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Who can (*not*) be Greek? Citizenship, Identity and Belonging among  
youth of sub-Saharan African background in Athens.

Presentata da: **Andromachi Papaioannou**

Coordinatore Dottorato

**Andrea Segré**

Relatore

**Bruno Riccio**

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## INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the research is the exploration of identity formation and belonging among youth of African background. Taking into consideration the change of the Nationality Code<sup>1</sup> in March 2010, according to which citizenship could be granted as well to children born or raised in Greece of migrant parents if specific preconditions were fulfilled, the notion of citizenship is explored. The question ‘who can (*not*) be Greek’ is indicative of the period before the enactment of the New Nationality Code until today, where the debate is still open since some of its articles were considered anti-constitutional and therefore were cancelled by the State Council in February 2013. Using the Act 3838 as a reference point, issues regarding identity formation and belonging among adult second generation Africans are explored. The ethnographic research was conducted from June 2010 until October 2012 in the city of Athens, Greece.

The idea governing the specific research project was a campaign called ‘No to racism from baby’s cot’<sup>2</sup> run by the African Women Association claiming the right of the children born in Greece to migrant parents to be enrolled into the municipality’s registrar<sup>3</sup> and therefore be accepted as full citizens. The first time I came across the campaign was while I was doing a web research on migrants’ organizations in Greece when I was studying in London. The next time I travelled back to Greece, I booked an appointment with one of their representatives in order to get more information on the matter and most specifically on the problems migrant origin youth face due to the restricted access to citizenship. The core idea of my PhD research was an outcome of this very first conversation I had in June 2009.

When I am talking about youth of migrant background I refer to all those children usually referred to as ‘second generation’. The term second generation applies to the children of the migrants, born or raised in their parents’ host country (Crul & Vermeulen 2003). Yet, which children the specific term includes, varies, and different scholars have produced a more open or a more restrictive categorization. When in all approaches children born in the host country are definitely members of the second generation, those who came as infants, during childhood or puberty may or may not be included. According to Irvin Child (1943:3), second generation are

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<sup>1</sup>The Nationality Code was reformed by the Act 3838/2010. Until the Act 3838 was voted, Greek citizenship was granted only to those born to Greek parents. See p. 185

<sup>2</sup>More information on the campaign can be found at <http://www.africanwomen.gr/?p=805>. The campaign is no longer active.

<sup>3</sup>In order to get a birth certificate, children should be enrolled at their municipality’s registrar. However, Greek citizenship is a prerequisite for the registration. Children born to migrant parents do not acquire the Greek citizenship and so they cannot be enrolled at the registrar, leaving them without a birth certificate. The only proof of their birth is the certificate given from the hospital where they were born.

all the children of migrants 'either born here [USA] or brought from the mother country at an early age'. On the other hand, Portes and Zhou (1993:75) define as second generation all 'native-born children with at least one foreign-born parent or children born abroad who came to the United States before age 12'. For the purpose of my study I define second generation as all children born in Greece to foreign parents as well as all those who came to Greece before the age of six and passed through the Greek education system, choosing to follow Andall's (2002:391) approach who 'defines the second-generation category to include those born in Italy or who arrived before age 6 (i.e. before commencing school)'.

Migration in Greece is a rather recent phenomenon since it became an immigration destination in the early 90's. As far as the African migration to Greece is concerned, the great majority started arriving in the country mainly after 1995. Until then, the African population in the country did not exceed a few hundred. Most of the people who arrived in the 70's and 80's came as students. Their children who are now in their twenties and early thirties are the older representatives of the African second generation. The vast majority of the youth of African background are still minors, yet they are reaching adulthood in growing numbers. The precarious legal status of both migrants and their children is a reality I came across during my research. Most conspicuously, children of migrant background, whether born or raised in Greece, have no access to citizenship. Therefore, from the moment they reach adulthood and are no longer considered protected family members, they are considered migrants themselves and have to obtain a personal residence permit in order to continue to reside legally in the country. The only way they can access citizenship is through the rather time-consuming and expensive process of naturalization.

Greece, being a rather new destination country, has to deal for the first time in its history not only with migrants themselves, but also with their offspring, the so-called 'second generation'. The very existence of those children is the living proof that migrants are settling in Greece and not all of them see it as a transit country. On the contrary, it has become a destination country for many migrants and a homeland to their children.

The successful integration of the second generation is a bet about to be lost for Greece, unless, the State takes an initiative to facilitate the process. Besides the legal matters concerning the citizenship acquisition from children born in Greece to foreign parents, or, children who arrived in the country at a very early age and were schooled here, more essential initiatives need to be taken, mainly considering the gradual integration of both first and second generation. As Grillo argued (1999:11), 'integration' envisages 'immigrants becoming an integral part of, though not necessarily absorbed by, the receiving society and culture'. Integration, indeed, is a two way

process among the Greek society, the State, and the migrants. For the host society, supporting the integration process of the migrant population is equivalent to equal opportunities for the sum of the population, promotion of integration, access to rights and opening up institutions. At the same time, migrants, by showing *willingness* to learn a new culture, build personal relations within the receiving society and with its members, acquiring rights, and accessing position and status, contribute to their own integration in the host society. In order for the process to be successful, State policies targeting integration should be implemented and migrants themselves should take advantage of them. At the same time, the State has to support its policies and prepare the society to accept them, by mainly promoting the benefits they both could have from the integration process of the migrant population. The daily interaction of the local with the migrant population is a lived experience and the means through which stereotypes could be eliminated.

Successful integration of the migrants in the host society automatically means that their children will have more possibilities to integrate as well. As far as Greece is concerned though, failing to integrate the first generation has created many obstacles for the integration of the second, leading to phenomena of marginalization of migrant origin youth born or raised in the country.

For the past two and a half years I have lived in Athens socializing mainly with youth of African background. Athens is the capital of Greece and the place of residence for the vast majority of the African population living in the country. The target group of my research were young adults aged 18-38. The people over 30 were the minority among my informants; those aged 25-30 were slightly more, whereas those aged 18-24 represented the majority. Having fewer informants from the older children and more from the younger mirrors their actual percentages among the African second generation in total. Even though they do have features in common, one cannot talk about second generation as an exclusive category. Not all individuals bear the same characteristics; indeed, great differences occur among them.

Still though, there are a few elements that play a rather important and fundamental role in the integration process of the second generation and in their identity formation as well. The age of an individual was proved to be a key factor in understanding the levels of integration among the youth of African background. When I am talking about the age though, it is not the age as such that I refer to. I mainly refer to the time this particular individual was born, grew up and came of age, in comparison with the migration flows that started occurring in Greece after 1990, and the results they had in the society.

Most conspicuously, the older second generation were born in the 80's, before the mass migratory flows took place. They are the children of the first Africans who arrived in Greece

mainly as students. The high educational capital of the parents, even if it was not always translated into a high-income high-status employment, in combination with an average knowledge of the Greek language, promoted their integration into the Greek society. Few African families were residing in Athens in the 80's and they were dispersed all over the city. At the time there were neither neighborhoods inhabited mainly by migrants nor Kypseli<sup>4</sup> commonly referred to and considered a ghetto. Children of African background were socialized mainly in the Greek society and less in the African communities, while the majority of them admit that they made few or no friends at all with other children of African background. At school they had to interact almost exclusively with their Greek peers, something that facilitated their integration process in the society even if childhood was remembered by most of them as a rather tough period in their lives.

I grew up in Zografou<sup>5</sup> area; there were only 3 black families in the neighborhood. It was not easy but I was a tall and strong kid, if you know what I mean! (Katerina, 22, born in Greece)

I have lived in Ambelokipous<sup>6</sup> all my life; I went school there as well. I have studied to be a social worker. (Nadia, 28, came at age 1)

When I was little I had no contact with other kids of African origin. As I told you before, we lived in Vironas<sup>7</sup> and there were very few of us. There were my cousins, okay, and another African family but still, I had no relationships with them. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

I attended primary school in Amerikis Square<sup>8</sup>. I was the only foreigner and black kid in the school [...] I didn't like to fight but I had to earn the respect somehow and protect either myself or my friends. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

Besides the tough school years, being a minority at school facilitated or even forced their integration in the Greek society. In other words, older second generation do not tend to have severe integration issues or practice ethnic enclosure and are rather open to difference. In addition, they were more likely to have completed higher education mainly due to the fact that

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<sup>4</sup>Kypseli is an Athenian neighborhood close to the city center. It is a rather densely populated area, with a high percentage of migrant residents. The majority of the African population in Athens lives in Kypseli. The area is constantly demonized by the mass media, and is often referred to as a 'ghetto'.

<sup>5</sup>Zografou is an Athenian neighborhood. See map p.103

<sup>6</sup>Ambelokipoi is an Athenian neighborhood. See map p.103

<sup>7</sup>Zografou is an Athenian neighborhood. See map p.103

<sup>8</sup>Amerikis Square is located close to Kypseli. See map p.103



their parents were also holders of university degrees, valued education and promoted it as a means of upward social mobility for their children.

However, I do not suggest that the integration process was an easy task or that the Greek society in the 80's and early 90's was idyllic. Being black or a foreigner at the time was also a very good reason to be socially excluded or stigmatized. Yet, it was more like a fear of the unknown 'other', and less a demonization of the migrant 'other' as the source of all evils, as it is today. The children who were born in the 80's had no option but to integrate and unfortunately in some cases even assimilate. There was no ghetto to feel protected in; there were very few others like them and there was no intercultural school to go to. Yet, despite the lack of all these it made them today adults without integration issues, without meaning of course that they do not have to deal with discrimination or racism on the part of the society or on the part of the State, especially as far as their legal status and the problematic access to citizenship is concerned.

On the other hand, younger second generation were born in the early 90's; a time where Greece was transformed into an immigration country. Migratory flows from Africa started arriving but they were much less intense than those coming from the Balkans and Eastern Europe. The younger second generation are children of the Africans who arrived in Greece mainly as economic migrants and less as students. Even in the cases where parents were holders of higher education degrees from their countries of origin, they usually failed to recognize and use them in Greece. This fact, in combination with a poor or moderate knowledge of the Greek language, drove them almost exclusively to be employed in low-income low-status jobs. When migrants started arriving in the country, they tended to inhabit the most devastated areas of the city, where the rents were low. The broader Kypseli area became a very popular neighborhood among newcomers because of the cheap housing it offered and its proximity to the city center. Financial and social insecurity were the two factors that drove the majority of Africans to settle down in Kypseli. As migration flows became more intense, xenophobia, racism, violence, and discrimination against migrants increased. Each community was closed to its own, making not only the integration of the first generation almost impossible but jeopardizing the integration of the second as well. The children born in the early 90's grew up in neighborhoods inhabited by large numbers of migrants and they went to schools with significant numbers of migrant origin students. Many times schools were miniatures of the society and students of migrant origin were targeted and excluded, so they felt more secure socializing in their ethnic communities; a fact that created problems with their integration process.

Kids at school were okay, they just ... hang around in groups. Bulgarians there, Africans here, Filipinos on the other side, but it does not mean that we can't go to their side. You can. They just sit like that though. I mean you can go and talk to any of them, no problem. It is just that usually they stick in their own group. In the class we are all mixed up though. (Ben, 19, came at age 4)

I had friends whose parents were pushing them to hang out only with Africans and have relationships only with Africans, but they did not follow. And sometimes they had brothers or sisters who were exactly like that; it was like 'how can you be in a relationship with a white? The whites are like this or that'. But this friend of mine was completely different from the rest of her family. I mean it depends on the person and not so much on the family. (Nadia, 28, came at age 1)

Ethnic enclosure is highly practiced among Africans. Few younger second generation who live in Kypseli have relationships outside the African community and this attitude is favored by their parents as well. Socializing mainly in the African community and living in a degraded and poor area that offers few opportunities of upward social mobility and integration, African migrants and their offspring are trapped into a vicious circle of social exclusion. At the same time, as far as the second generation is concerned, those who manage to break this vicious circle and successfully integrate into the Greek society are often seen as too Greek or not African. *Africanness* as self-identification of the second generation is highly valued among younger second generation who deny their belonging to Greece and sometimes even develop an aggressive and mocking attitude towards their African peers who do not follow this behavior pattern.

When I first met them, they considered me so different from them. I never thought it was strange though. We don't have the same mentality, you can tell it immediately. I don't know how to explain it... Anyway, they considered me white. They told me, 'you are white; you are not a real black.' There is this stupid thing blacks have, I mean, those of the ghetto and the others. You know... Not that they did not accept me in the end though. (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

No matter how they perceive themselves or their peers, there is an issue of major importance that cuts across all differences among the youth of African background. The one thing almost all second generation children have in common is their precarious legal status. According to the Greek legislation, the children of migrants are not granted the Greek citizenship and they are under their parents' residence permit. When they come of age, they are no longer considered

protected family members and have to apply for a personal residence permit. Without a legal residence permit of their own, they are treated as undocumented migrants in the country they were either born in and/or raised. Issuing a residence permit has proved a real challenge for the majority of the youth of migrant background. Expensive fees, endless bureaucracy, poorly informed and uneducated employees are unfortunately the reality of the Greek public sector. In other words, the problems related to the issuing of their residence are rather severe and as a result many youngsters are left without a legal residence permit or only with a *veveaiosí*<sup>9</sup>, a document that shows they have submitted their application and are waiting for the issuing of the residence permit. Until the Act 3838 in March 2010 was voted, there was no way for a migrant origin child to acquire the Greek citizenship before reaching adulthood; a prerequisite to apply for naturalization which is a quite time consuming, expensive, exclusionary and strict process that has been designed though for adult migrants and not their offspring. The Act 3838/2010 gave the possibility to children of migrant origin to access the Greek citizenship if they fulfilled certain criteria. Unfortunately, the articles concerning the citizenship acquisition from the second generation were cancelled by the State Council in February 2013, after they were considered anti-constitutional by the majority of the State Council judges. At the moment, the only way for a second generation to access the citizenship is through naturalization.

The precarious legal status, in combination with integration issues, a sense of non-belonging or personal ambitions, are some of the reasons why the majority of those children see their future abroad. During the past three years, the financial crisis that has hit the country has resulted in the rise of the extreme right rhetoric and the subsequent ‘moral panics’ (Grillo 2009; Queirolo Palmas 2006), through which migrants and their children are depicted as criminals and subhuman, while racist attacks have become an everyday phenomenon in the center of Athens. A desire to leave Greece though is not solely a characteristic of the migrant origin youth; many young people of Greek origin have already left the country in search of a better future abroad. Perhaps they want to leave for different reasons, but still there are many common ones, such as unemployment, high taxes, lack of opportunities, low salaries, a failing health care system and a corrupt political system. Still though, for the second generation there is another very important

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<sup>9</sup>What is commonly referred to as a *vevaiosi* or *ble vevaiosi* is nothing more than a blue transcript or a receipt that proves that migrants or their children have applied for a residence permit. It is not a valid residence permit; therefore it does not give to its holder the same rights as a valid residence permit. The residence permit has the form of a sticker that is attached to the passport. Due to severe bureaucratic problems, many migrants never actually get their sticker on time. In other words, they pay for a residence permit but they cannot make use of their rights. For example, even if their residence permit gives them the right to travel, while they have a *vevaiosi* and are waiting for the issuing of their valid residence permit or else their sticker, they are restricted from travelling to any other country than their country of origin.

reason that facilitates their decision to depart, and this is the problematic nature of their belonging to Greece not only in a formal, but also in a more substantial way.

