To conclude: the material I presented in this chapter delineates the characteristics of the three Italian groups which are under study. These groups present similarities and differences, due to their complex relationship with both Italy and the UK or, rather, London. Moreover, the excerpts from books and newspaper articles I quoted provide some elements on the emergence of a discourse on the new Italian professional migration in London. The issue of how different types of Italianness coexist and evolve among the different groups of Italians in London is thus central to this work; the way the old first generation, the new first generation and the second generation see themselves has important consequences not only on the development of the Italian network in the British capital, as I will show in the next chapter, but also on the way their interest and participation in politics is orientated, as stressed by Bleich (2008). This aspect will be extensively discussed in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5: THE ITALIAN NETWORK IN LONDON

In this chapter I provide a critical "thick description" of the Italian network that is active in London and is made up of state institutions, Churches, *patronati*, associations and web-based social networks. Here it should be made clear that also Italian political parties and movements are an important component of the Italian network, but as they are examples of political participation as well, they will be discussed in the next chapter.

Three aspects are central in my study of the Italian presence in London today: the fragmentation of the community, a topic that already came up in the previous chapter; the evolution of the Italian network, with the decline of traditional forms of association and the emergence of new forms of aggregation; and the contribution of this network to the creation and performance of a new form of Italianness among new Italian migrants, with a discourse that by means of off-line and on-line spaces emphasises aforementioned aspects such as meritocracy, fair competition, and respect for the rule of law, which are considered more present and appreciated in British society, than they are in Italy.

In this way, this chapter will bridge the previous one, on the different Italian communities in London, with the next one, on their political involvement, by examining those elements of the institutional and discursive opportunity structure, which allow Italians who live in London to keep in touch with their home country, construct and perform their identity, and act accordingly.

The starting point of this chapter is the work of Mark Choate, who authored a study on sending states' transnational interventions in politics, culture and economics, focusing on Italy at the end of the 19th Century, when mass emigration started. According to Choate,

> the Italian state became involved in several key fields of emigrant life. By coordinating institutional efforts in Italy and abroad, the state was able to intervene with some success in the economic, cultural, and religious dynamics of migration (Choate 2007: 741).

This attempt by the Italian state can be considered as a pioneering example of identity politics, as I defined it in chapter 2. This involvement was realised both directly, by means of state institutions like embassies, consulates, institutes of culture and chambers of commerce, and indirectly – a fundamental role here was played by Catholic orders serving emigrants, such as the Scalabrinians. Moreover,

humanitarian organisations of reformist Socialists, and the heavily liberal Dante Alighieri Society, also drew upon Italian state funding to help migrants. The Italian state aimed not to support culture for culture's sake, but to use education as a cultural bond tying expatriates to the fatherland (Choate 2007: 749-750).

As I have shown in the previous chapter, the first wave of larger-scale migration to London took place in the second half of the 19th century, and the appearance of the first Italian network in the British capital dates back to that time. In 1841 Giuseppe Mazzini established a school for poor Italian immigrants in Hatton Garden in Clerkenwell – which, however, did not outlast his presence in London. More long-lastingly successful was the experience of the 'Society for the Advancement of Italian Workers in London', set up by Mazzini in 1864. This later became known as the 'Mazzini-Garibaldi' Club, and closed only in 2008, when the membership agreed to sell the freehold and donate the vast majority of the proceeds to a newly formed charity, the 'Mazzini-Garibaldi' Foundation. Because of the contrasts between Mazzini and Catholics, who blamed him for the spread of socialist ideas, also a Catholic school was set up; moreover in the same years also the Italian Church of Saint Peter's in Clerkenwell was opened in 1863, followed by the Italian hospital founded in 1884 by Giovanni Ortelli, a generous and successful businessman, and by the Italian Chamber of Commerce in 1886.

As is clear from this brief historical account, the Italian network developed following the needs of the Italian migrants, in particular in the field of workers' support, religion and language. For this reason, in the next section (5.1) I focus on the role played by *patronati*, on the activities of the two Italian Churches in London and on the importance of language and Italian classes for Italians living in London. In section 5.2, I come back more extensively to the topic of the fragmentation of the Italian presence in London and the consequent decline of traditional associations. In section 5.3, I show how this decline is compensated by the development of new forms of association, which follow the evolution of the Italian community and make use of the opportunities offered by new technologies. Finally, in section 5.4, I discuss how the Italian network in London contributes to the emergence of a new discourse on Italianness, which is reinforced by media and is spreading among the new wave of migrants.

5.1 PATRONATI, CHURCHES AND ITALIAN CLASSES

5.1.1 Patronati

Patronati are branches of Italian trade unions involved in providing assistance to those Italians who maintain or have maintained working relationships in the UK. *Patronati* were legally

recognised for the first time in 1947 and today their activity is regulated by law 152/2001. According to this law:

> The institutions of *patronati* and social care are engaged in the activities of consultancy, assistance and protection, even with powers of representation, in favour of employees and self-employed, retired, individual Italian citizens, foreigners and stateless persons,…to achieve in Italy and abroad any kind of performance in the field of social security, immigration and emigration…towards Italian citizens or those already in possession of Italian nationality, even if resident abroad.

The law also clarifies which are the areas of intervention of *patronati* as regards consultancy, assistance and protection: '(a) the achievement, in Italy and abroad, of the mandatory pension plans and replacement and integrated forms; (b) the achievement of the benefits provided by the National Health Service; (c) the achievement of social-welfare services, including those relating to emigration and immigration; and (d) the achievement, in Italy and abroad, of the benefits provided by pension funds, on the basis of special agreements with local providers' (Italian Law 152/2001). One important aspect is that the services of consultancy, assistance and protection are provided free of charge, subject to the exceptions set out in the law, and without the requirement of joining the *patronato*. One more function of *patronati* that should be noted is that they 'can provide, based on special agreements with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, support activities for the Italian diplomatic and consular authorities abroad' (Italian Law 152/2001). As I will show later, this is relevant in the organisation of Italian language classes and of other skills development courses for the various components of the community.

During my fieldwork, I interviewed representatives of four Italian *patronati*, the ACLI (Christian Associations of Italian workers), the INCA-CGIL (National Confederal Institute of Assistance-Italian General Confederation of Labour), the CISL (Confederation of Italian Workers' Trade Unions) and the INAS (National Institute of Social Assistance). The framework that emerged from these discussions is that the main area of intervention of *patronati* is shifting from assisting workers in the field of worker rights and taxation, to being mainly active in the field of social security practices for those who have reached the age of retirement.

Melchiorre Nola, of the CISL *patronato*, explained to me that by working there he could experience the daily life and changes of the Italian community. In particular, his work has to do with pensions, EU regulations and the reconstruction of the pension career. For these reasons, Italian citizens who contact the *patronati* are mainly from the old first generation, though in some cases young people who come to London temporarily to study English and work part-time in low-skilled jobs also ask them for advice.

The topic of the relationship between *patronati* and young Italians also came up during my interview with Lorenzo Losi, of ACLI. Mr Losi mentioned that they are the only *patronato* providing a guide booklet to give advice to people who are planning to come to London and that this is a joint venture between ENAIP (the educational branch of ACLI) and the Italian Church of St. Peter. The guide was first produced in 2004, updated every year since, and is currently only available in Italian. This means that it is a publication that is addressed mainly to the new wave of migrants, rather than to the second generation. Also Marisa Pompei, of the INCA-CGIL, told me that her *patronato* rarely deals with second and third generations because they were born in the UK and usually do not have any issue with the Italian state regarding work and taxation, unless they had worked in Italy in the past.

During our talk, Ms Pompei explained the links between INCA and Italian and British institutions and trade unions. The activity of the *patronati* is regulated by the Italian Ministry of Welfare, and the *patronati* cooperate with the consulate and with the British Department of Work and Pensions. The links with the TUC (Trades Union Congress) are strong, Ms Pompei said, and imply common initiatives and exchange of experiences. According to my respondent, INCA encouraged workers to join a local trade union; that happened in big organisations in industrial sectors (where Italian workers were highly represented, but minimally active in union affairs), but not much in services (where many Italians from the old migration were employed). Among the more recent waves of Italians arriving in the UK, those who come with low qualifications think that their work experience is going to be temporary, so they are not interested in joining British trade unions.

Patronati are not much known by the new wave of professional migrants. According to the manager of one of the new web-based Italian social networks, 'the *patronato* was a function instituted for the old migration, that had objective problems to understand how many things worked, taxes, pensions, etc. Because now migration is seen more as something temporary, there isn't this necessity to contact *patronati*'.

Probably the biggest *patronato* is the Catholic ACLI. ACLI offer two groups of services: the ones typical of a *patronato* as described above, in the field of social security and pensions; and language and skill-development, through ENAIP. 'Today ENAIP offers a wide range of educational, training and research opportunities in the UK and several other countries. ENAIP originally focused on courses for Italians living abroad, but has recently extended its courses to anyone living in the UK, particularly those wishing to do business in the EU' (ENAIP website). At the time of my interview with Lorenzo Losi, in April 2009, ENAIP was offering around 60

courses in London and other towns and cities like Bedford, Birmingham and Cardiff, both for young students and adults.

As I will show more in detail in the next chapter, *patronati* also have a political role. In the past, *patronati* have been channellers of the political interests and activity of Italians in London, also because of the links ACLI and the INCA-CGIL had respectively with the DC (Christian Democrat) and the PCI (Communist) parties, which dominated Italian politics till the beginning of the 1990s. The situation changed in the past twenty years, because of the changes in the Italian political arena and the approval of the law regulating the vote of Italian citizens who are resident abroad, granting them the right to vote without going back to Italy and to have their own representatives. If the political activity of Italians in London is now channelled mainly through political parties and movements (that – in all cases I came to know about – do not have their own offices), *patronati* sometimes offer their venues and support for meeting and events. For example, during my fieldwork I attended the primary elections of the Italian PD (Democrat Party), held at the venue of the ACLI in Clerkenwell, and the visit of an Italian senator to the old community, and an event organised by the Italian Association of Partisans, both the latter two taking place at the offices of INCA-CGIL in Islington.

5.1.2 Churches

Scholars writing on the history and evolution of Italian migration to Britain have devoted ample space to the role of religion and of Italian Churches among Italians in the UK, both in London (Marin 1975, Parolin 1997, and Fortier 1999, 2000 and 2006) and in other settings of Italian immigration and settlement (see Colpi 1991 on Bedford, Bottignolo 1985 on Bristol, and Ganga 2005 on Nottingham).

The reason for this interest is because the Catholic religion has always played an important role in the life of the Italian communities, and Catholic institutions have been another pillar of the Italian network in the country. One of the first studies on Italian emigration to Britain was written by the Scalabrinian Father Umberto Marin (1975), the *patronati* of Catholic origin are present in the key areas of Italian presence, and many associations were founded as appendages of the Italian missions in the UK. These forms of associative life were often praised as the most successful in the Italian communities, as is revealed by Bottignolo (1985) in his research on the Mission in Bristol, and as was evident in the words of my respondents from the old first and the second generation, which I quoted in the previous chapter.

Moreover, Catholic values have been part of the Italian identity and of the education transmitted by migrants to their children born abroad. Besides Fortier's aforementioned studies on migrants' belonging and identity (1999, 2000 and 2006), this can be seen in the works of Ganga (2005) and Medaglia (2001). Ganga (2005) recently carried out some research on the Mission in the Nottingham area, which was founded in 1958 and closed in 2002. She focuses on the role of religion in the process of the transmission of moral values and identity formation. In particular, she argues, immigrants from Italy in the UK tend to conceive themselves – and to be constructed – as Catholics, mainly because they live in a dominantly Protestant land' (Ganga 2005: 145). For Ganga, the Mission and the Club in Nottingham represented 'the *fulcrum* around which the entire social life of the Italian community in Nottingham once turned...[and] had worked as a religious, moral and social point of reference for most Italians in the area' (Ganga 2005: 151).

Medaglia (2001) carried out her fieldwork in 1996 at the Catholic mission in Enfield (North London). She states that ethnic churches have religious and spiritual, cultural and social functions; thus, in her opinion, in the patriarchal Italian community, the three structures of household production, culture and sexuality are closely interconnected through the crucial role that the Catholic Church plays in the community.

During my fieldwork, besides periodically attending the Mass in Italian at St. Peter's Church in Clerkenwell and at the Scalabrinian Church in Brixton, I interviewed the priests of these two parishes and I participated in the weekly meetings of the Club of Senior Citizens organised at both the aforementioned Churches and at the Catholic Mission in Enfield. Moreover, I took part in the yearly Our Lady of Mount Carmel procession that is considered to be the most important Italian religious event in the country.

The Italian Church of St. Peter was inaugurated by the Pallottini fathers in 1863. As Luca Matteo Stanca (2001: 76) explains, 'the hunt for a site focused on Clerkenwell because it was in this area, and in particular in the teeming and fetid alleys of Saffron Hill, that the Italian immigrant community was concentrated'. Because of its central location, St. Peter's has been an important reference point for Italians living in London and surrounding areas, both in religious and social terms. Initially the Church was physically at the centre of the Italian community, but today 'the Church finds itself having to work with a more dispersed community, scattered across a wide area, and in effect the conventional fabric of a parish around the Church simply does not exist' (Stanca 2001: 89). Nevertheless, the Church of St. Peter is still regarded as the Italian Church in London, as recognised also by Father

Giandomenico of the Brixton Scalabrinians, it is visited by both the old and the new generations and waves of migration, and is home to several associations and the Club of Senior Citizens, run together with the ACLI.

The Club's weekly meeting follows a regular schedule: it starts around 11 am with people arriving at the Club and spreading around tables where they can chat among themselves and play cards; at the same time, the Mass is celebrated in the Church. The two times I visited the Club, I could observe that the majority of men were in the lounge upstairs playing and chatting, while most women were attending the Mass in the Church. After the Mass, there is a common lunch offered at a cheap price with the help of some volunteers, followed by more chats, card games and dances. The meeting usually ends by around 4 pm. The Senior Citizens' meeting at the Italian Church in Brixton and at the Catholic mission in Enfield follow a similar pattern. In all the three locations the attendance was quite high, with between 50 and 100 people participating each time, but it is interesting to note that the meetings at St. Peter's and Brixton take place on different weekdays, giving the chance to those who want, to take part in both: when I went for the first time to the Scalabrinian Church in Brixton, I was recognised and greeted by some old Italians who had seen me during my visit at St. Peter's.

Father Carmelo, rector of St. Peter's Church, highlighted the religious, social and political role of St. Peter: according to its original project, the Church was planned to be the biggest in the country, but was then boycotted by St. Paul's Cathedral. Because of the central position of the Church and his long residence there, Father Carmelo – who arrived in London in 1971 – has been a privileged observer of the changes in the Italian community. During our talk, he outlined the characteristics of the different groups that I described in the previous two chapters, the old migration and their descendants, the students and the professionals; moreover, he spoke about a problem that is usually overlooked:

> Already in 1975 the problem of drugs started, many young Italians started coming here, already with drug problems from Italy. Later in the 1980s there were not hundreds but thousands of young Italians with the HIV/AIDS disease...so we started a project to help these guys, the St. Peter's project, that is a charity...and in 1973 I started working in prisons, where around forty thousand Italians passed since then.

Interestingly enough, the only reference I could find in the literature to this social problem was a study on Italian intravenous heroin users published in a medical journal (Lipssedge, Dianin and Duckworth 1993). Besides the Club of Senior Citizens for the old wave of migrants and the St. Peter's project for people with drug or crime problems, the Church also runs the Pallotti Club for British-born Italians, and pre-marriage courses for couples. According to Father

Carmelo, they prepare around 150 couples per year, with more than 100 of them going to Italy to have their wedding and only around 40 having it in the UK. Father Carmelo stressed that in the past it was the opposite, the new trend being evidence of the increasing transnational links of the more recent waves of migrants.

Finally, it is important to mention the procession of our Lady of Mount Carmel, which takes place every year since 1896, with the only interruptions during the two world conflicts. The procession is thought to be the first outdoor Roman Catholic manifestation of faith since the time of Henry the VIII's Reformation, and for many decades it has been the main event for the Italian community. For these reasons, it has also been analysed anthropologically by Gaetano Parolin (1997).

Parolin, himself a Scalabrinian father, based his study on the account of the procession that took place in 1994. After describing the procession and the Italian festival that is celebrated every year in the area of Clerkenwell, he focused on the role played by the procession and stated that:

> In the English and Anglican society these Italians are a minority, are marginal. Thus, they experience the anomie, the uprooting, disorientation, anonymity. It is the social drama that they live in a structure, where they are workers only. The festival is an affirmation of the group's identity, as an anti-structural element in relation to English society, where they feel dominated…The festival is a group therapy, in which they come out of anomie to clarify their identity (Parolin 1997: 122).

I had the chance to attend the procession on Sunday July 17, 2011: even nowadays the procession goes through the area of Clerkenwell and Holborn. Besides churchgoers, there are three groups that take part in it: religious movements, communities that bring the statue of their saint, and local associations. As an example of this commitment, when I interviewed Mr Cassetta, he stressed with emphasis that his local association had participated every year in the procession and brought the statue of St. Anthony (*Sant'Antonio*), to represent the Italian community of Epsom.

Although the importance of the procession for the community and the number of participants have been decreasing throughout the years, the procession was attended by several hundreds of people, attracted, besides the religious ceremony, by a small fair, with Italian associations and shops selling Italian products from stalls in the streets in the area. It is interesting to read the description of the event (in English) provided by Backhill online, a social website which – according to their statement – aims to connect with the Anglo-Italian community of all generations:

The annual Procession in honour of "Santa Maria del Monte Carmelo" has been celebrated on Sunday the 17th of July. Thousands of people gathered around St Peter's Italian Church and followed the procession which swung around the perimeter of the Church.

People came from different parts of Italy and the UK for this special event. Walking along the streets around the Church there were coaches coming from Woking, Luton, Birmingham, Manchester and Enfield.

As every year a big sagra accompanied the procession. Many stalls were selling typical regional Italian food such as porchetta, arancini, pizza and cannoli, together with Italian wine and cheese while the notes of "Ti amo" by Umberto Tozzi and other famous Italian songs were helping to set up the Italian atmosphere.

Under a harsh sky, between heavy rain and sun spells, the 8 floats marched on parade accompanied by the representatives of the Italian associations: Sutton, Croydon and Epsom with Sant'antonio, Lucchesi nel mondo, Aylesbury Italians, Gruppo di preghiera di padre Pio, Parmigiani Valceno, Luton and Dunstable, Parmigiani Val Taro, Lewishham, Enfield, Hoddesdon, Ponders End, Waltham Cross, Walton on Thames & Woking, Cheltenham and Gloucester, Piacenza insieme, Madonna della neve, Circolo trentino di Londra, Gruppo giovani Italiani, Birmingham, Peterborough, Christ with the First Communicants, St Peter's youth Club and OGI.

In the Backhill article, this account is followed by few statements highlighting the historical relevance of the event and by an interview with one of the women who volunteered to organise the procession and the fair. In my opinion, this editorial choice shows the relevance of the event for the (old) Italian community, in the same way as the list of local communities, prayer groups and associations that participated is evidence of both the (temporary, due to the celebration) unity and the (everyday) fragmentation of the Italian community (and its *campanilismo*, to use the same word of Colpi 1991, who had discussed the social meaning of the procession in her study); and the description of the food on sale during the fair represents an important link with Italy and with the experience of many members of the old community, who were working in the catering sector, and who came from rural origins in Italy, where regional farm produce is particularly prized.

The other Italian Church is the Church of Christ the Redeemer, located in Brixton and run by the Scalabrinian Fathers. *Monsignor* Giovanni Battista Scalabrini was the pioneer in Catholic assistance to emigrants. 'In 1887 Scalabrini wrote to the missionary body in Rome, *Propaganda Fide*, and began to organise a network of priests and nuns to aid Italian emigrants in Italy and the Americas, […] especially by creating Italian-language parishes in centres of Italian settlement. A major part of the Scalabrinians' work was to study and explain the needs of immigrants in their new environments' (Choate 2007: 747-748).

The Scalabrinians founded their first mission in the UK in Bedford in 1954, followed in 1957 by the opening of another in Peterborough. The first two missionaries, Father Walter Sacchetti and Father Umberto Marin, arrived in London in 1966 and the first Mass was celebrated in the Church of the Redeemer on Christmas Eve 1968. Like the Church of St. Peter, the Church in Brixton was conceived not only as a spiritual centre, but also as a social reference point for the Italian community residing in the southern areas of the capital. This aspect was stressed by Father Ziliotto during the interview I carried out with him:

> Of course, we always have the Church as a reference point... the structure of this centre is formed by the church, the living room downstairs has a great importance too, as we have done some activities like the newspaper, then the communication, the nursery, and the shelter for young people, because we understood that these waves of young people arrived and needed a place, a reception, so now we still have these two hostels for girls and boys.

Because of its location in the multi-ethnic area of Brixton, today the Scalabrini centre hosts other communities such as the Portuguese and the Filipino. In this way, the Church has evolved from being an ethnic Church for Italians to being an *émigré* Church, a topic already discussed by Anne-Marie Fortier (2000 and 2006), whose research was also mentioned by Father Ziliotto during our conversation. The goal of the Scalabrinian Fathers is to put in contact with each other the various national groups that visit the Church, while at the same time maintaining their identity and culture. Father Ziliotto insisted on this point and explained it with passion:

> Being the founders of this centre, Italians have given a lot so that this centre could be built, so it is clear that...it's like when a child of two years, a little brother arrives, it's clear he's jealous, and jealousy is natural...for example, on Sunday we have, there is Mass at 9.30 am in Portuguese, where there are children, young couples, middle-aged people...there is the whole community, that is, there is the whole range. Then there is the Mass at 11.30, the Italians come in and see all this good of God, children...while they are all older; in fact one of the most benevolent things they say to me is "Oh, I recall the times of fifteen, twenty, thirty years ago when we were the same way"; others said " they want us out"!, and that's the point…we must help them to educate each other. I must say that perhaps our pastoral mission is exactly this, to educate each other, and we should be a little better at this...we made the attempt, besides responding to new immigration, also to make different cultures meet, so…We are moving towards this direction, now the best thing would be to keep their roots, and they can be put in touch, communicate...for example at Easter we do the Mass together, that is, the night we celebrate Easter a little in Italian, a little in Filipino, a little in Portuguese…in my opinion, this centre is going towards this direction, but it is

the city itself that brings you to live this multicultural, multiracial, multireligious dimension.

The Scalabrinians also publish *La Voce degli Italiani*, a newspaper for the Italian community. For Fortier, *La Voce degli Italiani* was the visual and textual representation of the Italian community; an interesting feature of this representation was the increased visibility of younger Italian migrants and the creation of a section called *Spazio Giovane* in April 2004. This was an attempt by the Scalabrinian fathers to educate their fellow Italians about the presence of new migrants, who were often not seen as real immigrants by the old settlers (Fortier 2006: 67).

La Voce celebrated sixty years of activity in 2008 but its importance has been declining as it was an example of ethnic media mainly used by the old migration; after a short period of suspension, its publication was resumed in early 2010, with the aim of involving the youngest generations, but during my interviews I could hear just a few references to this paper. *La Voce* was also a means used in the 1980s and 1990s to help lobbying for the right to vote for Italians abroad, as father Ziliotto remembered:

> The right to vote, yes, it was an issue that we brought forward with our newspaper, and here we organised the first debate at European level with the two proponents of the law that went into parliament…the presence of Italians in England does not have a sufficient number to be able to compete with Switzerland, Germany, where there are seven hundred thousand Italians, but among the smaller it is the largest; however London is London, and if you want to send a message you send it from London... so, in this sense, the Italian community could also have people of some importance to support certain arguments.

Father Ziliotto also campaigned for some centre-right candidates before the Italian general elections, but at the time of the interview (March 2009) he had become disillusioned about the vote for Italians abroad, because of the modality chosen to implement the new law, a critique he shared with several of my interviewees. I will come back to this issue in the next chapter.

5.1.3 Italian language and classes

The literature on Italians in the UK shows the importance attached to Italian language and Italian courses. Language courses are highly indispensable in order to reproduce Italian cultural heritage (Medaglia 2001), and they play an important symbolic role because they 'offer a great emotional substitute to the Italian immigrants, who are always thinking of their return to Italy,

and with each passing day, see the possibility of realising their dream fading away' (Bottignolo 1985: 125).

For British-born Italians the picture is different: Bartolini and Volpi argue that the Italian language is usually given little importance because for second generations the mastery of the English language represents the essential condition to interact with locals (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 97). My findings confirm their statement only partly: in fact, while all the interviews with British-born Italians were carried out in English and they answered that English was their mother language, my respondents were still able to understand Italian and sometimes used some Italian words during our conversation. This due to the fact that – even if they attended the British school system – their parents would speak Italian to them at home (with them usually replying in English); moreover they attended Italian evening classes, usually once or twice a week. As Concetta explained to me, Italian classes were very important, not only in enabling her to learn her parents' language, but also in terms of socialising with her Italian peers:

> I used to go to normal school Monday to Friday, and then in the evening time and on Saturday morning since the age of six until eighteen, I went to Italian school as well. I think it was funded by the Italian Consulate…I know that now they're not so popular, but when I went the classes were about 20-30 kids. And there it's where I made a lot of my friends I am still friends with now.

During my fieldwork, I met Paola Dri, the head-teacher of the language courses organised by the Italian Consulate. She explained to me that they 'take care both of courses for the Italian community, for the continuity of the relationship with language and culture, and of the promotion of Italian language, by means of courses by English schools'. While extra-curricular courses are targeted to those who have a link with Italy, courses which are taught as part of school programmes are intended for all students. Because of these different functions, Ms Dri and her staff cooperate with British institutions, like the Department for Education, the agencies that deal with the teaching and promotion of foreign languages, and the institutes of culture of different countries.

> Our job is very complex, because the law has been by large outdated by the reality of Italian emigration...As the Italian community is not concentrated, it is spread over the territory, and migration is very heterogeneous, our courses are fragmented; moreover, the students of our courses in the vast majority are kids whose mother tongue is not Italian (interview with Ms Dri).

