

Volume One:
Families, Social Capital and Ethnic Identities of
Caribbeans, South Asians and South Europeans

Edited by
Harry Goulbourne

With contributions from
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Acknowledgement	ii
Introduction - Harry Goulbourne	1
Background	2
Some relevant themes	4
Conclusion	5
Families, social capital and ethnic identities: Report on the Caribbean - Tracey Reynolds	6
Introduction	6
Research Background	6
Jamaica and Barbados: brief historical overview	7
Race and class divisions	8
Caribbean migration and family ties	10
Transnationalism	12
Family Remittance	13
Return migration	14
Conclusion	16
Appendix One: Summary of Meetings	17
Families, social capital and ethnic identities: Report on Italy - Elisabetta Zontini	18
Introduction	18
Background	18
Families and social capital	19
Migration	22
Transnationalism	24
The Ministry	24
The Regions	26
<u>Trentino</u>	26
<u>Emilia Romagna</u>	28
<u>Lazio</u>	29
<u>Sicily</u>	29
The Associations	30
The Church	31
Ethnic identity and generational divisions	31
Citizenship and return migration	33
Transnational families	34
Conclusion	35
Appendix One: List of Interviewees	36
Appendix Two: Dates and Places visited	36
References	37

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Harry Goulbourne
April 2006

Introduction

Harry Goulbourne

The reports of researchers-in-the-field contained in this publication are the result of a project undertaken as part of the Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group (hereafter, Families Group) at London South Bank University in 2003-4. The full programme of work for the Families Group can be found at: www.lsbu.ac.uk/families. The exercise discussed here involved:

- collecting, analysing and cataloguing published data on families and social capital in South Asian, Southern European, and Caribbean communities in North America
- visiting four overseas sites (South Europe, South Asia, Caribbean, North America) of research and establishing institutional collaborative research with researchers working on families, social capital and ethnic identities
- producing a research/methodological paper about the comparative and international dimensions of families, social capital and ethnic identities
- helping to develop a fourth arm of the Ethnicity Strand in the Families Group and seeking additional funds for a three year complementary project on families, ethnicity and social capital focusing on one of our three groups (Caribbeans, South Asian or Southern European) across the Atlantic.

The reports published here concern in the main the first two of these aims, while also demonstrating how the project was conducted. There is no attempt to finesse these reports; rather, the work of each researcher and their direct experiences are told on-the-move, so to speak - that is to say, as part of the preparation for more detailed empirical and theoretical work in the areas highlighted. The exercise achieved the objective of preparing a group of young researchers to conduct cross-cultural, trans-national, research and acquaint themselves with the issues and concerns of established scholars in different cultural and national spheres.

It is important and relevant to publish these papers as work-in-progress, because not only will these researchers' findings and experiences inform their forthcoming academic publications, but what they report here is a significant part of the research process that is often lost or remain silent in the research dissemination process. It is hoped that new researchers in the related fields of families, transnational relations, social capital, migration, and race and ethnicity studies, will find this kind of publication useful, particularly as they plan and design their research programmes and projects.

In these introductory remarks about the reports it is necessary briefly to explain the context of the project, how it complemented other on-going research projects in the Families & Social Capital ESRC Research Group (hereafter, Families Group) at London South Bank University, and point to some relevant common themes. Due to the length of most of these contributions, we publish them in two volumes: those by Reynolds and Zontini are in the first volume and those by Evergeti and Mand constitute volume two.

Background

Our research projects under the rubric of ethnicity (within the Families Group), takes Britain as the central social and physical location, with each project extending outwards into societies across the world. The three main projects in the ethnicity strand of the Research Group explore families and young people's diasporic identities (Dr Tracey Reynolds: commenced October 2002), household and family rituals (Dr Elizabetta Zontini: commenced in April 2003), and family care and provision in a transnational world (Dr Kanwal Mand: commenced in September 2003). Each project focuses on a specific categorical group - sometimes confused with a minority ethnic community - in Britain: Caribbeans (with backgrounds in Barbados, Jamaica, and Guyana), Southern Europeans (Italians, with backgrounds in Trentino and Sicily), and South Asians (of Punjabi and Goan backgrounds) respectively. These are societies with which Britain has had close and continuing connections through families and kinship groups, and the three projects are integrated, with the aim of identifying and understanding shared and distinct social patterns and experiences of social, but particularly family, life within a general British context.

The original designs of these projects, however, lacked a North American dimension, and soon after the start of the Group's work we became convinced that a number of developments were encouraging us to think that it would be useful to extend our interest to that region.

The first of these was the impact of the bombing of the twin towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington on 11 September 2001 - commonly referred to as 9/11. In general, the recognition of legitimate plural racial and ethnic individual and group identities has been viewed as a benign development in Britain. However, the atrocities of 9/11 changed that perspective, even though they had been preceded in the late 1990s by earlier acts of terrorist bombings in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, and followed by bombings in Bali and Madrid the Beslan massacre, and more recently the London bombings in July, 2005. However mistaken, these events have encouraged states to be wary of multiple identities and to see such identities as suggestive of dubious loyalty to the nation-state, particularly where security is concerned (see, for example, Association of Black Sociologists, 2001). The fact that a number of individuals with dual identities were quickly arrested in the wake of 9/11 by the security services in Britain and the USA, as well as Afghanistan and Pakistan, appears to give credence to the perception that heterogeneous identities imply divided loyalty. Major disturbances between Asian and White communities in Bradford, Manchester and other English cities in summer 2001 (see, Ousley, 2001; Cattle, 2001) also reinforced a view that dual or multiple ethnic identities undermine public harmony and social peace in a developing multi-cultural society which is itself hotly contested (see, for example, Parekh, 2000; Phillips, 2005). In the USA, the religious identity (Muslim) of the 'Washington sniper' of 2002 (as well as his and his collaborator's racial identity) may also have further reinforced a popular and policy view that difference and plurality pose a fundamental threat to the public good. Such perceptions are very likely to be inimical to the interests of individual citizens as well as new minority ethnic communities in open societies such as obtain in parts of Continental Europe, Britain and North America. These considerations alerted us to a continuing need to prosecute relevant academic research that will question preconceived assumptions and hasty conclusions about continuing links between families and communities across national boundaries.

The second factor that encouraged us to attempt a North American dimension in the racial and ethnic identity strand of the Families Group, was the state of scholarship on new ethnicities/migration patterns across the Atlantic. In other words, there is a strong tradition of focusing on one or the other side of the Atlantic divide, while ignoring the very real social connections between communities with common backgrounds, aspirations and family connections. For example, with regard to Caribbeans - about whom there has been much research on both sides of the Atlantic - there has long been a

call in the research community for a major research project that would encompass the Atlantic world as a whole, that is, the Caribbean, North America, and Europe (Britain, France, The Netherlands). While there are a number of notable attempts, these have not been satisfactorily done at either the British or the American ends (see, for example, Cross & Entzinger, 1986; Grosfogel, 1997; Goulbourne & Chamberlain, 2001; Foner 2001; Goulbourne, 2002; Peach, 1991; Thompson & Bauer, forthcoming). With regard to ethnicity, family and social capital, there appears to be no available comparative account or research underway, although there have been specific projects which undertake parts of this larger problem (see, for example, Goulbourne & Chamberlain, 2001; Thompson & Bauer, 2003; Noble, 2001). It was our intention that the project should address this problem with regard to the groups specified, by bringing together the various pieces of work being conducted by researchers in isolation of each other and establish a collaborative network. As explained below, this was only partially achieved, and the work along the lines of examining trans-Atlantic networks, particularly with regard to Caribbeans, remains.

The third factor that underpinned this project has had to do with the notion of social capital, which acts as an integrative and/or a heuristic element in our overall research programme (Edwards, et al, 2003). Researchers and scholars in the USA are in advance of UK scholars and researchers in incorporating this concept into the theoretical corpus of their work, and where ethnicity is concerned there is much for UK researchers to learn by way of emulation but also avoidance from their American colleagues. For example, there is a strong tendency in the US literature to stress the virtues of ethnic distance as a resource for groups which need to situate themselves before competing on the open market with other groups (see, for example, Zhou, 1997; Portes & Zhou, 1993), although others have stressed cultural proximity as a valuable social capital resource for new groups (see, Foner, 2001; Nee & Sanders, 2001). At the same time, there is in this body of literature something of an equation between ethnic values and social capital resulting in a kind of a tautology (see, Goulbourne & Solomos, 2002). This point requires more extensive and careful treatment than can be gone into here (see, for example, Goulbourne, forthcoming), but suffice to stress that while the notion of social capital is heuristically useful it can also cast confusion rather than light on social processes. It was thought that the comparative dimension of the project, would help us better to understand both the potential light and the confusion of the concept, and therefore not make some of the glaring mistakes found in the American literature.

Much of the literature on communities in the north Atlantic world has emphasised the African and particularly the European connections, but there has also been a strong South Asian link to be considered. The background to this narrative or story is the movement of people from the Indian sub-continent to East Africa during the heyday of imperialism, and then on to Europe and North America in the last century, as well as people migrating directly from the independent subcontinent to Britain and North America (see, for example, Anwar, 1979; Bhachu, 1986). There have also been people of South Asian heritage who have settled in Britain, The Netherlands and North America after the experience of indenture labour in the Caribbean (see, for example, Tinker, 1974; Goulbourne, 1991; Tatla, 1994). Thus, not unlike the African presence in the Atlantic world, the South Asian presence warrants empirical documentation and theoretical discussion in order better to understand the post-Cold War world order that is still in formation. Arguably, the families, their networks and communities constitute the best ways of garnering this understanding.

As it transpired, however, much of the work on the North American literature about the communities that we were interested in, focused on Greek and Greek Cypriots, and to a lesser extent on Caribbeans and South Asians. This shift in emphasis was due to the good fortune of the group being joined by Dr Venetia Evergeti, whose interest and expertise centred on Greece and Greek communities abroad. This enabled the group to explore a new dimension in the British social and

cultural kaleidoscope. After all, our original intention was indeed to gather data on a comparative basis in order to understand families, social capital and racial and ethnic identities in Britain, and this strategy served our overall purpose, as will be seen from the papers in this publication.

Some relevant themes

As indicated, this project built on the existing three research projects in the family, social capital and ethnicity strand, and was delimited to the specific communities in which we are conducting research in Britain - Caribbeans, South Asians, and Southern European groups. Three additional factors were important for the scope of project - these were time, place and the validity of comparison. The period in which we are interested is of course that which saw sizeable post-World War Two immigration and settlement in Britain and North America. Of course, the actual times of entry vary for the groups, but they are sufficiently proximate to warrant comparison of experiences across racial and ethnic communities. Areas of settlements differed, but there are also remarkable similarities in terms of urban areas. The third factor is that of contrasts: South Asians of all backgrounds migrated to Britain; it would appear, however, that those who migrated to North America have tended to be more of professional backgrounds because of employment/state policies. The same may also be true of South Europeans, depending on the specific country being focused upon. With regard to Caribbeans, those who migrated to Britain are generally assumed to be predominantly of agricultural and skilled working backgrounds, while the balance is tipped towards the middle classes with regard to those who went to North America.

With regard to each of these communities, the researchers found several similarities as well as dissimilarities in the different research sites. This is only as to be expected in comparative social research, because people respond differently even to situations that appear to be the same or similar. This kind of exercise can result in merely comparing and contrasting, but the basic aim of the Aristotelian comparative methodology is that general processes and characteristics can be identified and help to establish rules or principles in social interactions. Thus, as will be noted in the individual reports, the researchers' findings in this project revealed several dissimilarities and similarities. These will be more carefully and extensively drawn upon in subsequent publications, but in concluding these introductory remarks, it may be worthwhile highlighting one or two obvious similarities in the different experiences of these communities.

First, it is significant that all governments in the original home countries of these communities are now keenly interested in gaining the loyalty or support of those who they regard as their fellow citizens living outside the national boundaries. In all the countries visited, as the reports show, national and regional governments have or are actively involved in claiming or welcoming people outside their boundaries who may have a past connection. Dual citizenship, sometimes voting rights, and nearly always favoured investment conditions are parts of attractive packages offered to people who lead their lives outside the national boundaries but who have some links with the Caribbean, Greece, India, or Italy. It should be noted that this phenomenon occurs in both developed and developing economies, and may therefore be reflective of the present state of the competition between different forms of capital.