Second generation are denied access to citizenship as a result of their origin, because citizenship is reserved for those of Greek descent only. At the same time, the State does not acknowledge the multiple forms of belonging those youngsters have developed by growing up, living, socializing and being schooled in the country (Riccio 2010). In other words, the second generation, no matter how attached they feel to Greece, they are perceived as migrants and are treated as such, both in a formal and in an informal way. The identity crisis the second generation finds themselves in jeopardizes their integration process and promotes social exclusion and marginalization.

# METHODOLOGY

## I. RESEARCH TARGET

The main aim of the research is the exploration of the identity formation process of the youth of African background in Athens, Greece. Most conspicuously, how the socio cultural integration of the second generation affects their identity is investigated. Moreover, a vital part of the research is the legislation concerning the citizenship acquisition from the second generation and the effects it has on the identity formation of those youngsters.

The vast majority of African migrants live in Athens and as a result this has seen the development of the second generation Africans in the capital. Moreover, African migration is among the oldest migration flows in the country even if they are not among the most abundant migrant communities. This means that the African migration in Greece has experienced different phases and their outcomes are to be investigated among the second generation. More analytically, when talking about the identity formation of the youth of African background in Athens, I focus on three distinct factors that according to my research, shape the process.

1. The role played by the first generation concerning the integration process of the second generation. The family, and more conspicuously the parents' *willingness* to integrate, is considered to be linked to a sense of temporality which characterizes many African families who see Greece as transit and not as a final destination, no matter how many years they have been residing in the country. How far the specific attitude of the first generation affects the identity formation and the integration process of the migrant origin youth is investigated.
2. The place of residence and its role in the integration process of the second generation. The ghettoization of a specific Athenian neighborhood (Kypseli) is examined as an important factor of identity formation, mainly because it is considered to be linked to the integration process of the youth of migrant background. The place of residence is approached as an intrinsic factor mainly because it is linked to the social, human and economic capital of the first generation. A comparison between the youngsters who grew up and live in Kypseli to those who grew up and live in different parts of the city is attempted in order to highlight the potential differences among the members of the African second generation.

3. The social representations of African origin youth in the Greek society. How the youth of African background are depicted in the society is approached as a key factor for their social incorporation. The images Greek society has of migrant origin youth are rather crucial and the connection between those and the experiences of the second generation are questioned. Moreover, the role played by race is examined.

Furthermore, the issues of identity and belonging are investigated, focusing on the ways the second generation perceive themselves and at the same time how they are perceived by the society. Notions, such as those of *greekness* and *africanness*, are proved to be vital for a complete understanding of the identity formation process of the youth of African background. Last, Greek nationalism and the legislation concerning the citizenship acquisition from the second generation are used as a lens through which identity formation is examined. Access to citizenship is considered a goal for almost all second generation, yet how and if it is combined with the right to cultural diversity is investigated.

## II. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The main target of the research was the production of an ethnography of the African second generation in Athens. Most conspicuously, questions were posed in order to facilitate the process and examine the relationship between identity formation and the socio-cultural and structural integration of the youth of African background. The questions that were posed were shaped during my fieldwork and are characteristic of the specific period of time when the fieldwork took place. In other words, the results do not mirror the identity formation process of the whole African second generation, indeed they are drawn from experiences and attitudes of a specific fragment of those youngsters who are 18 years old and above.

Many scholars, both in Europe and the USA have conducted various researches on the second generation (Andall 2002; Colombo & Rebughini 2012; Crul & Vermeulen 2003; Portes, Fernandez-Kelly & Haller 2009; Portes & Rumbaut 2001; Portes & Zhou 1993; Rumbaut 1994; Vermeulen 2002; Vertovec & Wessendorf 2004), and according to those researches it was proved that the integration process of those youngsters is influenced and shaped by factors such as the home and the host country, the human, social and economic capital of the first generation, the receiving society, the educational system, the legislation concerning migrants and their

offspring. Taking into consideration the above factors as those that shape the social environment in which migrant origin youth is raised, their role in the integration and identity formation of the second generation is examined.

- How far the integration of the first generation influences that of the second generation taking into consideration that African migrants are considered to be one of the less integrated communities in Greece.
- How far the incorporation of the second generation is influenced by the place of residence. In the specific case, the place of residence is examined as a result of diverse parameters such as economic capital, community networks and human capital.
- In what terms belonging both to Greece and the country of origin is negotiated by second generation themselves on the one hand and the majority society and the State on the other.
- How far the identity of the second generation is influenced by the lack of rights accompanying the status of a second generation as migrant and not as citizen. Most conspicuously, how the lack of legislation concerning the citizenship acquisition from the second generation influenced their identity formation and the role played by the Act 3838/2010 regarding their attitude towards the possibility of becoming citizens of Greece.

Focusing on those questions that were actually shaped during my fieldwork research mostly according to my participant observation and general conversations long before the conducting of interviews, the core question of my research started being shaped by my interviewees as well; who can (*not*) be Greek?

What does it mean to be or not to be Greek, but most importantly how is *greekness* defined by both Greeks and non-Greeks? Moreover, the notions of *greekness* and retrospectively, *africanness*, play indeed a key role in the identity formation of the second generation. At the same time, besides their socio-cultural elements of *greekness* or *africanness*, citizenship plays a very important role as well. Citizenship and more specifically the possibility to access it, defines in a formal way who is 'qualified' to be Greek. The formal qualifications are questioned, and

are compared to the living experience of being Greek as integral part of a second generation youngster's identity. So, the core question of my research is deconstructed in order to answer the following questions:

1. Who can or cannot be Greek according to the majority society and the Greek State?
2. Who can or cannot be Greek according to the youth of African background?
3. Which are the 'qualifications' for *greekness* and *africanness*? Formal qualifications versus lived experience.

### **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Having as a research topic the identity formation process of second generation Africans in Athens and intending to produce an anthropological research on the topic, I considered that the qualitative research method was the most appropriate tool in my quest for producing accurate results and conclusions.

However, concerning the quantitative research and its indispensability at certain points, I came across a lack of official data concerning the specific fragment of the migrant origin population. In other words, it was rather difficult if not impossible to find statistic data on African origin youth mainly because of their small number which resulted in them being included in the category 'other nationalities' in most researches. The last census took place in Greece in May 2011 but did not produce any result I could use in my research.

Qualitative research as a research method emphasizes the different meanings people fabricate in order to understand their world and evaluate their experiences. In other words, how people make sense of themselves and their experiences is central in this type of research. At the same time, the role of the researcher is vital because one uses oneself as the main instrument for information and data collection. One actively participates in the process and is capable of interfering, clarifying, and asking for an explanation or more details from the informant and at the same time checking if one has grasped the meaning of a conversation or interview. The relationship and contact with the informant may create new challenges and import new material to the research, which may differentiate the collection and interpretation of data.

Furthermore, the main aim of my research being the exploration of a procedure in process, I considered a qualitative method of data collection and analysis to be the most suitable because it is inductive. This means that I do not have a hypothesis that I try to prove through my research



but rather the opposite; I intend to gather data in order to build a concept or a hypothesis. At the same time, a main characteristic of qualitative research is that it is highly descriptive. Description is used as a tool to explain the context of the research, and words, images and quotes to describe the participants, their opinions, their activities and their attitude.

As I mentioned above, the study of identity formation of second generation is not a study of something static but a study of a phenomenon that is in constant change. Identities are fluid and are changing constantly and qualitative research is the most accurate way to study such mutable phenomena. According to Patton (1985:1), qualitative research ‘is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so that it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting- what it means for the participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what’s going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting. The analysis strives for depth of understanding’.

Most conspicuously, qualitative research as a methodology strives to conceive and comprehend phenomena from the participant’s perspective. The role of the researcher is to try to make sense of them and interpret them as prescribed in his role as a data and information collection instrument. One’s final target is however to analyze all the collected data in order to produce a piece of work, which will be both accurate and descriptive of the specific phenomena.

#### **IV. SAMPLE ID**

The selection of the interviewees and the access to the field was made through the snowball sampling technique. When I first came to Athens, I had a couple of contacts that helped me meet some second generation Africans. Through them, I came in contact with more youngsters every day and expanded my social circle. According to the snowball sampling technique, the original contacts recruit the next ones from among their acquaintances. This resulted in most of the contacts I gathered knowing each other more or less as well. Having as a sole prerequisite for an adult second generation to be of African origin, it was more likely to trace them among the social networks of their African origin peers. Moreover, my main target was not to meet people just to interview them, indeed I tried to establish a relationship with them before the interview took place. At the same time, I actively participated in some activities of the migrant associations in order to observe both youth and their families firsthand. This activity enabled me not only to be

in constant contact with my informants, but also to get to know them better and understand more about them and the way they act. Sometimes observation offers information that cannot be gathered from an interview. At the same time observation gives the opportunity to see things that cannot be explained in words such as body language, gestures, pauses, dances, and feelings of joy, sadness, pride etc and the peoples' reaction to them.

Everyday contact with the people studied, and active participation in their activities are considered the backbone of an ethnographic research. As van Maanen (1982:103-104) noted, 'the result of ethnographic inquiry is cultural description. It is, however, a description of the sort that can emerge only from a lengthy period of intimate study and residence in a given social setting. It calls for the language spoken in that setting, first-hand participation in some of the activities that take place there, and, most critically, a deep reliance on intensive work with a few informants drawn from the setting'.

My intention was to have interviews and participant observation as main sources of data collection. Concerning interviews I used mainly semi-structured and unstructured according to the case and the relationship I had with the individual. My aim was to interview as many young people of African background as possible. For the purpose of my study I conducted 57 interviews with second generation youngsters, out of which 30 were male and 27 female. Moreover, 31 were aged 18-24, 21 aged 25-30, and 4 aged 31-38. The reason why I chose to interview more younger than older individuals, had to do mainly with their actual percentages among the African second generation population. In other words, older second generation represent the smallest fragment of the African second generation, followed by those aged 25-30, and 18-21, while the largest percentage of the African second generation are still minors and therefore not included in the sample. Moreover, out of the 57, 39 were born in Greece and 18 came before the age of six.

	18-24	25-30	31-38	Total
Male	15	11	4	30
Female	16	11	0	27
Total	31	22	4	57

There is no official data regarding the total number of African second generation nor the African migrants. According to unofficial data provided by the African communities, it is estimated that

the sub-Saharan African population in Greece is between 10.000-12.000 people, out of which around 1.000 are second generation.

## V. METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS

The eight most commonly used qualitative research designs or strategies are: basic interpretive, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, ethnographic study, narrative analysis, critical and postmodern- poststructural research. In basic qualitative research, researchers are interested in how peoples' experiences are interpreted by them, how peoples' worlds are constructed and how the meaning is attributed to people's experiences (Merriam 2002).

For the purpose of this research though, I used ethnographic study as my research method. Ethnography has been widely used in anthropological researches and has as its main target to study diverse cultures and societies. As in all qualitative research strategies, in ethnography the relationship between researcher and informants for the collection of data and information is of vital importance. The anthropologist, while doing research, tries not only to collect data, but, to establish relationships with his informants because it is precisely through this relationship that he will be able to interpret his data in a certain way. As Merriam (2002:9) argued, 'ethnography is not defined by how data are collected, but rather by the lens through which the data are interpreted'.

In order to produce the most accurate results, and be able to make sense of the deeper meanings of my informants' words and actions, I focused on establishing real deep relationships with most of them. The levels of intimacy varied among my informants, yet there were a few that I could refer to as key informants and a particular one as my main informant. The profound relations of friendship and trust proved to be much more productive for my research, as the most important information was gathered during relaxed conversations, dinners with friends, long phone calls or walks. Trust between my informants and I was developed after every day contact through which we got to know each other.

The protection of the anonymity of my informants is rather important to me and to them as well. Therefore, all names were altered and the country of origin is not mentioned unless it is necessary. Moreover, all information that could betray a person's identity is also altered in order to protect it from exposure. The age though, is always kept as such. All recorded interviews are confidential material that was produced for the purpose of the specific research and all those who participated were aware of my research project.

## **VI. DOING FIELDWORK**

My fieldwork started in June 2010 and officially lasted 18 months. I took 6 months off in order to distance from the field, keeping in touch mainly with my key informant while reflecting on the material I had gathered. Yet, I had to go back to the field for a period of two months when the negative response of the State Council regarding the Act 3838 was released to the press (November 2013) and published (February 2013).

During the period of my fieldwork, I came to experience a completely different reality to the one I had experienced thus far. Socializing mainly with second generation Africans, I came across a variety of incidents that shaped my opinion on the subject. The interviews I took were more complementary and worked as a valid resource for quotes because most of the issues discussed in the interviews were heavily discussed and debated in advance with the majority of my interviewees in a number of conversations, both formal and informal. Getting to know many youngsters of African background better and becoming friends with some of them, was the way through which defenses and stereotypes of both sides collapsed, and actual bonds were formed. Moreover, discussing all irrelevant matters, laughing, hanging around and spending time together proved many a time to be much more productive in terms of understanding their reality than a formal conversation or interview.

At the same time, I was following all conferences and public speeches concerning second generation and citizenship issues, as well as press releases, TV shows, and of course the news. I had the opportunity to discuss about second generation issues with some leading figures of the migrant communities, politicians, professors, activists and reporters, and many every day Greek people of all age ranges.

The knowledge I gathered through my readings in combination with many diverse people's opinions on the matter helped me not only interpret but also analyze the results produced by my research. My fieldwork diaries were proved vital in order not to lose myself on the way. Moreover, the help of my key informant was proved to be invaluable. Without his help I would have required considerably more time to enter the field and access places and people which otherwise would have been almost impossible to do alone. He also provided me with his genuine and indispensable knowledge on the second generation issues.

# CHAPTER 1

## THEORETICAL APPROACHES ON THE SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND THE IDENTITY FORMATION OF THE SECOND GENERATION

In order to understand the empirical parts of the research, a literature review is considered an indispensable tool. I choose to analyze basic terminology and concepts, and at the same time, present the theoretical work produced by scholars working on the subjects of migration and second generation both in the USA and Europe. The reason why I choose to present a variety of theoretical approaches is to give a more detailed look at what has been produced about the integration of migrant populations, second generation and their identity formation process. Most conspicuously, I discuss the most important scholars that were and are working on these issues throughout the past decades, focusing primarily on second generation. Moreover, I discuss rather extensively the Greek setting and the approaches that are most appropriate for its analysis and understanding.