Courses are taught at a basic level, as a first contact with the language; this is the reason why the children of those who moved to London recently and plan to stay in the UK only few years often do not attend them, because the level is too basic for them. On the other hand, for many second- and third-generation Italians, who are descendants of the old waves of migration, these courses are a chance to practise Italian, a language they often do not speak even at home: 'this is because in the vast majority of cases even when the parent speaks in Italian, the kid answers in English', Ms Dri explained to me.

As regards primary school students, courses usually run once a week for one hour; this is both because of the size and dispersion of London and because of the logistical organisation of British schools. As regards secondary schools, courses prepare students to get a certificate, as for all other subjects, and there are several hours of classes per week.

Teachers are of two types: first, those from Italy, who come with a temporary assignment. And then there are other teachers: 'because we cannot cover all the needs,...we hire local hours of teaching that are managed by organisations, one is ENAIP, and the other is COASIT, but are still funded by the Ministry' (interview with Ms Dri). While COASIT (Italian Schools Assistance Committee) only cooperates with the Consulate, ENAIP (the educational branch of ACLI, as I explained earlier) also organises their own courses for adults. This is the case also for the Italian Institute of Culture, but the difference is in the target market: the courses 'of the Institute of Culture are targeted to a general audience, while those of ENAIP are aimed at people linked to the Italian community', Ms Dri told me. This was confirmed during a meeting I had with a representative of the Italian Institute of Culture; my interviewee said that 'the Institute refers more to an English audience and language courses are attended 50% by British people and 50% by people from other nationalities, while the presence of second- and third-generation Italians is rare'.

If the courses organised by the Consulate are – as I have just explained – often considered too basic for the children of the new migrants, some of them still felt the need for an institution where they could follow the Italian school curricula and study in both English and Italian. As a consequence, the Italian School project was developed.

The Italian School in London started its activity in Autumn 2010, but the story of the project dates back to Spring 2004, when a committee ('*Una scuola per gli Italians*') was created within the organisation Italiansoflondon with the aim of putting together into a clearer structure all the requests the organisation received concerning children's education within the Italian

community. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the use of the term "Italians" clearly suggested that this initiative was targeted to Italian mobile professionals.

The Committee organised a data gathering inquiry – '*Una Scuola per gli Italians 2004*' ('A School for Italians 2004') – and two focus groups with Italian/mixed marriage parents with the aim of understanding whether there existed a real demand for an Italian school. In December 2005 the Italian Consulate and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Italian Embassy and the Italian Cultural Institute, organised a conference called '*Le Scuole Italiane e l'Italiano nelle Scuole*' ('Italian Schools and Italian Language at School') calling '*Una Scuola per gli Italians'* to present the findings of the inquiry and of the focus groups. According to the school's website, over 150 people participated in the event to show their support for the initiative. In February 2006, a working group of ten volunteers was founded with the aim of opening an Italian school in London. In July 2007 the School obtained Charitable Status from the Charities Commission and, after funding was obtained and premises were found in Holland Park Avenue, the School opened in September 2010 with the Early years classes (sources: *La Scuola Italiana a Londra* website: our history; my interviews with Arturo Tosi and Ines Saltalamacchia).

According to Ms Dri, who helped in formulating the questionnaire from which the original scoping of interested people started, and monitored all the steps of the project, the Italian School is mainly related to the new migration, and in particular to people who arrived recently from Italy, with a high level of education, who can recognise the deficits of the British school system. This is more or less confirmed by what I have been told by Ines Saltalamacchia, a representative of the Project I interviewed few months before the opening of the School: she stated clearly that the school targets new professional migration and, in her opinion, the type of people who had showed great interest in the school were highly mobile people and mixed couples, who have a high regard for the Italian education system and want to give their children some continuity in their study, but at the same time offer them the chance to study in English. For this reason, each class has two teachers, one Italian and one English, as this encourages children to speak both languages from the start. Consequently, in the School's mission it is stated that:

> The main objective of *La Scuola Italiana a Londra* is to create an Italian school which is fully integrated with the British context in which it operates. It is a school which integrates the Italian Curriculum, internationally recognised as the great strength of the Italian school system, with the best aspects of the British education system, in particular its educational objectives and teaching methods. *La Scuola Italiana a Londra*

therefore has a fully bilingual and bicultural curriculum (*La Scuola Italiana a Londra* website: our vision).

This approach derives from the multicultural view that is behind the Italian School project:

> The strongest belief behind the project, and of those involved in it, is that being bilingual does not mean simply being able to communicate perfectly in two languages but it also encourages the development of a more open and mature way of thinking. We strongly believe that bilingualism and a broader cultural background are fundamental stones in the building of a new generation of citizens who increasingly have to cope with, and adapt to, cultural diversity. Students at *La Scuola Italiana a Londra* benefit from a broader and more complete education which combines Latin and British cultures, the values of which are the basis of the new Europe (*La Scuola Italiana a Londra* website: our vision).

I will discuss in the last section of this chapter what this means for the development of a new kind of Italianness among Italians in London.

5.2 FRAGMENTATION AND DECLINE OF TRADITIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

The Italian School project is an example of a recent addition to the London Italian infrastructure, that is developing because of the changing needs of the new wave of Italian migration, that are quite different from those of the old wave of migrants. In this section I will discuss the decline of traditional forms of association, which derive from the fragmentation of the community and from the changes in the Italian migration pattern.

As I explained in the previous chapter, the old and new migrations are completely detached one from the other and they rarely have chance to find a common ground to meet and communicate. The year of arrival in the UK assumes several important meanings: not only do the newly arrived have a different relationship with the host country because of their knowledge of English, their education, and the presence of thousands of young Europeans, with whom they share many characteristics, but also they come from a country that has changed deeply since the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, their Italian language contains many new terms and is less influenced by local dialects, and their *forma mentis* and system of values are different from those of the previous generations. Also Father Carmelo confirmed the lack of contact between the different groups:

> I don't think there is much contact…for me, the old migration is not even aware of this new migration that is coming here…they don't mix… I tell you about young people: here we have many young people, I am talking about hundreds of young people, of

this new migration, who are all professionals, who attend the Church; and we have the youth who were born here and go to the (Pallotti) Club upstairs…They don't mix, it's very difficult for them to mix.

The detachment between old and new migrations is something that shapes their individual identities. The former appear to have an identity that is obviously looking backwards to a lost era and is now heavily based on semi-active institutions/associations. This contrasts with a much more active and contemporary identity among the new migrants.

The fragmentation of the community between the old first generation, second and third generations, and the new first generation is mirrored by the associational landscape. In past decades, associations played a fundamental role, as many of them were founded on a regional or local basis and they acted as reference points for those who came from the same geographical area and arrived in a new country, of which they did not know the language and habits.

Today 'many associations exist on paper but are no longer active as they were in the past, many regional groups do not manage any more to go on', I was told by a well-known leader of Italian associations in London. The crisis of traditional migrants' associations is an issue that has been discussed for more than a decade – as Lorenzo Losi explained to me – and it is common to many Italian communities around the world, as showed by Severgnini's words (2008) on the Australian case, which I quoted in the previous chapter. When asked what the main reasons for this decline are, the representatives of associations, institutions and other organisations answer in different ways, often talking about internal contrasts, indifference and the individualism of new generations:

> Traditional associations are almost over; the first was the vogue until the '90s, but also perhaps up to 7-10 years ago, it was all based on associations…(the decline) is due to indifference, internal conflicts, then when politics come into play it's the end, a disaster (interview with Father Carmelo).

> The associational life is declining also because people grow up and young people don't want to attend...As long as there are people who are of a certain age who are interested in doing, all goes well, the association progresses, but when these people start getting tired, age begins to advance, the ailments etc. etc., and therefore they cannot be any more active as before. The new generation, the generation that follows, does not have much interest, 'cause they do not think they enjoy meeting with others of the same nation, because their nation is this one; and if they want to have fun they have friends from school, friends they met by going out together, like in pubs they have in the neighbourhood (interview with Stefano Scalzo, *Patronato* INAS).

I argue that this is the most convincing explanation, because it makes clear that traditional associations were created to meet the needs of the Italian migrants in a particular historical context: that of economic migration at a time when in Italy linguistic, cultural and social (and not only economic) differences between different geographical areas were much higher than in the current era. Today those needs do not exist anymore: in fact, the first generation of the post-WWII migration is ageing and decreasing in size; the second and third generations, even though they preserve the Italian identity and sometimes also the language, are not interested in joining traditional associations, because they grow up in Britain and often prefer to socialise out of the Italian community, as the previous quotation showed. Finally, the people who arrived more recently would rather meet and spend time with students or professionals coming from other countries, with whom they share similar socio-economic and cultural conditions (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 96), expectations and challenges. And, when they wish to spend some time with other Italians, they prefer to do it without resorting to formal parties organised by traditional associations.

5.3 NEW FORMS OF ASSOCIATION

In this way, the crisis of traditional regional associations should not be considered in a negative way, as a decline in the ethnic social capital of Italians in London, but only as a consequence of the changed characteristics of the Italian presence. In this perspective, it is also easier to understand the success of new forms of association, which target specific sectors of the community, such as the Italian societies of many universities, whose activity is very helpful for the newly arrived Italian students, or the *Club di Londra* and the Business Club Italia, which are reference points for many Italians working in the financial and banking sector.

As regards the Italian Societies of London universities, I came to know about the activities of the societies at Imperial College, UCL, King's and LSE. In their mission statements, these societies aim to link Italians studying in London with people interested in Italy. For example, in the Imperial College Italian Society's page it is stated that:

> We try to celebrate Italian culture around London and do things like an Italian would. We organise events and activities for Italians studying at Imperial, for those who are interested to learn more about Italian ways and the lingo, and we welcome those from anywhere in the world.

Similarly, the Italian Society of UCL 'intends to bring the culture, traditions and language of Italy into the multicultural community of UCL. It is for all those that are studying Italian or just

have an interest in Italy, but also for the Italians at UCL'. The King's College Italian Society adds one more element to the ones cited above; one of their aims is 'to bring KCL students in contact with groups involved in similar activities in other universities', this implying linking Italian students and researchers from different academic institutions in the London area.

During my fieldwork, I took the opportunity to attend some events that were part of the Italian week launched by the LSE Italian Society 'to both celebrate Italian culture, but also highlight the problems facing Italy today'. The society at LSE was established in the 1960s, counts around 700 members and organises regular events with guests from Italy. Speakers such as the journalists Beppe Severgnini and Marco Travaglio, the political blogger Beppe Grillo and the former prime minister Massimo D'Alema attracted an audience of several hundred people, not only from the student community, but also from other sectors of the Italian collectivity in London.

If the Italian societies target the academic world, also the Italian business and financial establishment have their own points of reference. One is the *Club di Londra*, established in 1985; among the founders there was Lord Charles Forte, who is still considered the most successful personal story among Italians who migrated to the UK. The Club has around 100 members (plus some honorary ones) and meets generally 8-10 times a year. According to their statute, 'the main objective of the Club is to debate, on occasion of luncheon or dinner, subjects of British/Italian interests with high profile speakers'. For example, one of the last events, that took place in July 2011, was a debate with Bill Emmott, former editor of the Economist, and the correspondent of Italian Public Broadcasting RAI, Antonio Caprarica. Contrary to the events organised by the university societies, the activities of the *Club di Londra* are usually not advertised nor open to a general audience.

Another Club for senior Italian professionals based both in the UK and abroad is the Business Club Italia. Established in September 1995, members are Italian and Italian-speaking business people involved in various professions, businesses, industries and organisations. According to their statute,

> the purpose of Business Club Italia is to develop social and business relationships between business people in the Italian community and other communities in London and to encourage economic, cultural, political and social debate amongst its members. Business Club Italia also endeavours to: provide a means of contact and communication with Italian and international political and economic centres of influence; serve as a Club for business people and act on behalf of its members in

providing a forum for them to communicate their opinions to the political and economic centres of influence in Italy and abroad.

Also in the group of the old wave of migrants, forms of associational life have followed the evolution of the community. Just to provide some examples, the former Mazzini-Garibaldi Club, which was open till to 2008, has been transformed into a charity (The Mazzini-Garibaldi Foundation) after the decision by the Mazzini-Garibaldi Club to donate £1.4m from the sale of its freehold premises. In this way, a Club whose activity was in decline turned into a charity devoted to supporting the Italian community in the UK: since the Foundation's formation, grants approved by the Trustees include financial support for the 2010 OGI (Italian Youth Olympics); a grant to The Villa Scalabrini Care Home in Shenley (a home for elderly Italians in UK); a donation to the L'Aquila Earthquake Fund (this being a typical example of a transnational activity geared towards the home country); and a contribution to essential lift repairs at St. Peter's. In a similar way, the Italian Hospital Fund (currently named 'Italian Medical Charity') was set up in 1990 after the Italian hospital was sold, because it was no longer financially viable, and since its formation has made grants to over 2,000 separate cases needing financial help dealing with their medical problems.

Also, other associations have been established, the *Comitato donne italiane* (Italian Women's Committee), whose activities for members fund projects carried out by a different charity chosen each year; and *Il Circolo*, a charity born in 1994 by the initiative of a group of women, which raises funds for research scholarships for university students by organising different social, cultural and recreational activities for their members, who are mainly between 40 and 60 years old. According to Elisabetta Provini Walker, the former president of *Il Circolo*, this is probably the main difference between associations like hers and traditional regional associations: setting a mission to be accomplished every year allows them to plan a series of regular activities and meetings, thus keeping the association alive.

In this way, although the Mazzini-Garibaldi Foundation and the Hospital Fund were established to manage the funds obtained by selling the premises of the club and the hospital, while *Il Circolo* and the Women's Committee are active associations that meet on a regular basis, these charities have in common that they have been created in response to the change in the Italian presence: to fulfil the financial needs of those members of the community who cannot afford studies or health care on the one hand, and to give new motivations for meeting to those who have retired on the other hand.

By far the most successful among the new forms of association have been those that have exploited the opportunities offered by new technologies, in particular the web. In fact, several websites (plus numerous pages and groups on Facebook) provide information for Italians who plan to move to London or already live in the capital, organise events for them and help them to find fellow citizens, with whom to network and create friendships. The two most successful and known ones are Italianialondra.com and Italiansoflondon.com.

Francesca Romana Seganti (2007) aimed to provide a more in-depth understanding of the cultural and social role of the online community hosted on the Italianialondra.com website. Thus, she offers some insights into the users of this social network at the time of her research, between October 2004 and April 2005:

> most of the interviewees arrived in London in the early nineties and belong to middle class backgrounds. On average, the interviewees have been living in London for seven years. These Italians constitute a new migration pattern compared to previous Italian migration waves. They decided to leave Italy because in Italy the market that interests graduates is saturated (Seganti 2007: 127).

Beppe, the editor of this website that he defines as 'the biggest Italian social network in the UK', told me that Italianialondra was created in 2003 and is addressed to Italians who live or plan to move to the British capital. In May 2010, subscribed people numbered around 18,000, of whom 48% were male and 52% female, and 75% of members were between 25 and 35 years old; at the time of writing this chapter, the website appears to have more than 25,000 people subscribed. The membership is free and the website finances itself through the advertising of events and services. Italianialondra.com wants to be a service provider, not a charity or an association with an exclusively social mission. This is made clear by their mission statement:

> Italianialondra.com is a service that is proposed as a useful tool to bring together the Italians living in Britain or Italians wanting to move there. Indirectly, through the means of interaction provided by the site, Italianialondra.com promotes the dialogue among the Italians who find themselves sharing the same experience of "Italian abroad", facilitating the integration of the Italians into the fabric of London. Italianialondra.com also aims to promote and enhance the Italian presence abroad and the spread of other cultures, so numerous in London, among the Italians residing in the capital…In this way, the services provided by Italianialondra.com indirectly create a community, virtual and real, made up of Italians living in London.

Italianialondra started as an individual initiative; the same happened for Italiansoflondon, the first social network that was created for Italian citizens arriving in the British capital.

Gianfranco Pelati, the founder of this website, explained to me the genesis of this project, a fascinating story, which says a lot about Italian professionals living in London, and – indirectly – about their relationship with the old migration. Mr Pelati arrived in the UK in 1994:

> I was not particularly tied to Italy, I came here, I wanted to enjoy the English experience, did not hang out with Italians...I had absolutely no nostalgia for Italy, so for the first two years I never met an Italian...I had no Italian friends.

At the time of his arrival, Mr Pelati had the idea that most Italians living in London were representatives of the old Italian migration, and he mentioned to me the traditional stereotypes of Italians wearing white sleeveless t-shirts and working in restaurants and hotels. He admired them for their tough migration experience and hard work, but he was aware he had not much to share with them.

> Instead, I discovered later that what happened to me happened to so many people, after some years spent in England...I felt some need of my roots. By chance, I met another guy from Rome, we began to talk about stupid things, like the Italian television when we were kids, but this shows you how your culture will remain even as you grow up…Then I started to meet other Italians, and I discovered that there are many Italians living in London...who are working in banking, finance. I come from the world of finance, so obviously I targeted them first, but then with time I have expanded to all other sectors. So, I discovered that there are many Italians in the field of research, in the universities.

Around 1997-1998, when the internet became more common, especially in the world of business and finance, to which Mr Pelati belongs, he took the habit of reading Italian newspapers online, and then selecting some articles and sending them to a mailing list of more than 100 Italians in London. Together with another Italian guy, in the late 1990s he started using this mailing list also to organise events for Italians in London, like parties that attracted an attendance of 200-300 people. In 1999 Mr Pelati had the chance to meet the journalist Beppe Severgnini, who had created his forum, the aforementioned "Italians", the year before.

> By talking to Severgnini, I discovered that the phenomenon I was experiencing here in London, the new Italian emigration of the so-called professionals, those young graduates or people with professional skills, who come to London mainly to improve professionally, then maybe go back or go somewhere else in search of a better job, an immigration that is very different from that of the previous wave, I discovered that this world that I had experienced in London was there everywhere, that this phenomenon was not related only to London, but was related to all industrialised countries, precisely where the new Italians were going to try to improve their professionalism.

In this way, Mr Pelati decided to exploit the potentialities offered by new technologies and create a web portal for Italians in London. Before doing that, in 2002 he registered Italiansoflondon as an association. As for Italianialondra, Mr Pelati feels the need to stress that he chose to be registered as an association only because in this way it would have been easier to get access to institutions, but – he repeated several times – Italiansoflondon does not share the bureaucracy of a formal association and is a 'very dynamic reality', to put it in his words. By turning his original mailing list into a website, the numbers boomed and at the time of our interview in 2009 Italiansoflondon had reached around 7,000 members (according to the website, at the end of October 2011, the members are more than 13,000). In spite of this, Mr Pelati did not seem concerned to reach bigger numbers:

> It is said that there are about 15-20 thousand Italians who work in the city, in finance, people of different ages, and I think that in our age group - between 20 and 45 - there are probably 4-5 thousand...I think half of ours [=members] are definitely in this area, others are students, many who work in the university sector...many who work in the field of new professions, so there are many in graphic design, media, in music...We look at the Italians who are here and who are in this age group and are working in a new professional field.

After this statement, I asked him if Italiansoflondon has any link with the old migration, and he replied that the old first generation is excluded for several reasons: they do not use the internet and they have different interests, while 'we are completely different, very dynamic, we organise events targeted to our community', and that means the young professionals.

Among their activities, besides providing information to Italians in London, advertising Italian businesses and having a classifieds section, they have been among the promoters of the aforementioned Italian School project and they organise social and cultural events, cooperating with the Consulate, the Italian Institute of Culture, the Italian bookstore, Italian Societies at London universities and – in some cases – Italian media.

During my fieldwork, I had the chance to try for myself the services offered by Italiansoflondon, both by using the classifieds section to sell a laptop with an Italian keyboard, advertise my research and look for accommodation, and by attending two events organised by the social network. This experience allows me to confirm that the users of Italiansoflondon are mainly young Italians who work as professionals or in academia; but it should be highlighted that social events are attended also by Italians who are in London on a more temporary basis (often to improve their English, while working part-time) and feel the need to meet other

fellow citizens; and by young people from other nationalities, who often come along with their Italian friends.

The story behind the creation and the success of Italiansoflondon and the other examples I provided in this section show how the associative world has been evolving, following the evolution of Italian migration to London, and trying to meet their emerging demands. For this reason, while it is correct to speak about the decline of traditional associations, it would be wrong to speak of a generalised decline of forms of collective activity among Italians in London and overlook the new realities that I just described. These make London one of the cities where the Italian presence is more noticeable and active – also politically, as I will show in the next chapter – and where a new discourse on Italianness is emerging among the community of those who have arrived and settled in the past twenty years.

5.4 CONCLUSION: ITALIANNESS IN LONDON

In my introduction chapter I stated that it is not possible to talk of the existence of only one Italian community in London; thus it is more correct to use the plural form, communities. In the approach I follow in this study, community and social identities are not fixed and static, but constructed and performed. According to Anthony Cohen, community is constructed also by means of rituals and traditions, in which 'the symbolic expression and affirmation of boundary heightens people's awareness of and sensitivity to their community' (Cohen 1985: 50).

If we look at the old Italian community, Fortier's research on migrants' belonging analysed the role of the *Centro Scalabrini* in producing a 'portable Italianness' (Fortier 2006: 73). As I explained in chapter 2, Fortier shows that organisations like the Scalabrinian church not only sustain a community, but also re-create it by means of events, rituals and practices that reinforce and re-shape the sense of belonging. The *Centro Scalabrini* is the physical space reflecting this community, 'a performative site for the construction and display of a particular version of Italian ethnicity' (Fortier 2006: 68), and *La Voce degli Italiani* is its visual and textual representation.

This portable identity – that can still be seen in the Club of Senior Citizens that meets weekly – is made up of two components (the two ingredients of Morawska's salad bowl that I cited in chapter 1): (1) being Italian, and (2) sharing the experience of migrating to the UK for economic reasons and spending many years away from Italy, working hard to obtain some economic

success. In this discourse, the "bad image" – like that of Italians who are involved in drug and crime issues – remains faceless (Fortier 2006: 70); moreover, at the time of Fortier's work the new migration was excluded by the community, an example of this being the preference for Italian teachers coming from within the community and not having just arrived from Italy:

> The basis of the argument about who is most competent to teach young Italians is twofold: first, Italian emigrants have a particular experience that shapes their identity in a way that distinguishes it from Italian adults coming from Italy; their relationship with Italy and with Italian culture is distorted and transformed from years of living abroad and of settlement. Secondly, the relationship with the local English culture is also complicated by the experience of migrations, as well as by the legacy of an inherent spirit, or mentality, that only Italians and their descendants can possess (Fortier 2000: 82).

Similar examples of "internal others" – which prove the existence of internal boundaries within the same national group – can be found in the research carried out by Kathy Burrell among Italians in Leicester, where the respondents 'spoke about how hard working their communities are, and what good people they are…[and]…in order to be part of the community, individuals are supposed to be hardworking and successful, law abiding and well behaved, hospitable and helpful' (Burrell 2006: 164); and in the personal experience of Ganga (Ganga and Scott 2006), who during her fieldwork found herself being "othered" by old Italian migrants in Nottingham, because of her recent and temporary migratory experience to the UK.

This particular Italian identity had a deep impact on the political interest and participation of the members of the old Italian community towards Italian politics, as explained by Fortier (2000 and 2006), and they fought to obtain the right to vote in order to represent the "abroad" within Italy.

I argue here that, just as in earlier decades there was this attempt to create an identity among the old Italian community in London, today there is an attempt to create an identity among the new Italian community in London. Off-line and on-line spaces are used in order to create a narrative behind this identity; examples of the first type are the Italian Bookstore and the Italian School, and of the second type are websites such as Italianialondra or Italiansoflondon; using Fortier's terminology, the first are the physical spaces reflecting the new Italian professional community, while the latter are its visual and textual representation.

As I discussed in the previous chapter, professional mobility, meritocracy and fair competition are key words for those Italians who are part of this new community and share the same experience of leaving a country where their skills were not appreciated and where they could

not express their potential. This emerged in most of the conversations I had with representatives of the new Italian migration to London and during several meetings of political movements and parties I attended during my fieldwork.

Virtual social networks like Italianialondra and Italiansoflondon emphasise that they are a point of reference for Italian professionals, and also the Italian School website remarked that their working group 'was composed of ten volunteers, all with professional experience in various fields, from teaching to finance, from law to public relations' (source: *La Scuola Italiana a Londra* website: our history).

In November 2010 Italiansoflondon and the Italian Bookstore organised a debate called 'Goodbye Italy'. Three journalists and writers (from radio and newspapers) were invited 'to analyse the new and professional emigration of talents from Italy [and to understand] why many young Italians leave their country to have their qualities and their right to work recognised' (source: event brochure). The two main speakers were Sergio Nava and Claudia Cucchiarato, whose activities in collecting stories of professional migrants I portrayed in the previous chapter. In this way, this event gave the chance for these two journalists, who have been playing a leading role in the emergence of the discourse on the new Italian migration, to meet with the protagonists of the phenomenon they narrate, in London, which has become the main destination and the symbol of this type of migration. And, symbolically, the venue chosen was the newly established Italian school, an institution set up with the contribution of the new professional migration.

More than 300 people attended the event, and many had to stand because the conference hall was full. The stories told during the debate resonated with those published in Nava's (2009) and Cucchiarato' s (2010) books: they emphasised some positive aspects which are popularly considered part of being Italian according to the stereotypes, such as style, flexibility and creativity, while at the same time distancing themselves from other characteristics, such as clientelism, nepotism, political transformism and lack of respect for the law, which are considered by some scholars (as an example, see Altan 2000) among the main causes of backwardness of the country. The contributions of the participants became part of the '*Manifesto degli Espatriati*', an initiative launched on-line by Cucchiarato and Nava to give voice and mobilise "young Italian professional expatriates"; the full text of the *Manifesto* (in Italian in the original) is a clear and interesting example of explicit transnational engagement and can be read in the box below.