Second, there is a variety of understanding and experiences of 'return'. Settlers and their offspring in Britain and the USA appear to regularly 'return' to the accepted sources of their heritage, under the various guises as visitor, tourist, investor, or ultimately as settler. In some cases, as in the Caribbean, return can take all these forms, with a heavy emphasis on permanent return. In other cases, such as with regard to India, permanent return remains a myth.

Third, academic interests in the issues with which our group is concerned - families and the notion of social capital - are rather mixed. In the Caribbean, an earlier generation of anthropologists and sociologists were keenly interested in families, but this was not linked then nor now to the concept of social capital. However, in general terms, the substantial matters with which these scholars were concerned are not irrelevant to the matters with which social capital theorists are concerned today. In other words, concerns about shared values, family types (nuclear, extended, etc.), networks for mutual support, and who does what, when and where, continue to be as relevant today as in the 1950s and 1960s, as Reynolds found during her tour of the region. It will be seen that while in all the societies with which we are concerned families have or coming to form part of public policy within the context of migration, these societies view the issues differently. In South Europe Evergeti and Zontini experienced complex situations and relationships with Italian and Greek communities abroad, with sometimes an interest in social capital. It appears, on the other hand, that in India there is comparatively little current interest in family studies, and the academic community appears to be more concerned about larger or over-arching problems of development and global inequality.

Conclusion

As will be evident from a perusal, these examples do not exhaust the themes to be found in the statements that follow in the two volumes of this publication. It is also worth repeating that these pieces are partly preparatory work for investigation into important aspects of families and social capital across national and cultural boundaries. As such, they warrant reporting as part of the process of viewing a general field of research and establishing collaborative links with scholars across boundaries. Crucially, however, these reports are themselves part of the process of investigation and analysis.

Families, social capital and ethnic identities: Report on the Caribbean

Tracey Reynolds

Introduction

In May and June 2003 I visited Jamaica and Barbados as part of Caribbean young people project in the ethnicity strand of the Family and Social Capital ESRC Research Group. The purpose of this visit was formally to speak with academics, researchers, policymakers about issues concerning the family, kinship ties and community in the region within a transnational context. I also had the opportunity to speak with researchers with a related interest at the Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) annual conference in Belize where I presented a paper discussing work on our projects, particularly the one I led on Caribbean families. These various discussions were vital in exploring notions of family and social capital of Caribbeans in the UK and North America and understanding the historical importance of collective and social ties for Caribbeans globally. The key themes to emerge in these discussions focused on understanding transnational family ties and networks, the impact of migration and remigration on family relationships and household structures; social and economic family remittance; and issues of race and class divisions in these Caribbean societies. This paper provides a brief overview of these discussions.

Research Background

The primary aim of my visit to Jamaica and Barbados was to introduce the project to academics, policymakers and officials with related research and policy interests concerning the family. In total I held meetings with 20 academics at the University of West Indies (UWI) at Mona, Jamaica and Cave Hill, Barbados. Meetings also took place with officials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jamaica and Barbados; the Planning Institute in Jamaica, Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other public policy agencies. I had less meetings in Barbados compared to Jamaica and Barbados for three main reasons. Firstly, it was the end of the academic term and a number of academics I wanted to speak to had left the island for their summer break. Secondly, I had a shorter time period in Barbados (4 days) in which to conduct the meetings and a number of academics had to postpone our meetings because of unforeseen work or family commitments. Guyana is a third research site in the Caribbean and I had initially intended to visit that country as part of the exercise. However, this leg of my visit was cancelled due to financial constraints. Nonetheless, I had the opportunity to speak with researchers and academics doing research on Guyanese families in Belize at the Caribbean Studies Association annual conference. I provide a brief summation of my meetings at the end of this paper.

In Britain there is a tendency to view the Caribbean as a homogenous territory. Thus, the main advantage of my visit to Jamaica and Barbados was that I could observe the diverse ways in which class, colour, and ethnic divisions are understood and experienced in Jamaica and Barbados. These differences illustrate that each of these countries is culturally and ethnically distinctive, and they each possess their own unique traditions and customs. I also observed that the social and cultural life of these societies bear little resemblance to the homogenous image usually conveyed about the region.

Jamaica and Barbados: brief historical overview

Jamaica is the largest English-speaking island in the Caribbean with a population size of 2.5 million people. Just over half of the population live in urban areas with 25% of the population in the Kingston and St. Andrew metropolitan areas. Jamaica is divided into 14 parishes. The majority of the population are descendants of African slaves (76%) and there is a significant minority of East Indians, Chinese, Europeans, Syrians and Lebanese.

Jamaica was under Spanish rule from 1494 to 1655, during which time the indigenous populations (Arawaks) were virtually wiped out. This was then followed by British rule from 1655 to 1962 and its influence still shapes the economic, political and social life of Jamaica. For instance, British settlement is largely responsible for the tri-partite racial divide that characterised Jamaica. Generally, speaking people were racially divided along the hierarchal lines of 'white' 'brown' and 'black'. These racial divisions correlate to the socio-economic categories of upper class, middle class and working/peasant class (Alleyne, 2001). Despite social changes in Jamaica and increased social mobility of black people into the middle and upper classes, through education and economic prosperity, it could be argued that the tri-partite racial division remains an important facet of Jamaica society today. I return to this issue of race and class later in the discussion.

During 1655 to 1838 the British settlers imported African slaves on a mass scale to work on the sugar plantations. Indeed, at the height of slavery, Jamaica was regarded as Britain's 'jewel in the crown' because of the economic prosperity and enormous wealth it brought to English plantation owners and English cities such as Liverpool and Bristol. However, runaway ex-slaves known as Maroons also establish their own communities and small farming lands in Jamaica mountainous regions. In 1838 the slaves were finally emancipated and many ex-slaves settled in rural areas as small land farmers. By early 20th century national movements were established by leading figures such as Marcus Garvey, and later Alexander Bustamante (Jamaican Labour Party) and Norman Manley (People National Party) to call for independence. After Jamaica was granted independence from Britain in 1962 these two national parties have dominated Jamaica's political landscape. Today, Jamaica's main industries are bauxite mining, tourism, manufacturing and construction, as well as the rapidly declining agricultural sector. From the 1970s up to present times, some areas of Jamaica have been marred by politically motivated and/or drugs/gang related violence. Other key developments include (1) continued mass migration from rural areas of Jamaica to urban areas. This has led to overpopulation of Kingston (the capital city of Jamaica) and the development of domiciliary towns such as Portmore, an annexe to Kingston, to cope with the increased demand for living space, resources and public utilities; (2) established overseas Jamaican communities in US, Canada and the UK who continue to develop links back to Jamaica through, for example, remittances and close continuing social links; (3) increased profile of Jamaica on the world stage through cultural activities, such as reggae music, sports and exported violence linked to illegal drug trafficking.

Barbados is one of many territories in the Eastern Caribbean. It has a population size of 280,000 people and is divided into 11 parishes with Bridgetown as its capital city. Descendants of African slaves form the majority population with over 90% of population being Black, 5% of the population are white and remaining 5% are mixed-raced and belong to other ethnic groups. The majority of whites still have disproportionate wealth, influence national politics and control business enterprises. Black comprise the middle and lower classes. Historically, there was an 'invisible' and marginalized sub-group of poor whites in Barbados, referred to as 'Redlegs', who are the descendants of the white labourers who existed prior to establishment of large plantation estates where slaves worked the land.

British settlers first arrived in Barbados in 1627 and up to their independence in 1966 Barbados remained exclusively under British control. The sugar industry was the primary commercial enterprise of Barbados and by the mid 1600s the small land holdings of the early British settlers were divided into large plantation estates. Like other territories in English speaking Caribbean and the Americas, slaves were brought from West Africa to work the plantations. This continued up until the abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire in 1838. By 1939 there was an established movement for political independence and Sir Grantley Adams set up the Barbados Labour Party. From the period of 1958 to 1962 Barbados was one of ten members of the West Indian Federation that established political autonomy and internal self-government. Sir Grantley Adams served as the first and only Prime Minister. Barbados achieved independence in 1966. Throughout most of the 20th century the economy has remained largely independent on sugar, rum and molasses production. Barbados is now considered to be a developed economy and tourism and manufacturing are the country's primary industries. Most migration from Barbados has been to Britain (mostly during the 1950s and 1960s) and the USA. In recent times, Barbados has experienced a strong inflow of workers from East Caribbean territories and Guyana.

In both these societies, as throughout the Caribbean, religion is another important socializing agency of Caribbean society. Pentecostal and other fundamentalist sects are a vital force in Caribbean life. They perform a dual function of valorizing family and community and establishing strict codes of personal and community behaviour. Jamaica is a very religious society and religion plays an important part of everyday life. In fact, a popular saying in Jamaica is that you can find a church and rum shop on every street corner. Over 75% of the population are Protestants, 8% Roman Catholic and other religions including Muslim and Jewish faiths. Rastafarianism is practised by 5% of the population (Jamaica National Survey, 2001). In Barbados, the Anglican Church is the primary place of worship.

Race and class divisions

In both Jamaica and Barbados the significance of race and ethnicity and the correlation between race and class underpins the social structure of these societies. Notions of status and power are strongly associated with a white or European ideal. Colour is still widely regarded as a significant determinant of wealth and poverty. Thus, being white or light-skinned is still seen as an important contributor towards wealth and/or upward social mobility. This is evident in the way that white or light-skinned people dominate the upper class and upper middle classes in each of these societies. For instance in the 1970s the so-called twenty-one families that are said to control the private sector in Jamaica have European or Jewish heritages with plantation/landowning, commercial and merchant family ties to the region. In contrast, a black or dark skinned person is afforded lesser status and they are concentrated in the poor and working class categories.

In my discussions with academics and policy-makers it was suggested that to some extent this relationship between race and class has changed and there is a less demarcation of social class status according to race/skin complexion. A number of significant factors have informed this change concerning race and class divisions. First, the growth of private and public owned business enterprises and tourism in these societies has resulted in a broadening of professional and educational opportunities for black and dark-skinned people and these opportunities have allowed them to move into the middle classes. Second, during the 1970s the traditional middle classes (ie, people of light/brown skinned complexion) migrated in large numbers to North America during the 1970s because of the socialist political orientation of Michael Manley's PNP (People's National Party) government. This facilitated the removal of the racial barriers for upward social mobility by black people into the middle class because this created more opportunities for educated black

people to step into professional and managerial employment positions that previously had been closed to them. Carl Stone (1985) noted that it was during this period that the black middle class greatly expanded and became an influential force. Third, the development of political nationalism within the region and the influence of the Black Power Movement of the 1970s on the Caribbean created a platform in which people could publicly question understandings of race and notions that only white/European identity has social and cultural significance. From this period onwards individuals began to celebrate their black racial identity and recognise the importance of their historical ties to Africa in their ethnic and racial heritage. Fourth, the latter part of the 20th century has seen increased consumption and consumerism of Caribbean cultural activities (such as Jamaican reggae music) and the multi million trade in narcotics and drug trafficking (Alleyne, 2002). The increase commercialism of Caribbean music and illegal drugs has created alternative routes for upward social mobility, other than through inherited wealth and education. IN addition there has emerged a new generation of individuals accumulating great wealth (and social status) within a relatively short period of time.

However, despite a general shift in attitudes concerning race and class divisions and increased opportunity and accessibility of upward social mobility, there is evidence to suggest that social status are still irretrievably linked to colour and social class. Dr Farley Brathwaite, Senior Lecturer in Sociology noted that from an early age children internalise the disadvantages of being black as opposed to white or fair-skinned in Caribbean society and the family act as the main agent in transmitting these values of skin colour and racial values. In my discussions this was also explicitly and implicitly reinforced in a number of different ways. I observed various beliefs, attitudes and behaviour that continue to valorize white identity whilst at the same time pathologies black identity. In Jamaica, for instance, I noted that skin bleaching is very popular amongst women in order to achieve a less black skin tone. Skin bleaching is a widely successful commercial business as evidenced by the wide number of skin bleaching products readily available in shops. One woman who admitted to using these products shared anecdotal stories with me around her fears of 'too black' and the belief that brown-skinned woman, or 'brownings', are favoured by men over black-skinned woman and that they are much sought after by males as partners. Such notions of physical beauty and desirability are by no means exclusive to Jamaica and such understandings of beauty and desirability are common across the Caribbean and African diasporas (Cooper, 2001).