Choosing to refer to approaches and concepts that are not used in my analysis is aiming to explain the reasons why the specific approaches or concepts are not applicable to the Greek case in order to highlight the peculiarity of the studied setting. The first studies on second generation were made in countries such as the USA, where migration was a constant and old phenomenon. As some European scholars have also noticed (Andall 2002; Colombo, Domaneschi & Marchetti 2011; Colombo, Leonini & Rebughini 2009; Colombo & Rebughini 2012; Riccio 2010; Riccio & Russo 2011; Vermeulen 2002; Zinn 2011) the American setting as described by scholars such as Zhou and Portes differs radically from the European. At the same time countries that have become migration destinations within the past few years such as Italy and Greece tend to follow different patterns as far as the migration policies are concerned and retrospectively the policies regulating integration of migrants and their offspring or citizenship acquisition comparing to central or northern European countries.

Integration is not a linear process; on the contrary it has many aspects and is influenced by a variety of different factors. The aspects of integration as described by Entzinger (2000) and Vermeulen (2002) are discussed focusing primarily on Vermeulen's analysis as the most suitable to the Greek setting. Moreover, concepts such as that of multiculturalism and the intercultural model are examined not only to present their influence in the migration policies of many countries, but mainly in order to examine how far they could be implemented in Greece and why. Furthermore, the rather famous concept of segmented assimilation (Portes & Zhou 1993; Portes *et al.* 2009) is discussed highlighting how and could be applicable to a setting radically

different from the American. While discussing and analyzing aspects, models and theories, the Greek setting is described and the applicability of all the above is questioned. At the same time, using Vermeulen's analysis on the aspects of integration, the approaches of other European scholars (Andall 2002; Colombo, Domaneschi & Marchetti 2011; Colombo, Leonini & Rebughini 2009; Colombo & Rebughini 2012; Riccio 2010; Riccio & Russo 2011; Zinn 2011) is used to enrich and highlight the peculiarity of the Greek setting. Taking into consideration studies on second generation performed in southern European countries -and most particularly Italy-, and the similarities of the Greek and the Italian setting, an effort to use them as a more relevant analytical tool is attempted. Notions such as those of the hyphen (Colombo *et al.* 2009; Colombo & Rebughini 2012) are examined as the most indicative of the reality second generation Africans face in Greece. Moreover, a focus on the complex issue of identity formation as a vital part of the integration process is attempted.

The Greek setting is a rather peculiar one for a variety of reasons, especially when compared to northern European countries or the USA. First of all, it is a rather new immigration country considering that until 40 years ago it was mainly an emigration country. Moreover, it is a country hit at the moment by a severe economic crisis, the outcomes of which are still very early to predict, yet as in any society in austerity, xenophobia, racism and fear are increasing. Another very important factor to be taken into consideration is the nature of Greek nationalism shaped during and after the formation of the Greek State focusing on *jus sanguinis* as a sole prerequisite of citizenship. For the first time in its recent history, Greece is receiving migratory flows consisting of rather diverse populations. Many of these people have chosen Greece as a final destination, have brought along or created families, work, live in and contribute to the country. Still, many of those face integration issues since the Greek State never implemented any policy regarding the social inclusion of the migrant population. The situation is becoming even more complicated now, as the children of migrants or otherwise known as the so-called 'second generation' are reaching adulthood and become socially visible. Almost 200.000 children and young adults are people without rights in the country where they were born or/and raised. Yet, besides the acquisition of formal rights (citizenship) what is most at stake is the substantial integration and the actual feelings of belonging of those children in the Greek society.

## 1.1 ASPECTS OF INTEGRATION

How first and second generation immigrants integrate in the society is determined by factors known as aspects of integration. Many scholars (Entzinger 2000; Vermeulen 2002) have developed those aspects defining their characteristics.

Entzinger (2000) describes the existence of three aspects of integration that take the form of policies implemented by the State. The first aspect is the one related to the State, its legal and political extensions, focusing mainly on the ways it grants citizenship to the people inhabiting its periphery. Most conspicuously, citizenship acquisition obeys the rules of *jus soli*, *jus sanguinis* or a combination of both, and it reflects the relations each State has both with its citizens and non-citizens. At the same time, the second aspect is that related to the notion of the Nation and its flexibility. Societies are divided into those who favor assimilation as a way to integrate foreign populations, and those who favor the creation of ethnic communities or minorities in their internal. Both assimilation and ethnic preservation are conceived as the cultural aspect of integration, where those who belong to a nation are considered as bearers of the same cultural heritage. The last aspect is the socio-economic and especially the one related to the labor market and the ways it can be accessed by migrant population. Moreover, it focuses on the distinction between long term and temporary migrants and their equivalent access to labor rights.

Vermeulen (2002) too, focused on three aspects of integration, the structural, the socio-cultural and the identity. By structural integration he meant the sum of laws regulating the access of the migrant population to a variety of very important sectors such as the educational system, the political system, the labor market, and the institutions of the host society. The second aspect was the socio-cultural integration by which he meant the ways the migrant population and their offspring are incorporated in the host society. Yet, the socio-cultural integration is not to be perceived as a specific process, indeed, it evolves differently according to the social context in which it takes place. In other words, multiculturalism or pluralism, the intercultural model and assimilation are the three different paths integration may follow. Yet, each one of them has its variants and borrows elements from each other. The multicultural or pluralistic model focuses on the perception of cultures as distinct and their preservation as such as a right. Moreover, rights are asserted to people as members of a specific ethnic group and not as individuals. The intercultural model may be considered an evolved form of the multicultural one, where integration is perceived as a two-way process, where both home and host culture learn to know each other and borrow elements from each other without resulting in becoming the same.

Society is not seen as a ‘melting pot’<sup>10</sup>(Zangwill 1909). The assimilation model and its variants focused mainly on the possible outcomes of social integration which depend mainly on which segment of the society the migrant and his family will end up assimilating to (Crul & Vermeulen 2003:971). The third aspect is the one of identity and focuses mainly on the notion of national identity and the way it may be formed as a result of the immigration policies and the citizenship Law of each country.

For my research, I have used the model proposed by Vermeulen (2002) as the most helpful analytically in order to approach the case of the youth of African background in Athens. Still though, I choose to combine it with theoretical evidence from other scholars as well, in order to produce the most accurate results concerning the Greek context.

Vermeulen divided integration into three diverse aspects that fit the Greek setting. Structural integration is conceived as the sum of laws regulating the access of the migrant population to a variety of very important sectors such as the educational system, the political system, the labor market, and the institutions of the host society. In Greece access to specific areas of the labor market, the political system, institutions, and in some cases areas of the educational system, is linked to the citizenship acquisition, meaning that non-Greeks have rather restricted access to rights. In other words, second generation, as soon as they finish school and reach adulthood, instead of finding themselves in exactly the same position as their Greek peers, they find themselves in their parents’ shoes and sometimes in an even worse situation. Being born or raised in the country are not enough to secure their legal residence in the country; on the contrary, a residence permit, -as if they were migrants who just entered the country-, is required. Moreover socio-cultural integration was perceived as the way migrants and their children are incorporated in the host society. The integration process of both first and second generation depends on different variables according to each case. Yet the integration process of the second generation is highly connected with the one of the first, meaning that successfully integrated parents tend to raise children without integration issues, while unsuccessfully integrated parents tend to transmit their social status to their offspring. The aspect of identity linked to the feelings of national belonging and their formation, was rather important to analyze in the Greek setting, especially from the moment that second generation children are not granted citizenship since it is *jus sanguinis* that regulates citizenship acquisition.

As far the aspect of identity is concerned, an effort to include a broader sense of the term is attempted. Most conspicuously, national identity cannot be considered a person’s sole identity

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<sup>10</sup>The ‘Melting Pot’ is a theatrical play written by Israel Zangwill. It was staged for the first time in 1909 in New York City, United States.



even if examined under the lens of the integration process. Identity formation is a rather complex procedure and is influenced by a variety of different factors. Moreover, it is continuous, fluid and in constant change, therefore, it is almost impossible to be treated as something static or eligible to concrete categorization.

Most researches on second generation were performed in context with a long tradition in immigration. Yet, how far their outcomes are applicable to new migration settings such as the Greek one, are to be questioned. Furthermore, the globalized environment second generation is experiencing in most countries has introduced the notions of transnationalism and cosmopolitanism as dimensions of migration processes. These notions are also to be used as analytical tools in order to investigate the identity formation process of the youth of migrant background.

### 1.1.1 STRUCTURAL INTEGRATION

What is usually referred to as the structural dimension of integration, is that of having the possibility to access rights as its main characteristic. In other words, structural integration means the equal access to institutions, organizations and rights, given to migrants and their offspring on behalf of the State. Main aspects of the structural integration are the access to the labor market, schooling and education in general, society, and political institutions. Yet, how these aspects are implemented in forms of legislation and policies is different to each State. Most conspicuously, the level of structural integration of the migrant population and their offspring are facilitated or jeopardized by each State's immigration policies. According to Soysal (1994), these policies are retrospective of their perception of citizenship. Each State conceives the notion of citizenship in a different way and grants it to people who inhabit it according to specific qualifications.

Greece is one of the countries that grant certain rights only to their nationals. However, in order to become a national, one has to be born of at least one native parent, or, in case they are of foreign descent, become a naturalized Greek citizen who meets specific qualifications. Most conspicuously, as far as migrant populations in Greece are concerned, their prospects of structural integration are rather low, mainly because of State immigration policies. Inclusion in the labor market is considered one of the most vital aspects of structural integration (Castles & Miller 2003). Yet in Greece, access to specific labor sectors is restricted to nationals only. In the public sector only those who hold the Greek citizenship are entitled to work. This includes public schools, hospitals and public services in general. At the same time, only those who are Greek citizens have access to the Athens Bar. Taking into consideration the specific restriction and the multiple professions that those of foreign origin cannot access unless they become

naturalized, the possibilities for upward social mobility for migrant population diminish. The migrants, upon arriving in the country, even if they possess human capital, cannot use it unless they are employed in the private sector. The situation becomes even more challenging for the second generation. The youngsters who have been born or raised, and educated in the country, find themselves excluded from specific labor sectors, not because they are lacking any form of qualification, but because they are not considered citizens of the country. In other words, the migrant origin youth find it almost impossible to use the human capital they acquired in Greece in specific sectors. This may lead to an unofficial form of segregation between the younger generation in Greece based only on the criteria of nationality and citizenship.

Moreover, until the Act 3386/2005<sup>11</sup> was voted, migrant origin children no matter whether they were born in the country or arrived at a very early age, faced difficulties enrolling in public schools. In other words, the Act 3386/05 ensured the right to education meaning that all children were eligible for school enrollment no matter their parents' legal status. Until then, many parents found it difficult to enroll their children in school mainly due to some headmasters' attitudes of non acceptance of children of undocumented migrants. Moreover, the children of migrant origin, born in the country faced a completely different problem. They too faced serious problems with school enrollment mainly due to the fact that they were lacking a birth certificate. In Greece, birth certificates are only given to the children of nationals, while the children of non-nationals, born in the country, are only holders of a certificate from the hospital in which they were born.

Until the Act 3838/2010 was voted, the only way for a non-national to become a Greek citizen, no matter where they were born, was through naturalization, which was applicable only to adults. According to the pre 3838 Act, which facilitated the requirements for naturalization, the procedure was rather complicated and problematic. Ten years of continuous legal residence were required in combination with a stable income, and a fee of 1500 euro. There was no time limit for the State to come up with an answer and at the same time, a negative answer carried with it no obligation to be accompanied by a justification. Furthermore, in case of a negative answer, the fee was not refunded. In practice, applications for naturalization were taking up to 10 years to be examined, and the outcome was never justified. The Act 3838/2010 introduced for the first time two elements in order to facilitate the process. The first one referred to the time limit and the other to the obligation for justification. In other words, the application had to be examined within 2 years and the outcome had to be accompanied by an answer. Furthermore, it

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<sup>11</sup>According to article 72 of the Act 3386/2005, all minor third country nationals who reside in Greece are entitled to have access to compulsory education as Greek nationals are, without any preconditions (i.e. no matter the legal status of their parents), for their enrollment and participation in the school activities.

diminished the time for a continuous legal residence permit from ten to seven years. However, as far as the second generation was concerned, there was no legislation governing their access to citizenship as minors. At the same time, no rights were granted to them, making them undistinguishable from migrants even though they were born or lived their whole lives in the country. The Act 3838/2010 for the first time gave the minors of migrant origin the possibility of acquiring the Greek citizenship. In other words, it recognized their right to be citizens of the country in which they were born or raised. The Act was cancelled on February 13<sup>th</sup> 2013 when the State Council considered some of its articles anti-constitutional, among them the one that granted citizenship to minors schooled in Greece for 6 years. Furthermore, the article that facilitated the citizenship acquisition for minors born in Greece was likewise considered anti-constitutional.

Access to political rights is usually accompanied by citizenship. At the same time, access to them or even the possibility to access them by migrant population is an aspect of structural integration. In many European countries restricted political rights are asserted to long term residents. In Greece, those rights were a privilege of the nationals. Migrants who were holders of a residence permit had no access and in order to acquire them, they had to be naturalized. An important innovation of the Act 3838/2010 was the right it gave to long term resident permit holders to participate in local elections. This article of the Act was among those considered anti-constitutional by the majority of the State Council. The level of access to rights for non-nationals is different in every country even within the European Union. Each country is responsible for its own immigrant policy which is determined by who is considered to belong to the country. For migrant populations in Greece, a non-national status jeopardized their access to social services, education, the labor market and political rights. The situation of the second generation is even more at stake, mainly due to their precarious legal status and their denied access to citizenship.

It is argued that structural integration comes next to socio-cultural integration (Gordon 1964). I argue though, that structural integration if not a prerequisite for socio-cultural integration, then surely it facilitates it. The socio-cultural integration of the second generation cannot be complete if not accompanied by the structural one as well. Access to equal rights for the children of migrants born or raised in the country empowers them and facilitates their socio-cultural integration. Any notion of belonging is formalized by citizenship acquisition, promotes social cohesion and combats segregation and marginalization. The formal existence of first and second class citizens among the younger generations may promote social unrest, ethnic enclosure and, jeopardize the integration process promoted by the society and the educational system.

### 1.1.2 SOCIO-CULTURAL INTEGRATION

The terms assimilation [αφομοίωση] and integration [ενσωμάτωση] even if they mean different things, are sometimes used as one and the same, especially as far as the Greek setting is concerned. More conspicuously, the words integration or incorporation are used in public speech yet their meaning is that of a total assimilation. Migrant populations are supposed to ‘integrate’ in the Greek society in order to be socially included, actually meaning to become more or less like Greeks, abandoning their cultural and linguistic differences. Moreover, how far migrants with different religious beliefs and external appearance are considered assimilable and therefore eligible to integrate is to be questioned. Integration is conceived as a one way process, as something migrants should do if they want to be accepted. In other words, what the Greek public rhetoric promotes is assimilation as a prerequisite of social inclusion and participation, yet it also refers only to those who are considered assimilable.