In my opinion, what I heard during the 'Goodbye Italy' event – and, similarly, what can be read in the numerous newspaper articles discussing brain-drain and the flight of Italian talents – reveal that this emerging discourse is linked to some attitudes shared by several Italian intellectuals since the time of Italian Unification, such as their cosmopolitism, that implies quite a weak link with fellow citizens and a certain distance from the average Italian (Patriarca 2010: XIV), and their "inverted patriotism" (Dickie 2001), that is holding a negative view on the home country, seen as unable to change and tackle its problems.

BOX 3: THE MANIFESTO OF ITALIAN EXPATRIATES

1. The phenomenon of expatriation of young qualified professionals from Italy is a national emergency. We leave, but not to return (if not absolutely necessary), nor does Italy attract young talented people from other countries. In Italy there is no "circulation" of talents.
2. Italy is not a country for young people. That's why we had to leave, and we cannot return soon. Italy is a country with the handbrake on, at best. A country where the ruling class - which has been reproducing itself for decades - has failed. Abroad, the youth have the same right to citizenship as the generations that preceded them.
3. The selection process abroad is far more transparent and meritocratic than in Italy. The amount of work offered is greater, better and better publicised.
4. The career path abroad is clear, definite, and provides average salaries far greater than in Italy, especially for young graduates.
5. Abroad age does not count: you can obtain a position of responsibility at any age, if you deserve it. Even at 25 years.
6. The "recommendation" abroad is clear: those who recommend put their reputation at stake. In Italy it is hidden, it rewards the mediocre, the "children-grandchildren-cousins of someone" and co-opted people. Nepotism is a national shame, to be eradicated even by the introduction of a specific criminal offence.
7. Abroad, you bet on the ideas of young people. They are funded and supported, in the name of innovation. In Italy – rather - funding goes mainly to those who have a "name" or an affiliation.
8. Abroad there is - in many cases - a welfare state which supports young people, for example through a minimum income or subsidies for unemployment and for rent. In Italy the welfare state is almost entirely geared towards to the elderly. The young are left to themselves, charged to the families. The real "social safety net" in Italy are families: the State and politics have failed.
9. Outside there is a generational change: in politics, as in entrepreneurship, as in academia or in other sectors of civil society, old generations make way to advance society.
10. We young Italian professional expatriates intend to engage, so that Italy may once again be a "country for young people", meritocratic, modern, innovative. So that it may come out of its underdeveloped, conservative and hypocritical status, and it may come back to being a fully-fledged European and western country. Listen to our voice!

(source: http://fugadeitalenti.wordpress.com/2010/09/27/il-manifesto-degli-espatriati/)

On the other hand, just as it was for the "portable Italianness" of the old migrants studied by Fortier, so too this new identity is created by excluding other kinds of Italian migrants: the old Italian migration and their descendants are not taken into account, while the experience of those young people who come to London to improve their English and work part-time in low-skilled jobs is often overlooked as well (especially by national media), as they are considered just as a temporary presence in the British capital.

But what is most important – following again Bleich (2008) – is that the *Manifesto* shows how this kind of Italian identity which has been developing among young, recently arrived, highly educated or highly skilled Italians has an impact on the way they see Italy and on how they think they can contribute to the social, economic and political development of the country. In this way, in the next chapter, on the political participation of Italians in London, I will show how the emergence of this new form of Italianness plays a role in the political behaviour of Italians in London.

CHAPTER 6: THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF ITALIANS IN LONDON

> We Italians [in London] perhaps feel more Italian than the Italians who are in Italy, because we wake up in the morning, go to our job place, meet friends, people, and we are the Italians, before being Mirko, Paola, Luca and so on; and it is something that even if we do not want to remember, there is someone who reminds you…When we open a newspaper, we remember we're Italian, you feel a chill behind your back, many times you wish to feel it for something beautiful, but in many cases it is due to shame. So in the end you realise that you want to have your voice, and you understand that you have the right [to do so], because you left your land, a European country, to come and work in another European country, because there is a problem, and you didn't have the chance to face the problem in your land, and you still want the right to say something (Gaspare Giacalone).

This quotation is from the interview I carried out with Gaspare Giacalone, the secretary of the SEL (Left, Ecology and Freedom) party in the UK. Gaspare is now forty-two years old; when he was twenty-four he was a young councillor in his village in Sicily, then moved to London fourteen years ago and he has been working for the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Even though Gaspare is well informed about British politics and he chose to vote for British candidates at European elections, his political activism is focused on Italy and less than two months ago he decided to temporarily quit his job and leave London to run for mayor in his small village in Sicily. This chapter opens deliberately with Gaspare's story, because his life trajectory and his words touch several points that I will discuss here on the political participation of Italians in London.

In the next section (6.1), I provide a brief historical background of the political involvement of Italian citizens in the British capital since the nineteenth century. In section 6.2, I discuss the topic of the right to vote for Italians abroad, followed (section 6.3) by an analysis of the level of information and interest in Italian and British politics. The following two sections focus on transnational political involvement: in section 6.4 I examine the voting behaviour of Italians in London, while in section 6.5 I investigate the activities of parties and movements and other forms of participation. In section 6.6 I try to understand the reasons behind the transnational political involvement of Italians in London. Finally, in the last section (6.7) I speak about the involvement of the groups I take into account in British politics; this paves the way to the discussion of the interplay between interest and participation towards the home and the host country in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

6.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The literature on the political experiences of the Italian migrants in the UK is scant and the scholars who have dealt with this theme have emphasised that politics was not at the top of the agenda in migrants' associative life.

As regards the political involvement of Italians in the UK, the academic literature focuses mainly on four different moments: (1) the arrival in London of political refugees at the time of the process that led to Italian unification; (2) the presence of a colony of anarchists at the beginning of the 20th century; (3) the spread of fascist institutions in the 1920s and 1930s; and (4) the contribution of the London Italian community to the debate that led to the approval of the law granting the right to vote to Italians resident abroad. So far, no academic study has focused on the political involvement of the new Italian young migrants, who have arrived in the UK in the past twenty years.

In his essay on the patterns of migration of Italians to London, Robin Palmer dedicates considerable space to the arrival in the first half of the 19th century of nearly a thousand political exiles from Italy (Palmer 1977: 254). This number is confirmed by Colpi, who describes these refugees as temporary migrants, who were mostly estranged from the poor and uneducated members of the Italian community (Colpi 1991: 31). The first of these political refugees was the poet and patriot Ugo Foscolo, who reached London in 1816 and lived there till his death in 1827; Foscolo's years in London have been described by Charles M. Franzero in his book *A life in exile. Ugo Foscolo in London, 1816 – 1827* (Franzero 1977). The figure who had the greatest impact on the Italian community (that at the time consisted of less than 5,000 people) was Giuseppe Mazzini. Mazzini, a republican intellectual, patriot and activist, advanced *Italianita'* (Italianness) among his compatriots abroad as much as at home (Palmer 1977: 254). As I described in the previous chapter, he contributed to the development of the Italian network in London by setting up the aforementioned Society for the Advancement of Italian Workers in London, and establishing a school for poor Italian immigrants in Clerkenwell. One aspect that is highlighted by both Palmer and Colpi is the support Italian political refugees received by the Victorian establishment. According to Palmer, Mazzini was 'much favoured by the Victorian establishment...[and he] acted as a catalyst, unifying disparate elements among his expatriate co-nationals in a social climate of Victorian romantic *Italophilia*' (Palmer 1977: 254). Colpi instead focuses on the poor economic conditions of these exiles, whose main source of income was giving singing, music, painting and Italian language lessons to members of the upper classes. For these reasons, the fact that they were well received by the liberal

circles of British society was of the highest importance, as 'they sought entry into the cultural and political world in order to mobilise public opinion in favour of their cause as well as to find means of supporting themselves' (Colpi 1991: 31). The sympathy of a big part of the British elite for Mazzini and the Italian political exiles of that time is also witnessed by the support that most of the British press gave to the Italian School against the critiques he received by Catholic institutions, who blamed Mazzini for teaching pupils socialist theory (Sponza 2005: 6). But what is more important, as a consequence of this dispute also a Catholic school was set up; moreover these are the same years when also the Italian church of Saint Peter's in Clerkenwell and the Italian hospital were established. Thus, the presence of an Italian network of institutions, associations and organisations can be dated back to the time of Mazzini's activity in London. As Palmer puts it:

> Mazzini's charisma helped foster a 'climate' in which other enduring [Italian] institutions...could flourish. An infrastructure of impressive dimensions thus awaited the first large wave of true labour-migrants to London (Palmer 1997: 254).

The second period of intensive political activity of Italians in London is the beginning of the 20th century, when a number of Italian anarchists moved to London to escape the repression they were subjected to in Italy. The presence of this group is mentioned both by Sponza (2005) and by Luconi (2009), but the most detailed picture is provided by Di Paola (2005), who studied the sociability, politics and culture of anarchist clubs in London. The main reason for this kind of immigration was that England did not impose any restriction on the entrance of political refugees till 1905 and as a consequence anarchist clubs with members from different nationalities developed and created contacts with English radicalism.

A first Italian club, the *Circolo Italiano di Studi Sociali* (Italian Club of Social Studies), was established in 1879 (Di Paola 2005: 354-355). Besides bringing together anarchists from different countries and being depicted by the press as places where international conspiracies were planned, clubs were a point of reference for those expatriates who arrived in London after long and tiring trips; in fact, in these clubs – that were mainly in the quarter of Soho, which at the time was replacing Clerkenwell as the centre of the Italian community – newly arrived anarchists would receive shelter, food and help to settle in London (Di Paola 2005: 356). There are some points that are important to highlight in Di Paola's account, as they are closely related to the subject of my study: (1) 'new refugees had little in common with the community of economic migrants, despite the efforts of propaganda of the most famous of them, Errico Malatesta' (Di Paola, cited in Sponza 2005: 11) – similarly, also today activism regards only a small minority of the Italian communities; (2) the schedules of meetings usually included

conferences or debates followed by social activities (such as singing and dancing) – the current activity of Italian political parties and movements in London often follows the same pattern; (3) in opposition to mainstream politics of the time, women were a regular presence in these meetings and articles published in newspapers and magazines of the time reported that 'women often represented the majority of the entourage that participated in the evenings organised in clubs' (Di Paola 2005: 361). In the same way, many Italian women act as political activists in London today.

Together with the bad hygienic conditions in which many Italians lived in the first decades of the 20th century, the presence of Italian anarchists was one of the main sources of concern for English authorities. In the following years, this would be replaced by the "fascistisation" of the Italian institutions in the country.

As I wrote above, the inter-war period was considered by scholars like Colpi (1991) as the "Golden Era" for the Italian community, and one of the reasons for this was the efforts put by the Fascist regime to spread its propaganda among the Italian communities abroad:

> The emigrant communities were increasingly considered as part of an expanded Italy in a moral, political, and economic sense. It was one of the aims of fascism to reunite into a brotherhood all the many sons of Italy abroad under the Italian flag (Colpi 1991: 86-87).

It was Mussolini who wanted the denomination "Italian workers abroad", to replace the one of "emigrants", previously adopted in official documents. Claudia Baldoli (1999) studied in depth the Italian *fasci* abroad and the education of Italians in Great Britain. The establishment of *fasci* abroad had a double mission to accomplish: on the one hand, they had to discipline Italians abroad and encourage them to participate in the 'great enterprise of the fascist National Renaissance', while on the other hand 'fascists abroad had to convince local citizens that the fascist "style and thought" was the one that best meet their aspirations' (Baldoli 1999: 245-246).

The presence in London of two Italian Fascist intellectuals who taught at the University College, Antonio Cippico and Camillo Pellizzi, was instrumental in the formation of the *fascio* in London in June 1921. This was one of the first *fascio* to be set up outside of Italy, and reflected the importance Mussolini attached to England in his foreign policy. In the 1920s, the *fascio* had to face the hostility of the previously established Italian associations (Baldoli 1999: 244) and of the rest of the community to all forms of ideological-political associations (Sponza 2005: 12). Baldoli states that 1932 was a key point for the fascist penetration in the London Italian

community. In fact Dino Grandi, one of the founders of the Fascist Movement and a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, was appointed as ambassador, Pelizzi became president of the Dante Alighieri cultural society, and 'following the signing of the Lateran Pacts the sermons of the priests of Saint Peter's Church became ostensibly more favourable to the regime of Mussolini and this had a strong influence on much of the community, for which religion was the cultural and emotional bond' (Sponza 2005: 12). Moreover, an Italian school was established at Hyde Park Gate, with the regime being responsible of appointing the teachers, and a fascist newspaper, *Italia Nostra* (Our Italy) was published in London till 1940. In its efforts to impress the British and to gain support among the Italian "colony", the regime also implemented some welfare policies: not only did the pre-existing institutions receive massive support, but also 'children of every emigrant household received generous Christmas parcels from Mussolini, and they were also given free holidays at the English seaside and in Italy' (Palmer 1977: 255).

By means of this cultural and welfare network, fascism came to encompass all forms of activity within the community; there were few anti-fascists, mostly intellectuals who were refugees from fascist oppression, living in London. Among them, there were Luigi Sturzo, founder of the *Partito Popolare*, and the sons of Claudio Treves (Colpi 1991: 88), while Sponza (2005: 12) mentions the anarchist Silvio Corio and anti-fascist leaders like Gaetano Salvemini and Carlo Rosselli, who visited London to disseminate their ideas. The tensions between fascists and anti-fascists in the London Italian community, together with an account of the links between Italian fascists and Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists and the way British government regarded Mussolini and his regime, are the main topics of Alfio Bernabei's book *Esuli ed Emigrati Italiani nel Regno Unito, 1920-1940* (*Italian Exiles and Emigrants in the UK, 1920-1940*), probably the most vivid depiction of the London Italian community during the inter-war period and WWII. Bernabei (1997) makes use of official sources to tell in a fictional form the story of Decio Anzani, a socialist refugee who fought against fascism, who was nonetheless interned and died in the sinking of the Arandora Star, a ship used to deport Italian prisoners of war to internment camps in Canada.

To summarise: according to the literature, fascism played on nostalgia and, for many Italians who before had felt abandoned by their state, supporting the regime was more a form of patriotism (Colpi 1991: 88). Because of this and because of the social characteristics of the colony, which was detached from the values of the working class, the political struggle between fascism and anti-fascism was experienced only indirectly inside the community (Sponza 2005: 12).

After the collapse of the fascist regime and the end of WWII, London Italians felt there was a degree of discrimination against them. According to Colpi (1991: 194-195), in the 1950s most of the strong anti-Italianism expressed by the British population during the war continued. While most of my respondents from the old first generation said that they did not feel discriminated, a few of them told me about some episodes of racism they experienced in those years. Thus, Italian migrants decided to focus on their jobs more than being involved in political activities (Palmer 1977). This attitude is mirrored in the lack of references in the literature to the political involvement of Italians in the first decades following the war. The consequence of the absence of political consciousness is stressed by Bottignolo in his analysis of associational life in Bristol and the South West of England:

> the lack of clear reference points and organisational models meant that all the political activity inside the community as such, was entirely to be invented and consequently open to the fantasies and creative capacities of each individual (Bottignolo 1985: 114-115).

As I have shown earlier, most of the socialisation of Italians in these years took place through Churches, Catholic and locally-based associations and *patronati* (welfare agencies).

> The Italian welfare agencies, which have grown up since 1965 and are attached to the various political parties in Italy, work mainly within the 'new' Communities where the industrial work-forces grew up. These, together with the Italian missionary priests and new churches, provide a remarkable degree of institutional completeness for the Italians (Colpi 1991: 221).

6.2 THE RIGHT TO VOTE

At the time Colpi wrote her well-known *The Italian Factor* (1991), Italians abroad had not been granted yet the right to vote in Italian general elections without having to go to their polling stations in Italy, but the process of European integration had caused a renewed interest in politics, with the first European parliamentary elections held in 1979, when Italian citizens resident in another EEC country were given the opportunity of voting for the election of Italian MEPs. According to Colpi, due to this event, 'a new attitude began to take root in political circles in Italy concerning the emigrants. Their potential as a political force in the national political arena was realised and a movement developed which had not occurred since the 1930s' (Colpi 1991: 227).

In the 1980s, a number of boards and commissions were set up to deal with emigrant issues (Fortier 2000: 74), among which it is necessary to cite the COMITES (Committees for Italians Abroad), instituted by Law no. 205/1985, and the CGIE (General Council for Italians Abroad), established by Law 368/1989. The CGIE is a consultative body with strictly advisory powers, and is composed of 94 members, of which 29 are appointed by the government and 65 are elected representatives of councils located in the countries of emigration. These local councils are the COMITES. In the UK there are four COMITES, while three members of the CGIE represent the Italians living in the British Isles.

In her book *Migrant Belongings*, Fortier dedicates a chapter to the (identity) politics of Italians abroad. She focuses on the politicisation of emigration by London Italians. The starting point of her analysis is the status of "invisible immigrants" of Italians in London, a cultural minority absorbed within the white European majority. In this way, on the one hand European integration would, according to Italian leaders, 'liberate Italians from their status as second class citizens by virtue of their (white) Europeanness' (Fortier 2000:72), while on the other hand the central political issue became identity preservation and self-determination that rely on some form of "return to the nation". In this way, analysing the debate on the granting of vote for Italians abroad, Fortier explains that:

> The attribution of equal voting rights to Italian emigrants is conceived, in Italy, as an issue of national integrity and solidarity that will transcend regional differences. Italian politicians speak of emigration in terms that consistently seek to assert Italian national integrity over claims of both local (for example London or British Italian) and international relationships without compromising the European community spirit [...] From the London Italian leadership's point of view, however, the issue took a different twist. Community leaders consider than the vote for representatives of Italians abroad would be a political lifeline for the émigré population...London Italian leaders are fighting for the recognition of emigration as the basis from which a distinctive identity may emerge (Fortier 2000: 78).

The so-called "question of the vote to Italian citizens overseas" centred on voting procedures, but it never questioned the right to vote for Italians abroad. As Battiston and Mascitelli (2008) explain in their paper on the challenges to democracy and citizenship surrounding the vote to Italians overseas:

> Italian politicians were conscious and concerned that allowing millions of emigrated Italian citizens to vote in Italian elections had the potential to significantly influence election results…[As a consequence], the process of seeking to amend the electoral rules concerning overseas Italian citizens has been, historically, particularly lengthy and tortuous – namely, 48 years of parliamentary debates during which 143 bill

proposals and constitutional amendments were tabled and discussed (Battiston and Mascitelli 2008: 263).

An important step in this direction was the approval of Law 91 in 1992, which amended the previous citizenship law and reinforced the key concept of transmission of citizenship by recognisable blood ties (*ius sanguinis*) among generations of Italians, irrespective of whether such ties grow and replicate outside Italy's borders. Equally important, the law also recognised multiple and/or dual citizenship.

The law granting the right of voting to Italians abroad was finally approved in 2001 by Silvio Berlusconi's second cabinet, with the decisive contribution of Mirko Tremaglia, a former fascist and Minister for Italians Abroad (see also Lafleur 2011 for an analysis of the political reasons which led to enfranchise Italian citizens abroad). The Law 459/2001 introduced the postal vote, created an overseas electoral constituency for Italians abroad (that is divided into the following overseas electoral zones: (a) Europe, including the Asian territories of the Russian Federation and Turkey; (b) South America; (c) North and Central America; (d) Africa, Asia, Oceania and Antarctica), and gave them for the first time the right to run for elections. One deputy and one senator is elected in each of the overseas electoral zones, while the other seats are distributed between the same overseas electoral zones in proportion to the number of Italian citizens resident in each, a total of twelve members in the Chamber of Deputies and six members in the Senate.

The law on the right to vote for Italians abroad is considered by many of my respondents as a turning point for the political participation of Italians in London. Marina, from the *25 Aprile* (the day of liberation from fascism) association, told me that 'the right to vote from abroad is certainly a further motivation to do some political activity abroad'. Claudio, secretary of the local branch of the *Rifondazione Comunista* (Communist Refoundation) party, explained the reason for the activity of his party in London stating that: 'when you can vote, you need mobilisation. If Italians couldn't vote, things would probably be different'. Emanuele, an activist from the *Fabbrica di Nichi* association, remembered that when he arrived in London in 1994 he had to go back to Italy in order to vote in general elections, so the new electoral law has been 'an undeniable step forward, from a practical standpoint'. Manfredi Nulli, coordinator of the *Italia dei Valori* (Italy of Values) party, provided further argumentation on this point:

> I have the feeling that more and more people from the new migration register with the AIRE and I believe that a consciousness is developing for those who live abroad not only to use new forms of communication such as the internet as a form of protest or

> expression of consensus, but also to understand that you can do something with your vote from abroad.

Also respondents from the old first generation emphasise the change due to the new law: for example, Mr Cassetta told me that:

> after the law, the political activity of Italians in London increased a lot…for the first time we had some political meetings, before no one came here for us Italians, so in my opinion this vote has a big influence on Italian politicians to understand that there is a force abroad.

In spite of this mobilising effect and the fact that the vote gives voice to Italians who live outside the country, the law approved in 2001 has also received some criticism (see Tintori 2009, and Tarli Barbieri 2007 for an analysis of the problems related to the new law), which is remarked on by several of my respondents and key informants.

Lorenzo Losi, current president of the ACLI *patronato* in the UK and a former vice-president of the CGIE, was involved in the process that led to the approval of the law 459/2001. He explained to me with passion how the law had been originally conceived and then he showed his disillusionment for how the final version was different from the initial intentions. In fact, in his opinion, the number of MPs is too small; as a consequence, some communities do not have their own representative in the parliament. For example, in the European electoral zone, most of the residents live in Switzerland and in Germany, thus it is more likely that an MP would be elected among the Italians who live in those countries, rather than from the London area (in spite of London being the second biggest consular constituency in the world today). The number of MPs elected abroad is linked to the way the constituency is divided into the aforementioned electoral zones, and the way these zones were designed does not allow MPs to have a regular presence among their electorate. Even more important, the electoral zones were planned on the basis of the Italian presence in the different geographic areas at the time: this does not take into account the evolution of Italian migration and the low percentage of new migrants who register with the AIRE, as I explained in chapter 4.

But probably the most troublesome aspect of the current law is the voting procedure. First of all, as Marina told me, the law is intricate, because of the different systems adopted for each kind of election: while the postal vote is used for voting in national elections and referenda, for European elections those who choose to opt for Italian candidates have to go to *ad hoc* polling stations set up in the UK; finally if an Italian who is resident abroad wants to vote in the local election of his or her town, province or region of origin in Italy, they have to go back there and vote at the local polling stations, as the absentee ballot is not allowed for these elections. This

complexity generates confusion on the rights Italians abroad are granted and, in terms of the political opportunity structure, discourages participation, especially in local elections in Italy.

The rationale behind this policy choice is that in many municipalities, especially in Southern Italy, the number of people registered as Italians abroad is bigger (or relatively high) compared to the number of those who are still resident in these villages; thus the vote of migrants and their descendants could fundamentally affect the results of elections. For similar reasons, it should be stressed that Italians abroad elect twelve MPs in the Chamber of Deputies, but their votes do not contribute to the calculation of the majority prize for the coalition which obtains more votes. Most respondents were not aware of this significant detail regarding their electoral rights, which puts a big limitation on their concrete influence on Italian politics.

Instead, the more common allegation about the postal vote is that it allows fraud. In fact, the envelopes containing the voting papers are sent by the Consulates to the addresses provided by Italian citizens who are registered as resident abroad. Inside the main envelope, there is a smaller pre-franked one where voters can put the voting paper and send it back to the Consulate. Voting papers are then transferred to Italy, where they are counted altogether. There are three main issues with this system: the first is that envelopes are posted as normal mail and no signature is required at the point of delivery; second, it is duty of Italian citizens to communicate any change of address to the Consulate. This means that a certain percentage of citizens do not receive their ballots. Finally, an issue that is intrinsic to the postal vote is that voting is not completely secret and can be delegated to someone else. According to several of my key informants, this is what happened with the second- and third-generation Italians who left their voting papers to their parents to fill them; moreover the latters' vote can be controlled. Mr Cassetta spoke in general terms: 'much more organisation is needed, much more attention to how voting happens, because there have been many irregularities'. Instead, Father Giandomenico was much more direct in expressing his doubts:

> The votes of the second and third generations were managed by their parents: in a household where they received ten voting papers, parents are those who voted for all of them…I understand that not everyone is attracted to politics, you get the convenience of voting at home, you can vote with full consciousness and freedom, but then you don't care because you don't feel it…We have all seen that the voting system is really a scam, you cannot say that is the real community that has voted for their candidates; this is not true, and not only in England. And in this sense the *patronati* played a negative role, I mean, the first and second elections were managed by *patronati*, they handled the envelopes.

Frauds and irregularities in the vote of Italians abroad in several consular constituencies were reported in the news. While I have no evidence to prove his allegation, Father Giandomenico's words can be clarified by what I have been told by representatives of some Italian political parties, that a few Italians from the old first generation, with little education, are used to contacting the *patronati* or the leaders of their hometown/regional associations when they receive communication from Italian offices. In this way, when voting papers were sent, it would not be surprising if some old Italians had handed their ballots to *patronati*. Of course, this does not mean that their voting papers have been filled by someone else, or that votes have been actually controlled by *patronati*. Instead, I argue that if some institutions or parties believe that there have been some irregularities, this should generate a deeper debate on how to involve and inform more the old first generation and their descendants. In fact, as I will show in the next section and throughout this chapter, information plays a key role in determining the political participation of Italians in London.

6.3 INTEREST AND INFORMATION ABOUT POLITICS

As I mentioned earlier, in the introduction and in chapter 2, in this research I adopt a broad definition of political participation, which includes also being interested and informed about politics. First of all, new communication technologies give the chance to Italian citizens who live abroad to be informed about what happens in Italy as much as their fellow citizens who live in the home country (or even more, according to several of my respondents who are very critical about the freedom of the media in Italy, as I will explain more in detail in the section on the reasons for their transnational participation). On the other hand, old migrants are mostly excluded by this flow of information because of their lack of technological skills; thus their knowledge of what happens in Italy usually relies on Italian TV programmes watched via satellite. As regards British-born Italians, their access to news about Italy is restricted by their limited knowledge of the Italian language, especially in written form. As I will show later in this chapter, several of the respondents from this group identify the lack or scarcity of information as the main reason why they do not participate in Italian politics.