It was also apparent that colour still played a main role in defining social class status. People who are light/brown-skinned complexions are heavily concentrated in professional and managerial sectors. For example, the vast majority of academic, policymakers and officials I met with were brown or light-skinned in complexion. Yet, despite my observations during my discussions there was reluctance in acknowledging this issue of colour privilege, class location and social status. I was continually informed that material wealth and not colour was a significant determinant of social class. Two social groups now exist and these are differentiated according to economic status. These are crudely defined as the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. Yet, these categories still continue to be racially defined. Thus, white, light/brown-skinned individuals constitute the majority of the 'haves' and black and dark skinned people were more likely to dominate as 'have nots'. Lewis (1992) comments that the upper and middle classes are further sub-divided into the 'old rich' and 'new rich' and the 'old middle class' and the 'new middle class', which are again racially defined. Thus, 'old rich' comprises the established monied class and landowners, where economic wealth and social status are acquired across a number of successive generations. The 'new rich' (or *nouveaux riche*) represents entrepreneurs and owners of corporations and big businesses who acquired their wealth in one generation. Similarly, the 'old middle class' represents those families with established and intergenerational professional occupations similar to medicine and the law. The 'new middle class', is largely comprised of individuals who took advantage of increased educational opportunities and

development of government and public sector professional posts from the 1970s onwards. Not surprisingly, black and dark-skinned people dominate in the 'nouveaux riche and the 'new middle class' (Lewis, 1992). Yet, with one or two exceptions, the salience of race in defining social and economic categories was not highlighted in these discussions. The working class as a social category is also characterised according to this notion of the 'old' and the 'new'. The 'old working class' reflects people working on small farming lands in rural areas and skilled workers in traditional manufacturing and industrial sectors, such as, for example, miners working in aluminium and bauxite industries. The 'new working class', is said to constitute un/semi-skilled workers in the tourist and service sectors who express similar aspirations to the 'new middle class' and 'nouveaux riche', in terms of the pursuit of excessive material wealth and possessions. This includes purchasing expensive cars and houses, designer clothes and bling jewellery. These new social groups were commonly characterised and criticised as being 'materialistic', 'lacking in class' and 'vulgar' in the way that they displayed their newly acquired wealth. The harshest criticism was generally reserved for those nouveaux riche that acquired their wealth through illegal activities (ie, drug trafficking).

Caribbean migration and family ties

Migration has mainly represented a combination of internal migration and external migration as people leave their place of birth/origin in search of better employment opportunities and also improved life-chances. Rapid globalisation and a declining agricultural society across the region have encouraged the movement of people from rural spaces to metropolitan urban cities. In Jamaica, for example, it is estimated that as many as 20,000 annually people migrate from the rural areas to the capital city, Kingston. This has given rise to the development of 'dormitory districts' to the east and west of Kingston. It has also created housing and employment shortages leading to wide scale social problems in the city.

Historically, Caribbeans have also migrated out to other parts of the region, North America (US and Canada) and Europe (including the UK) in search of better employment opportunities and improved life chances. Edwin Jones, Professor of Public Administration, commented that an outcome of the longstanding historical continued trend towards internal and external migration is that Caribbean societies are very much viewed as 'sending societies'. It is believed that it is commonplace for the majority of families to have at least one family member who has migrated elsewhere. Mass migration to the UK from Jamaica and Barbados in the post World War II era was largely prompted by three factors: (1) labour shortages in key public and utility services within the UK, (2) continued cultural, economic and political links to the UK, (3) restrictive immigration legislation in the US which increased the potential flow of migrants to the UK (Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001). Jamaica had the largest number of migrants to the UK, followed by Barbados. The vast majority of these migrants derived from poor/working-class rural and urban backgrounds. By the late 1960s the opening up of immigration controls in the US coupled with the narrowing of immigration legislation in the UK for New Commonwealth territories led to shift in migration flow towards to the US from the Caribbean. These migrants had higher levels of education and tended to have middle class backgrounds. In Jamaica, for instance, during the early 1970s, the election of Michael Manley's PNP government and his leanings towards socialism prompted large numbers of the elite and middle classes to leave Jamaica and settle in the US. A number of authors investigating Caribbean migration have also highlighted how the relative economic and social success of Caribbeans in the US compared to Caribbeans in the UK is rooted in the former groups' upper and middle class Caribbean origins (Waters, 1999; Goulbourne,

2001; Foner, 2001). Their upper and middle class status allows them better to utilise their cultural and social capital to secure educational, occupational and economic success.

A unique feature of Caribbean society is that despite geographical distances between family members, as a consequence of continued migration, family networks are strong. Family members maintain their links family networks and they still demonstrate a strong sense of loyalty to their roots and family 'back home'. These ties to family and kinship 'back home' are often strongest among the first generation migrants. In my conversation with Hubert Devonish, Professor in Language and Linguistics, he acknowledged that as more generations are born into other societies this loyalty to their familial roots diminishes but these successive generations still find ways to maintain their links to their Caribbean country of origin through, for example, remittance, language, food and family visits to the Caribbean.

In discussions with academics, researchers and policymakers it was difficult to reach a general consensus about the impact of migration on family relationships. Generally speaking migration was widely regarded as having both a positive and negative value for family relationships and networks. In terms of its positive value for the family, it is suggested that migration creates a steady income stream for the family vis-à-vis family remittance. I will return to this issue later on in the paper. Migration has also contributed to reducing surplus labour in a region where there are high rates of unemployment and surplus labour, and where migration is often the primary route for people to gain employment and improve their social opportunities. Migration, particularly external migration, also represents a way through other societies to gain first hand knowledge about the region and each country's specific culture and values. In the discussions, for example, Jamaica was continually referred to as a 'global brand' that could be marketed, promoted and advertised to the rest of the world through its cultural icons (eg, Bob Marley); music (eg reggae), sports etc. (eg, the Jamaican bobsleigh team).

However, the complexities of migration mean that alongside the positive benefits of migration, there are negative consequences for family relationships. Of primary concern was the way in which migration negatively impacts on children. The term 'barrel children' was continually referred to in discussions to reflect the experiences of children whose parents has migrated and had left them behind to be cared for by other family members. It is suggested that many of these children have their material needs met, with their migrant parents (usually mothers) sending them money and goods back home, nevertheless these children experience emotional deprivation and exploitation as a result of an absence of parental care. The practise of 'childshifting' – the shifting of childrearing responsibility from the mother to other family relatives on an informal basis – is a well-established feature of Caribbean family life (Russell-Browne et al, 1997). Hermione Mckenzie, Senior Lecturer in Sociology reflects that whilst it is an established cultural practise in the Caribbean for migrating parents to leave their children behind to be cared for by other relatives, in previous times these children would have been left with grandparents, or senior uncles or aunts. However, in recent years these grand parents and senior relatives have also themselves migrated. This means that the children are being left with carers who are either distant relatives or older siblings who are not much older than them. She suggests that as a result these children left behind to be cared for by family relatives do not have adequate support and parenting systems to compensate for their parents' absence. There has been a shift in terminology and policy focus away from 'childsifting' towards 'child abandonment' to investigate wider social problems for children left behind such as abuse, social deprivation, psychological trauma, educational underachievement and teenage pregnancy (Interview with Policy Officer, National Children's Home, June 2003). A further argument concerning the negative value of migration for children left behind is that it inhibits individual growth and

achievement. A common viewpoint expressed it that these children have less motivation to achieve because they see their life 'back home' as a 'stop gap', a temporary measure, until they are 'sent for' by parents (usually mother) and they themselves migrate. Educationalists suggest this issue could be a contributory factor in the rise in educational underachievement in the region, particularly amongst Caribbean boys (Chevannes, 1996)

Migration also has negative consequences for the migrants' experience. People who migrated from Jamaica to the UK during the 1990s highlighted the burden of care and expectation that migrants feel in providing for family 'back home'. This burden of care creates stress for migrants particularly those on limited earnings who are struggling to make ends meet in their new country. Some migrants who are unwilling or unable to meet demands of family members left behind decide to cut or weaken their contact with them.

Transnationalism

The Caribbean family has been able to sustain itself through its ability to maintain strong transnational ties and networks, which are valued as a central aspect of Caribbean society. (Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001). Modern communication systems (such as the email, internet, mobile phones) and improved technology (such as electronic money transfer) has greatly aided the frequency of familial trans-atlantic ties. Importantly, it has also created an immediacy of interaction between family members living in different parts of the world. Young people in particular take the immediacy of these trans-national links for granted. For instance, I observed that since my last trip to Barbados in 2001 there had been a significant rise in the number of Internet cafes to cater for this increased demand. Similarly, in Jamaica across the towns I visited the majority of young people have one or more cellular (mobile) phones. One memorable sight was when I observed a young farmer in Claremont (St Ann) who was tending to his cows in a field while also talking to his cousin on his mobile phone in Leicester, England.

The relative low cost of travel ensures that people in both of these societies regularly visit family in USA, Canada or UK and people in these countries make regular visits 'back home' to see family members. The frequency of travel has also increased especially in terms of travel between Caribbean and USA. One outcome of this is that some groups in society do not have to choose between residing overseas and a particular Caribbean territory. For instance, 'transnational entrepreneurs' or businesspeople (Grillo, 2002) can now live and work simultaneously in two countries by taking advantage of the frequency and immediacy of travel and new technology. Two discussants both have family members who commute between Miami, and Jamaica for work and home. Several academics I met with worked in Jamaica and Barbados but lived in other Caribbean countries and they would commute between these two places.

It is important to note that not everybody can access and make use of these advances in communication, technology and travel to establish transnational links. Poor disadvantaged communities still have limited opportunity to access and utilise telecommunications systems such as the Internet, and they lack adequate financial resources to frequently travel abroad and visit family members. Similarly, the vast majority of elderly people do not use the Internet, email or cellular phones. Generally, they tend to use more 'traditional' methods such as letter writing or landline telephones to communicate with overseas family members overseas.

Family Remittance

During the discussions it was identified that transnational ties are driven by a basic need that individuals have to sustain familial relationships. The form that this need takes varies according to individual family circumstances and whether or not they are living within or outside the Caribbean. Nonetheless, financial and cultural remittances are two key ways in which these family transnational ties are sustained. Financial remittance involves the return of money and financial goods by migrants to family members in their country of origin. Cultural remittance is much more concerned with emotional attachments and represents the way that migrants abroad utilise their family links to maintain cultural connections to their Caribbean place of origin (Burman, 2002). Common forms of social remittance include owning and building property 'back home', the celebration of Caribbean cultural rituals and national events in the new country of residence, keeping abreast of national news 'back home' through the Internet and newspapers.

At the time of my visit John Small, Lecturer in Sociology was conducting research into this area of family financial remittance. He stressed that family financial remittance is viewed as an integral part of Caribbean society. His preliminary findings show that in Jamaica financial remittance has overtaken tourism as the largest foreign earner, with over US\$1.1bn a year received in family remittance. In addition, financial remittance arriving from Britain is estimated at £70million per year. In 62% of Jamaican households financial remittance constitutes over 60% of household economy.

Debates concerning the role and function of financial remittance in the Caribbean have generally focussed on the value of remittance for the family and wider economy and if this is used productively for long-term investment. Financial remittances come in the form of goods and money that family members overseas send to family 'back home' in the Caribbean. The money sent is primarily used to cover the cost of food and clothing; the building and maintenance of family property; school fees, and medical expenses. Generally speaking, in the discussions financial remittance was widely regarded as having a positive contribution to families and society. With regards to the family, financial remittance contributes towards family income and it is the primary source of income source in many poor and working class households. Financial remittance also reinforces notions of responsibility and attachment to family members in the Caribbean, thus sustaining these transnational family ties and networks. In terms of wider society, it is suggested that financial remittance provides financial compensation for the economic losses sustained throughout the region as a result of migration. It therefore encourages reinvestment and redistribution of income from North America and the UK back into economies of Caribbean countries.