I would like to explore the actual meaning of the two words before I analyse their involvement in migrant policies. The term assimilation tends to have negative connotations because according to it migrant populations should abandon their cultural, linguistic and religious identity and adopt those of the dominant state in order to become acceptable by the host society. Diversity is neither accepted nor valued and homogeneity of all citizens is sought. In Greek, the word ‘αφομοίωση’ [assimilation] means becoming the same, similar, becoming ‘όμοιος’. On the other hand, the term integration has a broader meaning. I intend to define integration as a process through which migrant populations become accepted in the host society, learn its language and its culture, obey its laws, build personal relations with members of the receiving society and develop feelings of attachment with it without having to abandon their religion, language and customs (Borkert *et al.* 2007; Grillo 1999). In other words, they become active members of the host society so their children will consider it a home society and will identify themselves as its members. The words integration or incorporation [ενσωμάτωση] have exactly this meaning; becoming part of the society’s body [σώμα]. Integration does not intend to create a melting pot society where everybody looks alike. On the contrary, its target is to create a society which will acknowledge and celebrate diversity and at the same time will guarantee the rights of all its citizens regardless of their origin, religion or culture.

Assimilation and its variants, multiculturalism and the intercultural model will be analyzed as models of socio-cultural integration of the second generation as far as the Greek context is concerned.

The classic concept of assimilation is one of the oldest integration models, and has as its target the transformation of all newcomers into replicas of the indigenous populations in order to

protect the cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious identity of the majority society. In some countries, prerequisite for any kind of rights is the complete abandonment of any kind of distinctiveness on the part of the newcomers. In others, assimilation is favored yet its outcomes are not always the ones expected. The segmented assimilation model focuses exactly on the fact that the assimilation process is not a linear process; on the contrary it is fragmented and is influenced by three factors. In other words, the outcomes of the whole process depend on which fragment of the society the migrants and their offspring will assimilate (Crul & Vermeulen 2003:971).

On the other hand, according to the multicultural model, integration has as its target the creation of a pluralistic society that respects difference and treats all its members in the same way. What should be underlined here though is that even though tolerance and acceptance tend to create multicultural societies, difference should not be treated as something static and autonomous that has to be protected at any cost. Yet at the same time multiculturalism is heavily criticized as promoting cultural, religious, social, economic and political divisions (Malik 2001). It is argued that multiculturalism has failed in Europe because in many cities ethnic or religious communities tend to inhabit, work and socialize in different places without coming in contact with the local population or with other communities. Living in separate enclaves in a so-called 'multicultural society' is evidence of the unsuccessful integration of the specific populations in the larger society. In other words, multiculturalism, when taking the form of institutionalized policies may lead to marginalization and ethnic segregation.

Moreover, the intercultural model as a reviewed form of multiculturalism is examined. According to this model, integration is seen more as a two-way process where the majority society interacts with the minority cultures in order to promote social coherence. Cultures are perceived as fluid, and the contact among them as interaction that alters their bearers as well. People living in societies where many different cultures co-exist, and they themselves are bearers of multiple cultural identities, are able to choose which elements of which culture they will adopt. They interpret and re-interpret many cultural elements throughout their lives but their access to rights is neither restricted nor favored because of the specific process. On the contrary, rights are asserted to individuals as such, and not as members of a specific ethnic community.

#### 1.1.2.1 ASSIMILATION

In order to understand how second generation might or might not integrate in the host society it would be rather useful to speculate on the concept of assimilation among other theoretical approaches. The term assimilation is perceived as the eradication of minority cultures mainly by

State policies implemented in the host country in order to deal with diversity and promote social cohesion. Assimilation is perceived as a one-way process, according to which migrants abandon their culture and adopt the one of the country of settlement, in order to become indistinguishable from the native population. In other words, they seek social inclusion through identification with the society of the host country (Gordon 1964).

#### 1.1.2.1.1 CLASSIC ASSIMILATION

Assimilation in its classic form was first presented by the Chicago School in the 1920's and has been represented by different scholars such as Gordon (1964), Alba and Nee (2003). According to the classic assimilation model, migrant communities tend to become more and more similar to the dominant group by adopting the majority society's norms, values, behaviors and characteristics (Brown & Bean 2006). Moreover, the longer migrants reside in the host country, the more assimilated they tend to become. According to Gordon (1964) migrant assimilation in the host society is favored by structural integration, long-scale intermarriage, identification with the host country through linguistic proficiency and cultural adaptation, and abandonment of the culture of origin as a means to end discrimination, prejudice and social exclusion. Portes and Zhou (1993) argue that classic assimilation is achieved gradually in terms of generations and is usually accompanied by social upward mobility and economic success.

The classic assimilation model is based on research made in the USA, a country characterized of the multiple immigrant flows that has been accepting throughout its history. The model describes the assimilation process as it was formed, implemented and experienced in America. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, USA became one of the first immigration destinations, receiving people from all over the planet. Moreover, being a society formed from immigrants ad hoc, differentiates it from the European nation-states.

#### 1.1.2.1.2 THE RACIAL/ETHNIC DISADVANTAGE MODEL

According to the racial/ ethnic disadvantage model, some migrant groups fail to assimilate and keep their ethnic distinctiveness in the host country. Yet, as some scholars (Glazer & Moynihan 1963) argue, ethnic enclosure for certain groups tends to lead to pluralism instead of disadvantage. Most specifically, this model refers to the immigrant communities or ethnic groups which choose to live in their ethnic-bound groups. Usually, those ethnic groups are economically but not socially integrated. They tend to practice ethnic solidarity in order to survive in the host society which leads to their ethnic enclosure. Yet because of this ethnic enclosure they are more likely to experience economic success.

The main characteristic of the racial/ ethnic disadvantage model (Glazer & Moynihan 1963; Portes & Zhou 1993), is the unsuccessful assimilation of certain ethnic groups. Discrimination, both structural and social, may jeopardize the assimilation process of specific populations, no matter their levels of linguistic proficiency or cultural adaptation. The second generation is those who suffer the consequences of the assimilation process of the first generation, be they successful or unsuccessful.

Most conspicuously, in some cases ethnicity might become an obstacle towards assimilation and upward social mobility, and in others it may well become a means to economic success. As Brown and Bean (2006) argue, racial or ethnic identification may be practiced among migrant origin youth and follow three different patterns:

- A. Reactive identification: Migrant origin youth tend to identify themselves with their countries of origin rejecting any form of identification with the host country mainly as a result of constant discrimination, social exclusion and segregation. This form of ethnicity is usually practiced among individuals with lower human, social and economic capital who have failed to achieve their social inclusion in the majority society.
- B. Selective assimilation: Migrant origin youth tend to choose when, how and which elements of their ethnic background they will use in order to achieve access to rights, the labor market, and institutions of the host country. Selective assimilation is usually practiced among migrant origin youth of higher levels of education that acknowledge that certain opportunities and support are only available inside the ethnic community.
- C. Symbolic ethnicity: Migrant origin youth tend to identify themselves with their countries of origin out of personal choice, knowing that this identification is accepted due to their economic integration in the society (Gans 1992). Such form of identification is mainly found among higher class youngsters, whose social position is guaranteed no matter their ethnic background.

Ethnicity, either reactive or symbolic, tends to be traced among youth of lower or higher socio-economic class. Working and middle class youth tend to follow an assimilation pattern that would allow them to gain the most in the host society (Brown & Bean 2006).

### 1.1.2.1.3 SEGMENTED ASSIMILATION

The segmented assimilation concept as introduced by Portes and his associates, applies specifically to the second generation and their adaptation in the host society. Moreover, assimilation is not considered a straight-line process; on the contrary it is heavily affected by a number of factors. At the same time, society cannot be conceived as homogenous either, so the assimilation of the second generation is highly connected to which segment of the receiving society both first and second generation will assimilate (Crul & Vermeulen 2003:971). In other words, the segmented assimilation model, taking into consideration the diversity of experiences observed among second generation youth in America, combines the straight line assimilation model with that of ethnic disadvantage (Portes & Zhou 1993).

Still though, the specific concept is believed by some authors to be useful and productive from an analytical point of view. Furthermore, it focuses mainly on the socio-economic outcomes of the assimilation and less on the cultural ones. At the same time, it is used mainly to explain changes occurring, not at an individual level, but changes conceived in terms of generations (Alba & Nee 2003; Brubaker 2001; Gans 1997).

Most conspicuously, according to Portes (1996) the segmented assimilation concept has as its target to make clear that the assimilation process not only does not always leads to the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the second generation, but also that the improvement of socio-economic conditions is not always accompanied by an acculturation process. On the contrary, bilingualism and conscious creation of links with one's own community could be proved to be a valuable tool on the way towards social integration and economic success.

When the model of segmented assimilation is used to analyze an immigrant community and the second generation, there are some exogenous factors that should be taken into consideration because they are indicative of those people's future in the host country (Portes *et al.* 2009:1079).

- A. The human capital that immigrant parents possess. The possession or not of human capital by migrant parents, the social context that they find or do not find upon their arrival, and the structure of the immigrant family are of major importance. The human capital of the parents is translated into the kind of employment they might find, which is further translated into the social and economic status they might receive in the host society. At the same time, the importance of education as a family priority for the younger members is a key factor in the process. Well-educated parents are more likely to push their children towards higher education, acknowledging its importance in social and



economic success. Less educated or illiterate parents are less likely to push their children towards higher education.

- A. The social context that receives them. At the same time, the social context migrants find or do not find upon their arrival is also crucial for their future. Families who migrate into cities with already established communities of co-patriots are more likely to receive help and use the already existing links in order to find accommodation, jobs, and use their human capital. Furthermore, the laws concerning migration and the attitudes of the receiving society towards migrants should be taken into consideration. A hostile migration policy and society, in combination with a weak or non-existent ethnic community might jeopardize the transformation of their human capital into an equivalent occupation. In other words, the tripartite government- society- community differences are referred to as modes of incorporation in the host society (Portes & Rumbaut 2001).
  
- B. The composition of the immigrant family. Another very important factor is the composition of the migrant family. Female headed families or broken ones are very different to extended families, where there is a whole network of relatives to take care of and, at the same time, control children, adolescents and elders. Single or divorced parents, or couples where one of the two parents has stayed behind, find it rather difficult to combine the needs of the children with the demands of the job market.

Each family is a different case, but having or lacking the above factors is indicative regarding the possibilities for upward or downward assimilation of the second and third generation. Families, who manage to achieve a middle class status on arrival, or, after a while because of possessing high human capital, are more likely to maintain or improve their status in the second or third generation. The majority of such families face upward assimilation by practicing consonant acculturation where the whole family focuses on learning and adopting the culture and language of the host country. At the same time, high human capital and working-class families who are part of strong ethnic communities are most likely also to experience upward assimilation in the second generation. These families, due to the strong affiliation with their co-patriots, usually practice selective acculturation by preserving their language and part of their culture. Moreover, they selectively adopt elements of the host country's culture. In this case, bilingualism is highly valued and higher education is believed to be the second generation's passport to the social and economic integration. In other words, upward social mobility is achieved through ethnic

cohesion. There is also a third case though, where working class or single parent families with weak ethnic communities are most likely to face downward assimilation by practicing dissonant acculturation. The children of such families adopt the host country's culture while consciously rejecting the culture of their parents. This results in the rupture of family communication because parents remain mainly foreign-language monolinguals and the children not only refuse to speak any other language but that of the host country, but also reject their parent's ways. What should be made clear though is that even though dissonant acculturation does not produce downward assimilation by itself, it is more possible to facilitate it because parents lose control of their children and children are denied the advantage of being bilingual. This results in the second generation having low educational achievement and most probably the third one either remaining in the working class or in search of economic opportunities which will turn into deviant lifestyles (Portes *et al.* 2009).

Moreover, as Portes, Fernandez-Kelly and Haller (2009) argue, race plays an important role in the assimilation process of the second generation. Most conspicuously, racialization of migrant origin youth may create barriers in the society denying them equal access to the labor market, and promoting racism, segregation and social exclusion. As argued by Portes, Fernandez-Kelly and Haller (2009:1080), 'the majority of today's second generation is non-white; being formed by children of mestizo, black and Asian parents whose physical features differentiates them from the dominant white American majority. Social scientists know that race and racial features have no intrinsic significance. Their meaning is assigned to them in the course of social interaction. In such a racially sensitive environment as that of the American society, physical features are assigned major importance. They then go on to affect, sometimes determine, the life chances of young people. Children of black and mixed-race parents find themselves particularly disadvantaged because of the character of the American racial hierarchy'.

The main critiques concerning the segmented assimilation model targeted its lack of focus on the element of culture as such. Most conspicuously, the specific model focuses mainly on economic success as means of integration. Yet, how is it possible to produce accurate results without talking into consideration one of the major factors of human differentiation? At the same time though, it could also be argued that the model of segmented assimilation was developed in the USA based on the American reality. Moreover, the USA is a vast country with major cultural, social and economic differences, created by migrants, where migration as a phenomenon always took place more or less intensively.

The classic assimilation theories were questioned by some scholars (Rumbaut 1997) as to if and how they could be applied in today's societies. Other scholars questioned the concept of

assimilation itself, arguing if assimilation as a model is to be preferred in order to facilitate the integration process of the second generation (Gans 1992).

How far could the assimilation model be applied to Greece? How reliable is such a model? And if it is to be used only as an analytical viewpoint, is it applicable to a new migration country such as Greece?

Migration flows started arriving in Greece after 1990. Before that time, there were very few migrants residing in the country and they were mostly students, members of the clergy or employees of foreign companies. The segmented assimilation concept was developed in the USA, a country with a long tradition in migration and with a significant presence of second and even third generations. In Greece though, migration is a rather new phenomenon and second generation is mainly children and adolescents, and fewer young adults in their twenties and early thirties, making it rather difficult to predict with certainty their future. At the same time the fact that they are the first second generation is in itself a different thing altogether. In other words, it is much different to be a second generation in a country such as the USA with its long tradition in migration policies than to be a second generation in Greece, a rather homogeneous country where the phenomenon of migration has only become a reality in the past 20 years. Furthermore, the migration laws and the legislation concerning citizenship are very different. Notions such as citizenship, nation, nationality, race and religion mean different things in Greece and this produces different results even if the same analytical tools are used. It is rather obvious that each country is different, and Europe is entirely different to the USA.