6.3.1 The old first generation

If we look at the results of the questionnaire study (figure 1), among the twenty-seven old first-generation respondents who answered this set of questions, only six state that they are

very well informed about what happens in Italy, while ten consider themselves as reasonably informed. Respondents from this group show relatively more interest in what happens in London (seven say they are very well informed and eleven are reasonably informed) and in the UK (twenty are either very well or reasonably informed). This can be interpreted as a consequence of the low-cost access to information through television for this generational group, as it emerged during the follow-up interviews I carried out.

Figure 1: Level of information (O1G)
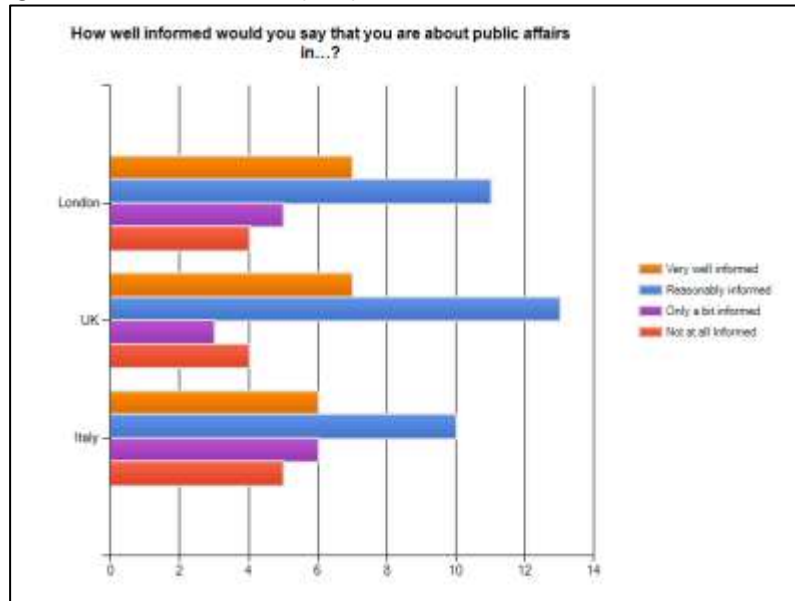
This is confirmed by the results of another question, on how often respondents read newspapers, check websites, or watch or listen to news programmes on TV or on the radio to know about public affairs in London, UK and Italy (figure 2). While fifteen respondents out of twenty-seven say they follow what happens in Italy almost every day and four do it regularly, these ratios rise to respectively eighteen and six out of twenty-seven in regards to public affairs in London and to nineteen and five out of twenty-seven for public affairs in the UK.

If we consider instead the level of interest in politics (figure 3), only a minority of respondents (ten) from the old first generation are very or fairly interested in Italian politics, while a third of them are not interested at all in it. Interestingly, the number of those who are either very interested or not interested at all is similar if we look also at local politics in London and British politics: respectively, eight and seven respondents are very interested, while six and five of them are not interested at all. The most significant difference is in those who are fairly or not very interested, who can probably be identified as "median voters" and tend to follow more what happens in the city and in the country where they currently live.

Figure 2: Use of media to follow news (O1G)

How often would you say you read newspapers (can also be on the internet), or watch or listen to news programmes on television or on the radio to find out about recent developments in public affairs in…?
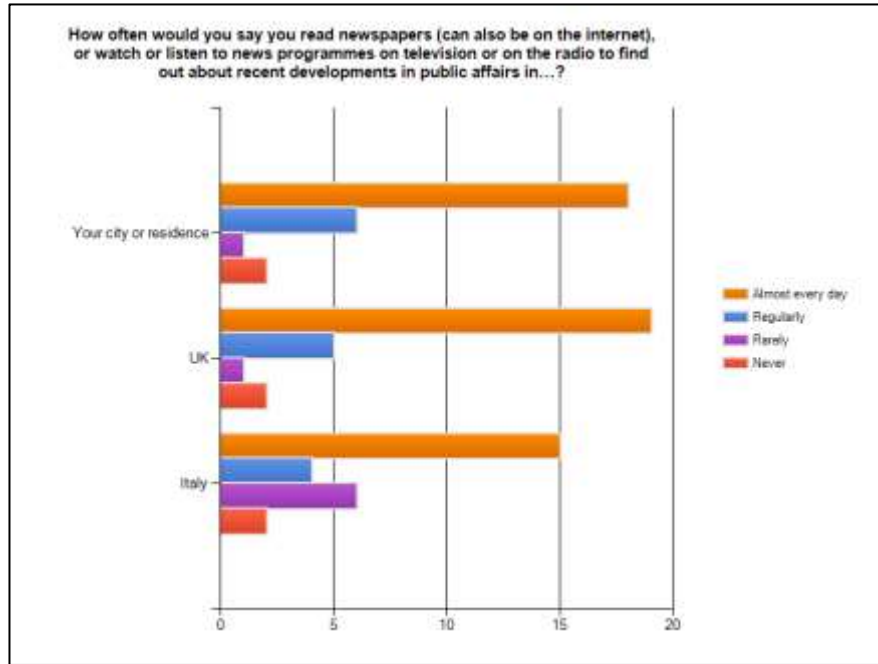
Figure 3: Interest in politics (O1G)

How interested are you personally in each of the following areas?
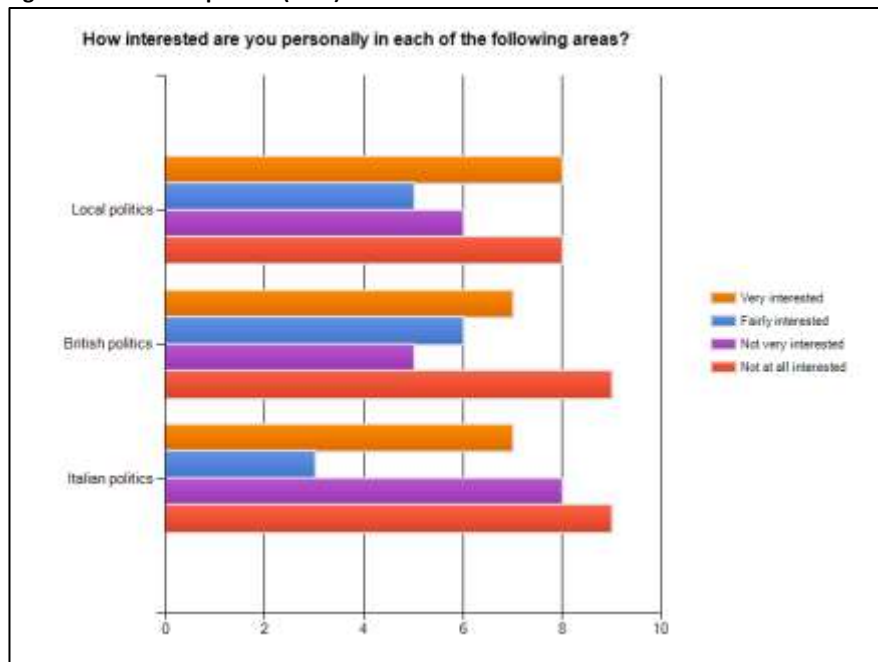
On the other hand, when asked how often they talk to family, friends or colleagues about politics (figure 4), speaking about Italian politics appears to be more common than discussing about local or British politics: one third old first-generation Italians claim to do it almost every day or regularly, whereas the respective numbers are smaller for local and British politics (although it should be noticed that most of the respondents answered either rarely or never).

Figure 4: Talking about politics (O1G)
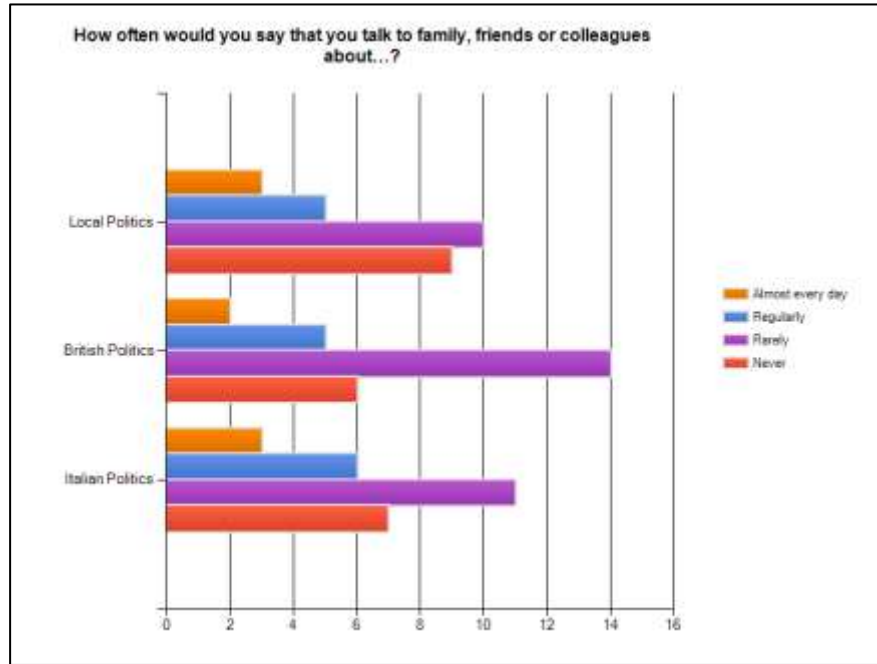
This result is probably due to the fact that, even after many years living in the UK, the socialisation for many old Italian migrants still takes place with other Italians and through Italian channels, such as regional associations, *patronati* and churches. Moreover, as I explained when speaking about the methodology of this research, participants from this group were the most difficult to be reached and accessed, so it is likely that those who accepted to take part in the research are those whose ties with the Italian community are stronger.

6.3.2 The new first generation

If we analyse the same questions for the new first generation, the picture is very different. As regards the level of information (figure 5), around one third of the thirty respondents in this group state that they are very informed about what happens in Italy, while only four claim the same about their knowledge of public affairs in the UK, and even less (three) about what happens in London. It should be added that the most answered option to the question on how well informed participants are in public affairs in the UK is being "reasonably informed", chosen by twenty-one respondents (figure 5).

The low degree of information on public affairs at the local level is confirmed by the fact that only one third of the respondents follow almost everyday news about London. Instead, more than half participants from this group read, listen or watch almost everyday news about Italy and about the UK (figure 6).

Figure 5: Level of information (N1G)
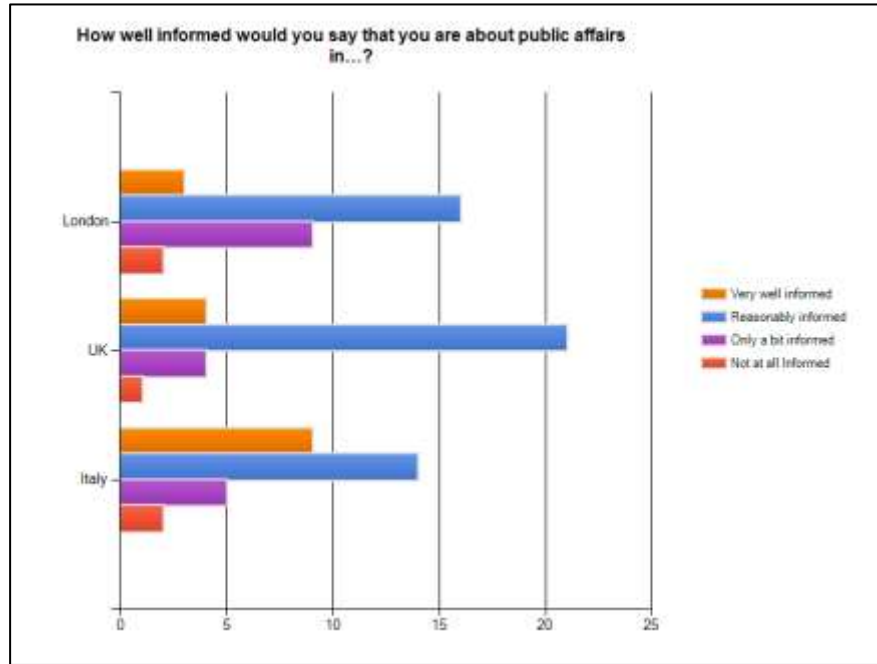
Figure 6: Use of media to follow news (N1G)
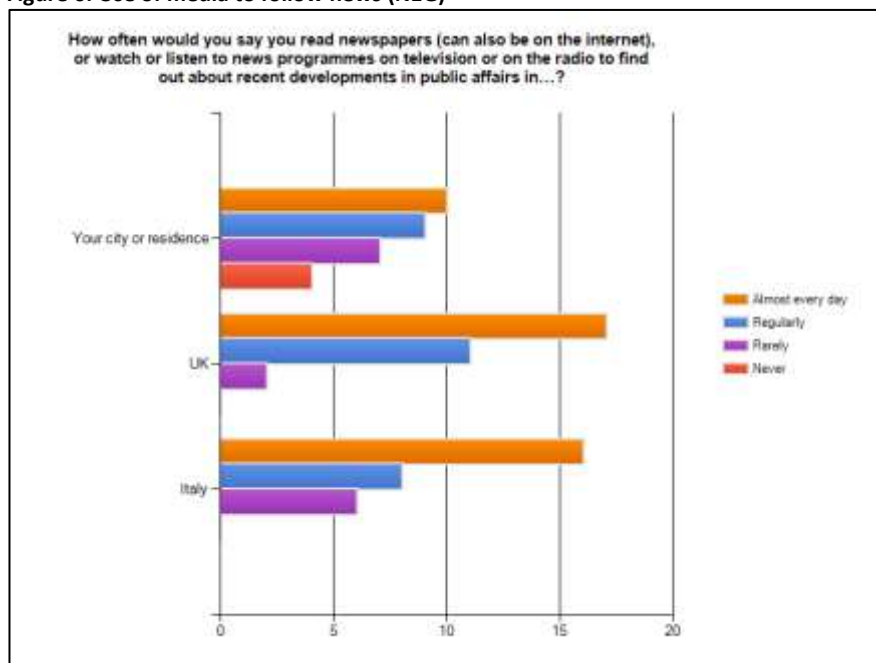
The combination of these data and the additional information I collected during my interviews and ethnography show that: (1) the new first generation is in regular touch with public affairs in Italy, following them almost every day or at least regularly; (2) this group of recently arrived migrants appears to get just the information they need as residents of another country (for example, about the labour market, housing, taxation and welfare), this explaining the vast majority who consider themselves reasonably informed; (3) the sources of information are

different from those of the old first generation: nobody among the new migrants mentioned satellite TV among their sources, while the internet is the media commonly used to know about what is going on in Italy. As regards news about the UK, an important role is played by free-press, which provides no-cost basic information for those working in the Greater London area. (4) Finally, compared to the old first generation, recently arrived Italians seem to be less tied to their neighbourhood or borough in London and less interested in what happens at the local level. My interpretation of this finding is that people from this group spend most of their time at their working place and socialising outside afterwards, and buy their own house or settle in a specific area only sometime after their arrival in London.

The data on the level of information are echoed by those on political interest (figure 7): more than one third of the respondents (eleven out of thirty) are very interested in Italian politics, seven in British politics (with other fifteen who are fairly interested), and only three claim they are very interested in local politics. Local politics is the only area for which half of the respondents answered either that they are not very interested or not interested at all.

As a consequence, more than three quarters of the respondents from this group speak either rarely or never about local politics. British politics is a regular topic of conversation for half or my new first-generation respondents, while twenty-two of them speak almost every day or regularly about what happens in the Italian political arena (figure 8).

Figure 7: Interest in politics (N1G)
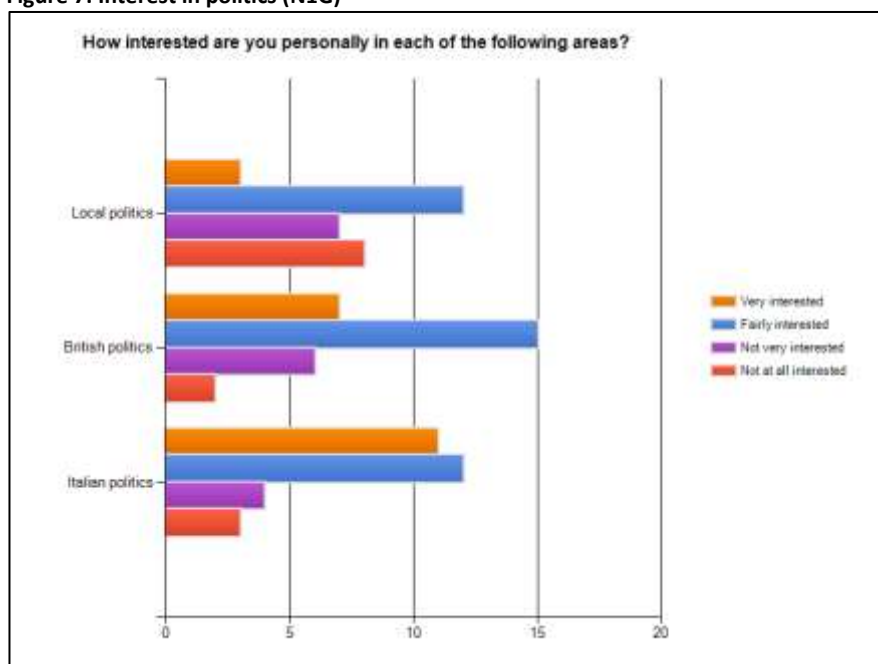
Figure 8: Talking about politics (N1G)
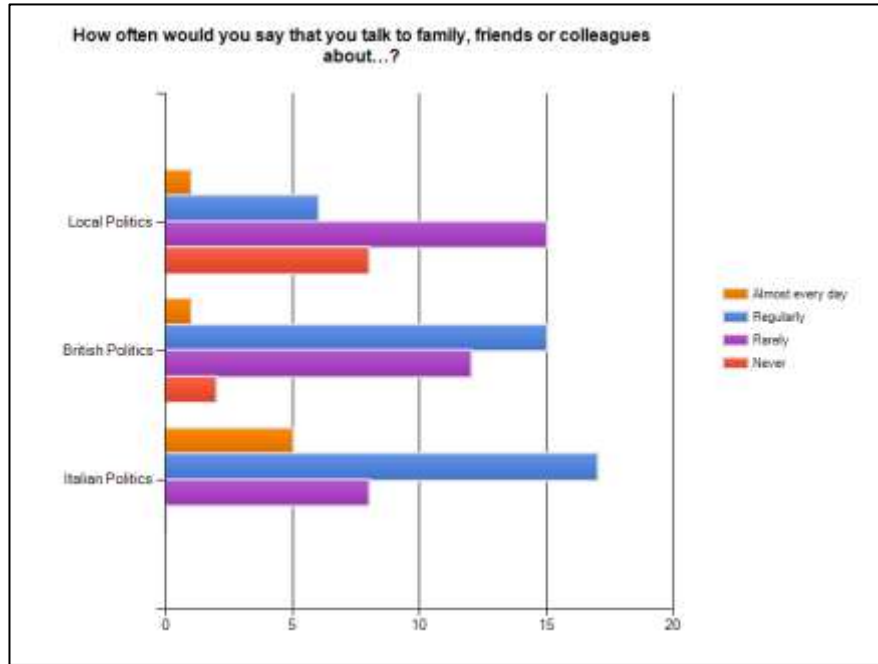
From my interviews and informal conversations, the possible interpretation for these attitudes and behaviours is on the one hand the fact that speaking about politics in the UK is not as common as in Italy; thus this happens regularly but not daily. On the other hand, Italians are more used to discussing about Italian politics and they have chances to do that either when they meet other Italians, or when they speak on the phone or on the web with their family and friends. In this way, the opportunity provided by easy and cheap communication seems to play a more important role than the institutional political opportunity of voting in local elections as EU citizens resident in another EU country (which requires a bureaucratic act, that is signing up in the local register).

6.3.3 The British-born Italians

Finally, from the responses of the British-born group, it emerges very clearly that their attention and interest is much more geared towards London and the UK than towards Italy. In fact, as can be observed in figures 9 and 10, only one respondent out of thirty-two defines herself as very well informed about public affairs in Italy and only two claim that they follow news about Italy daily; instead, more than half declare that they are only a bit or not at all informed, and the same number (seventeen) do not follow or follow rarely news about their country of origin. News about London and about the UK are tracked by respectively fourteen

and seventeen participants from this group, who mostly think they are reasonably informed about the city and the country where they live.

Figure 9: Level of information (BBI)
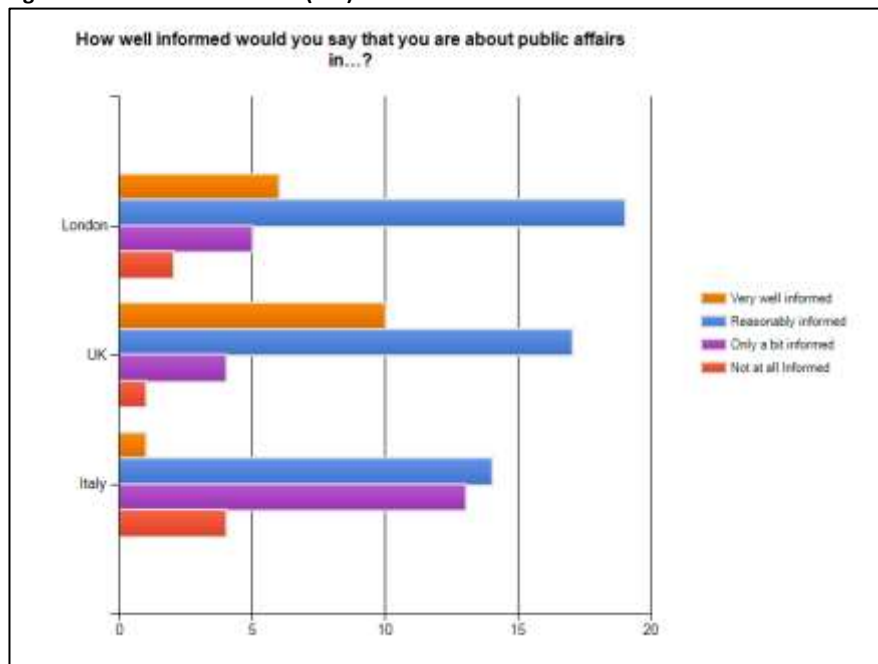
Figure 10: Use of media to follow news (BBI)
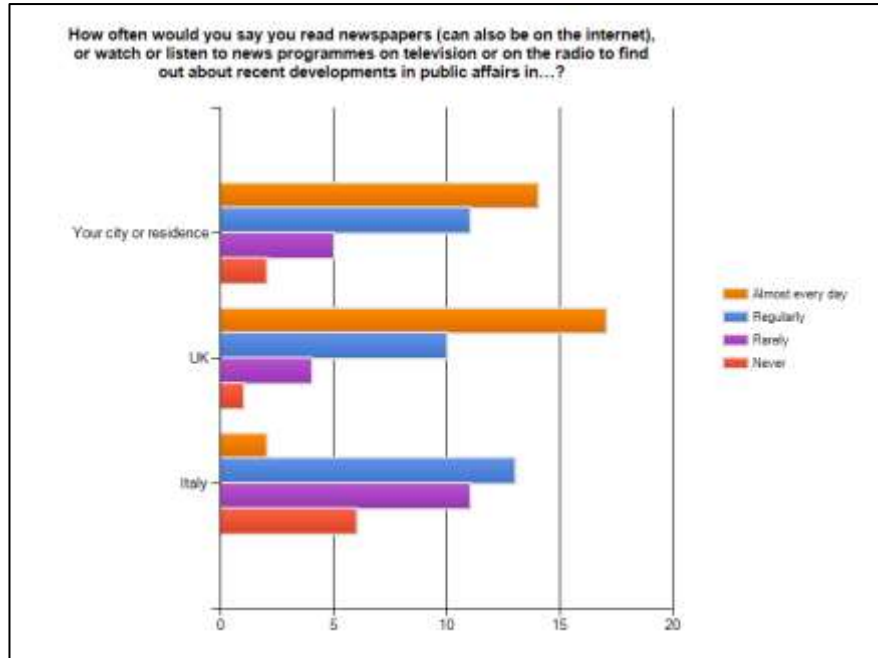
In spite of their lack of information, as shown in figure 11, the majority of British-born Italian respondents show some degree of interest in Italian politics (four are very interested and thirteen are fairly interested in it), but most of them (around two thirds) discuss it rarely or never (figure 12).

As a consequence of their growing up in the UK and their being English native speakers, people in this group give more attention to local and – even more – British politics (figure 11); in the same way, politics is not a daily topic of conversation (only two and one claim to talk almost every day respectively about British politics and local politics), but still the majority of the participants (seventeen out of thirty-two) answer that they talk to family, friends or colleagues about British politics regularly (figure 12).