Yet, and despite of the benefits of financial benefits to the family and society, several viewpoints also expressed concern that financial remittance has directly hindered family relationships and societal development in the region. In terms of the family, Beverley Bryan, Lecturer in Education, questions whether overseas financial assistance has reduced the family's ability to care for itself independently. Also the extent to which it has created less commitment by policy agencies to develop social welfare and educational services because of the social expectation that family overseas, through financial assistance, would address social and welfare needs of their specific family. Various discussants also pointed out that financial remittance has contributed to what they perceive as a declining work ethic and a dependency culture among the younger generations. They claim that Caribbean youths no longer have to work or aim for educational or professional success because they can depend upon family members overseas to provide them material goods when required. This is borne out by high rates of unemployment for young people across the region (see for example, Hillman and D'Agostino, 2003). However, such criticism overvalues the importance of financial remittance to family households. For example, Eudine Barriteau, Professor in Gender Studies observed that in reality many households do not receive financial remittance as regular payments, and that family

members left behind have no alternative but to seek paid work in order to meet their basic family and household needs.

It has also been suggested that financial remittance hinders economic development because people are spending dollars that have not been generated in the Caribbean country (Burman, 2002). In Jamaica, for example, much of the remittance dollar is spent on imported goods. This in turn creates a culture that discourages savings and long-term investment. While consumer demand is strengthened it does not improve production. In order to structure financial remittance so that it benefits the economy, the Jamaican government is talking publicly about finding ways to harness investment from migration by utilizing remittance provided by Jamaicans abroad to develop productive investment instead of consumption or savings. However, policy plans to alter the nature and purpose of financial remittance to one of productive investment and nation building has so far met with strong resistance. This is because it is widely believed that the population still view financial remittance as a private family arrangement. Family members overseas who send money 'back home' want to maintain their independence in deciding how money sent home should be used. There is also a general feeling that the responsibility to develop the country's infrastructure and generate productive investment opportunities should rest with the government and not individuals living overseas.

Remittance within family relationships also takes the form of cultural remittance. This involves individuals sustaining strong family links to the Caribbean in order facilitate the 'reconnection to the homeland' (Burman, 2002). Thus, visits to friends and family in the Caribbean on a regular basis act one way second and third generation Caribbean young people in the UK can strengthen familial bonds, 'search for one's cultural roots' and learn more about their specific culture and heritage. Tracy Robinson, Lecturer in Law has lived and studied in both the UK and USA and understands the historical importance of transnational links for young people in UK and North America. She suggests that young people's desire to maintain familial links is driven by a strong sense of curiosity and a desire 'to know where you come from'. This is particularly true for young people who feel alienated within their respective societies. Thus, 'knowing where you come from' gives young people the possibility of challenging or coming to terms with the problems and issues that emerge from living in British or US societies. She reflects that parents and grandparents have an important role in encouraging their children and grandchildren to seek out family members and establish a close relationship with their Caribbean country of origin. I develop this issue further in my analysis of Caribbean young people, social capital and family relationships (Reynolds, 2004).

Maintaining family links transnationally through cultural remittance are not always based on freedom of choice. Certain family obligations and responsibilities necessitate these links, such as, for example weddings, funerals and other family rituals. In addition, maintaining links with family members transnationally is not always easy. Hubert Devonish, Professor in Language and Linguistics, recognises that complex negotiations goes on between family members who live in the Caribbean, North America and the UK because although they may share biological kinship ties, living in different countries mean that they are culturally different and this can lead to potential problems around communication, values and lifestyles. Consequently, an important aspect of developing familial transnational links is about understanding and negotiating these cultural differences.

Return migration

Much has been written about the issue of return migration to the Caribbean and the experiences of 'returnees' to their country of origin/birth (see for example, Abernathy, 2001; Goulbourne, 2002). John Small's analysis of return migration utilises a 4-part typology of 'returnees' according to age and

generation divisions to explore the different characteristics of return migration. The first group, the 'young returnees', are usually in their early 20s, and born outside of the Caribbean. The nature of their return involves an 'identity search', whereby young people actively seek relationships with family members in the Caribbean as a way of understanding their family and cultural roots. Often this quest for understanding is underpinned by feelings of dislocation and marginalisation from the society they are born into. This group is a very transient group and their 'return' often does not last more than a few years. In part this is due to the fact that these young people are generally well educated and so they may have returned to the Caribbean to study or to gain a few years work experience after completing their education. Another factor is that the reality of everyday living in a developing society and the difficulties they face in making this cultural adjustment mean that many young people are unable to settle in the Caribbean on a permanent basis.

The second group of 'returnees' tend to be in between the 30 and 40 age group categories. Termed the 'enterprising group' they 'return' to the Caribbean with substantial work experience and in search of business and employment opportunities. Usually, these 'returnees' were born in the Caribbean, and migrated elsewhere at a very young age, or their partner/spouse was born and grew up here. This group of 'returnees' is characterised by families who have young school age children. They generally share the view that life in the Caribbean would be more beneficial to their children, and their family, compared to life in USA, Canada or UK. The third group of 'returnees', reflects those people who are in their early 40s up to retirement age. Usually they were born in the Caribbean and migrated overseas as children or young adults. This group encompasses people who may have desired to return to the Caribbean at an earlier stage in life but they purposely postponed their return in order to ensure their grown up children had completed their education and/or financially stable and independent. It also encompasses people who 'return' home to the Caribbean to look after or care for their sick and elderly parents or relative. Generally this group of 'returnees' are less educated and less skilled than the previous two categories and they have less employment opportunities. Finally, the fourth group comprises the largest proportion of 'returnees': those people who return to their Caribbean country of birth when they reach the age of retirement. This group usually returns with some economic capital. For instance they tend to receive company pension, and they may have sold their house overseas and/or used their life-savings to build a retirement property upon return.

A different migration pattern to the UK and US/Canada has created a distinction between 'returnees' and the way they are perceived in the Caribbean. Returning residents to the Caribbean from US or Canada because of their shorter migration time span, closer geographical distance to Caribbean and the increasing 'Americanization' of the region are viewed as having stronger connections to the Caribbean and there is the sense that cultural differences are less sharply defined. These 'returnees' tend to be younger in age compared to the majority of returnees from the UK and they contribute to the economy through employment or the setting up of business enterprises. In contrast, as noted earlier, the vast majority of UK returnees are retired. Generally, prior to return migration, they may have lived in the UK for over 40 years and would have made fewer visits. The society and relatives they left behind are very different to the ones they choose to come back to. Moreover, the area they choose to settle in may be different to where they grew up. The length of years spent overseas prior to return migration mean that sometimes these older returnees are not always accepted within their community and some are viewed with suspicion and mistrust. However, not all retired 'returnees' encountered this problem. It was noted that those retired 'returnees' who have visited the Caribbean on a regular basis prior to returning and maintained strong family connections in their country of return tend to settle in well and easily make the cultural transition. In contrast, those retired 'returnees' who did not return for many years prior to retirement encountered adjustment problems, and consequently experienced isolation and alienation. To offset some of these problems, in

Barbados and Jamaica networks of overseas returning resident associations have been set up to assist people with resettlement.

During my discussions it was highlighted that the elderly population of retired returnees creates additional demands for health and social care provision. Social policy agencies looking at the issue of return migration in the Caribbean have focused much of its attention on this group of returnees because of the social implications for health and aging in the Caribbean. In Jamaica I attended a conference on return migration where agencies and policy-makers focused on ways to meet these growing demands on health and welfare services by this group. One solution advocated was to approach the UK and USA governments to generate additional funds to assist with health and social care provision of returning residents.

Conclusion

In conclusion I have attempted to provide a broad overview of the key issues that emerged during the discussions. The main focus on the debate has been to summarize the views expressed by academics and researchers, policymakers and officials concerning issues around race and class divisions, transnational links and family networks, financial and cultural family remittance and return migration. This discussion I present is by no means exhaustive and there was other areas that raised that have not been fully developed in this paper. Underpinning the discussions in each of these areas is the general view that in the Caribbean family and society are in transition. In terms of the family, it is suggested that there is a shift away from 'old' family values towards 'new' family values. Whilst the former promotes family relationships based upon collective care, reciprocity and co-operation, the latter advocates individualism and materialistic consumer culture. A consequence of this shift away from collective participation of community members towards increased individualism by the younger generation is that the gaps are created in society, as there is less trust and reciprocity between community members. Added to this, economic poverty, and the increasing influence of US culture on Caribbean cultures, values and practices have also resulted in social, economic and family changes across the Caribbean region.

Appendix One

Summary of Meetings

Caribbean Studies Association Annual conference: Routes and Roots, Belize City, Belize, 28th May to 1st June 2003

Dr Leon Wilson, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Wayne State University, 30th May 2003

Dr Alissa Trotz, Research Associate, Toronto University, 30th May 2003

Jamaica

Mrs Grant-Griffiths, Returning Resident Facilitation Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingston, Jamaica, 3rd June 2003

Mrs Donna Lewis, Family and Welfare Legal Adviser, Kingston, Jamaica, 3rd June 2003

Mr Easton Williams, Director of Planning Institute, Planning Institute Annual Conference, Pegasus Hotel, Kingston, Jamaica, 3rd June 2003

Mrs Hermione McKenzie, Senior Lecturer in Sociology, Dept of Sociology, University of West Indies (UWI) at Mona, Kingston, Jamaica, 4th June 2003

Mr John Small, Head of Sociology, Dept of Sociology, UWI at Mona, Kingston, Jamaica, 4th June 2003

Professor Patricia Anderson, Dept. of Sociology, UWI at Mona, Kingston, Jamaica, 4th June 2003

Professor Carolyn Cooper, Dept. of English, UWI at Mona, Kingston, Jamaica, 4th June 2003

Prof Hubert Devonish, Dept. of Language and Literacy, UWI at Mona, Kingston, Jamaica, 5th June 2003

Dr Beverly Bryan, Lecturer in Education, Dept of Education, UWI at Mona, Kingston, Jamaica, 5th June 2003

Dr Hillary Robertson-Hickling, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute (SALISES), UWI at Mona, Kingston, Jamaica, 5th June 2003

Mr Las Lewis, Chairman, Jamaica Adult Literacy Unit (JAMAL), Kingston, Jamaica, 6th June 2003

Mr Seymour Riley, Director, Jamaica Adult Literacy Unit (JAMAL), Kingston, Jamaica, 6th June 2003

Barbados

Ms Tracy Robinson, Lecturer in Family Law, Dept of Law, UWI at Cave Hill, Barbados, 10th June 2003

Dr Michelle Rowley, Lecturer in Gender Studies, Centre of Gender and Development Studies, at Cave Hill, Barbados, 10th June 2003

Professor Eudine Barriteau, Director, Centre of Gender and Development Studies, at Cave Hill, Barbados, 11th June 2003

Dr Farley Braithwaite, Lecturer in Sociology, Dept. of Sociology, at Cave Hill, Barbados, 11th June 2003

Dr Alvin Thompson, Senior Lecturer in History, Dept. of History, at Cave Hill, Barbados, 11th June 2003

Ms Ena Trotman-Stoby, Policy Officer, National Children Home Barbados, Bridgetown, Barbados, 12th June 2003

Mr Harry Hackman, Policy Officer, National Children Home Barbados, Bridgetown, Barbados, 12th June 2003

Mr Joseph Hunt, Former Director of Returning Residents Facilitation Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bridgetown, Barbados, 13th June 2003

Meeting cancellations: Prof Hillary Beckles, Prof Christine Barrow and Dr Elsie Le Franc, UWI at Cave Hill, Barbados

Families, social capital and ethnic identities: Report on Italy

Elisabetta Zontini

Introduction

In January 2004 I went on a research trip to Italy as part of a project entitled Families, social capital and ethnic identities. It was intended that this trip would also be part of the preparatory work for my specific project about Italian families and social capital in the ethnicity strand of the Families Group at London South Bank University. During this trip I visited three parts of Italy (Bologna, Rome and Palermo) and discussed the project with a number of academics (8), policy makers (5) and representatives of emigrant associations (4). In addition to this visit, in September 2003 I attended the 2nd World Congress of Youth of Trentino origin near Trento. During the congress I had the opportunity to talk to officials and policy makers from the Trentino administration, members of emigrants associations, emigrants' representatives, and the youth delegates from several countries of Italian emigration. The aim of these visits was to explore the work done in Italy in the fields of families, social capital and Italian emigration and seek to understand the main concerns of both academics and policy makers in these areas. An additional aim was to establish links with scholars and others working on similar topics as myself and obtain contacts to facilitate the forthcoming empirical part of my project. The trip proved very useful, not only in establishing contacts with individuals and organisations working on similar topics to my own, but I also learned about the social, historic and political context in which to locate the transnational experiences of UK Italian families with whom I intended to conduct interviews.