As far as Greece is concerned however, it is too early to predict the future of the second generation. The children of migrant origin are young adults coming of age as we speak, and yet their legal status in the country is still at stake. When structural integration is problematic, it affects the socio-cultural as well. As far as the youth of African background is concerned, their social position in the Greek society becomes even more problematic because of racialization. Skin color betrays the foreign origin of an individual and this makes their social integration more difficult. Moreover, migration as a phenomenon is rather new, which means that there are very few established ethnic communities which could provide support to their members. As far as African communities are concerned, this is not the case because each community numbers a few hundred individuals. The largest African community in Athens is the Nigerian Community which in 2001 numbered almost 2000 members, mainly male (Marvakis, Parsanoglou & Pavlou 2001). According to unofficial data from the Nigerian Community, it was estimated that there were about 4000 Nigerians residing in Greece in 2012.

### 1.1.2.2 MULTICULTURALISM

Multiculturalism as a concept was developed in Europe, North America and Australia in the 80's. It was mainly the result of mass migration flows from the 1960's and onward, where migrants were proved to be more like settlers than a temporary work force. The assimilation policies, favored at this point, promoted the adoption of the majority society traditions, language and values, discarding at the same time those of their countries of origin. The rising numbers of diverse migrant populations in the industrialized western countries challenged the prevailing immigrant policies of the receiving countries which until then had favored assimilation. Moreover, at the time, migration was conceived mainly as male labor migration. Yet, family reunification, long term settlement strategies and the creation of the so-called 'second generation' changed those perceptions.

The growing rejection of assimilation policies was supported by proponents of a civil rights movement, politicians and academics as well. During the 60's and 70's, the right of the migrant communities to diversity was highlighted through a public discourse focused on notions of tolerance, participation and representation. At the same time, rights such as those of worship, to speak one's mother tongue, to engage in cultural activities and practices were promoted under the umbrella of group/cultural/minority rights and were supported mainly through public campaigns in order to access public awareness and promote their inclusion in policy and governance of the States. These campaigns were described as emerging 'politics of recognition' or 'politics of identity', targeting racism as the denial to diversity (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2004).

In the 1980's many of the immigrants who had settled permanently in the host countries were considered ethnic minorities with growing linguistic, religious and cultural differences to the native or the already assimilated migrant population.

Multiculturalism is one of the concepts on which many discourses have been made and both negative and positive readings were asserted on the term. According to Vertovec and Wessendorf (2004:3), those who perceive multiculturalism in a positive manner tend to highlight the notion of equality in terms of access to rights, treatment, education, the labor market, law, social services and political participation, focusing on tolerance as a right. In other words, migrant populations or ethnic minorities are entitled to preserve their own culture, religion and language as a group and at the same time participate as equals in the State. On the contrary, those who perceive multiculturalism in a negative way, usually focus on the danger it bears within to break the social cohesion, threaten the nation-state and destroy the national identity of its members. For the opponents, multiculturalism is seen more as equivalent to policy measures

and less as an ideology or philosophy. It is true that in a policy context the term refers to ‘official recognition of the existence of different ethnic groups within the state’s borders, and it evidences concerns about disadvantage and equity which the state recognizes as its responsibility to address’ (Stratton & Ang 1998:138). When one is referring to multiculturalism within a society, one usually refers to societies where more than one cultures co-exist. In other words, multiculturalism focuses on the different perspectives and the differences themselves among human cultures. Cultures are perceived as a distinctive means among people and categorize them according to their practices, language and religious beliefs. Even though all people are entitled to have access to social and political rights, they are conceived as participating in the society as members of a distinct group and not as individuals. Yet, it was through the development of the concept of multiculturalism that the right to diversity was first acknowledged.

Multiculturalism as a concept is based on the perception that the co-existence of distinct cultural groups within a single society is possible. Yet, it fails to take into consideration the power relations developed within a society that challenge the notion of equality among all cultural groups. At the same time, religion, class, gender, race, and population number are among the factors that shape power relations and put at risk the supposed balance of the multicultural or otherwise pluralistic model. I argue that balance cannot be achieved because of the factors mentioned above. At the same time, the power the State itself has on its people, not only as a policy maker but, mainly as a promoter of the majority culture, puts ‘balance’ into question. Minorities tend to be influenced by the majority and adopt some of its characteristics and practices, without meaning of course that they abandon their cultural distinctiveness. Yet, most of the times, they come closer to the practices of the majority in the public sphere, practicing their diversity mainly in the private sphere.

Some of the strongest critiques on multiculturalism emerged from both advocates and critics pointing out that the practical implementation of multiculturalism may indeed cause multiple side effects for the society (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2004). Most conspicuously, ethnicity was highlighted as the most important part of a person’s identity, leaving no space for other social coalitions besides ethnic ones. Culture was perceived as highly distinctive, and sometimes seemed imposed from above, trapping individuals in their ethnic communities. Furthermore, political representation on a basis of ethnic coalitions might jeopardize democracy, and decrease the possibilities of equal participation among the citizens of a State. Moreover, the size of a minority group may facilitate the access of some people to specific benefits, while smaller groups might face social exclusion. In other words, the size of ethnic communities might create

inequality as far as access to rights is concerned and promote rivalries among ethnic minority groups. Plus, focusing on ethnicity as a matter of inequality may divert attention from other forms of inequality not only in the interior of the ethnic group itself, but concerning forms of inequality related to gender, age, class, access to the labor market, or education. Last but not least, specific cultural practices -such as female circumcision- were tolerated in the name of cultural relativism and social workers, health care personnel, police, lawyers and other workers in the public or private sector found themselves unable to react fearing their stigmatization as non tolerant or even, racists.

Multiculturalism otherwise pluralism, is highly associated with cultural relativism when perceived as a policy to be implemented. Cultures are considered to be rather static autonomous entities where change is not perceived as something positive. This perspective has severe consequences as far as migrant communities or ethnic minorities are concerned. They are seen as forever different, as permanent ‘others’, both by society and by the State, something that jeopardizes not only their own integration process but also the one of their children. Moreover, ethnic enclosure imposed by pluralistic or multicultural policies may end up distancing migrant communities and ethnic minorities from the majority society instead of helping them integrate and transform the host country into a home country.

Most of the critiques on multiculturalism are relevant to the way it was perceived and implemented by state policies and not so much in the concept as such. The concept may indeed be proved more useful if used as an analytical approach in order to describe conditions of super-diversity (Vertovec 2007:1025) and how young people of migrant background deal with a situation as such (Harris 2009).

#### 1.1.2.2.1 MULTICULTURALISM IN GREECE

Until 1990 when Greece became an immigrants’ destination, the experience of the Greek people of multiculturalism was from the migrants’ perspective. During the 60’s and 70’s, Greece was an emigration country, sending almost a million Greek migrants abroad, mainly to Germany, the USA, Australia and Canada. Greek people formed their own migrant communities abroad trying to integrate in the host societies without having to abandon their language and cultural heritage. When Greece was transformed from an emigration to an immigration destination, questions concerning multiculturalism and its prerequisites and/or consequences, were posed. Could a rather homogeneous society such as the Greek one be transformed into a multicultural one, and if it could, was multiculturalism applicable in the Greek setting? Moreover, was multiculturalism a

tool for the successful integration of the migrant population or were there more suitable tools? But most importantly, how could multiculturalism and pluralistic policies influence the integration process of the emerging second generation?

All those questions can only be answered with assumptions because pluralistic policies were never implemented in Greece. The Greek State has for a very long time refused to see migrants as settlers and preferred to perceive them as workers who would eventually leave the country, taking for granted that integration was not a priority for those people, or for the social cohesion of Greek society. In other words, migrants were perceived and treated as outsiders of the society, as people who would not have to interact except in the labor market. Yet, this perception was far from the truth. Migrants, be they settlers or temporary residents, do interact with the society in multiple ways. Moreover, the connection between migrant population and the host society becomes even more apparent when the second generation is formed. According to Glazer (1954), the first generation is *in* the society, but not yet *of* it, unlike the second generation.

In the Greek setting, it became rather clear that many of the migrants were settling in the country when they chose to bring their families or created new ones in Greece. Still though, no integration policies were designed and/or implemented either for the first or for the second generation. If and how pluralistic policies would promote the integration process of the immigrant population and not their ethnic enclosure cannot be answered when there is no intention of them even being designed. Moreover, pluralistic policies have been implemented in various European Countries, the USA and Canada, but had different effects in each and every one. The riots in Bradford (2001), Paris (2005), Los Angeles or Chicago (2006) in the 00's are seen by many politicians as a result of tolerance, and multiculturalism and pluralistic policies were blamed for the disruption of social cohesion and the division of a country into ethnic groups (Malik 2001).

In most European countries, multiculturalism could be either 'de facto', or 'official'. When talking about de facto multiculturalism, some scholars refer to the individual rights and liberties protected by each country's legislation or constitution, which acknowledges for its people, their access to rights as citizens. On the other hand, when talking about 'official' multiculturalism, they usually refer to the assertion of rights to migrant communities as ethnic groups (Joppke & Morawska 2003). European societies may indeed be de facto multicultural, but how far they are also official, is to be investigated separately in each country. A rather similar form of distinction between 'weak' and 'strong' multiculturalism, is proposed by Grillo (2005). Multiculturalism in its 'weak' form is encountered in the private sphere where diversity is highlighted, whereas in

the public sphere and most conspicuously as far as market, education, employment and access to rights is concerned, assimilation is expected. On the other hand, 'strong' multiculturalism is encountered in the public sphere where the recognition of rights to migrant communities and ethnic minorities as culturally diverse, is institutionalized. Both models of 'official' or 'strong' multiculturalism have to be implemented by state policies in order to exist, are therefore questioned as far as their positive social outcomes are concerned. Institutionalized cultural pluralism may jeopardize social cohesion by promoting difference and separateness. On the other hand, cultural essentialism has been proved rather problematic in many cases where the State failed to put some limits defined by the law concerning which elements of the migrant cultures do not cross the line of the socially acceptable (Entzinger 2000).

The pluralistic model is indeed in crisis because besides its multiple positive elements, its negative outcomes are not to be dismissed. Taking into consideration some of the positive aspects of multiculturalism such as access to social and political rights on behalf of the migrant population without having to abandon their own religion, cultural practices and language in order to be socially accepted, diversity could be highlighted as a positive element of a person's identity. Yet, multiculturalism focuses on groups instead of individuals and rights are asserted in terms of groups and not individually. At the same time how functional a society divided into ethnic enclaves could be, is to be questioned. At a time where social cohesion is at stake in Greece, implementing policies that might endanger its fragile condition are not to be preferred. Moreover, when those negative outcomes have overcome the positive elements in practice in many other countries, alternative models should be sought. The balance between tolerance, acceptance and cultural practices has been proved rather problematic and difficult to achieve in most European countries. Yet, what should be mentioned here, is that even homogeneous societies are experiencing issues of social cohesion and migration flows are not solely responsible for cohesion issues that European societies have been facing the past decades. However, the presence of culturally diverse populations in a country jeopardizes the social cohesion even more, if those populations practice -institutionalized or not- ethnic enclosure.

### 1.1.2.3 THE INTERCULTURAL MODEL

Unlike the multicultural or pluralistic model, the intercultural model (cross-cultural or trans-cultural) focuses on the dialectic between the diverse cultures. Its main characteristic is integration as a two way process, where both home and host cultures are engaged in a daily interaction (Reid & Reich 1991).



The intercultural model adopts in a way some elements of multiculturalism and becomes a more advanced version of it. In other words, it embraces diversity and respects cultural differences without taking for granted their separation in order to be preserved. Diversity is seen more as a personal choice and rights are asserted to people as individuals and not as members of a specific ethnic group. Moreover, the culture that emerges from a dialectic among different cultures promotes social cohesion and the integration of the migrant populations in the host country (Back *et al.* 2002; Brubaker 2001). Being able to acquire rights without having to assimilate or remain ethnically enclosed in order to be recognized as a minority, migrant populations raise the possibilities of their successful integration.

Most conspicuously, the intercultural model as a concept promotes interaction among different cultures and diminishes segregation, unlike multiculturalism which focuses on cultural preservation through ethnic enclosure. In other words, it is based on the interaction between natives and migrants, shaping and constantly reshaping the social environment. Social problems tend to lose their intensity and social cohesion and economic development are boosted. The intercultural model is argued to be an evolved version of the multicultural model which has been highly criticized when it took the form of implemented policies, mainly because besides its many positive elements, its defects were considered responsible for the social unrest provoked by unsuccessfully integrated second generation youth in many European and American cities in the 00's.

It is argued that the intercultural model is the one that brings with it the most advantages in terms of migrants' successful integration in the host countries, yet this does not mean that is a panacea. Most conspicuously, it may carry many positive characteristics as a model, yet integration is influenced by a number of factors that cannot be determined by the specific model.

As far as Greece is concerned, the term intercultural has been mainly used in order to refer to education. Intercultural schools were founded in the late 90's as a European Union directive, in order to promote intercultural education and an easier access to schooling for older second generation who were not fluent in Greek.

In a country such as Greece, where migrants do not have the same access to rights as natives and access to naturalization is rather restrictive, an applied version of the intercultural model is far from the case. Moreover, the second generation is deprived of citizenship since currently there is no Act that guarantees the citizenship acquisition of minors of non-Greek origin. The only Act ever voted was the Act 3838/2010 that was officially cancelled on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February 2013 by the State Council as anti-constitutional. Even in countries where large numbers of migrants reside and second generation have easier access to citizenship, problems concerning their

successful integration also occur. Citizenship acquisition and the access to rights cannot guarantee the equal treatment of an individual in the society, yet I argue that at least as far as the Greek setting is concerned, it is a prerequisite for social cohesion. Structural integration of an already culturally integrated second generation may indeed become a tool to their social acceptance by a larger part of the society. In a society where a significant percentage of its population are treated as second class citizens despite being born or raised in the country, social cohesion -if not now-, will be at stake in a few years. For an intercultural model to be applied in Greece, diversity has to be valued first. So far, diversity is seen as a handicap and not as a tool to upward social mobility for the second generation. Moreover, nationalist rhetoric support segregation and social exclusion of all those who are ‘culturally’ different and thus inassimilable. Unfortunately, many second generation see assimilation as one way towards their social acceptance and reject their origins in order to blend into the Greek society. This may be the case for Eastern European origin youth, but can hardly be the case for African origin youth, where phenotype speaks for itself. Still, even among those youngsters assimilation occurs, however, less often. On the contrary, stigmatization as forever ‘others’ because of their origin is more often the case among African second generation.