Figure 11: Interest in politics (BBI)
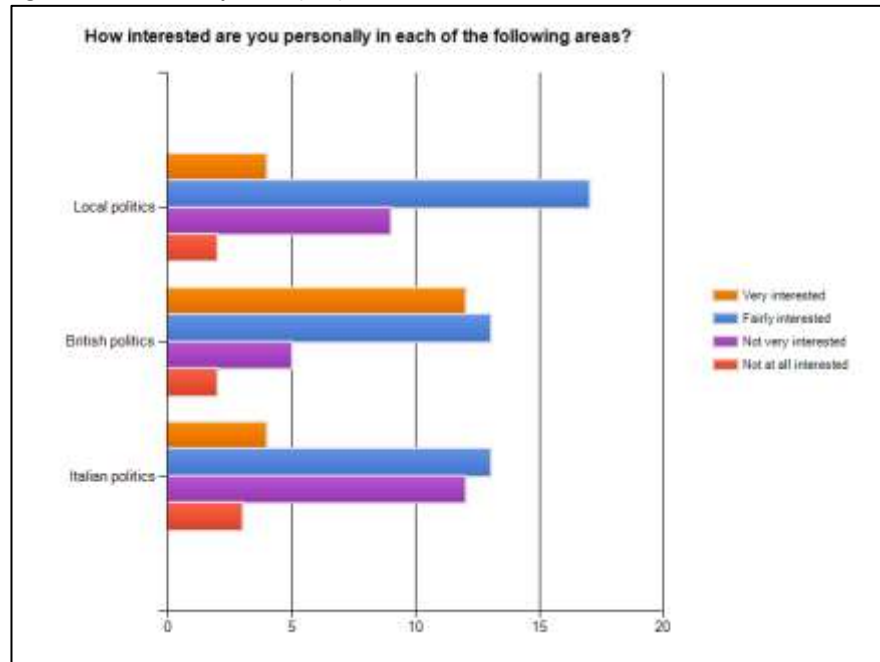
Figure 12: Talking about politics (BBI)
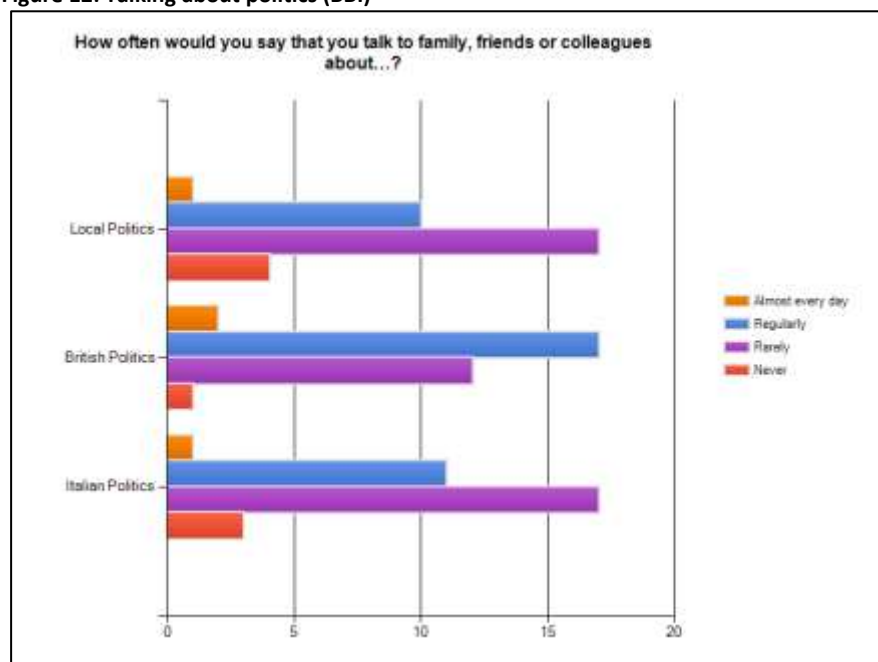
6.4 VOTING IN ITALIAN ELECTIONS

6.4.1 Analysis of official data

Interest and information about Italian politics deeply affect the turnout in elections. Following the approval of law 459/2001, the new voting procedures were first put to the test on the occasion of the 15 June 2003 referenda. Data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs show that just over one fifth (21.8%) of the total eligible Italian voters overseas (2.3 million) participated in the vote; that means that the overseas voter turnout was not far from the overall number of voters (Italy plus overseas: 25.7%). In the UK, the turnout of Italian voters was much lower, only 4.7%.

The picture changes if we look at the last two Italian general elections in 2006 and in 2008. In 2006, the new law was applied for the first time in a general election and – to general surprise – the vote of Italian citizens living abroad was decisive for the centre-left coalition led by Romano Prodi to get the majority in the Senate. As showed in table 2, the turnout for the total of the overseas electoral constituency was less than half the turnout in Italy; in the European electoral zone the turnout was slightly lower, and the percentage of Italians who voted in the UK was almost six percentage points below the European average.

As regards the performance of the different political parties, the "winners" and "losers" in absolute terms were the same in Italy and in the overseas constituency, while in relative terms it should be highlighted the success of the *Associazioni Italiane in Sud America* (Italian Associations in South America) in the South America electoral zone, the good result of the *Italia dei Valori* in the European electoral zone, and the overall poor performance of the *Lega Nord* (Northern League).

Table 2: 2006 General Election (Chamber of Deputies)				
	Overseas (total)	Europe	UK	Italy
TURNOUT	**38.93%**	**36.04%**	**30.60%**	**83.62%**
L'Unione	43.39%	52.73%	42.96%	46.11% *
Forza Italia	20.86%	24.42%	29.14%	23.72%
Ass. Italiane Sud America	10.28%	-	-	-
Per Italia nel Mondo -Tremaglia	7.42%	3.85%	8.13%	12.34% **
Unione di Centro	6.84%	4.60%	4.01%	6.76%
Italia dei Valori	2.82%	5.20%	4.68%	2.30%
Lega Nord	2.08%	2.34%	3.19%	4.58%

(Data source: Ministry of Internal Affairs)
(*= Tot. Ulivo – Italia dei Valori – UDEur)
(** Data for Alleanza Nazionale)

If we move to analyse the 2008 General Election (table 3), we can see more differences in the way Italian politics is viewed and participated in Italy and abroad. First, while the turnout decreased by three percentage points in Italy, it remained more or less stable overseas. Then, looking at the parties' results, while in Italy Silvio Berlusconi's centre-right coalition got a broad consensus, overseas the centre-left coalition got the majority of members of Parliament and the *Partito Democratico* (Democrat Party) was the first party in the overall constituency and in Europe (but not in the UK). Some other results need to be highlighted: (1) both in the European electoral zone and in the UK, the sum of the votes received by *Partito Democratico*, *Italia dei Valori* and *Sinistra Arcobaleno* (Raibow Left, a coalition of leftist parties created before the 2008 General Election) gave to the centre-left forces an absolute majority; (2) the *Unione di Centro*'s performance in Europe (and in particular in the UK) was negative compared to their result in the overall overseas constituency; (3) Di Pietro's *Italia dei Valori* got in Europe a percentage of votes that is double its result in Italy, and in the UK it passed the threshold of 10%; (4) as in 2006 the result of Berlusconi's *Forza Italia* in the UK was five points above the results of the same party in the European electoral zone, similarly in 2008 the result of the *Popolo della Liberta'*(People of Freedom, the new party founded by Berlusconi) in the UK was six points above the performance in the European electoral zone. In analysing these results, it is important to take into account that the *Lega Nord* decided not to run in the overseas electoral constituency.

Table 3: 2008 General Election (Chamber of Deputies)				
	Overseas (total)	Europe	UK	Italy
TURNOUT	39.46%	35.41%	32.00%	80.51%
Partito Democratico	32.48%	39.93%	35.63%	33.18%
Popolo della Liberta'	30.90%	33.64%	39.59%	37.38%
Ass Italiane Sud America	6.16%	-	-	-
Unione di Centro	8.43%	5.45%	2.92%	5.62%
Mov Ass Italiani all'Estero	8.33%	-	-	-
IDV	4.04%	8.12%	10.42%	4.37%
Sinistra Arcobaleno	2.73%	4.09%	4.81%	3.08%
Lega Nord	-	-	-	8.30%

(Data source: Ministry of Internal Affairs)

As regards the London Consular Constituency only, it is possible to notice that, while in the overall European electoral zone the number of voters in 2008 was more or less the same as in 2006, as mentioned above (35.4% versus 35.9%), in London there was a rise in the turnout from 32.2% in 2006 to 34.8% in 2008.

A reason for the rise in the turnout among Italians in London might be the evolution of the Italian presence in London: the weight of the newly arrived over the total number of Italians in

the UK has been increasing; while old migrants are influenced by the low participation of British citizens, for many years did not have the possibility to vote and are less interested in what happens in Italy, the newly arrived are often highly mobile people, who are informed and critical about current affairs in Italy and who expect they might come back to their country of origin in the future, and thus want to contribute to its social and political life, as I will explain more in section 6.6.

This factor helps us to understand the aforementioned good performance of political parties – like the *Italia dei Valori* – that are very critical of the Italian political system and emphasise values (seen by London Italians as) embedded in British society, such as "meritocracy" and the "rule of law", and which are part of the distinctive Italianness that is emerging among new waves of Italian migrants, as I discussed in the previous two chapters.

This becomes even more evident if we look at the latest European Election in June 2009 (table 4). In this case, it has to be taken into account that the elections regard only the EU area, that Italian citizens who are resident in any EU country can choose whether they vote for Italian or local candidates, and that the modality of voting is different, as the postal vote is not allowed and electors have to go to polling stations.

Table 4: 2009 European Elections			
	Europe	**UK**	**Italy**
TURNOUT	**7.42%**	**6.47%**	**66.47%**
Popolo della Liberta'	35.17%	35.51%	35.23%
Partito Democratico	22.81%	22.10%	26.11%
Italia dei Valori	13.66%	15.23%	7.98%
Sinistra e Liberta'	7.31%	6.40%	3.11%
Unione di Centro	4.43%	3.56%	6.52%
Rifondazione + Comunisti Italiani	3.76%	2.93%	3.39%
Pannella - Bonino	3.71%	4.85%	2.42%
Lega Nord	2.78%	3.29%	10.22%

(Data source: Ministry of Internal Affairs)

For these reasons, the turnout for this election was much lower than for the previous two general elections: around 7% both overall overseas and in the UK. This means that most voters belonged to the category of the most informed and active Italian citizens resident abroad. As is typical in "second-order" elections, many voters voted for protest parties, rather than the usual mainstream parties they would vote for in a national election. These factors explain the success of parties like *Sinistra e Liberta'* and above all *Italia dei Valori*, that improved their performance, compared to the 2008 general election.

6.4.2 Data from my questionnaire-based study

Data from my questionnaire contribute to unpack the official numbers of the participation in Italian elections. I asked respondents whether they voted in the last general election and whether they think they will vote in the next one. First of all, it should be noted here that one of the requirements to participate in my study was to be registered with AIRE, which is a necessary condition in order to vote as an Italian citizen resident abroad.

Starting from the old first generation, around two thirds (seventeen) of the twenty-seven respondents answered that they voted in the 2008 General Election, and nineteen think that they will vote in the next one. One aspect that should be taken into account in analysing these data is that for practical reasons, as I mentioned earlier in the section on methodology, most participants from this group filled in the questionnaire in my presence: as in the past voting was mandatory in Italy and is still considered a duty among old generations, it is likely that the high portion of people who answered "yes" may partly be biased by this organisational aspect.

As regards the new first generation, the fraction of those who answered that they voted in the previous Italian election is the same (nineteen out of thirty) as for the old first generation; none of the respondents from this group answered that they will change their choice whether to vote or not in anticipation of the next Italian general election.

Finally, if we look at the British-born Italians, less than one fifth (six of the thirty-two) respondents stated that they voted in the last general election, twenty did not vote even if they were eligible to do so, and five were not eligible. The picture changed when they were asked about the next Italian general election: eleven participants from this group claimed that they will vote, the number of those who were sure not to vote even if eligible decreased to only six but the most-answered was "I don't know", chosen by more than a third of the respondents. This is probably due to the aforementioned lack of information and interest in Italian politics among this group: should they have some more specific and concrete interests to take part in the next Italian election, they will collect information and vote, otherwise they won't, as they did in 2008.

6.5 PARTIES, MOVEMENTS AND OTHER FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

In the previous chapter I described the network of Italian institutions, churches, welfare agencies and associations which are active in London. Here I will examine another important

component of the Italian network, which is made up of political parties and movements. The presence and activity of these political organisations represent at the same time part of the institutional political opportunity structure for Italians in London and an example of their political participation.

Even if my respondents from the ACLI and INCA *patronati* mentioned the activity of groups of people linked to the *Democrazia Cristiana* (Christian Democracy) and the *Partito Comunista* (Communist Party) since the 1970s, as I explained earlier the turning point for the presence of Italian political organisations in London was the approval of the law on the right to vote for Italians abroad. During my fieldwork, I interviewed representatives of most Italian parties and I attended meetings and events organised by them.

One first aspect that should be highlighted is that, although all Italian main political parties have a branch in London, the centre-left parties and the associations that opposed Berlusconi's government at the time of my fieldwork, are more active: they have more members and sympathisers following their activities, they organise more social and political events (as is evident from the list of meetings and debates I attended, which I presented in box 1 in chapter 3) and often invite guest speakers from Italy, and they make a more frequent and interactive use of new communication technologies. On the one hand, this can be explained by the fragmentation of centre-left forces in the Italian political landscape, that was mirrored in London; on the other hand, Maurizio Morabito, spokesman of the *Popolo della Liberta'*, suggested that the reason for the lower level of activism of centre-right parties in London was that with Berlusconi in power they did not have motives to organise mobs or other forms of protest. Moreover, he suggested that Italians supporting the centre-left forces are more active because they are mostly from the academic world, while centre-right supporters and voters work mainly in finance and business, thus implying that they have less free time to invest in political activism. My fieldwork does not confirm this statement: in fact, if it appears clear that the majority of Italian researchers and students in London universities opposed Berlusconi's governments, several of the participants at the meetings, events and protests organised by opposition forces were employed in finance or in other professional and business-oriented sectors.

This being said, the set-up of the different Italian political parties in London usually followed a common pattern, showing a mix of bottom-up mobilisation first and top-down institutionalisation afterwards. 'Before the law, there were interested people, informal groups, but no formal structures', Claudio from *Rifondazione Comunista* told me. He went on:

> The group exists since the Tremaglia law introduced the vote for Italians abroad. Initially there was a small group of willing people, nothing formal. Afterwards they organised themselves, established a branch, formally acknowledged by the party in Italy, and others have been set up in other European cities, there is a network of branches of *Rifondazione* all around Europe.

In this way, most Italian political parties started their presence in London with the spontaneous involvement of small groups who organised themselves and only at a later stage did the headquarters of Italian political parties establish formal hierarchical structures for the activity of their branches abroad. In the beginning, parties relied also on the networks of community leaders coming from the traditional associational world, but with the boom of migration from Italy in the past ten years and the diffusion of new communication technologies, the new professional migration took the lead.

Although all Italian political parties in London hold scheduled (usually monthly) meetings and organise events with guest speakers, their regular activity and debate goes on through the internet, by means of newsletter, Facebook groups and web-sites. This is due mainly to the dimension and the distances in a metropolis like London and the time needed to reach the venue chosen for meetings. Also, no Italian political parties have their own office, thus meetings may happen in university buildings, usually when a member of the party works in an academic institution, in other public spaces like the South Bank Centre, in pubs or Italian pizzerias, or even in private flats.

> It is very difficult to organise events because London is a huge city and Italians are scattered around it…the old migration still has the Italian Church as a reference point, and the associations linked to the Church, while it is more difficult to localise for the new migration (interview with Marina, *25 Aprile* association).

That is why 'communication via the internet is fundamental. We have got Facebook…we have our mailing list, we have our discussion group in our website, we also have a blog as part of the website', exemplified Manfredi Nulli, secretary of the *Italia dei Valori* UK.

Moreover, new communication technologies are not only helpful to overcome the distance among Italians in London and to be informed on what happens in Italy: by means of the internet political activists in London can communicate their views and ideas and can reach a much bigger audience in Italy, in the UK and in other countries. In fact, while some of my respondents complained about the scarce attention they receive by the often hyper-bureaucratised headquarters of their parties in Italy, others preferred to emphasise the regular communication and the shared initiatives carried out with several branches of their party in

Europe and around the world. For example, at the time of my fieldwork, protests by Italian communities on the themes of the freedom of press and the role of women in Italian society were organised on the same days as in Italy in many cities around the world and promoted mainly through the web; in London the demonstration in favour of press freedom took place in front of the BBC headquarters in October 2009, while the *Senonoraquando* (literally: 'If not now, when') protest for the dignity of women at the time of Mr Berlusconi's sexual scandals took place in front of Downing Street in February 2011.

In this way, the opportunities offered by the internet are one of the main explanations for the increasing participation in Italian politics from abroad, thus confirming an aspect remarked on by several scholars (among which: Koslowski 2005, Bauböck 2008, and Vertovec 2009). The internet allows active participation in the Italian political debate in several ways, from signing an online petition, to writing a blog and commenting regularly on Italian politics. Probably, the best example of this pattern is given by the biography of Ivan Scalfarotto, currently the vice-president of the assembly of the *Partito Democratico*, whom I interviewed in Milan.

Scalfarotto was a professional, working in the financial sector in London, where in 2005 he founded the local branch of *Libertà e Giustizia* (Freedom and Justice), an association whose members met twice a month to discuss Italian social and political life. Scalfarotto became one of the main Italian political bloggers; as a consequence, he decided to run for the primary election for the leadership of the centre-left coalition before the 2006 Italian general election. Obviously Scalfarotto did not win those primary elections, but he became known in the Italian political establishment – which is very reluctant to changes coming from outside. Thus he decided to go back to Italy and focus on his political career, joining the hierarchical structure of the *Partito Democratico* – where he works on LGBT rights (an area in which the British legislation is much more advanced than the Italian one) – and later becoming the vice-president of the assembly of the party.

On the other hand, it should be stressed that the wide use of new technologies creates a barrier between generations. 'Italian people who have been resident abroad for long time probably do not use it, that means that old migrants who have been here for a long time are not reachable', Claudio from *Rifondazione Comunista* explained to me. This was confirmed by my attendance at meetings and events organised by parties, which usually saw the participation of people from the new wave of migrants, with few attendees from the older generations. Claudio follows up:

> [for the old migration] you need to be in the field, you have to go there, meet them, speak to them, in few words you have to go and meet all the community of Italians abroad, it is hard to reach them.

For this reason the attempts to involve the old migrants – more common during electoral campaigns – occur with the support of the traditional network of regional associations, local community leaders linked to parties, and *patronati*.

An interesting example is provided by the visit of Sen. Micheloni (*Partito Democratico*) to London in November 2010; I interviewed him and I was given the chance to shadow most of his visit to the constituency. In this way, I could observe that the party arranged for him two different meetings. The first, which targeted the new wave of migrants, (a) took place in the late afternoon, in order to allow workers to attend after office hours, (b) was housed in a university room at King's College (where the local secretary of the party works as a professor), and (c) was advertised online. The second meeting, which was for the old generation of migrants, (a) started in the late morning, after which the attendees had a communal lunch, (b) the venue chosen was the hall of the INCA-CGIL *patronato*, which (c) publicised the event through more traditional channels. Obviously, also the topics of the two meetings were different, reflecting the differences in the two audiences: at King's College Micheloni spoke and was asked mainly about the current political situation in Italy, while at the *patronato* the main issues discussed were pensions, welfare assistance and the cuts to the Italian consular system.

Finally, the use of new technologies also makes the communication and coordination among the local leaders of the different parties and movements easier, this being the case especially for opposition forces. In fact, given the small numbers of people actively participating in meetings and events, political forces opposing Berlusconi's government tried to coordinate and advertise events. This usually happened, more than through formal channels, through exploiting the direct knowledge of the leaders of the different parties; thus it can be considered an example of "interlocking directorates", as theorised by Fennema (2004).

This last point leads me to say something about the small numbers of people who participate in political activities in ways different than voting. In my questionnaire, I asked whether my respondents had been involved in the previous twelve months in any of the following political activities, with regard to Italian politics (see table 5): (1) contact a politician or a government or local government official; (2) be affiliated with a political organisation; (3) work in a political party or contribute to a campaign/political cause; (4) attend a political meeting; (5) sign a

petition/collection of signatures; (6) take part in a public demonstration; (7) donate money to a political organisation or group; (8) take part in a strike; (9) contact the media.

Among the old first generation, the vast majority of the respondents were not involved in any of these activities. Only four of them contacted a politician or a local government official, and three attended a political meeting. Their age and limited aptitude in using new technologies are the main reasons for this behaviour.

Table 5: Number of those who did any of the following activities in the previous 12 months, with regard to Italian politics			
	O1G (N=27)	N1G (N=30)	BBI (N=32)
Contact a politician or a government or local government official	4	3	2
Be affiliated with a political organisation	0	4	1
Work in a political party or contribute to a campaign/political cause	0	3	1
Attend a political meeting	3	6	2
Sign a petition/collection of signatures	0	15	2
Take part in a public demonstration	0	10	0
Donate money to a political organisation or group	0	4	1
Take part in a strike	0	1	0
Contact the media	0	5	2

The situation changes for the new first generation: each activity was experienced at least by one of the respondents; one out of five attended a political meeting on Italian politics and one out of three took part in a public demonstration. These data are remarkable because they show that, even if some people do not regularly follow the activities of Italian parties, they are ready to participate in a demonstration, to "take to the streets" (as is common in Italian politics), especially if the reason for the demonstration is something affecting the dignity or the image of Italians abroad. This finding resonates with what was documented earlier by Levitt, according to whom 'it may be easier for political party operatives to mobilize naturalized citizens around specific, targeted sending-country campaigns than to expect them to participate regularly in party activities' (Levitt 2003: 181).

As will become evident in the next section on the reasons for participation, the presence of Silvio Berlusconi as Prime Minister at the time of my research has been a mobilising factor that cannot be overlooked, also due to the attention that the British press turned on him. Non-electoral forms of participation are influenced by "questions of affects and emotions": what emerges from my fieldwork is that indignation and shame are feelings capable of mobilising Italians in London on particular issues and spur their participation in demonstrations and other forms of protest. This leads me to agree with Però and Solomos , according to whom 'more potential for future research may derive by considering also addressing – for example – the

role played by attachments and feelings in migrants' collective action' (Però and Solomos 2010: 14).

It is important to emphasise again that non-electoral political participation involves small numbers: typically a party meeting is usually attended by ten to thirty people and an event with a guest speaker rarely attracts more than a hundred, while the most successful crowds I attended had around 300 to 400 participants. This finding confirms what has been stated by several scholars, among whom are Waldinger (2008), Itzigsohn and Villacres (2008), and Guarnizo, Portes and Haller (2003); namely that few immigrants show much interest or are regularly involved in cross-border political activities. An exception in my survey is the high number of newly-arrived respondents (half of the sample) who signed a petition or a collection of signatures regarding Italian politics, this being a low-cost activity in terms of time and effort, but which at the same time allows Italians in London to participate in the same way as their fellow citizens in Italy and around the world.

Finally, this set of questions confirmed the low level of participation already seen when analysing voting among British-born Italians: in fact, almost all activities attracted no more than one or two participants and no one took part in a public demonstration.

6.6 WHY ITALIAN CITIZENS IN LONDON PARTICIPATE (OR NOT) IN ITALIAN POLITICS

After talking about the level and the forms of participation of Italians in London, in this section I try to understand why Italians in London are interested, and participate or not, in Italian politics; which are the differences among the three groups taken into account; and how Italians in London think they may contribute to the political debate in Italy.

6.6.1 The old first generation

As in the previous sections, I will speak first about the old first generation. Some respondents expressed their interest in what happens in Italy as a manifestation of their emotional tie with the country. For example, Pietro said:

> Although I have lived in the UK for fifty-two years, I still hold an Italian passport and consider Italy as my country, therefore I take an interest in what's happening there.

And Franco, who arrived in the UK from Sicily in 1955 and is now more than eighty years old, said with emphasis and pride that he votes 'because our homeland always calls us!'. These passionate statements show an emotional attachment to the home country, which leads people like Pietro or Fran to keep themselves informed on what happens in Italy. To some extent, this behaviour is a substitute for a return, which is not possible anymore. In this way, I can describe this attitude by using the same words as Waldinger:

> subjective attachment to the country of birth and its people remains strong…However, this sense of home country loyalty appears to have an abstract, or perhaps symbolic, quality (Waldinger 2008: 21).

Other respondents showed more mixed feelings, due on the one hand to the emotional link with Italy and on the other hand to their disillusionment towards their home country. During the meeting with Sen. Micheloni, an old migrant suddenly shouted: 'the UK is our stepmother, Italy is our mother who has abandoned us!'. Similarly, Titty is more interested in what happens in London and the UK, as there is where she lives, while Italian politics 'interests and doesn't interest me, because Italy does nothing for us. But I was born in Sicily, I am from Italy because my roots are there, then I want to know what happens in Italy'. And Matilde adds:

> We are here in England, Italy does not interest to us at all. It's England who feeds us…I might even vote, but who knows these people? We don't know who is better and who is worse.

Also Mr Ballarino speaks about the lack of knowledge about Italian politics, a reason why Italians abroad should – in his opinion – keep themselves away from Italian politics, 'because we would make wrong decisions'. Similarly, Gino explains that he follows what happens in Italy because he has some properties there, a house, and he spends his holidays there, but he thinks he cannot participate actively in Italian politics (although people from his village of origin asked him to get involved in local politics), because he does not live there.

Gino's opinion is very different from the one of Mr Cassetta, an engineer who obtained his degree in the UK, and who is a prominent figure among Italians in Surrey. Probably because of his somewhat younger age (sixty-six years old) and professional background, he was one of the few respondents from the old first generation who provided a strong argument on why and how Italians abroad can contribute to Italian politics. After telling me that many old Italians want to know what happens in Italy as they still have family and properties in Italy and have been trying to maintain an Italian community and culture abroad, he went on:

> We can always pass our opinions to Italy, if we want we can do everything, because with the internet I can access the website of my town and see what happened over there, and I can also interact with them, express my ideas…Moreover, because we live outside, we understand much more what happens than them who are there, we live here and we see how things work here, so we can compare the two sides.

6.6.2 The new first generation

These latter comments are echoed by those of several representatives of the new first generation, who think that they can offer their contribution to improve the political and socio-economic situation of their home country and the reputation of Italians abroad. Also in this group, as among older Italians, there are many who explain their interest in Italian public affairs in terms of their emotional attachment to the homeland, often reinforced by the presence of family and friends still in Italy. For example Gigi, who was spending his last months in London before moving to Brazil for business, told me that he wants to vote in Italian elections simply because he is Italian and he feels Italian. Laura was more detailed in her answer:

> It is my country of origin; I still have the right to vote and my family of origin lives there: more than enough reasons to stay well informed.

Similarly Carla:

> It's still my home country, so I am interested and my friends and family live there. Also, if I want or will have to go back in the future, it [what happens in Italy] will affect me.

For Alessia keeping informed on public affairs in Italy helps her to ease the distance with her home country and is a temporary replacement of return:

> I am Italian, I feel Italian and I want to move back to Italy in the near future. I feel closer to my family and friends in Italy by following what happens there.