The main themes discussed in the interviews in this visits centred on the changing characteristics of Italian families and social capital, Italy's shift from a county of emigration to one of immigration, the renewed interest of Italian institutions in fostering connections with the Italian communities abroad, the problems of maintaining links with the 'second generation', and questions around Italian identity, citizenship and return migration. The remainder of this paper is a summary of these discussions.

Background

In my September visit to Trentino, I attended all the fifteen lectures that were given to the delegates¹, all the group discussions in the working group and almost all the social activities. I also had a chance to conduct 3 taped interviews (with the head of the Association Trentini nel Mondo, with the consultore for Western Europe [representative between emigrant communities and the province] and

¹ The lectures were the following: paper by Prof. Franzina (university of Verona) on 'Emigration between need and adventure'; presentation of the two main associations of Emigrants from Trentino - Associazione Trentini ne Mondo (Association of Trentini in the World) and Unione delle Famiglie Trentine all'Estero (Union of Trentino families abroad)- ; paper on how to make a project; paper on co-operation and its principles; paper on sustainable tourism and marketing; paper on a internet project of the University of Trento to create a 'virtual community' for Trentino emigrants; panel of various experts to which delegates could ask questions on citizenship, access to the university of Trento, access to health professions, Trentino post-graduate school of management and tourism; talk by journalist Gian Antonio Stella author of 'When we were the Albanians'; paper on 'Ethic and globalisation'; talk by the 'Assessore' on Commerce, Cooperation, Labor and Communitarian policies on the general principles informing the Provincia policies on emigration; paper by a journalist on 'Values and differences between "identity" and "common origin"'; talk by a civil servant from the province examining the Provincial law on emigration; presentation of the final document of the congress synthesising the work of the working groups with the presence of the 'Assessore' for Emigration; official closure of the Congress in front of various local authorities (civil, military and religious).

with the Provincial Councilor for Emigration [Assessore all'Emigrazione]) as well as to conduct a number of informal conversations with about 30 of the 110 delegates from around the world. I would have liked to conduct in-depth taped interviews with some of the delegates on the themes of my project (so as to have some comparative material for my UK fieldwork) but given the tightness and richness of the programme this was not possible. I have the contact details and emails of all the participants so that in the future it will be possible to contact some of them on specific issues and perhaps pursue collaboration.

In Bologna, I interviewed the officer in charge of the activities for people from Emilia-Romagna residing abroad of the Assessorato for European policies and international relations of the region Emilia Romagna and two sociologists of the family (Prof. Barbagli and Prof. Donati and his team) working at the Department of Sociology and at the Department of Education, both of the University of Bologna. At the time of the interview both professors were also members of the National Observatory on the Family. In Rome I interviewed two senior researchers, Father Maffioletti at the Centro Studi Emigrazione (Emigration Studies Centre) and Corrado Bonifazi at the Istituto di Ricerche sulla Popolazione (research centre on population); two members of emigrant associations (a catholic and a left-wing one); a PhD student who has worked on Italians in Bedford; the emigration officer of the Lazio region and finally a spokesperson for the Ministry of Italians Abroad. In Sicily I interviewed the secretary and the director of an emigrant association and the emigration officer of the Sicilian region.

Families and social capital

With Prof Babagli I discussed some of what we considered to be major characteristics of Italian families. As head of the National Observatory on the Family, he published the results of his latest work as the head of the in a book called *Fare famiglia in Italia* (Forming a family in Italy). In this book he explores the stages towards adulthood and the systems of family formation in Italy. He used the results of a national survey on the family published by the National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT).

Prof. Barbagli argues that the processes affecting Italian families are similar to those of other European countries, but he noted the following exceptions:

- Italy is one of the countries with the lowest birth rate in Europe. In this context he is waiting for the approval of a project in collaboration with Prof. David Kerzer that would study Italy as a country of low fecundity with both quantitative and ethnographic methods. They want to analyse four parts of Italy: Padova, Bologna, Naples and Cagliari. The project will be funded by a private US institution and managed through an Italian independent institute called 'Catteneo' which is based in Bologna.
- Italy is one of the countries where marriages last longer than in other parts of Europe (especially in Southern Italy).
- Cohabitation and children outside marriage are less frequent and widespread than in other European countries.

As far as policies are concerned, policies in support of families are less widespread than elsewhere in Europe. Benefits for children are not common. As a result, several studies have shown how having children in Italy is more expensive than in the rest of Europe. In this respect he suggested the book by Naldini (2003) *The Family and the Mediterranean Welfare State*. Barbagli identified problems also with the legislation about divorce. In Italy, before obtaining a divorce it is necessary to have had what is called a 'legal separation'. Much political debate focused on this aspect of family life, with the progressive parties wanting to abolish the legal separation and the Catholic forces wanting to preserve it. In Barbagli's view, this meant that nobody concentrated on developing policies that would tackle adequately the consequences of divorce.

On the issue of family rituals, Barbagli suggests a look at his book 'Sotto lo stesso tetto' (Under the same roof) where there are chapters about how affections are expressed in families and about the ritual of the daily lunch.

On care, he said that the most interesting studies done in Italy on this issue are those that focus on time use. The conclusions of international studies comparing the time use of mothers and fathers conclude that Italy and Spain are the European countries where there is the sharpest difference in the working time of men and women. In the other countries the working time of men and women is roughly the same with women tending to have a larger share of caring work and men of paid work. These studies show how in Italy women work 8 hours weekly more than men and in Spain 12 hours more than men.

When I asked him about emigrant families, he said that emigration is no longer a central focus of sociology. The field that receives most attention today is that of immigration into Italy. In the past there was a fairly extensive bibliography on Italian emigrants. Topics that were object of study during the 1970s were remittances, family reunions, and return migration.

I also asked him if the question of social capital has received academic and political attention in Italy. He replied that it received a lot of academic attention. Social capital has become an easy and very fashionable label to apply to a person's area of study. He himself participated in a workshop at the Cattaneo Institute where social capital was debated with the American theorist David Putnam. Barbagli said that he is not against the concept of social capital itself but acknowledges that there are some problems with it and that it is a far more complex concept than it appears. He did not think that social capital received any political attention in Italy. He gave as an example the fact that he presented a report to the region Emilia Romagna where he summarised some of his findings under the heading of social capital. The representatives of the region did not like the use of the concept and asked him to take it out from the report. He said that for politicians with a communist tradition it is a very problematic concept.

Social capital and the family are at the heart of the research of another member of the National Observatory on the Family, sociologist Pier Paolo Donati. Prof. Donati leads a team of researchers based at the University of Bologna who in the last two years have focused on the issue of social capital linked to the family. They published their first results in the volume *Famiglia e capitale sociale nella società italiana* (Family and social capital in Italian society). In Italy those who have examined social capital did so mainly from an economic or political point of view. The Donati team's research is the first in Italy on social capital and the family. In Donati's view, mainstream studies of the family tend to be understood in antithesis to social capital.

Looking at our Families Group leaflet, Prof. Donati said that his research group addressed very similar questions to ours. Similarly to our project, they also set out to explore whether social capital is generated in the family or in the community or vice versa. They focused on social policies and social services and on education but have not looked at questions of employment and ethnicity. Their project studied primary and secondary networks of families, their neighbours and the third sector (NGOs, charities, co-operatives, foundations, no-profit associations, etc.). They study families in relation to the social networks that surround them.

Donati claimed that their approach is different from the mainstream. They follow what he called relational sociology. They see social capital as pertaining neither to the individual nor to the structure but as a social relation. For them social capital belongs to a social and cultural context and cannot be

accumulated. In their analysis they distinguish between primary relational resources (family relations) and secondary relational resources (third sector and community). They thus talk about primary and secondary social capital. Their conclusion is that the family generates a type of social capital which is different from the one generated in the community. There is a link between the two but they are not the same thing.

Starting from this understanding of social capital, Donati's team conducted a survey using telephone interviews. In designing their survey they followed and adapted the work of Coleman. They defined social capital as emerging from family relationships and as based on social linkages that are trustworthy and lasting. For each interviewee they analysed his/her potential relationships (not the actual number). They also looked at the time spent in each contact and at the quality of these encounters. Their aim was to see how this primary social capital influenced pro-social behaviour. They concluded that when primary social capital increases participatory attitudes also increase and the quality of participation improves.

They also wanted to examine different family typologies to see if they generate similar or different forms of social capital. They do not agree with the idea that all family forms generate the same type of social capital. They gave me two examples. The first is how young unmarried couples have very high social capital in relation to time but not dedicate such time to collective activities; the second refers to children in step families who apparently have weak relationships with their step parents.

At the time of our interview they were thinking about how to conduct a qualitative research on the same issues addressed by their survey. They want to incorporate in depth interviews, life histories and network analysis. They want first to know what is the relational network of each individual, and then look at what kind of resources flow within this network. They are thinking of interviewing young people between 18 and 27 to see their insertion in society taking into account their family situation.

A chapter of their book is dedicated to the role of family policies in influencing the generation of social capital. One of the future activities planned is to conduct another survey on social services for the young and elderly and see their relationship to issues of families and social capital.

Like Prof. Barbagli, Donati agreed that the issue of social capital is not high on the policy makers' agenda. In his view, politicians either take for granted that families are a form of social capital or think that families are inevitably obstacles to its creation.

According to Prof Donati to date there is no research focusing on social capital in Italy that has looked at ethnicity and immigration. In his view international researches on these themes are quite standard and do not have a strong theoretical background. They tend to study immigrant networks and how these influence migration processes.

In contrast to some US sociologists Donati wants to criticise the idea that the family is in opposition to social capital. He thinks that the family is normally seen as a problem. However, he thinks that in Italy in the last ten years there has been a revision of the ideas linked to the concept of amoral familism. He and other authors now believe that familial relationships are not against the generation of social capital but are themselves social capital. Donati believes that amoral familism is not a characteristic of rural villages of the south but rather a new phenomenon linked with urbanisation. It is in the new urban context that he sees the problems of isolation and lack of solidarity.

The value of strong family networks that supposedly characterise Italian families was also brought up by Rodolfo Ricci, the representative of the Italian federation of emigrant workers and their families

(Federazione Italiana lavoratori emigranti e famiglie FILEF). He talked about the positive role for certain Italian communities abroad of what he called 'traditional' family values. He thought that strong family relations are not to be viewed negatively. He gave me the example of the state of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil where Trentino and Veneto families favoured a specific model of economic development which is based on clusters of small family owned specialised firms. This model has been so successful that the current Brazilian government of president Lula is shaping his agrarian reform on the experience of small independent farms imported by these Italian immigrants. In Ricci's view the family and working culture of these emigrants favoured this type of successful model. This tradition of auto-organisation and co-operative work also favours civic participation. For instance, he claims that descendants of Italian emigrants are a large part of those involved in organising the activities of the Porte Alegre movement.

Ricci made a distinction between two Italian family models and explained their influences on Italian communities abroad. Italian families of the South have strong internal family relationships but weak ones towards the outside. They never experienced autonomous work and were reliant on salaried work in latifundia. They had to defend themselves from external forces. The families of the North did not suffer from the same isolation and were capable of building strong external relationships which, in his view, are at the root of their economic success.

Migration

I discussed the issue of Italian emigration with seven interviewees. What emerged is that this 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 (in this regard, see the recent two volumes *Storia dell'Emigrazione Italiana – Partenze e Arrivi – Italian Emigration History- Departures and Arrivals*). 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. Several social scientists said that their attention is now dedicated to the new immigration into Italy, the where most research funding is now allocated.