The intercultural model may be considered the most advantageous for the second generation and their successful integration process compared to assimilation - classic or segmented-, or multiculturalism. It promotes diversity, mostly in the private sphere and less in the public one which is mainly governed by equal access to rights as individuals and not as members of an ethnic minority. Social cohesion is most likely to be achieved when there is no dominant culture forced on the foreign population, and social dynamics and dialectics are shaped by an interaction between the diverse cultures. It is expected that the dominant culture will be more present and strong in any dialectic, yet this does not deprive any other cultural element of respect and co-existence. The society proposed by the intercultural model is one that appreciates diversity as long as it does not become an obstacle to social cohesion, equality and access to rights. Still though, the intercultural model is referring only to socio-cultural integration of migrant populations and their offspring and not to their structural integration. I argue that structural integration especially of the second generation is more likely to boost socio-cultural integration as well, even if in the Greek context, exactly the opposite is promoted by the State Policies. In other words, socio-cultural integration is considered a prerequisite for citizenship acquisition for the second generation who can apply for it only upon reaching adulthood. Yet, the hidden danger of such an approach is a backlash that will more than likely take place when all those children brought up and schooled mainly as Greeks, realize at the age of eighteen or twenty one,

that they are nothing more than migrants, and start being treated as such by both the State and a large part of the society.

### 1.1.3 IDENTITY

Identity is considered one of the three main aspects of integration. The other two aspects are the structural and the socio-cultural integration (Vermeulen 2002). The aspect of identity is highly connected with the integration process of migrant populations in the host country. Therefore, for migrants and their offspring to identify with the host society, integration has to occur. Yet, integration, as a two way process, is understood as the inclusion of migrants in the receiving society, its institutions, relations and moreover the improvement of their social status. Most conspicuously, it is seen as the process through which migrants themselves learn a new culture, access rights, acquire position and status, and build relations with members of the receiving society, while the receiving society gives them equal opportunities, opens up its institutions and promotes the integration of the migrant population (Grillo 1999). In other words, for successful integration to take place both migrants and the host society have to interact. Migrants should consciously see the receiving country not as transit but as a final destination, and the State has to see them as potential citizens and include them socially. Citizenship acquisition on behalf of the migrant population and especially of their children, either born or raised in the host country, is the formal proof of their identification with the specific society. According to Vermeulen (2002), citizenship acquisition is vital for asserting to a person the status of a citizen and promotes their integration.

How citizenship is acquired though, is defined by each and every State, according to their own conceptions of terms such as nation, national identity or ethnicity. As far as most European States are concerned, the notion of citizenship is linked to that of the nation State. People gain access to citizenship as members of the nation. At the same time, foreigners can also gain access to the citizenship of another State if and when they fulfill specific requirements. How these requirements are specified is linked to immigration and migrant policies of each State as well as to the way the notion of belonging is conceived. Focusing specifically on the notion of belonging, Castles and Miller (1993:39) distinguish four different ways citizenship is granted.

- A. Imperial Model. According to the imperial model, citizenship is acquired by those who live under the commands of a specific power, such as an Emperor for example. All people are considered citizens of the empire no matter their ethnic, cultural, religious or

linguistic differences. Yet, as empires no longer exist, this model is not applicable in any country in the world.

- B. Ethnic Model. According to the ethnic model, only those of the same ethnic descent have the right to citizenship. It is based on the notion of *jus sanguinis*, where common ethnicity, religion, language and culture are considered prerequisite for a person's access to rights, and therefore, citizenship is inherited from parents to children. The Nation is seen as the cornerstone of the State, the source and the reason for its existence. Moreover, the Nation is conceived as a family, where its members are connected to each other through blood ties. The countries that follow the ethnic model in granting citizenship have a rather strict legislation conceding the citizenship acquisition from non-nationals. In this model, also known as the German model of citizenship acquisition, *jus sanguinis* or the law of descent, determines the process.
- C. Republican Model. According to the republican model, citizenship is seen more as a right of the people who are born and live in a country connected to each other through their common belonging to the same political community. The core element of the republican model or French model, is the notion of *jus soli*, or, the right of a person to participate in the political community in which they were born. The place of birth becomes more important than ethnic descent in citizenship acquisition, and countries that follow this model are implementing a more flexible legislation concerning the citizenship acquisition for non nationals. The countries that follow the above model, conceive citizenship acquisition as a prerequisite for a successful integration of the migrant population. Moreover, the notion of integration is highly valued and the second generation is more likely to access citizenship by birth or as minors.
- D. Multicultural Model. According to the multicultural model, which is mainly implemented in the Netherlands, pluralism in a society is considered as natural, and people gain access to rights whether they are migrants or nationals. Most conspicuously, certain rights are given easily to migrants because they are considered to facilitate their integration process. Both migrants and nationals have the same rights as far as access to education, housing, the health care system and the labor market is concerned. Moreover, access to citizenship for the second generation is guaranteed. This model is mainly encountered in countries where ethnic and national identities are not that strong, and where people conceive themselves mainly as citizens and less as members of a nation state.

As far as citizen acquisition is concerned and its linkage to identity formation, the case of the second generation across Europe seems to be of major importance. Three of the four models are encountered in all European countries, yet I would rather focus on Greece, a country that follows the ethnic model and at the same time has rather recently become an immigration destination. At the moment, Greece does not recognize the right to citizenship of people of foreign descent born or raised in the country. In other words, even if migration has been a reality for the Greek society throughout the past twenty years, the children of migrants are seen and treated as migrants by the State, and they have no means to access citizenship unless they follow the naturalization process upon reaching adulthood.

According to Vermeulen (2002), identity is the third aspect of a person's integration. In other words, the feeling of belonging to the receiving society is rather important for successful integration. The aspect of identity becomes even more important when we are talking about the integration of the second generation. But what does identifying with a country actually mean?

The citizenship acquisition model affects the feelings of belonging of the children of migrant origin. Most conspicuously, I argue that the levels of identification of the African second generation with Greece is highly linked to their legal status. Feeling Greek, among other things, has to do with the way they are perceived and treated by the society and the State. For the vast majority of the African second generation, what appears to be for their parents a host country, for them is a home country. Being born or raised in Greece, most second generation identify with the country one way or another. Yet, feelings of belonging are jeopardized at the age of eighteen or twenty one (it depends on what age the children had to apply for their own residence permit)<sup>12</sup> when their legal status is questioned. Requiring a residence permit to stay in the country in which they were born has a dual effect on those youngsters. On the one hand, they realize that they are not considered full citizens but migrants by the State. They experience a shock, since from one day to the next they are turned into foreigners even if they do not feel like that. On the other hand, from the moment their *greekness* is denied, and in order to cope with this new reality, they seek new forms of identification and new places to trace their belonging. Most conspicuously, their integration process, facilitated by their participation in the society and the educational system, is turned upside down by the lack of citizenship and easy access to it, pushing those children back to the migrant communities. Identifying with Greece does not necessarily mean identifying with the Greek nation in its strictest sense; on the contrary, it means identifying with the Greek society and the Greek people.

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<sup>12</sup> Adult second generation have the possibility to acquire a residence permit linked to the one of their parents until the age of 21.

According to Stanley (2008:43) and her research in Rome, ‘those who look and act ‘Italian’ are assumed to be citizens whereas those who look and act ‘other’ are assumed to be non-citizens. *Italianness* then is more than a cultural identity; it also implies a political and legal belonging not automatically ascribed to the non-Italian and non-European migrant’. For the youth of African background in Greece though, the case is slightly different. Their *greekness* is denied by the State due to their migrant background, or their non-Greek origin. In order to become naturalized Greeks they have to prove they can act like Greeks; being born, raised and schooled in the country are not considered sufficient proof of social integration. At the same time, youth of African background acting ‘Greek’ is considered unexpected by a large part of the Greek society. In fact, only those who come in contact with those youngsters are familiar with the possibility of being both black and acting Greek. Being black puts those youngsters automatically in the category of non-citizen, and as Stanley argues, *greekness* becomes equivalent to political and legal belonging. In other words, I argue, that an identity is imposed from above on the youth of African background in Greece, which has nothing to do with their socio-cultural integration and their own feelings of belonging, but with the feelings of belonging they are thought to have by the State. Most conspicuously, their actual feelings of belonging to Greece are questioned merely because of the fact that *greekness* or feeling Greek is considered a sole privilege of those born Greek. Second generation Africans are expected to feel African and in a way are not allowed to trace their belonging to Greece. The levels of identification of a second generation with Greece may indeed vary and depend on many factors. However, for a successful integration of the second generation, feelings of belonging to the country should be encouraged and not denied.

#### 1.1.3.1 SELF-IDENTIFICATIONS OF THE MIGRANT ORIGIN YOUTH: THE HYPHEN

In a rather globalized era such as the one we are experiencing at the moment, identity formation of individuals becomes a rather complex process for the second generation. Youth of migrant background come across challenges, opportunities and dilemmas that influence the process and that at the same time were not posed few years ago. The use of technology and cyberspace facilitate the transmission of ideas, images and products in a more accessible and easy way compared to the past. At the same time migration flows constantly increase and acquire different characteristics, therefore the connection between migration and globalization is not to be discarded. On the contrary, it creates new spaces of interconnection and shapes the identity of the second generation. The notion of identity as something static is discarded and its fluidity, multiplicity and complexity are being recognized.

For a long time, the possible outcomes for migrant origin youth were assimilation, exclusion or crisis (Child 1943), mainly because identity and ethnic identification were perceived as bound entities. One could remain either attached to their parental culture, language and habits leading oneself to social exclusion and stigmatization in the host society but at least achieving social inclusion in their own ethnic community, or, completely abandon their ethnic influences and be absorbed into the majority culture in order to achieve upward social mobility and inclusion in the host society. The specific perspective assumed the incompatibility of the two cultural backgrounds and therefore, a choice was an inevitable step to be taken. Remaining in between was considered for a long time undesirable because the individual did not fully belong to either cultures and therefore was doomed to a dual marginalization. Yet, in the globalized environment of today the hyphenated identity seems to be a preferable and desirable option for the new second generation (Colombo & Rebughini 2012; Crul & Schneider 2010; Levitt 2009). The children of the migrants choose to combine their parental culture without accepting being recognized as anything less than full members of the society in which they live (Aparicio 2007; Colombo & Rebughini 2012; Kasinitz, Mollenkopf, Waters & Holdaway 2008). Being able to express and celebrate one's own ethnicity without fear of discrimination or stigmatization is the aim of many migrant origin youth. The notion of hyphenated identity as argued by Colombo and Rebughini primarily refers to the new second generation, the children of contemporary migrants who are now teenagers or young adults, born or raised in their parents' host countries. According to their analysis, 'people claiming hyphenated identity merely decorate their identifications with the majority with the frills and superficial modifications referring to a different (appealing, exotic) language. Rather than an indicator of difference, it is used to indicate a specificity that valorizes inclusion. In this perspective, hyphenated identification refers to a weak and voluntary ethnicity intermittent and strongly subjective. This ethnicity demands little or no involvement and is not a discriminating factor in relationships with others' (2012:129). How far though, can second generation youngsters that look phenotypically different claim a hyphenated identity? Which elements play a vital role in the self-identification of the youth of African background specifically?

Race plays an important role in the identity formation process of the youth of migrant background in a rather discriminatory way. The obviousness of an external appearance so radically different from the one of the majority population imposes on those youngsters not only the migrant status of their parents, but also a form of eternal diversity, highlighting the incompatibility of their black skin with a Greek ethnic identity (Andall 2002; Riccio 2010; Zinn 2011). On the other hand, the youngsters themselves feel obliged to highlight their African

identity and oppress their Greek one as if they are indeed incompatible due to the social pressure they are subject to. Unfortunately, stigmatization and social exclusion of second generation Africans is the result of a vicious circle of non-accepting the possibility of a person's dual or hyphenated identity. Most conspicuously, even in the cases where young adults express a desired hyphenated identity, they acknowledge that in the social context they live in, hyphen cannot be accepted yet. Many children aspire to integrate and put forward their double belonging, yet because their skin color is considered a marker of their ethnicity, access to the Greek one is permanently denied. They acknowledge that in Greece it is very hard to claim a hyphenated identity like a broader Greek-African or a more specific Greek-Nigerian or Greek-Congolese identity. Taking into consideration studies performed in Italy<sup>13</sup> (Andall 2002; Chiodi & Benadusi 2006; Colombo & Rebughini 2012) second generation when claiming a hyphenated identity (Italian-Eritrean for example) are allowed not only to highlight their belonging and legitimate presence in Italy, but also to embrace their racial difference promoting its positive elements instead of those that for the majority are considered reasons for stigmatization and marginalization. Still though, for many of those youngsters, the presence of their parents' ethnicity as part of their own identity is a mere consequence of the acknowledgment that a person with non-white racial characteristics cannot be considered solely and purely Italian. Therefore, a reactive racialized ethnicity is developed in order to help those youngsters cope with social exclusion by putting forward their dual identity highlighting the positive elements of their racialized one.

In Greece, being both black and Greek is also considered incompatible and second generation Africans face exactly the same problem of self-identification. How they feel has to be compatible with how they are expected to feel. In other words, black youth are not 'allowed' to feel only Greek, on the contrary they are expected to feel African even when born and raised in Greece mainly due to their different phenotype that betrays the foreign origin of their parents. Thus, as far as the self-identification of youth of African background in particular is concerned, race plays indeed a basic role. As it is a characteristic that cannot be hidden, many younger second generation Africans choose to highlight their *africanness* as a marker of identification the other way around, discharging the Greek elements of their identity. In other words, they act as they are expected to by the majority society; they feel and act African in a reactive way

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<sup>13</sup>The Italian social context is the one that is closer to the Greek one comparing to the rest of the EU and the USA. In Italy and Greece immigration replaced emigration in the early 90's and both countries are receiving large numbers of undocumented migrants. Moreover, in both countries the access to citizenship for the second generation is restricted.



identifying to something that was imposed from above which considers race a sole marker of a persons' identity.

Acknowledging that the levels of integration of the youth of migrant background are highly linked to the formation of their identity, I argue that much more complex processes are included than merely a feeling (or not) of national belonging. Ethnic identification, especially as far as youth of migrant background is concerned, has been central in second generation studies the past decades not only because each social context is different but also because second generation cannot be treated as a bound entity as it bears in itself many differences such as gender, religion, race or ethnicity.

In order to analyze the integration process of the second generation Africans in Greece, there are two variables that should be taken into consideration. The first one is the Greek social context, one of the less studied in Europe as far as second generation in general is concerned and the second generation Africans in particular. The second one is the element of race, because it plays an intrinsic role in the way those children are perceived by the society and consequently, how they perceive themselves.