This confirms the findings by Bartolini and Volpi, according to whom those who moved recently are more likely to vote, as for them 'the right to vote is a means to maintain or strengthen the link with the motherland, which they do not intend to give up' (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 109).

As for the old migrants, also for participants from this group the emotional link is often accompanied by disillusionment towards Italian politics; in some cases this feeling turns migrants away from Italian politics, in others it is an encouragement to participate:

> I don't vote in the elections as I don't really trust Italian politics in general. I hold the current system in strong disregard, but there is no real organised opposition and all the people involved in politics in Italy seem to be only interested in power and not in the good of the nation and the Italian people (interview with Giovanna).

> I participate probably because of a misplaced sense of duty to try and help this dying country (interview with Veronica).

The disillusionment about Italian politics was often amplified by the embarrassment for the presence and behaviour of Silvio Berlusconi as the head of the Italian government. In the questionnaire it was required to name the current mayor of London, the British prime minister and the Italian prime minister: interestingly (and not surprisingly), not only Berlusconi (or just Silvio) was the only name remembered by all the respondents, but also several of them filled the space in the questionnaire form with (ironic, critical, and in a few cases even offensive) comments on him. Berlusconi's government was often mentioned as a main cause for mobilisation:

> I would love to see a fair government in place one day, and especially competent and honest MPs working for the best interest of all Italian people (interview with Teresa).

> [I participate] because I think that the current government is a disgrace for my country and a dangerous example for the rest of Europe' (interview with Gaetano).

> I want to give my contribution to all other parties against Berlusconi (interview with Marina).

Although my research covers mainly the years 2009 and 2010, I recently contacted again some of the representatives of Italian parties and movements whom I had previously interviewed, and they agreed that since Berlusconi is no more Prime Minister (since November 2011), it is possible to notice less mobilisation towards Italian politics.

At the same time, this change also shows how Italian citizens in London nowadays can easily follow what happens in Italy and behave accordingly. In the previous section I spoke about the importance of new forms of communication for political parties and movements; in the same way, as was already mentioned in the words of Mr Cassetta, easier and cheaper means of communication and transport create more opportunities and reasons for participation. First, because they change the experience of migration, especially if we consider it inside the European space:

> The new migration goes on living Italy, on the one hand through the internet, they collect information online, so they live in contact with Italy...but they also go often to

> Italy, because nowadays in a weekend you can go [and come back] whenever in Europe (interview with Manfredi Nulli, secretary of *Italia dei Valori* UK).

> Now you manage to be more in touch with Italy, you can read all newspapers online whenever you want, so I think there is less nostalgia. Italy is no more a far homeland to dream or think about, it's something that is part of everyday life (interview with Maurizio Morabito, spokesman of *Popolo della Liberta'* London).

As a consequence – Mr Morabito continues explaining – it is easier than in the past to participate in Italian politics 'because you keep the contact, your thoughts are reported, it is as if you were in Italy, you follow Italy, you see what happens in Italy'. But at the same time Italians in London live abroad, are exposed to a different political system, to different habits, to a different mentality and civic culture, and thus they have the chance to compare life in their home and in the host country, 'learning some good things from abroad, and the mistakes which are committed', as I was told by the leader of an Italian association. Moreover, they can see what happens in Italy from the outside, using different sources, and with a different perspective. This is made clear by Claudio, from *Rifondazione Comunista*, and Marina, from the *25 Aprile* association.

> We're in London: look around you, there is the entire world around you. Our leaders go abroad, when they speak to the leaders of other parties, they need a translator. We live with these people, so we have the same advantages that London gives on a personal level: the cosmopolitanism, the exchange, the contamination, which may work also at a political level (interview with Claudio).

> By living abroad there is the chance to have a different point of view on Italian affairs and compare the civic attitudes of the Italian and the English…There are many Italians who don't exclude the possibility to come back to Italy at a certain point, and above all they wish to make use of their experience abroad both in terms of how things are organised, and as theoretical knowledge, which may benefit Italy, bring some fresh air, some new and different perspectives (interview with Marina).

To sum up: the answers of my respondents and the discussions I heard and participated in during the political meetings I attended indicate that the interest and participation in Italian politics has been greatly enhanced by the law on the right to vote and by new means of communication. Interest has also been fuelled by the presence of a controversial character such as Silvio Berlusconi as Prime Minister. But above all else, it is based mainly on two aspects: being Italian and living in London.

As I showed, being an Italian citizen means not only holding an Italian passport, but also having an emotional attachment to the homeland and on-going ties due to the presence of family and friends; moreover, being Italian and having grown up in Italy brings with it an obvious

knowledge of the Italian culture and the background necessary to understand the complex field of Italian politics.

The second aspect to be taken into account is being resident in London. I explained in the previous two chapters that a discourse is emerging among the new Italian wave of migrants, which express a distinctive identity, i.e. the "Italianness" of those highly-skilled, highly-educated and highly-mobile Italians who live as "eurostars" in a "eurocity" such as London – to use Adrian Favell's terms (2008) – characterised by 'meritocracy, opportunities to improve at a professional level, internationality, multiculturalism, and acknowledgement of diversity as a value', as one of my key informants put it.

These professional and academic Italians who moved abroad still want to express their voice and contribute to the development of the country, as exemplified by the aforementioned *Manifesto degli Espatriati* (see box 3, chapter 5), and by Law 238/2010 on the incentives for "expatriates" to return, written with the contributes of expats who proposed their own suggestions. As Alessandro Rosina, president of ITalents, puts it:

> Who lives abroad can still participate into the growth of the country; if not directly, by signalling best practices or sharing his experiences. "Escaped brains" are not lost,…[the vast majority] of our respondents is ready to provide proposals which can lead to laws such as the 238/2010. We want to exploit this big potential (Rosina, cited in Zanetti 2012).

In this way, and coming back to the case under study here, just as the old migrants studied by Anne-Marie Fortier (2000) wanted to obtain the right to vote from abroad and express their own Italianness in Italian politics, today these recently arrived Italians who participate in Italian politics from London, want to contribute to the evolution of the political, social and economic debate in their country of origin, by offering their perspective from outside and their joint experience of being at the same time Italian citizens and citizens of London.

6.6.3 The British-born Italians

This last point brings me to deal in this sub-section with the reasons behind the interest and participation, or – more often – lack of interest and of participation observed among the second-generation Italians who live in London. In fact, it is important to understand which aspects of being an Italian in London members of this group share with the old and new first generations of Italians.

In their essay on young Italians in England (2005), Bartolini and Volpi argue that civic and political participation is a field overlooked by young Italians, who do not seem to get an idea of current Italian politics:

> Given the lack of attention to politics, only a minority of young Italians participate in national elections. Among those who are less inclined to use the right of voting abroad, some believe that only older people are interested in voting. Others say that by participating, they feel they assume a right improperly, because they would ultimately act on choices that will have consequences for people far away (the Italians at home); besides that, in some cases, it is considered that you are entitled to vote in Italy only if you still have interests there to be protected (Bartolini and Volpi 2005: 109).

My own research confirms only part of what is stated by these authors. First of all, the motivations provided by those who participate are similar to those of the first-generation Italians, and several respondents pointed at the emotional, family and cultural ties with Italy:

> I think it is important to know what is happening in Italy because it means that you are still keeping a link with the culture and society even though we don't live there (interview with Susanna).

> I feel proud of my Italian identity and choose to vote to exercise my democratic right in my ancestral home (interview with Sofia).

> My grandparents are still alive and my dad was born in Italy, so [what happens in Italy] is going to affect my family to an extent. Also, what happens in Italy is going to affect our British-Italian identity, and the way Italians are viewed in other countries as well (interview with Sandro).

Susanna then goes on to explain how Italy can benefit from their involvement in Italian politics:

> Sometimes I think maybe you need an outside opinion as well, maybe what we see is not what they see, because they're stuck in the middle and Italy may actually benefit from me voting from an outside opinion.

Similarly Sandro says:

> I think it would be a really good insight for Italian politicians to know what British-, American-, Canadian- Italians think about their country and their politics, what their mentality is, it would be really useful for them to know…I vote in Italian elections because I see things from outside, from outside the box.

On the other hand, both Susanna and Sandro – who were probably the most knowledgeable about politics in this group because of their university studies and job experience – recognised what is the main obstacle for them to follow and participate more in Italian politics:

> The majority of times I just stick on BBC and then I look for Europe to see what happens in Italy, but really I am bad, I really don't follow it as much as I should (interview with Susanna).

Later, Susanna went on by arguing that it is not only that what happens in Italian politics does not affect her life much, but also that she lacks the background to follow and understand Italian politics. This is confirmed by Sandro:

> I am interested in Italian politics but I don't understand it that well, Italian politics is messy and complicated, I wouldn't know what to begin with; politics here is much more straightforward (interview with Sandro).

Also Lucia, who works at the British Treasury, and thus is used to following British politics and economics, states similarly:

> Italian news, I don't really follow it because I don't understand Italian politics. I've tried, I get all the stuff from the Consulate, every time there is stuff to vote, and I really tried to make an effort last time with going, who is standing for what etc.; there are all these parties, I don't understand!

Moreover, as I explained in chapters 4 and 5, knowledge of the Italian language is a key component that ties together the first generation. British-born Italians are excluded (in part or in whole) from this; as a consequence, they are shaped by a rather different Italian identity and – following again the Bleich's frame – this influences their collective outlook and behaviour.

At this point it is probably useful to quote the words of Manfredi Nulli, according to whom for first-generation Italians it is normal to follow what happens in Italy 'because this is the country where they come from and they know the culture, the traditions, they have the background', which is what most second-generation Italians are lacking instead.

Inspired theoretically by Bauböck, who states that 'as a general rule, extra-territorial voting should expire with the first generation' (2003: 714), and practically by the words of those key informants who revealed that parents often voted in place of their children, I tried to stimulate British-born Italians to think about their right to vote in a country where they have never lived and of whose political life they do not know much. Differently from what is stated by Bartolini and Volpi (2005), most of my respondents justified, with different tones, their right by virtue of their family ties with Italy, but at the same time recognised that those who do not know about Italian politics should not make use of this right:

> Everyone has the right to have the voice to say, even if they live in America, it is a good thing to have, because it gives everyone the opportunity to stay in touch with politics. It depends on the person, it is up to the individual (interview with Ciro).

> It is fair that we get to vote, because it is up to the person to find out about it, and if they are interested in it, they would learn about it…personally I still think I would want to have a choice whether to make that decision or not, rather than not having that decision (interview with Lucia).

Susanna and Concetta, who share the position of Ciro and Lucia, link this approach to the way politics is followed and activated in the UK:

> If you go there a lot and you feel that a certain party will affect your life when you go over on holiday, then I guess it's right to vote…but if people don't care, then they don't vote, and I found that with British elections: people if they don't know, they don't vote, if they don't care, they don't vote, they just leave it (interview with Susanna).

And this is because of the difference between Italian and British politics:

> I do think one of the things I noticed about differences between English and Italians is that Italians are much more politically aware and their beliefs are stronger, whereas in England the understanding of politics is much lower in the general population, people don't even know, they can't even name their MP or their local councillor or whatever, people don't turn up at the vote as much as they do in Italy (interview with Concetta).

This last statement resonates with some data provided by Morales and Giugni (2011: 34-35), who show that the autochthonous population's interest in the country politics in Milan is 65%, while in London is 50%. Moreover, it confirms what I said earlier about the role played by being informed and understanding one country's politics in encouraging voting and other forms of political participation, thus it is a good way to introduce the last section of this chapter, where I discuss the involvement of London Italians in British politics.

6.7 PARTICIPATION IN BRITISH POLITICS

In the historical background section at the beginning of this chapter, I explained that after WWII those Italians who were already in the UK or moved there for work in the 1950s paid little attention to politics, because of (a) practical, (b) discursive and (c) institutional reasons. In fact, (a) they had left Italy because they needed a job to gain the means to survive, thus they rarely had time to be involved in activities, other than working and socialising in the Italian community; moreover, their level of education and knowledge of English was usually too low to follow public affairs. (b) The experience of the war with Italians and British fighting on

different sides was very recent, thus politics was still a contentious field. Finally, (c) if we think in terms of the institutional political opportunity structure, until the UK joined the EU in 1973, Italians faced many movement restrictions; only after 1979 could they vote for European Elections, and only much later – after the Maastricht Treaty in 1992 – were they granted the right to vote in local elections in the UK (as in any other EU country). In order to participate in British General Elections, Italian citizens still need to acquire British citizenship.

All these barriers help understand why – besides the aforementioned Palmer (1977), Colpi (1991) and Bottignolo (1985) – also other scholars who have studied more recently the Italian presence in the UK reported the low involvement in British politics. For example Fortier states that Italian leaders' limited investment in UK political life reduces their transnationalism to a 'one-way street' (Fortier 2000: 161), and Medaglia explains that most Italian women (who are the focus of her research) have low expectations from the British state, thus their involvement in British political life remains limited (Medaglia 2001).

If we look at the information I collected by means of my questionnaire survey, what emerges from a descriptive statistical analysis can be highlighted as follows:

- Among the old first generation, only around one fifth of the respondents hold British citizenship; this ratio is even lower in the group of recently arrived migrants (one out of ten), while only around one fifth of British-born Italian participants are not British citizens (the circumstance that a few British-born respondents do not hold British citizenship is due to the fact that their parents only registered them with the Italian Consulate, thus when they came of age they could no more claim British citizenship automatically).

- When asked whether they feel encouraged to participate in British politics by media and political actors such as politicians, government officials and local authorities, almost four out of five old first-generation respondents answered they do not feel encouraged. This value decreases to three fifths for the new first generation, and to slightly above half of the sample for British-born Italians. The fact that all the three groups do not feel encouraged to participate can be interpreted as a sign that the discursive opportunity structure does not appear to favour the participation of EU citizens in British politics. I will come back to this topic in the final chapter.

- All the respondents from the old first generation were registered in the local electoral register; the ratio is very high also among British-born Italians (nine out of ten), and lower but still remarkable (almost three quarters) among the new first generation.

- As regards voting, those who claimed they voted in the 2008 London mayoral elections are almost eight out of ten among the old first generation, while just slightly more than half of the sample among the new first generation (sixteen out of thirty); as expected, the highest ratio of those who voted in the last local elections is found among British-born Italians (twenty-seven out of thirty-two). It should be noted here that these data must be read with some caution, taking into account that the official turnout at the mayoral election in London in 2008 was 45.3%; thus, more than in absolute terms, my respondents' answers are interesting in relative terms, to compare the electoral behaviour and attitude of the three groups under examination.

- Finally, if we consider other forms of participation (table 6), the participants from the old first generation are more active in British political life than in the Italian one: for example, one third of them stated that they attended a political meeting in the previous twelve months, six out of twenty-seven signed a petition, four were affiliated with a political organisation and the same number contacted a politician or local government official. Instead, among the new first generation, the numbers of those who did any of the listed activities are all lower than in the field of Italian politics, with the exception of activities such as signing a petition (half of the respondents reported having done that, same as for Italian politics), and contacting a politician or government official (nine did that, while only three did that in Italian politics). Finally, in the group of British-born Italians, each activity was experienced at least by two respondents (out of the thirty-two); around one third of them signed a petition, and one quarter contacted a politician or local government official.

Table 6: Number of those who did any of the following activities in the previous 12 months, with regard to British politics			
	O1G (N=27)	N1G (N=30)	BBI (N=32)
Contact a politician or a government or local government official	4	9	8
Be affiliated with a political organisation	4	0	3
Work in a political party or contribute to a campaign/political cause	1	2	3
Attend a political meeting	9	4	3
Sign a petition/collection of signatures	6	15	11
Take part in a public demonstration	1	7	3
Donate money to a political organisation or group	2	1	4
Take part in a strike	0	0	2
Contact the media	1	5	2

Information collected during my fieldwork by means of interviews and informal conversations allow me to interpret these findings. They confirm what I was told by several key informants and respondents from the old first generation about British-born Italians, who are roughly defined as "British". What is meant here is that, as I showed in the previous sections, they

grew up in the UK, and thus they are more informed and they understand more British politics; as a consequence, they are more involved in it. And, in absolute terms, they participate less in British politics than their Italian-born contemporaries do in Italian politics, because the way politics is experienced in the two countries is different, as the previous quotation from Concetta made clear.

Newly arrived Italians seem not to be very interested in British politics, and the reasons appear to be the same: Italians who have been in the UK only few years do not have the background (and often do not have the time to acquire it) to understand British politics. Moreover, especially among those who have not settled yet, there is not the certainty that the UK will be the country where they will live in the future, so there is not enough incentive yet to invest in learning about the local politics of the host country. And the cost and effort to acquire British citizenship in order to vote in British general elections appear not worth the case, given that as EU citizens Italians benefit from almost as many rights as British citizens.

Finally, among the old first generation, it is possible to notice the wish to express their voice and have the chance to vote for a general election in the country where they spent most of their life:

> I don't understand why we can't vote when there are the elections for the government here. It shouldn't be this way, because we pay taxes (interview with Matilde).

> In the end we do not have any power to say anything, we are excluded automatically…We are resident here, we should have the right to vote in general elections after five, ten, twenty years, or after we buy a house or we have a kid born here; they should put some conditions and we should have this right because we live here (interview with Gino).

In this way, the political participation of migrants is affected by the legislation and the political and social structure of both their home and host country in a certain historical moment. Political rights, the context of exit and reception, and historical contingencies come into play, as was stressed by scholars such as M.P. Smith (2007), Koslowski (2001) and Bauböck (2002), whose works I reviewed in detail in chapter 2.

Moreover, as has emerged clearly in the three empirical chapters that make up the core of this thesis, political rights, the context of exit and reception, and historical contingencies are all part of what I called the opportunity structure. This interplays with the agency of Italians in London in the construction, development and performance of their group identity. As I discussed in chapters 4 and 5, the members of the different groups under study develop

different kinds of Italian identity, and the data I presented in this chapter show how different identities have an important impact on the way they keep their links with Italy and participate politically in Italy and the UK.

In this research I focused on the political interest and activity of Italians in London towards their home country, but I found it necessary to study at the same time their involvement in the politics of the host country. In the literature review chapter I outlined the on-going debate on the relationship between political transnationalism and political assimilation; in the next chapter I will conclude this study by discussing how these two sides of migrant political participation interplay in the case of Italians in London, thus offering my own contribution to the debate.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis I have studied the Italian presence in London, focusing on the particular migratory history of this population, on the characteristics of the different groups which make it up, on the institutional and associational network which is active in London and on the political interest and involvement of London Italians towards Italian politics. The main narrative theme running throughout this work has been the interpretation of how Italian identity is constructed and performed, and evolves in different ways in the groups under study, thus affecting their political participation.

Studying Italians in London has the advantage of examining the different aspects listed above in a setting characterised by the presence of the "old" classic economic migration – of those who left Italy mainly in the 1950s and 1960s, their descendants who were born and socialised in the UK, and the "new" migration, made up mainly by highly-educated people in the professional, academic and arts sectors.

As I showed in chapter 4, the new Italian professional emigration has become a phenomenon widely discussed in Italian and international media and regards also other locations characterised by previous waves of Italian migration – such as the USA and Brazil. London is the main destination and the symbol of this flow, because it presents two main advantages: it is close to Italy and hence easily (and cheaply) reachable by Italians, and – the UK being part of the EU – Italian citizens do not need any document (apart from a national ID or passport) to live and work there. For these reasons, I found it necessary to dedicate ample space to the broader study of the Italian communities in London today, a topic that had not been studied in depth yet, at least as regards the more recent immigration.

Moreover, in the field of politics, Italians in London are an interesting group to be studied because, as EU citizens who are resident in another EU country, they have the right to vote both in European and local elections. This adds to the main theme which I examined, that is the identificatory, emotional and institutional links between Italian citizens abroad and Italy, considered both as the home country and as the Italian state. In fact, as I have explained at various points throughout the thesis (in chapters 1, 2 and 5), the Italian state is a classic case of a state's intervention in the economic, political and social fields towards their migrants abroad, a topic that is gaining increasing attention in the academic literature. My critical description of the Italian network in chapter 5 provides an example of this phenomenon – and of the politics

of identity that is behind it – and is an aspect that cannot be overlooked in any attempt to understand the political involvement of a migrant group towards their home-country.

In this way, in this brief concluding chapter, I first summarise and pinpoint the main findings of my study, also highlighting the role of gender – which emerged at various points, often implicitly, in the previous chapters but was not discussed specifically (section 7.1); then I offer my contribution to the on-going debate on the relationship between political integration and transnationalism, which I outlined earlier in my literature review (section 7.2). Finally, in the last section of this chapter (7.3), I reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of my research project as it has turned out in the form of this thesis, and I suggest some possible areas for future research.

7.1 MAIN FINDINGS

The study of the different groups which compose the Italian population in London today allowed me to expose the differences in terms of education and socio-economic background between the old and new first-generation migrants, an aspect often emphasised by scholars and media. What is probably more interesting is that, in spite of these differences, members of these groups have usually left Italy for the same main reason – often job-related – and share the same (negative) opinion on the Italian state and on Italian society. In particular, aspects such as the excessive bureaucracy, the rather low level of respect for the rule of law, and the importance of knowing someone to get something done, were often highlighted in the interviews I carried out and in the meetings I attended.

Among the "old" Italians, these negative aspects were discursively opposed to their hard-working attitude and their respect for family values which allowed them to be successful in their experience in the UK, as was analysed by Anne-Marie Fortier (1999, 2000 and 2006). This vision of Italy is usually transmitted to the second generation, although contrasts and conflicts often emerge since the latter's teens and then in adult life over the acceptance of strict family values; however, the picture I got from my fieldwork is not a static a rigid one, but one characterised by the fluid evolution of family relationships.

Among the "new wave" of Italians, other concepts, such as meritocracy, fair and transparent competition, a high level of education and creativity, are instead given a high value and are the key words of an emerging discourse on the so-called new Italian migration, which has been

developing by means of the media (especially those using new technologies) and of the new associational network in London, which targets this new professional migration.

An aspect which I would like to emphasise here is that gender plays an important role in this discourse. According to Fortier, the acceptance of traditional family values typical of a patriarchal society was an important aspect of the Italianness constructed and performed by the old generation of migrants. This emerged only partly in my own research, for example in the stories of some second-generation women who told me about their strict up-bringing and education, or in the morning schedule of the Club of elderly Italians, with most women attending the Mass, while most men were chatting or playing cards. Instead, what emerged clearly is that migrating to London has been an emancipatory experience for many young Italian women; they leave Italy not only because of the lack of opportunities faced also by their male counterparts, but also because patriarchy is still quite deeply present in Italian society, especially in job environments. As one of my interviewees told me, she prefers more to be discriminated as a foreigner in London, than as a woman in Italy. In this way, fairer gender relationships within the family and a modern role for women in society are an important component of the discourse on Italianness. The higher number of women from this group – compared to men – who showed interest in my study, and the success of demonstrations such as the aforementioned *Senonoraquando* one, are examples of this aspect. Similarly, the story of Ivan Scalfarotto that I told in chapter 6 and the accounts of some Italian homosexual men and women whom I met during my fieldwork show that London is considered more welcoming and open in terms of LGBT rights, compared to Italy.

Finally, my research shows that belonging to a different generation or wave of migration also influences the way Italians relate with the institutional, discursive and technological opportunity structure they experience in London. In turn, this impacts on the construction and performance of Italianness, and altogether these aspects affect political participation.

While the British-born Italians are mainly focused on British politics and show a lack of understanding of Italian politics, the old first generation has a basic knowledge of both and participates mainly through voting, both in Italian and in local elections. The new first generation is instead still mainly orientated towards Italy, especially in the very first years after their arrival (although non-electoral forms of participation apply to only a minority of the community); British public affairs are known at a basic level, but not having the right to vote in national elections does not encourage members from this group to be more informed and active.

7.2 POLITICAL INTEGRATION AND POLITICAL TRANSNATIONALISM

In chapter 2, when reviewing the literature on the political participation of migrants, I outlined three possible alternatives in the relationship between migrant political integration and transnationalism: (1) they can be in a zero-sum relationship, with one affecting the other negatively; (2) they can be mutually supportive, with one offering migrants the instruments to participate politically also in the other arena; or (3) their relationship is complex and cannot be simply reduced to a one-way direction.

My study supports this last view; in fact the relationship between the two sides of migrant political participation for Italians in London is a complex one. As I showed in section 6.7 of the previous chapter, several older Italians who still vote in Italian general elections, also vote in local UK elections and would like to vote in British general elections as well, after many years of settlement and paying taxes in Britain. In this way, for members of this group there seems to be no apparent contradiction between the two sides of the transnational political participation coin (although it should be remembered that overall this group is less informed about politics than the other groups, and participation means mainly voting in their case, both for generational and educational reasons).

For British-born Italians the situation is different: the vast majority of my respondents have the right to vote in both Italian and British local and general elections; in their case, it was the lack of information and of concrete interest which were the main factors to justify their rather low participation in Italian politics.

The picture is more complex for the recently arrived Italians. As I showed in the previous chapter, they do not feel encouraged to participate in British politics – a situation common to all the three groups under study. Manfredi Nulli, secretary of the *Italia dei Valori* in London, explained to me:

> As regards the new migration, I think that they follow issues such as the economy, taxes, foreign policy. [But, apart from that], when an Italian has arrived here since 1 or 2 years, either he already has a personal interest in politics, so he will be impelled by instinct to learn how English politics works, otherwise he will probably have no interest in it. But, as for politics, he won't probably have a good knowledge of many habits of this country, because he is not socially included yet…When you live here more than 2-3 years, you start having a different relationship [with the country], because you live here. You'd know in a way similar to the one of English people what happens in the politics of this country.

Mr Nulli did not make clear if this evolution would happen at the expenses of the interest and involvement in Italian politics. On the basis of my fieldwork experience, I argue that a growing attention to and involvement in British politics does not replace the link to Italy. On the one hand, this is because Italians from this group already use different sources of information for the two arenas: mainly the internet as regards Italy, and free daily newspapers, followed by public media, as regards the UK; moreover, Italians already have a background of knowledge in Italian politics. On the other hand, Mr Nulli's words and the interviews I carried out with other militants document that those who are actively involved in an Italian political party or movement not only often have a more general interest in politics, which make them more informed about British politics too, but also have the chance to know the leaders of British political parties and of political parties of other migrant communities. This is especially the case when these parties belong to the same European family, such as the European People's or Socialist parties.