Corrado Bonifazi of the National Research Institute on Populations (IRP) said that in recent decades there has been a change in Italian emigration. In the 1990s-2000s it is constituted mostly by qualified young people who are geographically highly mobile and go abroad in search of better working opportunities. The numbers are lower than in the previous mass migration and this is probably why no studies have to his knowledge looked at this brain drain, except from a brief analysis in one of their working papers entitled *La recente emigrazione Italiana in Europa: Francia, Regno Unito e Svizzera a confronto* (The recent Italian emigration in Europe: France, Great Britain and Switzerland compared). In spite of the lack of material, according to Father Maffioletti of the CSER (Centro Studi Emigrazione Roma – Emigration Studies Centre Rome), there starts to be a recognition even at the institutional level of the growing impact of qualified emigration. Such recognition of the changing nature of Italian emigration can be seen for instance in the definition of 'emigrant' used by the Sicilian region in its emigration law. According to a region representative, in the past they considered an emigrant (and therefore entitled to the provisions of the law) only unqualified manual workers or small shopkeepers, in recent years their definition has changed and now includes all those who leave the island for work reasons and thus including qualified migrants. In respect to Sicily, it is interesting to note that this definition of emigrant does not distinguish between those who settle in other Italian regions and those who go to the rest of the world. All Sicilian migrants – both internal and international - are represented in the same Emigrants' Consulta (political consultative body) and are subjected to the same law.

In spite of scarce academic interest, emigrant associations such as ANFE (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigranti – National Association of Emigrant Families) (of Catholic origin) and FILEF (of left-wing origin) continue to exist and work in the sphere of emigration. Francesco Mancinelli of ANFE said that emigration has been a crucial phenomenon for Italian society but Italy did not recognise this until very late. In the post-war period the situation was particularly difficult, Italy was in a situation of extreme poverty and, in his view, the institutions of the time did not have the willingness or the resources to worry about the Italians going abroad. It was private citizens and associations that started to get involved and to address the problems linked with emigration. ANFE was created in 1947 with the aim of helping the emigrants. In the first years they focused on basic help, then extended their activities towards helping with legal matters concerning expatriation and providing support and assistance to the family members who stayed behind often in dramatic situations. In recent decades they adapted their activities to the new situation of Italians living abroad, focusing mainly on providing education and training but also continuing to offer direct help to the Italian communities in need (at present especially in Argentina). (more on the activities of the associations in the following section).

Some of my interviewees acknowledged Italian emigrants still have problems, especially in some countries. South American countries that are affected by the economic crisis, were mentioned in most of the interviews but it emerged that the situation is difficult also in some European countries, especially in Germany and Switzerland. This is probably why Germany is the most studied European country of Italian immigration by Italian researchers. In 2003 the CSER conducted a detailed study on the situation of Italians in Germany. The aspects on which they focused were education, employment and entrepreneurship. At the time of my interviews, the results were not published. The IRP will organise a conference in collaboration with the Goethe Institute on Italian migrations to Germany to celebrate 50 years of Italian emigration there.

Ricci of FILEF thinks that even though the European Union offers guarantees to Italians settled in European countries, their integration remains a problem. He distinguished three sets of European countries: France and French speaking Belgium; Germany, Switzerland and Flemish Belgium and the UK. In France he talks about a positive integration of Italians. This means for him that Italians there have become 'francesised' but have retained autonomy. In Germany he thinks that integration has started to happen only recently and mainly for the 'third generation'. For the previous generation it did not happen at all. In his view, 30% of the Italian community is still marginalised with even the second generation having problems with education and employment. As an example he stated that only 10% of Italians go to University in Germany, a figure that is lower than that of the Turkish population. As far as the UK is concerned, Ricci said that he knows this context less than the German one. However, he thinks that it represents a peculiar case within Europe, more similar to the North American context. He sees the position of Italians here as polarised between assimilation and marginalisation. Compared to other countries, he sees low Italian participation in the activities of the Italian collectively and a scarce interest in Italy. The same feeling was shared by the representative of USEF (Unione Siciliana Emigrati e Famiglie – Sicilian Union Emigrants and their Families) who said that Italians in the UK are assimilated and no longer have an interest in Sicily. In his view, in the UK, there has been a strong nationalism and a strong pressure put on Italians to 'integrate'. He said that the Sicilians who left for Germany or for the UK came from similar backgrounds - their choice of country of emigration depended on chance and was often influenced by family ties - but their situation later became very different, mainly for the situation they encountered in the receiving society.

Not all interviewees agreed with this interpretation of the UK context and its push towards assimilation. According to Bruno Zoratto, spokesperson of the Ministry of Italians Abroad, it is Germany that pushes for migrants' assimilation whereas in the UK he sees more respect for migrants' identities. In his view, it is this openness towards foreigners that favoured a better integration of Italians than in Germany. Also Lo Cascio, the officer in charge of emigration for the Sicilian region, thought that Italians in the UK are well integrated and have access to jobs requiring formal qualifications and this is why he thinks that rarely they return to Sicily.

Transnationalism

Whereas, at present, there does not appear to be much interest in Italians abroad by social scientists, this is a theme that seem to enjoy new attention from a number of institutional actors (in government and in the regions). When I asked my interviewees the reasons for this renewed interest, they gave me the following explanations. First, several mentioned the concession in the last legislature of the vote to Italians abroad. Second, the creation by Silvio Berlusconi's government of a brand new ministry called 'Ministry for Italians Abroad'. Third, according to Ricci of FILEF, the interests of powerful players in the business sector who want to favour the penetration of products 'made in Italy' abroad.

This last point is linked to a broader shift in the conceptualisation of the so-called Italians abroad by a number of actors. According to Ricci, leftwing associations, such as FILEF, were those who set in motion this shift in the late 1980s. At that time emigration was considered only as a problem and it was only associated with the idea of marginality. They, instead, started to develop the idea of emigration as a resource. They did so for two reasons. The first was a tactical one. They knew that the theme of rights that they had tried to advocate up to that moment was not receiving much attention, so they tried to locate it within an economic framework that they thought institutions would be more ready to consider. Second, they had first hand experience of the richness and potential of the foreign Italian communities.

This concept of emigration as resource was taken on board in the 1990s by a number of key figures, including chambers of commerce, central and regional ministries. However, according to Ricci, these actors interpreted the idea differently from how associations had envisaged them. FILEF, for instance, had the objective of investing in human resources focusing on training and education for a large strata of Italians abroad; however, institutional and economic actors decided to invest exclusively in entrepreneurs and in business developments.

These new perspectives of emigration as a resource received a new impulse in 2000 with the first world conference of Italians abroad. According to Father Maffioletti that occasion gave rise to a new official political strategy that sees Italian communities abroad as points of economic development. Even terminology has changed in last decade. The officer responsible for emigration of the Lazio region explained that today they do not talk about emigrants any longer, the correct terminology being 'citizens residing abroad'. Below I summarise how different actors try to retain their links with these 'Italians residing abroad'.

The Ministry

According to Bruno Zoratto, president of the General Commission of Italians Abroad (CGIE) and communication officer for the Ministry of Italians abroad, the centre-right government of Berlusconi wanted to give prominence to the question of Italians in the world. The main signal of this new policy

was the institution of a new ministry for Italians in the world. The second signal has been the approval of the law that for the first time allows Italian citizens residing abroad to vote in Italian elections.

Reading the report on the activities of the ministry of Italians abroad we learn the following. First of all, there is a strong desire on its part to 'strengthen and stabilise the relationships between the "two Italies", that is to say between our country and the Italians in the World' (p.1). Second, a recognition of Italian communities abroad as a potential resource for Italian international politics. We read in the document that: 'the second Italy, that of the Italians Abroad' is profoundly different from what it was in the past and up to only ten years ago. Our communities abroad express today 350 parliamentarians and various ministers of Italian origin who take part in the decisions of 27 of the most influential countries in the World. Similarly significant is the Italian presence at the level of local authorities, one has only to think that for instance 15% of the mayors in the United States are of Italian origin. Furthermore, our co-nationals abroad occupy important economic positions in those countries that in the past have been the destination of Italian emigration; it has been calculated that in 2000 Italian communities abroad generated 100 billion Euros' for the national economic growth (p. 1).

The activities of the ministry are thus dedicated to prepare a number of services and legislative measures that will help to keep alive the relationship between the Italian government and its 'citizens abroad'. Below is a brief list of the activities undertaken by the ministry so far:

- approval of the law for the vote to Italians abroad (20 December 2001). From the next political election, Italians will be able to elect 12 MPs and 6 senators among Italian candidates residing abroad.
- completion and update of the census of Italians residing abroad (AIRE)
- promotion of general measures (including legislative ones) towards Italians abroad (e.g. protection of Italian citizens in the field of pensions, social assistance, etc.).
- information, update and promotion of cultural activities in favour of Italian communities abroad in order to maintain the link with the country of origin (e.g. promotion of Italian language and culture abroad, satellite television programming, creation of a prize for Italians abroad, sporting games, conferences such as the first international conference of Italian scientists in the world, etc.).
- valorisation of the role of Italian entrepreneurs abroad; e.g. first international conference of Italian entrepreneurs in the world, etc.
- special measures towards Argentina
- creation of the Department of Italians in the World by the Presidency of the Council of Ministries. Such department is divided in the following offices: Office for the cultural promotion and information for Italian communities abroad; Office for the promotion and protection of civil and political rights of Italians residing abroad; Office for the co-ordinated intervention of the State and the Regions towards Italian communities abroad
- office of general policies for Italians abroad with special reference to the valorisation of the role of Italian entrepreneurs abroad.

I have already explained how the associations are disappointed with these policies towards Italians abroad promoted by the new ministry which are seen by them as nationalistic and too oriented towards economic profit. Other actors too, such as some of the regional representatives, expressed scepticism for such policies. One of them talked about the malfunctioning of the Permanent Conference between State, Regions and CGIE (General conference of Italians abroad). Another interviewee stated that the state carries out the same old policies whereas the most innovative and interesting activities are carried out by the regions. Here below I will review the activities of the four regions I have been in contact with (Trentino, Emilia-Romagna, Lazio and Sicily).

The Regions

Father Maffioletti explained how every region deals with the issue of emigration through the following structure: the assessore (regional councillor), the Consulta (a consultative body composed by emigrant delegates, NGOs and regional officials), and an emigration law that guides the general activities of the assessorato. Each year every region also produces a document stating their planned activities and priority areas of intervention.

According to Father Maffioletti the regions have been involved with emigration since their creation in the 1970s; what has changed is that now they have acquired a new institutional role. One of their new competencies is the maintenance of links with their co-regionals abroad. When I asked what the reasons for the regions' interest in the Italians abroad were, Father Maffioletti said that the regions have a long history of keeping contacts abroad. During the 1970s they did so mainly to channel remittances. At that time the regions were trying to stress the link between the emigrants and their province of origin in order to favour the local reinvestment of the money earned abroad. They did so by stressing ethno-cultural links, promoting a sense of identity towards the region of origin. Today the regions see their co-regionals as bridges for their internationalisation. A great effort is now dedicated to maintain the link with young people and those of the second generation. There is a fear that as generations go by, these links with the communities abroad will be lost.

Trentino

Several times it was stated at the conference I attended in September (e.g. by the president of the Province Dellai and by the provincial councillor for Commerce, Cooperation, Labor and Communitarian policies) that Trentino does not stop at its borders. As Maffioletti had predicted, the province seems to be actively encouraging the maintenance of links between Trentino emigrants and their region of origin. The provincial councillor for emigration said that this is because Trentino emigrants had a crucial role to play in the transformation of Trentino from a poor region to one with the highest per capita income in Europe. In his view, the province has to acknowledge this role and support those Trentini that at present live in economically disadvantaged regions of the world. The new provincial emigration law of 2000 reflects these intents, stating that Trentino recognises:

- a) the significance and the value of the presence abroad of a sizeable population of Trentino origin and the contribution given by emigration to the edification of Trentino and its promotion abroad
- b) emigrations as a cultural and economic resource to be valorised through a relationship of reciprocal interest between the Trentino resident community and the Trentino emigrant one;
- c) the benefit of intercultural relationships as sources of reciprocal enrichment and as moment of concrete manifestation of international solidarity

The province promotes and consolidates, according to its competencies, the links with Trentini abroad and with their descendants, in this way contributing to the implementation of the general policies for Italians abroad (Trentino Provincial Law 3/11/2000 n.12 Art. 1).