Vermeulen's (2002) analysis on the aspects of integration was used primarily as an analytical tool in my research in order to facilitate the process of understanding and discussing the multiple factors that influence the integration of the African origin second generation and most conspicuously their identity formation. His division of integration into three different aspects was used as a reference point in order to guide my analysis which was enriched by the work of other scholars and concepts as well. At the same time, a review of important concepts such as those of assimilation and its variants were discussed and examined as far as their applicability to the Greek context was concerned, taking into consideration the fact that they were the result of studies in a framework rather different to that of the European framework. Both the multicultural and intercultural model were analyzed mainly because multiculturalism was applied in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in many European countries that became immigrants' destinations, and moreover, both terms are highly used in the Greek public rhetoric at the moment. Special attention is paid to the aspect of identity as intrinsic to the integration process of the second generation. Identity is conceived as a fluid, constantly changing and continuous process that is influenced in each case by a variety of different factors leading to multiple possible outcomes depending on the personality, the family, the self-esteem or the life experiences of each young adult. In other words, identity formation is an individual process as well and is not a process that takes place across generations as conceived in the assimilation concept (Colombo *et al.* 2009:39). The segmented assimilation concept (Portes 1996; Portes *et*

*al.* 2005) on the other hand highlights economic success as an indicator of social inclusion in the society for the second generation, leaving little or no space at all for other factors that influence integration either successful or unsuccessful. Moreover, the research was conducted in the USA, a country with a completely different social context than the European one. Many European scholars (Andall 2002; Bianchi 2011; Colombo et al. 2009; Colombo & Rebughini 2012; Crul & Vermeulen 2003; Riccio 2010; Riccio & Russo 2011; Wessendorf 2008; Zinn 2011) have argued that the European context is indeed rather different from the American one, thus the concept of segmented assimilation was partially or not applicable at all in Europe. Empirical research in different European countries focusing on second generation originating from multiple backgrounds showed the peculiarity of each European country. The integration process of the second generation is not a linear process; on the contrary the social context in which it takes place in combination with national migration policies influence its outcomes.

Therefore, the use of Vermeulen's division of integration into three interrelated aspects is used as my main analytical tool in my research on the second generation Africans in Greece. However, his primal analysis is enriched with the work of many other scholars in order to achieve the most accurate and complete analysis of the integration and identity formation process of the youth of African background analyzing at the same time the social context in which it takes place.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE PHENOMENON OF MIGRATION IN GREECE

#### 2.1 MIGRATION

‘At the international level, no universally accepted definition for ‘migrant’ exists. The term migrant was usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate was taken freely by the individual concerned for reasons of ‘personal convenience’ and without intervention of an external compelling factor; it therefore applied to persons, and family members, moving to another country or region to better their material or social conditions and improve the prospect for themselves or their family. The United Nations defines migrant as an individual who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary, and the means, regular or irregular, used to migrate. Under such a definition, those travelling for shorter periods as tourists and businesspersons would not be considered migrants. However, common usage includes certain kinds of shorter-term migrants, such as seasonal farm-workers who travel for short periods to work planting or harvesting farm products’.

(<http://www.iom.int>)

The inability to define migration is mainly related not to the nature of the phenomenon, but to the way people perceive the world. The creation of the nation states, the borderlines and the existence of the passport as a prerequisite for leaving a State or entering another, have altered the way migration is perceived. A phenomenon as old as time for a variety of living creatures, animals, birds, fish and human is transformed to a major problem for the majority of modern states mainly when concerning population originating from different States.

Population movement either within a State or across its borders is considered a migratory flow. Migration may occur for a variety of reasons, ranging from economic to life threatening ones. Most conspicuously, people migrate for better life opportunities, including employment and education, or for family reunification. Moreover, there is also a large percentage of the migratory flows consisting of people who were forced to leave their territories or countries. Those displaced people are called refugees, and as a refugee is defined as a person who

‘owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol). In addition to the refugee definition in the 1951 Refugee

Convention, Art. 1(2), 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention defines a refugee as any person compelled to leave his or her country owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country or origin or nationality. Similarly, the 1984 Cartagena Declaration states that refugees also include persons who flee their country because their lives, security or freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order'. (<http://www.iom.int>)

The process of leaving one's own country is called emigration while the one entering another State, immigration. Migration has multiple effects both for the countries of origin and the countries of settlement. Migration might be either short-term or temporary, or, long-term or permanent. When referring to temporary migration, it is usually defined as a period of time of at least 3 months and no longer than a year, mainly for employment. Long-term migration on the other hand, requires a minimum of at least a year which may end up to several years or permanent settlement. According to IOM (International Organization for Migration), there are diverse categories of migrants:

- a. Documented migrants: All those who entered a country in a legal way and continue to reside there legally.
- b. Economic migrants: All those who have left their countries of origin in search of better life opportunities. It may also be applied to all those who migrated for employment. Sometimes, the term is used to refer to people who enter a country without legal documents and use the asylum procedures as the only accessible means of legalization even if they are not included in the category of refugees. This practice is rather often in countries where there is no legalization process for those entering without legal documents.
- c. Irregular migrants: All those who enter a country without legal documentation by just crossing the borderline. Moreover, included in this category are all those who entered a country in a legal way but violated their visa or conditions of entry and subsequently were employed in the black labor market. The migrants belonging to this category are also referred to as undocumented or clandestine. The term 'illegal' is not considered appropriate because it carries a criminal connotation that surpasses the human nature of the migrant.

- d. Skilled migrants: All those who enter a country where their admission is favored and their position is granted due to their skills, qualifications or professional experience. In this category are included mainly high-skilled people who at the same time, due to their special status, find themselves in a less restricted position compared to other migrant categories.
- e. Temporary migrant workers: All those who enter a country for a specific period of time as labor force. They can either be skilled, semi-skilled or untrained, but they all have a work contract before entering the country and depart when their contract expires.

At the moment, the migrant population residing in Greece consists mainly of legal and undocumented economic migrants, asylum seekers and a few recognized refugees. Unfortunately, included in the category of undocumented migrants are many people who have been living in Greece for many years and had legal residence permits but failed to renew them mainly because of unemployment (i.e. the renewal of the residence permit is connected to employment and the labor market). At the same time, included in the category of asylum seekers are many people who entered the country without proper documentation and are using the asylum procedure as an -at least temporary- means of legalization.

### 2.1.1 THE FIRST GENERATION

In order to understand the nature of today's migration and its unique characteristics, I consider rather useful a historical approach to the concept of migration. According to Paul Silverstein (2005), the term migrant went through many changes in its meaning before becoming what it is today. It is rather obvious that the nature of migration together with its accompanied characteristics was a product of the social order of each era.

It is from the formation of the nation that the term migration- as we conceive it today- is given its main characteristics. The first distinct type of migrant was the nomad, the kind of person with no roots to a specific place. Even though human movement was thought to be something natural, nomads were thought to be in the early migration studies done by colonial officers as destabilizing social factors, people unable to root in one place and thus were continuously on the move. These kinds of people were also thought to be a bit backward compared to the more civilized Europeans settled in their nation-states.

After the 30's the migrant-as-nomad gave its place to the migrant-as-laborer when migration came to be understood in economic terms and not in cultural evolution ones. At the same time this was the era of great moves of populations from the colonies to the metropolis of the West.

Migrants became racialized and gendered and economic reasons as the motion power of migration were evident in the academic and policy maker's work in the mid twentieth century. Most conspicuously, after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, migrants became the definition of the *homo economicus*, of a distinct category of people able to 'as individuals, to weigh the costs and benefits, the pushes and pulls of migrating and make a decision on the basis of such calculation' (Silverstein 2005:372).

It was during the Cold War when some European scholars and activists rejected the push-pull theory and explained migration and population displacement as a consequence of capitalism. Migrants were seen as the uprooted victims of the particular economic system who were displaced from their homelands and worked endless hours. Marxist theorists produced a quite similar critique considering the phenomenon of migration as a consequence of the center-periphery relations imposed by capitalism. Migrants were welcome as long as they worked in order to promote the economic growth of the European nation-states and of course if they did not intend to stay.

On the contrary though, migrants did stay and brought along their families or made new ones in the countries of settlement. Even if the European States closed their borders to the mass migration in 1974 there were already many hundreds of thousands of migrants already settled in. Their children were the focus of the new policies which had as their target the integration of the so-called second generation in the receiving society. These young people were characterized by scholars as hybrid or as caught between two cultures, the one of their parents and the one of the host country. At the same time it was rather obvious that the American model of assimilation developed by theorists in the 30's was not applicable in the European context and the second generation in France or in Germany had a completely different behavior and evolution. This of course was not something totally unexpected because the USA of the 30's had nothing to do with France or Germany of the late 70's and 80's. Being in between became a new racial category in Europe and words such as cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism entered the vocabulary of everyday life.

The category of the transnational migrant emerged almost 20 years ago due to the partial failure of immigrant cultural assimilation in Europe. The 'neither here nor there' of the hybrid migrant is transformed to 'both here and there' and fears concerning the loyalty of second and third generations to the nation state in which they reside are questioned. These people consciously select their identity features, choosing from the cultures of both origin and settlement country. They identify themselves as Parisians, New Yorkers, German-Muslims, or English-Hindu without considering one part of their identity prohibitive for the other.

### 2.1.2 THE SECOND GENERATION

The term second generation refers to the children of the migrants, born or raised in their parents' host country (Crul & Vermeulen 2003). Greece, being a migrants' destination during the past 20 years, is experiencing for the first time the formation of the second generation. Moreover, the peculiarity of the phenomenon is highlighted by the presence of migrant origin youth with completely different religious and phenotypic characteristics.

As far as it concerns African second generation, the vast majority are still minors being the children of those who arrived in the country after 1990. Yet, the older representatives of the African second generation are the offspring of all those people who came to Greece mainly as students and decided to stay and build their lives here. Those young adults are the main focus of my research and they were either born in or brought to the country at a very early age (i.e. before the age of six).

The children of migrant background and most specifically those of African origin, follow a different integration process to that of their parents. Being socialized and schooled in the host society, they comprehend it in a different way to their parents. They tend to be fluent in Greek and less or not fluent at all in their mother's tongue, English or French (i.e. being the two official African languages). Moreover, having few or no relations at all with their countries of origin, they get to know their parents' culture through the migrant communities, their family and of course, the internet. At the same time, they are denied access to Greek citizenship and upon reaching adulthood, they are treated as migrants who have just entered the country.

## 2.2 HISTORY OF MIGRATION IN GREECE

After the formation of the Greek State in the early 1830's two important waves of mass emigration and one of mass immigration took place in Greece. The first one lasted from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century till the early 20<sup>th</sup> century while the second one followed the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. At the same time, a wave of refugees settled in Greece after the population exchange with Turkey in 1922 under the Treaty of Lausanne. This wave followed the destruction of Izmir and the defeat of Greek forces in Asia Minor after the 1<sup>st</sup> World War and the formation of the Turkish State.

The first wave of emigration was caused by the economic crisis of 1893. This crisis was a result of the rapid fall in the price of the major export Greek product, the currant. In the aftermath of the crisis almost one sixth of the Greek population emigrated mainly to the USA and Egypt. This mass migration was favored by the impoverished Greek State which saw migrant's

remittances as a way through the economic crisis and an important source of income for the Greek families who stayed behind (Kasimis & Kassimi 2004).

In the early 1920's due to the Treaty of Lausanne signed between Turkey and Greece a massive population exchange took place. Almost 2.000.000 refugees arrived in Greece coming from Asia Minor. They mainly settled in Northern Greece, in the territories which became part of the Greek State after the Balkan Wars of the early 1910's and which were depopulated when their Muslim inhabitants were relocated to Turkey.

The second wave of emigration which took place after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War, had as its main destinations the industrialized nations of Northern Europe such as Belgium and Germany, the USA, Canada and Australia. In this wave which lasted from the 1950's till the mid 70's, almost a million Greeks migrated abroad. This time, employment and search of opportunities were not the only reasons. Many people migrated for political reasons as a consequence of the 1946-1949 civil war and the 1967-1974 military junta. According to official statistics of the era, Germany absorbed the greatest majority of Greek migrants, a population of 603.300 people, followed by Australia with 170.700, the USA with 124.000 and Canada with 80.200 (Kasimis & Kassimi 2004).

After the oil crisis of 1973, Northern European countries closed their borders and adopted restrictive immigration policies. At the same time, as far as it concerned Greece, democracy was restored in 1974 and the country's entry to the EEC (European Economic Community) developed new economic prospects. Because of these reasons, immigration flows were dramatically reduced and return migration started to occur. It is estimated that half of the post-war emigrants had returned to Greece by 1985.

### 2.2.1 IMMIGRATION REPLACES EMIGRATION

The 1980's saw the arrival of the first migrants in Greece. They were mainly Polish and of Asian and African origin and were employed in agriculture, construction and domestic services. In 1986, legal and undocumented migrants numbered almost 90.000, of which almost 30.000 were citizens of European Countries. According to the 1991 census, 167.000 foreigners lived in Greece in a total population of 10.260.000. It was not until 1989 and the fall of the Soviet Union that Greece became an immigration country. Even though at the time Greece was considered one of the less developed European Union States, its geographical position with the extensive coastlines and the easily crossed borders facilitated the arrival of massive amounts of people. At the same time though, Greece's economic conditions favored the presence of migrants who were mainly employed in low-status and low-income jobs. Agriculture, tourism and construction



were the sectors with high demand in labor but with low supply due to the fact that Greek people were rejecting such jobs. Migrants were seen as an alternative and more profitable source of labor due to the illegal status of the majority of the migrant population (Kasimis & Kassimi 2004). Since the late 80's, all southern European countries (Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal) have turned into destinations for immigrants. Depending on their geographical position, they attract migrants from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, Asia and Africa. Basic reasons for the increasing migration flows from those areas were the fall of the Soviet Union and the communist regime, the deterioration of the global economic situation and the religious fundamentalism (Petronoti & Triandafyllidou 2004). The first mass migratory flow arrived in Greece in the beginning of the 90's mainly from Albania. The second one arrived in the second half of the 1990's mainly from other Eastern European Countries such as Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Moldavia and Russia, from Asian countries such as India and Pakistan, and from Africa.

According to the 2001 census<sup>14</sup>, 762.191 people out of 10.964.020 were foreigners from which only 47.000 were EU citizens. These numbers show that almost 7% of the people living in Greece were migrants. At the time however, there were many scholars who estimated that the real number of migrants was much higher and it arrived at almost at 10% of the total population. The reasons for such an approach were multiple among which were the facts that due to their illegal status many migrants escaped registration while others arrived after the census had taken place. Moreover, the census took place before the Act 2910/2001 was implemented which gave the opportunity to the migrants to obtain legal status.

According to the 2011<sup>15</sup> census, almost 7% of the total population currently residing in Greece are foreign citizens. Out of 10.8 (10.815.197) million people, approximately 800.000 are foreigners. More interestingly though, the foreign born people residing in Greece consist of 11% of the total population, out of which 3% were born in an EU country and 8% in a non EU country. There are approximately 200.000 children of migrant origin, born or raised in the country, comprising 10% of the total school population<sup>16</sup>. Still there are scholars who estimate that the actual numbers of the migrant population are higher and continue to comprise almost 9-10% of the total population residing in Greece supporting their opinions based on the same two arguments as in 2001. Most conspicuously, they support that many undocumented migrants escaped registration. Taking into consideration that the last legalization of migrants took place in 2007, and that people enter and leave the country daily, besides those who have applied for asylum, the rest have no legal documents at all. Not possessing any document, increases a

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<sup>14</sup>For more information about the 2001 census visit [www.statistics.gr](http://www.statistics.gr)

<sup>15</sup> For more information about the 2001 census visit [www.statistics.gr](http://www.statistics.gr)

<sup>16</sup>[www.ypes.gr](http://www.ypes.gr) [Ministry of Interior database]

general sense of fear and promotes invisibility and fear of registering themselves. For many people coming from Asia and Africa, Greece is considered a transit country whereas final destinations are the industrialized northern European countries. Yet, due to the geographical isolation of Greece from the rest of the EU, those people are literally trapped in the country. Possessing no legal documents in order to leave the country legally, they find themselves in constant search of alternative escape routes. Most of the times these alternative escape routes include fake passports or hiding under trucks departing from the ports of Patras and Igoumenitsa and have Italy as their destination.