I had the chance to interview Lazzaro Pietragnoli, one of the founders of the Labour Friends of Italy, a group 'for the members of the Labour party who share an interest in Italian politics and current affairs; for the members of the Italian community in the UK who want to be involved in the life of the Labour party', as they define themselves on their web-site. Mr Pietragnoli's political trajectory is itself an interesting example of combining the involvement in British and Italian politics. He moved to London as the correspondent of the newspaper *Europa*, the house-organ of the centre-left *Margherita* party. After his party merged with the Leftist Democrats to form the *Partito Democratico*, he joined the new party and participated in the primary election to become the PD's secretary in London. In the end, Lazzaro withdrew his candidacy, but went on being involved in politics and, at the time of writing this thesis, he is campaigning as the Labour party candidate in Camden Town with Primrose Hill ward, in the London Borough of Camden.

During our interview, Lazzaro explained to me that the main activity of the Labour Friends of Italy, founded in 2010 and part of the Labour Movement for Europe – an internal grouping within the Labour Party of those party members who are interested in European topics – is to increase the awareness among Italians in London that they have the right to vote in local and European elections and that they are required to register for that. In this way, at the time of electoral campaigns like the current one for the mayoral elections in London (due, at the time of writing, to take place in a few days), they cooperate with Italian parties with similar political positions, to mobilise the Italian vote. The internet, leafleting and phone-banking are the means most used for campaigning.

It should be stressed that, as on the left side of the political spectrum the *Partito Democratico* and *Sinistra, Ecologia e Liberta'* are actively supporting the mayoral candidacy of Ken Livingstone, Italian MPs from the *Popolo delle Liberta'* have met Boris Johnson and are campaigning for his re-election as mayor of London, using similar means.

To sum up: from my research it appears that the relationship between participating in Italian and British politics is a complex one, especially as regards the new first generation. The members of this group need some time to understand British politics, but – because of their often uncertain life paths and the lack of incentives (i.e. no right to vote in national elections and the weak propensity of British people to speak about politics, compared to Italy) – they usually focus on Italian politics. The experience of the old first generation and, even more important, that of the activists show that it is possible to become more informed and involved in British politics without "forgetting" about Italian politics. Being linked to an Italian political party or association often helps Italian to have information on British politics, as exemplified by the current mayoral campaign in London.

7.3 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Finally, I would like to conclude this chapter and this thesis by highlighting the weaknesses and strengths of this study as I see them, and to suggest possible future developments in the literature on the transnational political participation of migrants.

In my opinion, the main strength of this study is that it puts the topic of the transnational political involvement of Italians in London in the context of the Italian presence in London. As I explained in chapters 2 and 3, I decided to adopt a pluralist approach and examined my case following different epistemological traditions, combining different levels of analysis and different methods of research. This theoretical and methodological choice allowed me to provide the setting in which Italians are given the opportunity to live and work in London, and at the same time participate in Italian politics. As I have shown, contexts of entry and exit and historical contingencies play a pivotal role in the construction and evolution of the group's identity and the consequent political mobilisation; moreover, an in-depth study of the communities and of the networks that are imbricated within them allows me to avoid the trap of considering one national group in static and homogeneous terms, and instead to appreciate the internal differences of the group, as was evident in the case of Italians in London.

This leads me to highlight what I see as another strength of this research, that is that it combines a wide definition of opportunity structure, that takes into account and broadens the institutional and discursive aspects already emphasised by scholars such as Koopmans (2004), considering opportunities coming from both the home and host country, with the opportunities offered by improvements in technology (i.e. transports and communication). This allows us to understand better the role played by these factors in the development of migrants' identity and their consequent political involvement.

Finally, among the strengths of this research, I should add the choice of studying at the same time the two sides of the migrant political involvement. Although I made it clear at the outset that the focus of this study is political transnationalism, I argue that it is not possible to understand this phenomenon without examining at the same time the involvement of migrants towards the politics of their host country, as this affects both the opportunities migrants face, and gives them the chance to develop multiple loyalties.

As regards the weaknesses of this work, I first would like to stress a point that for me is fundamental: a PhD is at the same time the writing-up of an original piece of a research and an on-going process of learning how to "make" academic research. In my own case, my original project of studying comparatively the political integration of Italians in London and in another setting in the UK was modified because on the one hand I realised the complexity of the Italian presence in London, that would make it worth an intra-group comparison more than a comparison between two different settings; on the other hand, once in the field, I was able to notice the activity of several Italian parties, movements and associations, which made me more interested in focusing on the transnational side of political participation.

That being said, I think the main weakness of this research lies in the way people were recruited for the study. Given the time and – above all – funding constraints of a PhD, it was not possible to use methods deployed in big projects on migrant political participation, which permit a truly and statistically random selection of participants. As a consequence, although I have clearly stated that my respondents are not a representative sample of the Italian population in London, I should admit that it was almost impossible to contact Italian citizens who have completely cut their ties with Italy, this being true above all for some of the old first generation.

Moreover, I should briefly come back to the topic of my own identity as an Italian citizen in the UK studying other Italian citizens in the UK. What should be added here is that this affected my interaction with participants from the different groups, as for the new first generation I was

"one of them", while for the old first generation I was more of an outsider than of an insider for the reasons which I explained throughout the thesis; and for the British-born Italians I was often seen just as a contemporary, carrying out doctoral research. Of course, this relationship with my participants, plus my personal background as a person who was born and grew up in Italy, affects the interpretation of the phenomenon under study; thus it is quite likely that a non-Italian citizen or a British-born Italian would see the same processes that I examined from a somewhat different perspective.

On the basis of my own experience, I would like to suggest some possible lines of research on the political participation of migrants.

In the context of the European Union, I argue that it would be important to carry out more studies on the political involvement of internal migrants. This because intra-EU migration gives European citizens who reside in another EU country a particular status, that entails more political rights than other migrants enjoy. Moreover, in terms of identity, European identity is one additional loyalty which should be taken into account, as it can affect migrants' behaviour. Such a "European" identity, one could argue, would predispose such individuals to be more interested in politics, especially at a European or EU level.

On the other hand, following the Euro crisis an increasing number of European citizens have been moving to the so-called BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and to other fast-developing countries. A growing literature is emerging on migration to post-colonial settings (see: the special issues of the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* on postcolonial approaches to mobile professionals, and on the cultural politics of talent migration in Asia, published in 2010 and 2011), but so far most of the studies on the political participation of migrants usually focus on the activity of foreign nationals living in the USA and Western Europe; very little has been written on the involvement of European or North-American citizens living in Asian or South-American contexts. The institutional and organisational infrastructure developed by several European countries at time of their colonial presence offers opportunities to "expatriates" who move to work in post-colonial settings. Thus, I argue that combining this emerging literature with the literature on political opportunity structures could offer original insights into the field of migration studies.

Finally, I have showed how people who do not participate regularly in politics may mobilise when some particular issues motivate them; examples of this were the demonstrations against Mr Berlusconi after the outbreak of some scandals centred around his person. In this way, more potential for future research may derive by addressing also 'questions of affects and

emotions' (Però and Solomos 2010: 14). The literature on emotions and politics is growing fast (for example, see Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001), and emotions play an important role in the attachment of migrants and their offspring to both their country of origin and destination. Again, the interplay of this subjective and group factors with the infrastructure of institutional, discursive and technological opportunities which migrants face (and contribute to modify), would be a fertile ground for new research in this field.

REFERENCES

BOOKS AND ACADEMIC ARTICLES

- Aberbach, J.D. and Rockman, B.A. (2002) 'Conducting and coding elite interviews', *Political Science and Politics*, 35(4): 673–676

- Adolino, J.R. (1998) *Ethnic Minorities, Electoral Politics and Political Integration in Britain*. London: Pinter

- Alabiso, D. (2011) *Shanghai solo Andata : Storie di Giovani Italiani in Cina*. Milano: Francesco Brioschi

- Alba, R. and Nee, V. (1997) 'Rethinking assimilation theory for a new era of immigration', *International Migration Review*, 31(4): 826–874.

- Altan, C.T. (2000) *La Nostra Italia. Clientelismo, Trasformismo e Ribellismo dall'Unità al 2000*. Milano: Egea

- Ambasciata Italiana Londra (2006) 'Appunto. La comunità Italiana in Gran Bretagna'

- Anderson, B.R.O'G. (1991) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso

- Anwar, M. (1979) *The Myth of Return*. London: Heineman

- Appadurai, A. (1996) *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions in Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

- Axford, B., Browning, G., Turner, J., Huggins, R. and Rosamond, R. (2002) *Politics: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge

- Baldoli, C. (2003) *Exporting Fascism: Italian Fascists and Britain's Italians in the 1930s.* Oxford and New York: Berg

- Baldoli, C. (1999) 'I fasci italiani all'estero e l'educazione degli Italiani in Gran Bretagna (1932-1934)', *Studi Emigrazione*, 134: 243–281

- Barnes, S.H. and Kaase, M.(1974) *Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies*. Beverly Hills: Sage

- Bakker, M. and Smith, M.P. (2003) 'El rey del tomate: migrant political transnationalism and democratization in Mexico', *Migraciones Internacionales,* 2(1): 59–83

- Bartolini, S. and Volpi, F. (2005) 'Paradossi d'Oltremanica. I giovani Italiani in Inghilterra', in Catalbiano, C. and Gianturco, G. (eds) *Giovani oltre Confine. I Discendenti e gli Epigoni dell'Emigrazione Italiana nel Mondo*. Roma: Carocci Editore

- Basch, L., Glick Schiller, N. and Szanton-Blanc, C. (1994) *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects and the Deterritorialized Nation-state.* New York: Gordon and Breach

- Battiston, S. and Mascitelli, B. (2008) 'The challenges to democracy and citizenship surrounding the vote to Italians overseas', *Modern Italy*, 13(3): 261–280

- Bauböck, R. (2010) 'Constellations and hot identities. Political theory questions about transnationalism and diaspora', in Bauböck, R. and Faist, T. (eds) *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press

- Bauböck, R. (2008) 'Ties across borders: the growing salience of transnationalism and diaspora politics', *IMISCOE Policy Briefs*, 13: 1–8

- Bauböck, R. (2005) 'Introduction', in Bauböck, R. (ed) *Migration and Citizenship: Legal Status, Rights and Political Participation*, State of the art report for IMISCOE cluster B3

- Bauböck, R. (2003) 'Towards a political theory of migrant transnationalism', *International Migration Review,* 37(3): 700–723

- Bauböck, R. (2002) 'Political community beyond the sovereign state: supranational federalism and transnational minorities', in Vertovec, S. and Cohen, R. (eds), *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Bauböck, R. (1994) *Transnational Citizenship: Membership and Rights in International Migration*. Brookfield, VT: Edward Elgar

- Berger, M., Galonska, C. and Koopmans, R. (2004) 'Political integration by a detour? Ethnic communities and social capital of migrants in Berlin', *Journal of Ethnic Migration Studies,* 30(3): 491–507

- Bermudez, A. (2010) 'The transnational political practices of Colombians in Spain and the United Kingdom: politics 'here' and 'there'', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 33(1): 75–91

- Bernabei, A. (1997) *Esuli ed Emigrati Italiani nel Regno Unito, 1920-1940*. Milano: Mursia

- Bernstein, M. (2005) 'Identity politics', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 31: 47–74

- Berry, J.M. (2002) 'Validity and reliability issues in elite interviewing', *Political Science and Politics*, 35(4): 679–682

- Bevir, M. and Rhodes, R. (2003) *Interpreting British Governance*. London: Routledge

- Bleich, E. (2008) 'Immigration and integration studies in Western Europe and the United States. The road less traveled and a path ahead', *World Politics,* 60(3): 509–538

- Bottignolo, B. (1985) *Without a Bell Tower*. Roma: Centro Studi Emigrazione

- Bray, Z. (2008) 'Ethnographic methods', in Keating, M. and Della Porta, D. (eds) *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social and Political Sciences.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Brubaker, R. (2001) 'The return of assimilation? Changing perspectives on immigration and its sequels in France, Germany, and the United States', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 24(4): 531–548.

- Bueker, C.S. (2005) 'Political incorporation among immigrants from ten areas of origin', *International Migration Review,* 39(1): 103–140

- Burrell, K. (2006) *Moving Lives. Narratives of Nation and Migration among Europeans in Post-War Britain*. Aldershot: Ashgate

- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender Troubles: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York and London: Routledge

- Carling, J. (2011) [online], 'Integration and Transnationalism: how are the two connected'? Available from: http://www.imiscoeconferences.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=70:workshop-6&catid=36:workshops&Itemid=55 (latest access: August 1, 2011)

- Castles, S. and Miller, M.J. (2009) *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Cavallaro, R. (1981) *Storie senza Storia. Indagine sull'Emigrazione Calabrese in Gran Bretagna*. Roma: Centro Studi Emigrazione

- Cherti, M. (2007) *Paradoxes of Social Capital: A Multi-Generational Study of Moroccans in London.* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press

- Choate, M. (2007) 'Sending states' transnational interventions in politics, culture and economics: the historical example of Italy', *International Migration Review,* 41(3): 728–768

- Cieslik, A. and Nowicka, M. (2012) [online] 'Researching migrants as a migrant researcher'. Available from: http://www.mmg.mpg.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Pdf/CfP_Researching_Migrants_Migrant_Researcher.pdf (latest access: April 24, 2012)

- Cohen, A.P. (1994) *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity*. London: Routledge

- Cohen, A.P. (1985) *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. Chichester: Ellis Horwood

- Cohen, R. (1998) 'Transnational social movements: an assessment', *University of Oxford: Transnational Communities Programme Working Paper,* 10

- Collyer, M. (2008) 'The reinvention of political community in a transnational setting: framing the Kabyle citizens' movement', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(4): 687–707

- Collyer, M. (2006) 'Transnational political participation of Algerians in France: extra-territorial civil society versus transnational governmentality', *Political Geography*, 25(4): 836–849

- Collyer, M. and Vathi, Z. (2007) 'Patterns of extraterritorial voting', *University of Sussex: DRC Working Paper,* T-22

- Colpi, T. (1991) *The Italian Factor. The Italian Community in Great Britain*. Edinburgh: Mainstream Publishing Company

- Colucci, M. (2002) 'L'emigrazione italiana in Gran Bretagna nel secondo dopoguerra: il caso di Bedford (1951-60)', *Dimensioni e Problemi della Ricerca Storica,* 1: 235–272

- Conti, F. (2011) *"Leaving or Staying" – An Analysis of Italian Graduates' Migratory Patterns*. University of Sussex: DPhil thesis in Sociology

- Creswell, J.W. (2003) *Research Design. Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2nd edition

- Creswell, J.W. (1994) *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage

- CSER (1975) *L'Emigrazione Italiana negli Anni '70*. Roma: CSER

- Cucchiarato, C. (2010) *Vivo Altrove. Giovani e senza Radici: gli Emigranti Italiani di Oggi*. Milano: Bruno Mondadori

- Dalton, R.J. (1988) *Citizen Politics in Western Democracy*. Chatham, NJ: Chatham House

- De Blasio, N. (1979) 'Italian immigration to Britain: an ignored discussion', *European Demographic Information Bulletin*, 10(4): 151–158

- Della Porta, D. (2002) *Introduzione alla Scienza Politica*. Bologna: il Mulino

- Della Porta, D. and Diani, M. (1997) *I Movimenti Sociali*. Roma: Carocci

- Della Porta, D. and Tarrow, S. (2005) *Transnational Protest and Global Activism*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield

- Dickie, J. (2001) 'The notion of Italy', in Baranski, Z. and West, R. J. (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Italian Culture.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Diehl, C. and Blohm, M. (2001) 'Apathy, adaptation or ethnic mobilisation? On the attitudes of a politically excluded group', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 27(3): 401–420

- Di Paola, P. (2005) 'Club anarchici di Londra: sociabilità, politica, cultura', *Società e Storia*, 108: 353–375

- Dryzek, J. (2002) 'A pox on Perestroika, a hex on hegemony: towards a critical political science', paper presented at the annual APSA meeting, Boston, MA

- Eggert, N. and Giugni, M. (2010) 'Does associational involvement spur political integration? Political interest and participation of three immigrant groups in Zurich', *Swiss Political Science Review*, 16(2): 175–210

- England, K.V.L. (1994) 'Getting personal: reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research', *The Professional Geographer*, 46(1): 80–91

- Evergeti, V. and Zontini, E. (2006) 'Introduction: some critical reflections on social capital, migration and transnational families', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 29(6): 1025–1039

- Faist, T. (2000) *The Volume and Dynamics of International Migration and Transnational Social Spaces*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

- Favell, A. (2008) *Eurostars and Eurocities. Free Movement and Mobility in an Integrating Europe*. Malden, MA: Blackwell

- Favell, A. and Geddes, A. (1999) *The Politics of Belonging: Migrants and Minorities in Contemporary Europe.* Aldershot: Ashgate

- Fechter, A-M. and Walsh, K. (eds) (2010) *Special Issue Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. Examining Expatriate Continuities: Postcolonial Approaches to Mobile Professionals*, 36(8): 1197–1357

- Fennema, M. (2004) 'The concept and measurement of ethnic community', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 30(3): 429–447

- Fennema, M. and Tillie, J. (2001) 'Civic community, political participation and political trust of ethnic groups', *Connections*, 24(1): 26–41

- Field, S.J. (1994) 'Becoming Irish: personal identity construction among first-generation Irish immigrants', *Symbolic Interaction*, 17(4): 431–452

- Fortier, A-M. (2006) 'Community, belonging and intimate ethnicity', *Modern Italy*, 11(1): 63–77

- Fortier, A-M. (2000) *Migrant Belongings. Memory, Space, Identity*. Oxford and New York: Berg

- Fortier, A-M. (1999) 'Re-membering places and the performance of belonging(s)', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 16(2): 41–64

- Foucault, M. (2000) *The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. New York, NY: The New Press

- Franzero, C.M. (1977) *A Life in Exile. Ugo Foscolo in London, 1816 – 1827.* London: Allen

- Furlong, P. and Marsh, D. (2010) 'Ontology and epistemology in political science', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Gamlen, A. (2008) 'Why engage diasporas?', *ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) Working Paper,* 08(63)

- Gamlen, A. (2006) 'Diaspora engagement policies: what are they, and what kinds of states use them?', *ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) Working Paper,* 06(32)

- Ganga, D. (2007) 'Breaking with tradition through cultural continuity. Gender and generation in a migration setting', *Migration Letters,* 4(1): 41–52

- Ganga, D. (2006) 'From potential returnees into settlers: Nottingham's older Italians', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 32(8): 1395–1413

- Ganga, D. (2005) 'Religion and identity: families of Italian origin in the Nottingham area, UK', *Migration Letters*, 2(2): 144–152

- Ganga, D. and Scott, S. (2006) 'Cultural "insiders" and the issue of positionality in qualitative migration research: moving "across" and moving "along" researcher-participant divides', *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 7(3): art.7

- Geertz, C. (1993) *The Interpretation of Cultures, Selected Essays*. London: Fontana Press

- Ginsborg, P. (1989) *Storia d'Italia dal Dopoguerra a Oggi*. Torino: Einaudi

- Glick-Schiller, N. (2003) 'The centrality of ethnography in the study of transnational migration: seeing the wetlands instead of the swamp', in Foner, N. (ed) *American Arrivals*. Santa Fe, NM: School of America Research Press

- Glick Schiller, N., Basch, L. and Blanc, S.C. (1995) 'From immigrant to transmigrant: theorizing transnational migration', *Anthropological Quarterly*, 68(1): 48–63

- Glick-Schiller, N. and Fouron, G. (1999) 'Terrains of blood and nation: Haitian transnational social fields', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 22(2): 340–366

- Goldstein, K. (2002) 'Getting in the door: sampling and completing elite interviews', *Political Science and Politics*, 35(4): 669–672

- Goodwin, J., Jasper, J. and Polletta, F. (eds) (2001) *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press

- Guarnizo, L.E. (2000) 'Notes on transnationalism', paper presented at the Transnational Migration: Comparative Conceptual and Research Perspectives workshop, Transnational Communities Programme and the Social Science Research Council. Oxford University.

- Guarnizo, L., Portes, A. and Haller, W. (2003) 'Assimilation and transnationalism: determinants of transnational political action among contemporary migrants', *The American Journal of Sociology,* 108(6): 1211–1248

- Hall, S. (1996) 'Politics of identity', in Ranger, T.O., Samad, Y. and Stuart, O. (eds) *Culture, Identity and Politics: Ethnic Minorities in Britain*. Aldershot: Ashgate

- Hall, S. (1990) 'Cultural identity and diaspora', in Rutherford, J. (ed) *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart

- Herrmann, R.K. and Brewer, M.B. (2004) 'Identities and institutions: becoming European in the EU', in Herrmann, R.K. and Brewer, M.B. (eds) *Transnational Identities: Becoming European in the EU*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield

- Heyes, C. (2012) 'Identity politics', in Zalta, E.N. (ed) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Spring 2012 Edition)*. Available from: http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/identity-politics/ (latest access: May 30, 2012)

- Hickman, M.J. (2011) 'Census ethnic categories and second-generation identities: a study of the Irish in England and Wales', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 37(1): 79–97.

- Huntington, S.P. (1997) 'The erosion of American national interests', *Foreign Affairs,* 76(5): 28–49.

- IDEA/IFE (2007) *Voting from Abroad.* International IDEA Handbook Series

- International Organization for Migration (2004) *Glossary on Migration*. Geneva: IOM

- Ireland, P.R. (1994) *The Policy Challenge of Ethnic Diversity: Immigrant Politics in France and Switzerland.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Itzigsohn, J. (2000) 'Immigration and the boundaries of citizenship: the institutions of immigrants' political transnationalism', *International Migration Review,* 34(4): 1126–1154

- Itzigsohn, J. and Villacrés, D. (2008) 'Migrant political transnationalism and the practice of democracy: Dominican external voting rights and Salvadoran home town associations', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 31(4): 664–686

- Jacobs, D. and Tillie, J. (2004) 'Introduction: social capital and political integration of migrants'*, Journal of Ethnic Migration Studies,* 30(3): 419–427

- Jacobs, D., Phalet, K. and Swyngedouw, M. (2004) 'Associational membership and political involvement among ethnic minority groups in Brussels', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 30(3): 543–559

- Jones-Correa, M. (1998) *Between Two Nations. The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press

- King, R. (1988) 'Il ritorno in patria. Return migration in historical perspective', *University of Durham Department of Geography Occasional Publications,* 23

- King, R. (1977) 'Bedford: the Italian connection', *Geographical Magazine*, 49(7): 442–449.

- Koopmans, R. (2004) 'Migrant mobilisation and political opportunities: variation among German cities and a comparison with the United Kingdom and the Netherlands', *Journal of Ethnic Migration Studies,* 30(3): 449–470

- Koopmans, R., Statham, P., Giugni, M. and Passy, F. (eds) (2005) *Contested Citizenship: Immigration and Cultural Diversity in Europe*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

- Koopmans, R. and Statham, P. (2003) 'How national citizenship shapes transnationalism: migrant and minority claims-making in Germany, Great Britain and the Netherlands', in Joppke, C. and Morawska, E. (eds) *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Koslowski, R. (2005) *International Migration and the Globalization of Domestic Politics*. London: Routledge

- Koslowski, R. (2001) 'Demographic boundary maintenance in world politics: of international norms on dual nationality', in Albert, M., Jacobson, D. and Lapid, Y. (eds) *Identities, Borders, Orders*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

- Lafleur, J-M. (2011) 'Why do states enfranchise citizens abroad? Comparative insights from Mexico, Italy and Belgium', *Global Networks*, 11(4): 481–501

- Landolt, P. (2008) 'The transnational geographies of immigrant politics: insights from a comparative study of migrant grassroots organizing', *The Sociological Quarterly*, 49(1): 53–77

- Ledgeway, A. and Lepschy, A.L. (2012) *Le Comunità Immigranti nel Regno Unito: Il Caso di Bedford.* Perugia: Guerra

- Lee, T. (2008) 'Race, immigration and the identity-to-politics link', *Annual Review of Political Science,* 11: 457–478

- Levitt, P. (2003) 'International perspectives on transnational migration: an introduction', *International Migration Review*, 37(3): 565–575.