It does so in a number of ways. One of the main ones seem to be economic co-operation especially with the most vulnerable countries with a Trentino population. According to the provincial councillor for Commerce, Cooperation, Labor and Communitarian policies the province aims at establishing relationships of economic co-operation and support with these countries. He thinks that the main problems of the Trentino emigrants today are that some live in countries that have economic

problems. This is why they want to invest most of their resources in development projects aiming at reducing the economic vulnerabilities of these communities. They want to support those projects that originate from the local communities in order to favour a full economic, social and cultural growth rather than imposing their own cultural and economic models and risk imposing neo-colonial practices.

The province operates in close collaboration with the Emigrant Associations which implement the projects: for example, 60% of the provincial budget for emigration is transferred directly to the associations; the other 40% goes into what they call a solidarity fund that covers direct help to families in need and scholarships (Brichetti, Coordinator of the Emigration Office of Trento). Since 1990 the province started to finance development projects promoted by the Association 'Trentini nel Mondo'. This activity was directed especially to the communities of Trentino origin of South America. Since 1990 the projects carried out by the Trentini nel Mondo with provincial funding had been 46, covering areas such as the creation of co-operatives; the promotion of courses of professional training (such as in the production and commercialisation of agricultural produces); the support of associations; the building of schools, one aqueduct, social centres. The countries where projects are underway or have been completed are Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Chile in Latin America and Bosnia in Europe. Apart from these projects financed from the funds provided under the provincial emigration law, there is also what is called the Extraordinary Plan for Argentina (Piano Straordinario per l'Argentina) through which 1700 families of Trentino origin are assisted directly. The families in need are signalled to the province by the networks of local Trentino associations. This transfer of resources from Trentino to its old areas of emigration seems to be the opposite of what is normally described in the literature on transnationalism. In this case support, social and economic capital go from the country of emigration to the countries of immigration.

In order to define and implement the activities in favour of Trentini abroad the province designates up to 15 consultori normally nominated by the Emigrant associations. They are the referents of the province in their country or region and they have the task of taking up the instances of the Trentino communities abroad and represent them in the province. Each year the consultori of every area meet for their annual conference in order to discuss the programme of the activities and projects of the province in the field of emigration.

Apart from economic co-operation, there are a number of other ways in which the province seeks to maintain links with its emigrant population. According to law 2000/12 the province provides information and cultural documentation (art.7) -- they publish a monthly magazine which is distributed free of charge to all persons of Trentino origin listed in the list of Italians resident abroad (AIRE); social and cultural activities (art. 8) -- among which are congresses and meetings among Trentini residing in different parts of the world such as the one I attended; stays and interchanges (art.9); studies and researches (art.10).

Considerable effort and resources is dedicated to young people of Trentino origin residing abroad. They are encouraged to create networks among themselves and with their region of origin, and are seen as a potential resource for the region. The Provincial Councillor for Emigration argued that emigration has moved from being a problem to being a potential resource for Trentino. He sees young and highly educated Trentino descendants as potential 'terminals' of Trentino in the five continents. The province, also through periodical congresses, has an interest in strengthening the relationship with them. The province wants to invest in human resources and help creating leaders (interview with Brichetti, co-ordinator of the emigration office, 12/09/2003).

A further way in which the links among Trentini abroad are fostered is through investment in virtual channels. Apart from the web pages of the Emigration Office and of the Association Trentini nel Mondo, there is also a project of the University of Trento (funded by the province and by the association Trentini nel Mondo) which aims at creating a virtual Trentino community and which was presented at the Congress.

As I have shown in the previous section, there seem to be a general resurgence of institutional interest in Italy for its emigrant population. However, what emerged in the discussions held at the Trentino Congress is that the Autonomous Province of Trento seems to be investing more than its counterparts elsewhere in Italy and this seems to be an activity that predates the more recent re-discovery of the Italian communities abroad.

Emilia Romagna

The officer in charge of emigration for the region Emilia-Romagna, Katia Guizzardi, explained to me the main activities of the region in the field of emigration and gave me the document of their proposed activities for 2004. She said that in the last seven or eight years the region had developed activities directed mainly at young people. She too stressed the problem of keeping them linked to their region of origin and to the activities of the emigrant associations. She is aware of the fact that young people do not take part in the activities of the associations because such activities do not reflect their interests. Among the region's activities for young people, there is the creation of a dedicated internet site called Reporter (www.regione.emilia-romagna.it/reporter). What follows is a summary of the regions' activities towards Emiliano-romagnoli abroad contained in the region's planning document:

- courses of Italian language and culture (abroad, on-line and in Italy).
- internet project (financing of IT material for associations abroad so as to favour their communication with the region)
- reportER (internet site dedicated to young people of ER origin)
- expansion of the internet site for the Emilia-romagnoli abroad (more info on laws and practical matters)
- study periods in ER for Latin American young people of Italian origin
- bursaries for attending masters in ER
- stages for working in industries in ER
- cultural exchanges for young people of ER origin residing in Europe
- activities towards the elderly (Holidays for small groups of elderly ER residing abroad in a seaside town of ER)
- European Conference 2004 (meeting of all the associations of ER present in Europe to discuss policies and activities for the next years)
- World Youth Conference, Uruguay (meeting of young delegates of ER origin residing in the 5 continents).
- special measures towards Argentina

In addition to these activities the region maintains the contacts with their regional associations abroad and promotes cultural activities abroad in collaboration with the Italian institutes of culture, the chambers of commerce and the consular authorities.

Lazio

The officer in charge of emigration of the region of Lazio, Anna Bellissario, explained that in her region it is the 'Assessore' for family policies and social services who is responsible for emigration. The region of Lazio has so far passed three laws legislating the interventions to be carried out for Laziali abroad: the first in 1975, the second in 1991 and the recently approved law 23 of 2003. Here below there is a summary of the current region's activities:

- contribution to the special fund for Argentina in collaboration with the ministry of Italians abroad
- subsidies towards return migrants (covering of the cost of transportation, help with housing, job insertion, schooling and language training)
- co-ordination of the activities of the regional associations abroad
- organisation of cultural events abroad
- world conference of young Laziali abroad
- summer courses of Italian in Rome for young people of Lazio origin
- courses of Italian abroad
- holidays in Lazio for elderly emigrants
- scholarships for studying Italian emigration
- sponsorship of a research on the history of Laziali emigration to the UK to be carried out by young people taking part in the national civil service
- special activities for Argentina
- new web site

As it emerged in the other regions, in Lazio there is a declared strong interest in establishing links with young people of Italian origin residing abroad to foster their connection with Italy. The aim of the region is to create a cultural bridge between Italy and young Italians abroad. In their view these young people can be promoters of Italian culture and entrepreneurship.

Sicily

In spite of the fact that the region of Sicily has one of the largest emigrant population, its activities seem much fewer than those of the northern and central regions. Vincenzo Lo Cascio, officer in charge of emigration for the region, reported the following areas of intervention which he divided between direct economic contributions to the emigrants and indirect contribution towards the emigrant associations. Within the former there are:

- low interest mortgages for return migrants first-time buyers
- low interest mortgages for return migrants to open commercial or turistic activities
- scholarships for children of return migrants to attend primary school, secondary school or university
- language courses (he admitted that they sponsor few, due to budget restrictions)

Funds are allocated to association in order to carry out:

- cultural activities abroad
- holidays in Sicily for children of Sicilian emigrants (he admitted difficulties in finding second generation interested participants)
- activities of social tourism

In contrast to the other regions (which have very recent legislation) the last Sicilian regional law on emigration was approved in 1984. According to Lo Cascio this was an innovative law at the time but then nothing new has been done. Another problem of the region of Sicily is that of the 'Consulta', the consultative body of emigrant representatives instituted by each region. The last elected 'Consulta' has never met since its formation four years ago. Generally speaking, Lo Cascio admitted that the Consulte had always had a very low impact on the activities of the region. Also the emigrants conferences had not been organised in recent years, the last being in 1990.

The Associations

The emigrants associations are also actively promoting transnational links among the population of Italian origin residing abroad.

FILEF was created in 1967 by leftwing intellectuals in order to maintain the relationship with Italian communities abroad, mainly for electoral purposes. It was believed that post-war migration was a temporary phenomenon that would be followed by return. When the members of the association realised that emigration was becoming long-term they shifted their activities to promoting the integration of Italians into the societies to which they had emigrated. The aim of FILEF became that of representing the interests of Italian emigrants vis-à-vis the foreign governments and develop relationships of co-operation with leftwing political forces in the receiving countries. As mentioned in the previous section, FILEF was among the promoters of the concept of emigration as a resource but according to Ricci FILEF meant this in a different way from how it became appropriated by the institutional powers. FILEF saw the emigrants not only as a potential economic resource but also as a political one. In Latin American countries for instance they thought of realising co-operation projects mediated through the Italian population residing there. Ricci claimed that FILEF sees emigration as a social capital. What he called 'cultural islands' could become strategic points for developing progressive political agendas.

At the moment FILEF is engaged in a project with young people of Italian origin residing in Germany and Switzerland. The idea is to train these people and put them in connection with the Southern Italian region of origin of their parents. They want to channel the skills of the young people towards developing the deprived regions of the south of Italy.

USEF (Unione Siciliana Emigrati e Famiglie) is the Sicilian branch of FILEF. They were created in the 1970s to look after Sicilians abroad. Among their recent transnational activities there have been campaigning activities among Italian communities in Europe aimed at explaining the new electoral policy and the political situation in Italy. Currently their main activity is tackling the Argentinean situation. They promoted various solidarity campaigns and they funded the creation of a health centre and the supply of medicines to a deprived neighbourhood of Buenos Aires. They also aim at starting a fundraising campaign in the US Italo-American communities in favour of Argentinean-Italians with the support of a New York based Italian language newspaper 'America oggi'.

ANFE too promotes solidarity projects in Italian communities in need, at present especially in Latin America, and invest in preserving the Italian language abroad through the funding of language classes. ANFE keep alive the links with their regional branches abroad through regular visits and contacts, their latest trip having been to Australia.

The association Trentini nel Mondo is one of the most active of the regional associations. It operates so that:

Trentini abroad maintain a fruitful link with their region of origin, with their cultural and social roots while at the same time becoming full citizens in their host countries (Trentini nel mondo newsletter n.8 2003).

This association operates both locally in Trentino and abroad through its local branches (circoli). In Trentino its main activity is that of educational campaigns directed at the local population on emigration issues as well as promoting dialogue and cooperation with all local ethnic groups. The Trento headquarters also function as a source of information and coordination of the activities done abroad and in the 'circoli' and as a reference point for the province on emigration issues.

As far as the activities abroad are concerned, the Association in collaboration with the province has recently shifted its attention toward implementing development projects that are aimed at benefiting the social and economic reality in which they are implemented and not just specific individuals (Trentini nel mondo newsletter n.8 2003). The Trentini nel Mondo coordinates the activities of the circoli who are autonomous entities that share the values of the main association. At present there are over 200 circoli in the following countries: Argentina (43), Australia (8), Tasmania (1), Belgium (3), Bolivia (1), Bosnia (4), Brazil (35), Canada (5), Chile (3), Colombia (1), Denmark (1), Ecuador (1), France (2), Germany (9), Great Britain (1), Luxemburg (1), Mexico (7), Paraguay (1), Peru (1), Romania (1), USA (18), South Africa (1), Switzerland (10), Uruguay (3), Venezuela (1).

The association gives special attention to fostering links with the youth. It seems interested in creating human and social capital among young people through the establishment of global networks. According to its newsletter the association thinks that:

Conditions have to be created so that they (the youth) take full advantage - in terms of personal development - from the possibility of possessing two or more cultures to help create and develop a society ever more multicultural and intercultural (Trentini nel mondo newsletter n.8 2003).

The Church

The other active actor engaged in keeping alive Italians transnational links is the Church, especially through the Scalabrinese religious order. In Rome they direct the largest immigration research centre (CSER) which also edits the main Italian migration journal *Studi Emigrazione*. The Scalabrinese fathers have been particularly active in the UK where they have three missions (London, Bedford, Peterborough) and where they edit the newspaper *La Voce degli Italiani*. The representative of the Ministry of Italians abroad expressed the view that the Scalabrinese have had a very important role not only in directly assisting the Italian emigrants but also in preserving what he called 'our traditions and culture'.

Ethnic identity and generational divisions

The issue of Italian identity was discussed in several of the interviews. Prof. Barbagli explained how in Italy there is a lower identification with the nation than in other European countries. The scholars who have explored this issue have suggested that this is due to Italy's comparatively late unification; the presence of the Catholic Church; and the fascist period. It was suggested to me that, unlike other nations, Italians do not like national rituals, such as the singing of the national anthem, and generally do not identify with their national institutions, which they tend to mistrust. Both Prof. Barbagli and

Mancinelli from ANFE talked about recent top-down attempts by the current president of the republic to strengthen the sense of national identity and encourage people to feel proud of being Italian. According to Mancinelli this new rediscovery of Italianness became possible with the fall of the Berlin Wall. In his view, up to that moment in Italy there was no need to feel Italian since people were divided in two ideological camps: Catholics vs. Communists.

When I asked about the role of Italian identity for the Italians residing abroad, my interviewees replied that it was important to Italians, but up to a point. Father Maffioletti and Mr. Mancinelli believe that for several emigrants their regional identity is far more important than their national one. Some of them left when Italy had just been formed and the majority remained attached to their villages of origin, rather than to the country as a whole. Father Maffioletti went as far as to place ethnic identity in regional rather than national terms. He said that Italians abroad present themselves as Italians towards the outside but internally they are divided by what he called ethno-cultural differences.

Father Mario Maffioletti talked about the main theme of concern for the regional governments, namely that of the second generations. As we have seen, regional governments' fear is to lose the links with the descendants of the original migrants. Various efforts are made to get them to participate in Italian or regional associational life abroad, but with little success. The officer of Emilia-Romagna admitted that most of their recent activities are targeted at retaining the links with young people abroad. The same was the case for the Lazio region. As noted, the region of Trentino went as far as organising a world congress of youth of Trentino origin with the same intent. The reflections that follow were gathered at the congress to which I participated.

When I spoke to the delegates of Trentino descendants present at the congress about why these young people started going to the circoli, most interviewees replied that they were interested in 'finding their roots'. Some admitted that they went there dragged by their parents. Canadian and Australian delegates in my group said that they were brought to the circoli when only toddlers and carried on attending ever since. Others went because of a specific objective (e.g. gather information on how to obtain Italian citizenship). All said that in spite some of the ways in which they had started to attend were opportunistic, they remained involved because they wanted to know more about where their families came from, and the history and culture of Trentino. They wanted to establish fruitful links with their families' place of origin and with other Trentini around the world. Yet they did not necessarily aspire to go to live in Trentino in contrast to what was normally the case for their parents and grandparents.

In line with this widespread desire of getting to know their families' region of origin, the first request contained in the final document of the congress is about courses on the history of Trentino. One of the key words in the document is 'curiosity' which signals the attitude that these young people have towards Trentino and which they counterpoised to the notion of 'nostalgia' which was typical of their parents and grand-parents. In the conclusion of their document the young delegates highlighted the following points:

- we are happy to be the sons and daughters and descendants of those who left this land (Trentino)
- we still feel Trentini
- after 150 years of emigration several of us, because of the situation in our countries of immigration, are quite far from the dreams of our ancestors
- in the light of our experience, Trentino people have to reflect on the fact that migrant populations cannot be stopped but only welcomed. (Final document p. 13).

While they stressed the importance of having an interest in finding out where they came from, at the same time they wanted to respect the histories of other people around them and being full members of their societies of residence.

What it meant having an Italian and regional identity was something that the delegates experienced differently. Argentineans and some Brazilians seemed to have a very strong national (i.e. Argentinean and Brazilian) identity and until lately they gave little thought to their Italianness. However, in the last few years they have started to strengthen their connections with Europe as a possible way out of the crisis hitting their countries. Rumanians (whose migration was at the end of 19th century) were very proud of discovering their Italian past and they too were quite interested in the issue of Italian citizenship. Australians seemed to be in the process of rediscovering their Italian heritage, maybe as a result of multicultural policies in Australia. Belgians, on the other hand, were often ashamed of being Italian and several have changed their surnames. According to the COMITES representative in Charleroi, Piccoli, they are embarrassed of their parents past as miners. This shows how identity is context-related.

The Congress was a tool through which the province and the Trentini nel mondo offered their view on what constitutes a Trentino identity, something the young delegates were encouraged to feel. The provincial Councillor for Commerce, Cooperation, Labour and Communitarian policies Andreolli insisted on the risks of nostalgia which in his view may lead to privileging a Trentinita' (a Trentino identity) that centres on superficial cultural aspects such as choirs, bands and costumes and which is little open to newcomers. In his view Trentino cannot exclude newcomers on the basis of a defence of customs and tradition. A delegate from the USA asked the Councillor if he saw a contradiction in the conservation of a Trentino identity and the development of Trentino as a multicultural society. He replied that he thought it is possible to maintain an identity and be open to heterogeneity. He talked of identity as a process and as something in flux that was inevitably changing over the years.

Several times the issue of intergenerational differences surfaced in the discussions. Young people in the working groups discussed how often they do not find the activities organised by the elders in the circoli as particularly interesting for them. An Australian delegate expresses how she sometimes feels excluded from such activities because she does not speak Italian (she is second generation). Some of the elders are anchored to an idea of Trentino that does not exist anymore. The role of the circoli was discussed on several occasions in this respect. The idea of the Congress organisers was that the circoli should become a meeting place between the generations. The young delegates agreed with this in principle but felt that in practice this can be difficult to realise in their respective local contexts. With the exception of Latin America, elsewhere it seemed difficult to involve young people in the life of the circoli.

Citizenship and return migration

One of the themes that received most attention at the Congress was that of the Italian citizenship and the ways of acquiring it. This was the case mainly for Brazilian and Argentinean delegates. Italy has a citizenship law based on *ius sanguinis* which means that citizenship is endowed according to descent rather than place of birth. This means that those born in Latin America and who can trace their origins to Italy can apply for Italian citizenship. The law says that all of those who are descendants of Italian citizens can apply but this resulted in a problem for Trentino people who emigrated before 1920 when their region was under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. A new law of 2000 (promoted by the Association Trentini nel Mondo) changed this and now descendants of Trentino emigrants of that period are allowed to apply.

Because of the crisis affecting several Latin American societies, and especially Argentina, many young people see the possibility of acquiring Italian citizenship as a way of getting a European passport and as a potential way out from their countries (not necessarily to go to Trentino or even Italy). Virtually all the Latin American delegates were in the process of gathering the relevant documentation and some had come to the Congress as a way of going to look for further documentation at the villages where their families originally came from. Several said that they initially went to the circoli in order to ask for help in gathering the relevant documentation but then stayed on and started to collaborate with them because they developed a genuine interest for finding out more about their families.

Return migration is also very much linked to the crisis of some societies of Italian emigration especially Argentina and Bosnia. The Province of Trento dedicates part of its emigration budget to support families of Italian origin 'returning' to Trentino. The Association Trentini nel Mondo provides a comprehensive service to support them which goes from picking these families up from the airport, paying for sending over their belongings, hosting them in temporary accommodation, helping them with bureaucratic matters and even helping them getting inserted in the local labour market. Also the other regions I came across provide services and funds aimed at returning migrants. Sicily does so also for those who return to the island from other Italian regions. Lazio and Sicily did not have data on the numbers of the returnees. The officer of the Sicilian region said that return migration is difficult to quantify because several families return and then migrate again and several return without seeking the region's support. The majority of Sicilian's returnees come from Germany (especially after reunification), Switzerland and France and fewer from the UK. Recently several are returning from Argentina due to the crisis there.

As far as Trentino is concerned, fewer families than expected had used the services supporting return migrants (98), all of whom were Argentineans. When I asked both the director of the Trentini nel Mondo and the consultore for Western Europe about return migration from more economically successful countries they both told me that they thought it was very little and the same was the case for retired migrants returns. The consultore for Western Europe told of several people he knew opting for partial return migration. This means spending six months in the village of origin (normally during the summer months) and the rest of the time near their new families in the immigration country. He himself has the desire to retire back to Trentino but feels that his grand parenting commitments in Belgium do not allow him to do that yet. He too later on would opt for a partial return migration. Several of the young people, even those coming from countries in difficult situations, seemed uncertain about the possibility of going to live in Trentino. Several were concerned about the isolation of those villages where their families originated while other would prefer to explore possibilities in other parts of Italy.

Transnational families

In my trip I came across no one who studied Italian transnational families and there does not seem to be any interest in this topic from academics, members of associations and policy makers. Mr. Mancinelli said that there has been interest from the Italians residing abroad in strengthening or rediscovering links with their families of origin but Italians did not share this interest. The economic approach to transnationalism that, as we have seen, has been adopted by Italian institutions is probably at the root of the lack of interest for looser forms of connections linking Italians across countries.

At the Congress in Trentino it emerged that several of the young people present at were already enmeshed in informal familial transnational networks. Given the denseness of the Congress

programme unfortunately I did not have the time to investigate this crucial aspect in depth. What emerged in informal conversations is that several of them (with the exception of those from countries of older emigration such as Latin America) visited Italy regularly or at least have done so several times and they all seem to have maintained links with their families still resident in Trentino. Regular visits were done especially while their grandparents were alive, but with their deaths, some families stopped visiting and some sold properties in the villages of origin. Others instead maintained properties and used them for regular holidays. One San Francisco family tried to return to the village in Trentino but after a year decided that there was little they could do in the valley and went back to the US. The extent to which links with Italy are maintained varies from family to family but the majority of those descending from post World War II migrants seem to have at least some kind of connection.

Conclusion

This paper provided an overview of the preparatory trips that I have conducted in Italy in 2003 and 2004 for the project Italian families and social capital. The paper has revised some of the work done in Italy in the fields of families, social capital and Italian emigration and presented the main concerns of both academic and policy makers in these areas. What I noted is that whereas Italian institutions at both local and national levels were highly concerned with fostering connections with the Italian communities abroad, especially with the second-generations, there seemed to be little academic interest in these links, for instance in how they are produced and maintained. In my view, the extent and nature of these connections - both at a formal-institutional and informal-familial level - need to be investigated in more detail.

Appendix One

List of Interviewees

Academics

Prof. Marzio Barbagli, Faculty of Education, University of Bologna (14/01/2004)

Prof. Pier Paolo Donati and his team, Faculty of Political Sciences, University of Bologna (14/01/2004)

Dr. Corrado Bonifazi, Istituto di Ricerca sulla Popolazione e le Politiche Sociali (IRPP), Rome (15/01/2004)

Father Mario Maffioletti, Centro Studi Emigrazione (CSER), Rome (15/01/2004)

Michele Colucci, University of Rome, Rome (16/01/2004)

Policy makers

Sergio Muraro, Provincial Councillor for Emigration, Comano Terme (Trento) (11/07/2003)

Katia Guizzardi, European affairs and international relations department, Emilia-Romagna regional government, Bologna (13/01/2004)

Anna Bellissario and Claudio Lena, family and social services department, Lazio regional government, Rome (19/01/2004)

Bruno Zoratto, president of the General Commission of Italians Abroad (CGIE) and communication officer for the Ministry of Italians abroad, Rome (21/01/2004)

Vincenzo Lo Cascio, work department of the Sicilian regional government, Palermo (22/01/2004)

Emigration Associations

Rino Zandonai, director of the Association Trentini nel Mondo, Comano Terme (Trento) (8/09/2003)

Giuseppe Filippi, Consultore for Western Europe [representative between emigrant communities and the province], Comano Terme (Trento) (9/9/2003)

Francesco Mancinelli, ANFE (Associazione Nazionale Famiglie Emigrati), Rome (20/01/2004)

Rodolfo Ricci, FILEF (Federazione Italiana Lavoratori Emigrati e Famiglie), Rome (20/01/2004)

Marcella and Salvatore Augello (general secretary), USEF (Unione Siciliana Emigrati e Famiglie), Palermo (22/01/2004).

Appendix Two

Dates and Places visited

Comano Terme (Trento), 7-14/09/2003

Bologna, 11-14/01/2004

Rome, 14-21/01/2004

Palermo, 21-25/01/2004

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