- Levitt, P. (2001) 'Transnational migration: taking stock and future directions', *Global Networks,* 1(3): 195–216

- Levitt, P. and Glick Schiller, N. (2004) 'Conceptualizing simultaneity: a transnational social field perspective on society', *International Migration Review,* 38(3): 1002–1039

- Lipssedge, M., Dianin, G. and Duckworth, E. (1993) 'A preliminary survey of Italian intravenous heroin users in London', *Addiction*, 88: 1565–1572

- Localmultidem [online], 'Description of the project'. Available from: http://www.um.es/localmultidem/index.php?id=1 (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Luconi, S. (2009) 'Emigrazione, vita politica e partecipazione sindacale', in AAVV *Storia d'Italia. Annali 24. Migrazioni*. Torino: Einaudi

- Marin, U. (1975) *Italiani in Gran Bretagna*. Roma: Centro Studi Emigrazione

- Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (2010) 'Part II: methodology and research design. Introduction', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Martiniello, M. and Lafleur, J-M. (2008) 'Towards a transatlantic dialogue in the study of immigrant political transnationalism', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 31(4): 645–663

- McHugh, K.E. (2000) 'Inside, outside, upside down, backward, forward, round and round: a case for ethnographic studies in migration', *Progress in Human Geography*, 24(1): 71–89

- Medaglia, A. (2001) *Patriarchal Structures and Ethnicity in the Italian Community in Britain*. Aldershot: Ashgate

- Milbrath, L.W. (1965) *Political Participation*. Chicago, IL: Rand McNally

- Modood, T. (2005) 'Ethnicity and political mobilization in Britain', in Loury, G.C., Modood, T. and Teles, S.M. (eds) *Ethnicity, Social Mobility and Public Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Molinari, M. (2011) *Gli Italiani di New York*. Roma and Bari: GLF editori Laterza

- Morales, L. and Giugni, M. (eds) (2011) *Social Capital, Political Participation and Migration in Europe. Making Multicultural Democracy Work?* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Morawska, E. (2003) 'Immigrant transnationalism and assimilation: a variety of combinations and the analytic strategy it suggests', in Joppke, C. and Morawska, E. (eds) *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Mügge, L. (2012) 'Dual nationality and transnational politics', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38(1): 1–19

- Mügge, L. (2011) 'Diversity in transnationalism: Surinamese organizational networks', *International Migration* 49(3): 52–75

- Nava, S. (2009) *La Fuga dei Talenti. Storie di Professionisti che l'Italia si è Lasciata Scappare*. Cinisello Balsamo: San Paolo

- Niada, M. (2008) *La Nuova Londra. Capitale del XXI secolo.* Milano: Garzanti

- Odmalm, P. (2004) 'Civil society, migrant organisations and political parties: theoretical linkages and applications to the Swedish context', *Journal of Ethnic Migration Studies,* 30(3): 471–489

- Østergaard-Nielsen, E. (2003) 'The politics of migrants' transnational political practices', *International Migration Review,* 37(3): 760–786

- Palmer, R. (1977) 'The Italians: patterns of migration in London', in Watson, J.L. (ed) *Between Two Cultures. Migrants and Minorities in Britain*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell

- Parolin, G. (1997) 'La processione della Madonna del Carmine e la sagra italiana di Londra. Una lettura antropologica', *Studi Emigrazione*, 129: 99–125

- Parsons, C. (2010) 'Constructivism and interpretive theory', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Patriarca, S. (2010) *Italianità: la Costruzione del Carattere Nazionale*. Roma and Bari: GLF editori Laterza

- Penninx, R., Kraal, K., Martiniello, M. and Vertovec, S. (2004) 'Introduction: European cities and their new residents', in Penninx, R., Kraal, K., Martiniello, M. and Vertovec, S. (eds) *Citizenship in European Cities: Immigrants, Local Politics and Integration Policies.* Aldershot: Ashgate

- Però, D. and Solomos, J. (2010) 'Introduction: migrant politics and mobilization: exclusion, engagements, incorporation', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 33(1): 1–18

- Portes, A., Escobar, C. and Arana, R. (2009) 'Divided or convergent loyalties? The political incorporation process of Latin American immigrants in the United States', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, 50(2): 103–136

- Portes, A., Escobar, C. and Arana, R. (2008) 'Bridging the gap: transnational and ethnic organizations in the political incorporation of immigrants in the United States', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30(6): 1056–1090

- Portes, A., Escobar, C. and Radford, A. (2007) 'Immigrant transnational organizations and development: a comparative study', *International Migration Review*, 41(1): 242–281

- Portes, A., Guarnizo, L. and Landolt, P. (1999) 'The study of transnationalism: pitfalls and promise of an emergent research field', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 22(2): 217–237

- Pugliese, E. (2006) *L' Italia tra Migrazioni Internazionali e Migrazioni Interne*. Bologna: il Mulino

- Putnam, R. D., Leonardi, R. and Nanetti, R. (1994) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press

- Ramakrishnan, S.K. (2004) 'Second-generation immigrants? The ''2.5 generation'' in the United States', *Social Science Quarterly*, 85(2): 380–399

- Read, M. and Marsh, D. (2002) 'Combining qualitative and quantitative methods', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Robins, K. and Aksoy, A. (2001) 'From spaces of identity to mental spaces: lessons from Turkish-Cypriot cultural experience in Britain', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 27(4): 685–711

- Rose, G. (1997) 'Situating knowledges: positionality, reflexivities and other tactics', *Progress in Human Geography*, 21(3): 305–320

- Sarup, M. (1994) 'Home and identity', in Robertson, G., Marsh, M., Ticknet, L., Bird, J., Curtis, B. and Putnam, T. (eds) *Travellers' Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement*. London: Routledge

- Scotto, G. (2010) 'Italiani a Londra tra tradizione e meritocrazia', in Fondazione Migrantes (ed) *Rapporto Italiani nel Mondo 2010*. Roma: Edizioni Idos

- Seganti, F. R. (2010) 'Practicing reflexivity in the study of Italian migrants in London', *The Qualitative Report*, 15(4): 966–987

- Seganti, F. R. (2008) 'Understanding the role of the web in supporting identity construction strategies of the latest generation of Italians in London', in Sudweek F.,

Hrachovec, H. and Ess C. (eds) *Cultural Attitudes towards Communication and Technology*. Australia: Murdoch University

- Seganti, F. R. (2007) 'Beyond virtuality: the case of the latest generation of Italians in London and its use of cyberspace', *Altreitalie,* 35: 125–148

- Severgnini, B. (2008) *Italians. Il Giro del Mondo in 80 Pizze*. Milano: Rizzoli

- Smith, M.P. (2007) 'The two faces of transnational citizenship', *Ethnic and Racial Studies,* 30(6): 1096–1116

- Smith, M.P. (2005a) 'Power in place/places of power: contextualizing transnational research', *City & Society,* 17(1): 5–34

- Smith, M.P. (2005b) 'From context to text and back again: the uses of transnational urbanism', *City & Society,* 17(1): 81–92

- Smith, M. P. (2003) 'Transnationalism, the state, and the extraterritorial citizen', *Politics & Society*, 31(4): 467–502

- Smith, M. P. and Bakker, M. (2005) 'The transnational politics of the tomato king: meaning and impact', *Global Networks*, 5(2): 129–146

- Smith, R.M. (2004) 'Identities, interests, and the future of political science', *Perspectives on Politics*, 2: 301–312

- Snel, E., Engbersen, G. and Leerkes, A. (2006) 'Transnational involvement and social integration', *Global Networks*, 6(3): 285–308

- Sökefeld, M. (2006) 'Mobilizing in transnational space: a social movement approach to the formation of diaspora*', Global Networks*, 6(3): 265–284

- Soysal, Y.N. (1994) *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press

- Sponza, L. (2005) 'Gli Italiani in Gran Bretagna', *Altreitalie*, 30: 4–22

- Sponza, L. (1993) 'The 1880s: a turning point', *Supplement. The Italianist*, 13: 10–24

- Stanca, L.M. (2001) *St Peter's Italian Church in London*. Roma: Salemi

- Sultana, F. (2007) 'Reflexivity, positionality and participatory ethics: negotiating fieldwork dilemmas in international research', *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 6(3): 374–385

- Tajfel, H. (1981) *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Tamaki, E. (2011) 'Transnational home engagement among Latino and Asian Americans: resources and motivation', *International Migration Review*, 45(1): 148–173

- Tarli Barbieri, G. (2007) 'Il voto degli Italiani all'estero: una riforma sbagliata', in D'Alimonte, R. and Chiaromonte, A. (eds) *Proporzionale ma non Solo. Le Elezioni Politiche del 2006*. Bologna: il Mulino

- Tillie, J. (2004) 'Social capital of organisations and their members: explaining the political integration of immigrants in Amsterdam', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 30(3): 529–541

- Tintori, G. (2011) 'The transnational political practices of ''Latin American Italians''', *International Migration*, 49(3): 168–188

- Tintori, G. (2009) *Fardelli d'Italia? Conseguenze Nazionali e Transnazionali delle Politiche di Cittadinanza Italiane*. Roma: Carocci

- Togeby, L. (2004) 'It depends…how organisational participation affects political participation and social trust among second-generation immigrants in Denmark', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 30(3): 509–528

- Tosi, A. (1993) 'A new turning point? Language and social issues before and after European integration', *Supplement. The Italianist*, 13: 78–95

- Tricarico, D. (2007) 'Cucine nazionali a confronto. I percorsi della cucina italiana in Gran Bretagna', *Storicamente*, 3. Available from: http://www.storicamente.org/03tricarico.htm (latest access: April 26, 2012)

- Tubito, M. and King, R. (1996) 'Italians in Peterborough: between integration, encapsulation and return', *University of Sussex: Department of Geography Research Research Paper*, 27

- Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L. and Brady, H. E. (eds) (1995) *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

- Vertovec, S. (2009) *Transnationalism*. London: Routledge

- Vogel, D. (ed) (2008) *Highly Active Immigrants*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang

- Vromen, A. (2010) 'Qualitative methods', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds) *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

- Waldinger, R. (2008) 'Between "here" and "there": immigrant cross-border activities and loyalties', *International Migration Review*, 42(1): 3–29

- Walter, B. (2011) 'Whiteness and diasporic Irishness: nation, gender and class', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* 37(9): 1295–1312

- Wimmer, A. and Glick Schiller, N. (2003) 'Methodological nationalism, the social sciences, and the study of migration: an essay in historical epistemology, *International Migration Review*, 37(3): 576–610

- Yanow, D., Schwartz-Shea, P. and Freitas, M. (2009) 'Case study research in political science', in Mills, A., Durepos, G. and Wiebe, E. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Case Study Research*. London: Sage

- Yeoh, B.S.A. and Huang, S. (eds) (2011) *Special Issue Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies. In and Out of Asia: The Cultural Politics of Talent Migration*, 37(5): 681–842

- Zontini, E. (2006) 'Families, social capital and ethnic identities: report on Italy', in Gouldbourne, H. (ed) *Families, Social Capital and Ethnic Identities of Caribbean, South Asians and South Europeans*. London: London South Bank University

- Zontini, E. (2004) 'Italian families and social capital: ritual and the provision of care in British-Italian transnational families', *London South Bank University Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group Working Paper*, 6

MEDIA ARTICLES

- BBC [online] 'Born abroad: an immigration map of Britain'. Available from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/spl/hi/uk/05/born_abroad/countries/html/italy.stm (latest access: September 22, 2011)

- BBC [online] 'The young Italians'. Available from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b016ljx5 (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Celli, P.L. (2009) [online] '"Figlio mio, lascia questo Paese"' , *la Repubblica.* Available from: http://www.repubblica.it/2009/11/sezioni/scuola_e_universita/servizi/celli-lettera/celli-lettera/celli-lettera.html (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Cucchiarato, C. (2010a) [online] '"Noi, emigranti e invisibili". I ragazzi che lasciano l'Italia', *la Repubblica.* Available from: http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2010/10/22/news/cucchiarato-8316581/index.html?ref=search (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Cucchiarato, C. (2010b) [online] 'Giovani, laureati, in fuga per scelta. Ecco chi sono gli italiani all'estero', *la Repubblica*. Available from: http://www.repubblica.it/economia/2010/10/03/news/giovani_laureati_in_fuga_per_scelta_ecco_chi_sono_gli_italiani_all_estero-7687550/index.html?ref=search (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Faris, S. (2010) [online] 'Arrivederci, Italia: why young Italians are leaving', *Time Magazine*. Available from: http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2024136,00.html (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Hooper, J. (2011) [online] 'Economic standstill sets Italians on the move', *the Guardian*. Available from: http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/dec/21/italy-economic-standstill-work-abroad (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- 'Il "Manifesto degli Espatriati"' [online] Available from: http://fugadeitalenti.wordpress.com/2010/09/27/il-manifesto-degli-espatriati (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- 'ITalents'[online] Available from: http://www.italents.org/ (latest access: April 30, 2012)

- Nava, S. (2010) [online] 'Ecco numeri e costi della nuova emigrazione italiana', *IlSole24Ore*. Available from: http://www.ilsole24ore.com/art/economia/2010-12-20/numeri-costi-nuova-emigrazione-173135.shtml (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Valdambrini, A. (2010) [online] 'Professionisti e ricercatori, tutti in fuga dall'Italia. E adesso la rete gli dà voce', *Il Fatto Quotidiano*. Available from: http://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2010/10/18/professionisti-e-ricercatori-tutti-in-fuga-dallitalia-e-adesso-la-rete-gli-da-voce/72180/ (latest access: April 25, 2012)

- Zanetti, E. (2012) [online] 'Far tornare i cervelli in fuga? Servono meritocrazia e sgravi', *Linkiesta*. Available from: http://www.linkiesta.it/rientro-fuga-dei-cercelli (latest access: April 25, 2012)

WEB-SITES (ITALIAN NETWORK)

- Backhill [online] 'A unique heritage'. Available from: http://www.backhillonline.com/a-unique-heritage.html (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Backhill [online] 'The Italian Ladies Committee'. Available from: http://www.backhillonline.com/the-italian-ladies-committee-cdi.html (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Backhill [online] 'The Mazzini Garibaldi Foundation'. Available from: http://www.backhillonline.com/the-mazzini-garibaldi-foundation.html (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Backhill [online] 'The Our Lady of Mount Carmel procession'. Available from: http://www.backhillonline.com/the-our-lady-of-mount-carmel-procession.html (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Backhill [online] 'Whatever happened to…the Italian Hospital'. Available from: http://www.backhillonline.com/whatever-happened-to...-the-italian-hospital.html (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Business Club Italia [online] 'Statute'. Available from: http://www.businessclubitalia.org/statute.htm (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Business Club Italia [online] 'Who we are'. Available from: http://www.businessclubitalia.org/who.htm (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Club di Londra [online] 'Rules'. Available from: http://members.fortunecity.com/clubdilondra/htm/statutuk.html/ (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- ENAIP [online] 'About Enaip'. Available from: http://www.enaip.org.uk/index.php?page=how-about-enaip (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Imperial College Italian Society [online] Available from: http://www.imperialcollegeunion.org/clubs-and-societies/a-to-z/i/italian/ (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Italianialondra [online] 'Frequently Asked Questions'. Available from: http://www.italianialondra.com/faq.htm (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Italiansoflondon [online] 'Benvenuti'. Available from: http://www.italiansoflondon.com/index.php (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Italiansoflondon [online] 'Mission'. Available from: http://www.italiansoflondon.com/index.php?sezioneid=1&articoloid=9&link_template =standard (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- King's College Italian Society [online] 'Italian Society'. Available from: http://www.kclsu.org/society.asp?section=295&itemid=865&search= (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- Labour Friends of Italy [online] 'About'. Available from: http://www.labour-italy.org.uk/about/about.html (latest access on May 3, 2012)

- La Scuola Italiana a Londra [online] 'Our history'. Available from: http://www.scuolaitalianalondra.org/?page_id=231 (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- La Scuola Italiana a Londra [online] 'Our vision'. Available from: http://www.scuolaitalianalondra.org/?page_id=218 (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- LSE Italian Society [online] 'About this group'. Available from: http://groupspaces.com/lseitaliansociety/ (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- UCL Italian Society [online] 'Italian'. Available from: http://uclu.org/clubs-societies/italian/index.php (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- LSE Italian Society [online] 'About this group'. Available from: http://groupspaces.com/lseitaliansociety/ (latest access on November 4, 2011)

- UCL Italian Society [online] 'Italian'. Available from: http://uclu.org/clubs-societies/italian/index.php (latest access on November 4, 2011)

ANNEX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE (INCLUDING INFORMED CONSENT)

1. INFORMED CONSENT

*1. RESEARCH PROJECT:
A STUDY OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN THE UK

Informed Consent Form for Project Participants
NAME OF STUDENT/RESEARCHER: Giuseppe Scotto
NAME(S) OF SUPERVISOR(S): Prof. Russell King, Prof. Shamit Saggar
INSTITUTION: University of Sussex, Department of Politics
PROJECT TITLE: The integration of migrants: a study of the Italian community in the UK

Participant's Agreement:

I agree to take part in the above research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I understand the intent and purpose of this research. I am aware the data will be used for a doctoral thesis. I grant permission for the use of this information.

I understand that agreeing to take part in this research project means that I am willing to:
- complete the questionnaire sent by the researcher

Data Protection

This information will be held and processed for the following purpose(s):

- DPhil thesis and relative academic papers on the social and political participation of Italians in the UK.

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published.
I understand that I will keep a copy of the questionnaire for my approval before it is included in the research.

Withdrawal from study

I understand that my participation is voluntary; that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project.

Name	
Email address	
Date	

✱ 2. Would you like to be contacted at a later stage for a follow-up interview ?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

✱ 3. How did you hear about this research?

- ☐ Forum Italians
- ☐ Web-Site ItaliansofLondon
- ☐ Web-Site ItalianiaLondra
- ☐ Research blog
- ☐ Skype
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Italian Bookstore
- ☐ Personal contacts
- ☐ Other (please specify)

2. PERSONAL INFORMATION

*1. Gender:

○ M

○ F

*2. In which year were you born?

[   ]

*3. In which country were you born?

○ Italy

○ UK

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

4. In which Italian region where you born? (if born in Italy)

[   ]

5. In which year did you first move to the UK? (if not born in the UK)

[   ]

6. Did you arrive before or after 1980?

○ Before

○ After

○ British-born

7. What is the main reason why you came to live in the UK? (if not born in the UK)

○ Job-related / work opportunities

○ Family reasons

○ Partner

○ Study

○ Other (please specify)

[   ]

8. If you had to make again a decision to move or not to the UK now that you know how life is here, what would you do? (if not born in the UK)

○ I would still move to the UK

○ I would not move to the UK but would move to a different country

○ I would not move from Italy

○ I do not know

*9. How many years have you lived in London?

○ All or almost all of my life

○ Number of years:

[   ]

*10. In which country or countries do you hold citizenship/passport)? (tick 1 or more options)

☐ Italy

☐ UK

☐ Other (please specify)

[   ]

11. Would you like to become a citizen of the UK in the future? (if not currently a British citizen)

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't know

12. Would you like to move back to Italy in the future?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't know

*13. Are you registered in the (local) electoral register?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't know

*14. In which country were your parents born?

	UK	Italy	Other
Father	○	○	○
Mother	○	○	○

15. If your parents were born in Italy, in which region were they born?

Father: [   ]

Mother: [   ]

*16. Which one best describes the way you think of yourself?

- ○ Italian
- ○ English
- ○ European
- ○ Citizen of London
- ○ Other (please specify; e.g. both Italian and Citizen of London)

*17. Are your friends mostly...?

- ○ Italian
- ○ British
- ○ Different ethnicities
- ○ Other (please specify; e.g. both Italian and British)

18. Overall, how do you think is the reputation of Italians in the UK?

- ○ Positive
- ○ Negative
- ○ Don't know

*19. How often do you visit Italy?

- ○ more than once a year
- ○ about once a year
- ○ about once every two/three years
- ○ less than once every three years
- ○ never

20. Most people belong to some religious denomination, regardless of whether they are practising believers or even care about religion at all. To which religious denomination would you say that you belong?

- ○ Protestant
- ○ Roman Catholic
- ○ Atheist/agnostic/Do not belong to any denomination
- ○ Other religious denomination

21. Apart from funerals, christenings and weddings, how often do you practise your religion for example by attending religious gatherings?

- ○ every day
- ○ several times a week
- ○ once a week
- ○ once a month
- ○ several times a year
- ○ once a year
- ○ never
- ○ don't know

＊22. Which of these descriptions applies to your marital status?

- ○ married
- ○ cohabiting/living with partner
- ○ never married
- ○ divorced
- ○ widowed
- ○ Other (please specify)

23. In which country...

	UK	Italy	Other	N/A
was your partner born?	☐	☐	☐	☐
does your partner hold citizenship (a passport)?	☐	☐	☐	☐

＊24. Including yourself, how many people - including children - live regularly as members of your household?

And how many of these, if any, are children of yours of 16 or less years old?

Number:

Number of children:

＊25. Who is the main income-earner in this household, yourself or someone else?

- ○ Respondent
- ○ Someone else
- ○ Respondent and someone else

*26. Which of these descriptions best describes your job situation in the last month?

○ In paid work (or away temporarily) (employee, self-employed, working for your family business)

○ In education, (not paid for by employer) even if on vacation

○ unemployed and actively looking for a job

○ unemployed, wanting a job but not actively looking for a job

○ retired/permanently sick/ disabled

○ doing housework, looking after children or other persons

27. Could you tell me what is your current job? (if you are in paid work)

Sector

Position

*28. What language or languages would you consider as your native language?

○ Italian

○ English

○ Other

*29. How well do you speak...?

	I do not speak it	I speak it a little	I speak it reasonably	I speak it fluently	I speak it like my native language
Italian	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
English	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

*30. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

○ not completed primary (compulsory) education/'scuola elementare'

○ primary education/'scuola elementare' or first stage of basic education

○ lower level secondary education or second stage of basic education/'diploma di scuola media'

○ upper secondary education/'diploma di scuola superiore'

○ post secondary, non-tertiary education/'corso post-diploma non universitario'

○ first stage of tertiary education (not leading directly to an advanced research qualification)/'laurea'

○ second stage of tertiary education (leading directly to advanced research qualification)/'laurea specialistica' or 'master'

3. ASSOCIATIONAL LIFE

1. Are you currently a member of Italian or British associations, clubs, non-political organizations or have you been in the past? (tick one option for each row)

	Currently	In the past	Currently & in the past	Never
Italian Associations	○	○	○	○
British Associations	○	○	○	○

2. Have you participated in any activity arranged by any such kind of organisations during the last 12 months? (tick one option for each row)

	Yes	No
Italian Organisations	○	○
British Organisations	○	○

3. Have you participated in more than one...?

	Yes	No
Italian Association	○	○
British Association	○	○

4. Thinking of this kind of organisation, approximately how many years are you/have you been involved in this organisation? (if involved; for each organization)

Name of the organization/years of involvement
_____

Name of the organization/years of involvement:
_____

Name of the organization/years of involvement:
_____

Name of the organization/years of involvement:
_____

5. Do you remember how you started joining/participating in Italian/British associations? (tick one option for each row)

	A relative / friend /colleague asked me to join/participate in it	I decided to join/participate after reading materials published by the organisation (newsletter, brochure, etc.)	I decided to join/participate after a phone/mail request to do so	After attending a local meeting/activity/event organised by the association	I contacted myself with the organisation and requested to join/participate	I joined the organisation after watching/listening/reading a report/advertisement about it	Other
Italian Associations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
British Associations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

6. Do you have people in your environment, such as relatives, friends or acquaintances, who are engaged in Italian associations or organisations?

	Yes	No
Italian associations	○	○
British associations	○	○

7. Could you please tell me why are you not involved in any of these associations of groups? (tick only 1 option for each row)

	I am not interested	I have no time	I have not enough information	I have never thought about this	I don't know	N/A
If you are not involved in any Italian association:	○	○	○	○	○	○
If you are not involved in any British association:	○	○	○	○	○	○

4. INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS

*1. How interested are you personally in each of the following areas?

	Very Interested	Fairly Interested	Not very Interested	Not at all Interested
Local politics	○	○	○	○
British politics	○	○	○	○
Italian politics	○	○	○	○

*2. How often would you say that you talk to family, friends or colleagues about...?

	Almost every day	Regularly	Rarely	Never
Local Politics	○	○	○	○
British Politics	○	○	○	○
Italian Politics	○	○	○	○

*3. How well informed would you say that you are about public affairs in...?

	Very well informed	Reasonably informed	Only a bit informed	Not at all informed
Your city or residence	○	○	○	○
UK	○	○	○	○
Italy	○	○	○	○

*4. How often would you say you read newspapers (can also be on the internet), or watch or listen to news programmes on television or on the radio to find out about recent developments in public affairs in...?

	Almost every day	Regularly	Rarely	Never
Your city or residence	○	○	○	○
UK	○	○	○	○
Italy	○	○	○	○

*5. What are the British and Italian media (TV channels, newspapers, web-sites) which you usually follow? (please, name)

UK: _____

Italy: _____

*6. Could you please tell me the names of the mayor of London, of the British Prime Minister and of the Italian Minister?

Mayor: _____

British PM: _____

Italian PM: _____

*7. During the last 12 months, have you for such reasons done any of the following activities, considering only the British politics?

	Yes	No
Contacted a politician/a government or local government official	○	○
Been affiliated with a political organization	○	○
Worked in a political party/contributed to a campaign/political cause	○	○
Attended a political meeting	○	○
Signed a petition/collection of signatures	○	○
Taken part in a public demonstration	○	○
Donated money to a political organisation or group	○	○
Taken part in a strike	○	○
Contacted the media	○	○

*8. During the last 12 months, have you for such reasons done any of the following activities, considering only the Italian politics?

	Yes	No
Contacted a politician/a government or local government official	○	○
Been affiliated with a political organization	○	○
Worked in a political party/contributed to a campaign/political cause	○	○
Attended a political meeting	○	○
Signed a petition/collection of signatures	○	○
Taken part in a public demonstration	○	○
Donated money to a political organisation or group	○	○
Taken part in a strike	○	○
Contacted the media	○	○

9. Did someone ask you or encourage you to do any of the activities listed above? (tick 1 or more options)

☐ A relative or friend

☐ A neighbour, a colleague at work or an acquaintance of yours

☐ A political party, a trade union or some other organization

☐ The media

☐ No one

☐ Other (please specify)

✱10. Do you feel encouraged by media and political actors (politicians, government officials, local authorities) to participate in British politics?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't know

11. Did you receive the forms to vote in the last Italian general elections (2008)?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Don't remember

✱12. Sometimes people don't vote because they cannot or because they don't want to. Did you vote in the last...?

	Yes	No, but eligible to vote	No, but not eligible to vote	Can't remember
Local Elections	○	○	○	○
British General Elections	○	○	○	○
Italian General Elections	○	○	○	○
European Elections	○	○	○	○

✱13. Do you think you will vote in the next...?

	Yes	No	Not eligible	Don't know
Local Elections	○	○	○	○
British General Elections	○	○	○	○
Italian General Elections	○	○	○	○
European Elections	○	○	○	○

14. If you follow what happens in Italy and you vote in Italian elections, what are the reasons that push you to do so, even if you don't live in Italy?

*15. What do you think are the two most important issues that concern you at the moment in the UK? (tick 2 options)

- [ ] Crime
- [ ] Economic situation
- [ ] Taxation
- [ ] Unemployment
- [ ] Terrorism
- [ ] Defence/Foreign Affairs
- [ ] Internal political affairs
- [ ] Housing
- [ ] Immigration
- [ ] Healthcare system
- [ ] Educational system
- [ ] Pensions
- [ ] Environmental issues
- [ ] Other (please specify)