#### 2.2.1.1 MIGRATION LAWS IN GREECE

Even though mass migration to Greece began in the early 1990's it wasn't until 1997 that the Greek government introduced some sort of legislation concerning migration. Furthermore, actions towards the integration and the acquirement of legal status were delayed by the government's hesitation to deal with the phenomenon. In 1997, with the Presidential Decrees 358/1997 and 359/1997, the Act 1975/1997 was implemented regarding 'the entry-exit, residence, employment, expulsion of foreigners and procedure for the recognition of the status of refugee for foreigners'. The purpose of the two Presidential Decrees was to give the unregistered immigrants- the great majority of whom were residing in Greece- the opportunity to obtain a temporary residence permit or otherwise known as a 'white card'. The 'white card' gave them time to submit all the necessary documents in order to obtain a more permanent residence permit or otherwise known as a 'green card'. The people who qualified for the white card were all those who had been residing in Greece for at least a year, and could provide documents of having a clear police and court record, were of good health and had been paying national social insurance contributions<sup>17</sup> for a total of 40 working days in 1998. For the acquisition of a green card proof of 150 days of social insurance contributions was required. In this first regularization Act no fees were charged to those who applied for the white and green cards (Kasimis & Kassimi 2004; Triandafyllidou 2005).

Obviously, not all migrants were eligible for the white card and even fewer for the green one. According to official documents, of the 371.641 immigrants who applied for the white card only 212.860 ultimately received the green one. Furthermore, it is estimated that for various reason almost half of the migrants residing in Greece in 1997, did not manage to get any legal residence permit document (Triandafyllidou 2005).

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<sup>17</sup>The word for national social insurance contributions in Greek is '*ensima*'.

In 2001, the government voted the Act 2910/2001 which was considered a second opportunity for all those who had not managed to do so the previous time, together with those who migrated after 1997, to obtain a legal status. Migrants could apply for legal documents if they could show proof of residing in Greece for a year before the Act was passed. This time the migrants were given six months in order to collect and submit all the necessary documents in order to obtain a work permit with which they could apply for a residence permit. This time however, more documents were required. First of all, migrants had to submit an official employment contract for a specific period of time as well as show proof of paying national social insurance contributions for at least 200 working days. Furthermore, they had to pay a fee of 147 euro per person over the age of 14. People who had acquired residence permits in 1997 and which had expired were required under the new regulations to renew them.

The deadline for the work permit applications was August 2001 and by then 351.110 migrants had submitted their documents to obtain or renew their work permit which was considered a precondition for the residence permit. Due to bureaucratic problems and delays in the procedure the government issued all applicants with temporary residence permits till the end of October 2003. It was expected that by then, the processing of applications would be over. Yet, still many problems occurred leaving many migrants without legal work permits; others were given permits which had already expired, while others were left waiting for an answer for a very long period of time.

In 2005 with the Act 3386/2005 this was the last time undocumented migrants were given the opportunity to obtain legal status. This time as well, in order to apply for a work and residence permit, the migrant was obliged to produce proof of residence in Greece at least a year prior to the implementation of the Act.

Until January 2004 migrants had to renew their permits every year leading to extreme delays and loss of hours and money for many of them while queuing in order to submit their documents. However, an opportunity to become legal has only been given three times in the past 20 years with the Acts 1975/1997, 2910/2001 and 3386/2005. Since 2005, when migrants who came to Greece prior to 2004 managed to obtain legal work and residence permits, no other Act has been voted. This means that those migrants who came after 2004 and some who came prior to it but did not manage to submit the documents required, continue to be illegal without ever having had the opportunity to acquire legal permits. This situation favors their exploitation and diminishes their possibilities for a decent life and incorporation into the host society. Without work permits migrants are poorly paid, work excessive hours, have no rights and are not insured. In other

words, these people do not exist for the Greek state which makes them extremely vulnerable both as individuals and as employees (Kasimis & Kassimi 2004).

#### 2.2.1.2 THE SECOND GENERATION IN ATHENS

The term ‘second generation immigrant’ is not correct because these children have never been migrants. They have lived their whole life here; it is the only homeland they have met. The problems though they face are more than those of their parents. Today, a migrant’s child who lives in Greece after the age of 18 and does not start to work legally so as to have an insurance, is considered to be illegal and might be arrested and imprisoned at any time. (Ahmed Moawia, president of the Greek Migrant Forum)

The great majority of the migrant population residing in Greece lives in Athens. Athens, like many other European capitals in the past years is being transformed daily into a multinational and multicultural city. According to the 2001 census, 17% of the total population in the municipality of Athens were non EU-migrants. At the same time migrant clusters were observed in other municipalities of the capital as well. What should be taken into consideration though is that the people registered in the census were only those who had or were expecting a legal residence permit and that a significant number of people were not counted because they escaped registration due to their illegal status. This has as a result that the precise number of migrant population residing in Athens cannot be estimated. Unfortunately, the exact number of second generation residing in Greece is not known either, but it is estimated to be around 200.000 children and young adults.

Luckily though, according to the Greek legislation, being an undocumented migrant does not deprive one’s children from public and free education. The children of migrants, whose parents may be legal or undocumented, have the right to attend a public school. According to the annual research of I.P.O.D.E<sup>18</sup> (Instituto Paideias Omogenon kai Diapolitismikis Ekpaideusis –Institute of Education for Expatriates and Intercultural Education) for the year 2008-2009, in the public schools of the country 118.823 students of migrant status were registered from a total of 1.287.804 students and in the intercultural schools, 1.228 students of migrant status from a total of 4.314 students.

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<sup>18</sup>IPODE is part of the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, Sport and Culture [<http://www.minedu.gov.gr>]

More than 20 years have passed since the first mass migratory flows arrived in the Greek territory. When migrant populations arrived in Greece they either brought along their small children or gave birth to them in the Greek territory. Now, the so-called 'second generation' is already part of the Greek reality. The term 'second generation' is defined as all children of migrants born in the host country or brought here at a very early age (i.e. before the age of 6). They bring along characteristics from the culture of their homeland but at the same time participate actively in the integration process in the host country together with their parents. Moreover, children of migrant background have attended or attend Greek schools and are fluent in Greek. Yet, for the Greek state, these children do not exist. In other words, all these children and young adults, whether born and/or raised in the country are treated as migrants. Their legal status is directly linked to the one of their parents as long as they are minors, and as soon as they reach adulthood they have to obtain their own residence permit in order to continue to reside legally in the country where they were born and/or raised. Moreover, those born in the country are not given a birth certificate. The only document their parents receive is a certificate from the maternity clinic. In other words, for the Greek State, the children born in the country to migrant parents simply do not exist as they are not registered anywhere. As a result thousands of children in Greece are children without any kind of formal identity. On the other hand, when a child is born in Greece or abroad to Greek parents, it automatically takes Greek citizenship. The same happens with children born in Greece or abroad even if only one of their parents is Greek. The lack of a birth certificate creates a great amount of problems both to the children and their parents. Despite the fact that according to law any child with or without documents is eligible for school enrollment, parents sometimes have problems registering their children at school. Furthermore, without a birth certificate it is very difficult for parents to include their children in their insurance documents and residence permits because in order to do so the children must have birth certificates or valid passports. Issuing a passport from the parents' country of origin when the child was not born there and especially when there is no embassy of the specific country in Greece, has proved to be a rather challenging process and is a problem many children of African background have to deal with. At the age of 18 when children are no longer considered to be dependent family members, they are automatically transformed into migrants and are treated in exactly the same way as the people who came to the country recently. They have to start procedures in order to obtain individual legal status and if they fail to do so they might end up in prison or even deported.

Children of migrant background whether born or raised in Greece, attend Greek schools and are bearers of Greek education. They are Greeks, yet the State denies them their existence and at the

same time refuses to acknowledge the Greek reality. These children are here and will remain here, but the State not only does not give them the citizenship but in many cases upon them reaching adulthood, denies them the residence permit. This policy has severe consequences not only for those children but for the country as well. The State denies to a percentage of its residents the right to have a formal identity, a passport, the right to travel and study abroad, to have political rights or to represent Greece in any national sports team. These children are not allowed to do certain jobs that have Greek citizenship as a prerequisite (work in the public sector, as public officers, doctors, school teachers, policemen or become members of the Athens Bar as lawyers, etc.) and sometimes are condemned to black labor because they are lacking a residence permit. In a few words, even if they are Greeks, they are treated as second-class citizens and are doomed to constant insecurity and social exclusion.

In 2008 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs introduced a new Act<sup>19</sup> according to which second generation children could be included in those eligible to obtain a long-term residence permit. Yet this legislation regarded only the children of migrant origin born in Greece. Most conspicuously, in order for a second generation child to be eligible to obtain a long term residence permit (duration 5 years) they must pay a fee of 600 euros, be born in Greece, have completed the 9 years of obligatory education in a Greek school and have a valid passport. Even though the criteria for applying are not strict, very few children have applied so far. The main reason for this is the lack of information. Public employees in the Municipalities are not aware of the procedure and neither are second generation children themselves. In other words, the legislation to solve the legal status of at least those born in the country exists, yet it is not implemented due to lack of information.

Besides the legal problems concerning their formal existence and residence permit, second generation children in Athens have to deal with issues regarding their identity as well. How these children construct and identify themselves is a rather time-consuming and difficult process. Even if they were born in Greece many of them are stigmatized because of their religion or phenotype as being extremely different. Unfortunately identity, besides being chosen, is also given by the society itself. In other words, children of migrant background are usually identified by members of the dominant group as ‘others’ or ‘forever diverse’. Even if they feel Greek they are not accepted as such by either the society or the State. Cultural racism towards people

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<sup>19</sup>According to the Act 3731/2008, second generation children born in Greece would be eligible to apply for a long-term residence permit. The long-term residence permit is common among all EU countries as it was imposed by the EU in order to facilitate the movement of legal migrants in its territory as it gave to their holders the right to work in any EU country. Yet, the long-term residence permit designed in Greece for the second generation does not give them the right to work in any other EU country as the official long-term residence permit does. Acquiring this permit, second generation youth may secure their legal stay in Greece, yet they cannot use it in order to search for employment opportunities abroad.

coming from specific countries is rather obvious and people coming from these countries are considered inassimilable. This contraposition has multiple effects on the identity formation of the second generation, who find themselves socially excluded and stigmatized.

Everyday multiculturalism (Harris 2007; Semi, Colombo, Camozzi & Frisina 2009) and the ways young second generation people in Athens produce, use and challenge difference in their daily interaction has much to do with the formation of their identities. Youth of migrant background attend public schools together with native children and share the same space in the neighborhood after school. Unlike other European capitals such as London or Paris, Athens has no areas inhabited exclusively by immigrants. The great majority of migrant populations in Athens live in the center of the city. Obviously many of them are concentrated in the poorest and more populist zones, yet they are mixed; there are no areas inhabited by migrants coming from specific countries.

Until the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, the policy adopted by all nations-states towards migration was complete assimilation of the migrant populations in the dominant culture. Cultural, linguistic and ethnic differences were abolished while national homogeneity was promoted. From the 1950's though, assimilation policies were replaced with integration policies when migrants' or ethnic minorities' claims for a right to be different were recognized. The new labor migrant populations were seen as heterogeneous and their diverse cultural values and identities were thought to be acceptable within a multicultural framework. At the same time, peoples' rights to practice their own religion or customs and speak their mother tongue at least in the private sphere, were promoted by public rhetoric. This rhetoric however, was not meant to last long. Since the beginning of the 1990's a 'cultural-diversity skeptical turn' (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2005) or else a 'backlash' (Grillo 2005) occurred and some migrant populations and their descendants were altogether considered too different to us or inassimilable due to excess diversity. Greece, not having the experience of previous migratory flows, entered the migrant receiving countries in the early 1990's, exactly the period when certain migrants started being considered inassimilable. While it is quite expected that the first generations be more closely attached to the cultures of the countries of origin, the language and the religion, it is second generation nowadays that becomes the receiver of social exclusion, discrimination and is demonized in many European Countries. Youth of specific migrant background are considered inassimilable and are treated as the new internal enemy. The most inassimilable youth in Europe are considered to be Muslims and blacks, the first because of religion and the second because of skin color.

In Greece though, this does not seem to be exactly the case, not yet at least. The great majority of migrants in Greece come from the Balkan countries and their children, at least phenotypically, are not distinguishable from indigenous children. At the same time, both migrants and their children are considered more assimilable due to the fact that the great majority is Christians and white. Yet, in the 1990's migrants from Albania and their offspring were considered 'forever others'. Nowadays though, due to the increasing migratory flows from Asia and Africa, Albanians are considered an example of successful integration and the stigmatization of the 'forever other' applies to the Muslim and/or non white migrant population. Concerning the second generation however, there are not many Muslim children because migration from Muslim countries is mainly male migration. On the other hand, African and Asian origin youth is increasing, taking into consideration the fact that migration from Africa and Asia (mainly the Philippines) is both male and female, and mixed marriages are also taking place. These youngsters are the most vulnerable amongst the second generation because of their visibility. In other words, due to their different phenotype, they are more likely to be the subject of racist behavior and practices of exclusion. Yet, this occurs mainly because they are perceived as migrants and not as youth of migrant origin. The existence of the second generation is a reality few people are aware of, even though we are currently talking about 200.000 children and young adults. On the other hand, when it comes to access to rights, or formal integration, the great majority of second generation children, no matter their origin, face the same bureaucratic problems.

The basic problem that all second generation children and young adults face in Greece has mainly to do with their place in the society. Most conspicuously, they are not seen as youth of migrant background but as migrants, and are treated as such, by both the society and the State. They are not recognized as citizens despite being born in the country, and their legal presence in the country is directly connected to a residence permit. Not full citizens of their country, those children are subject to discrimination, stigmatization and social exclusion, with the sole excuse being their migrant background.

### 2.2.1.3 THE ACT 3838/2010

Before the implementation of the Act 3838 in 2010, the only way for a non-national to acquire the Greek citizenship was through naturalization. Yet, naturalization was an expensive, time-consuming and with ambiguous result process, applicable only to non-national adults. In other words, there was a legal gap concerning the citizenship acquisition for foreign origin minors born and/or raised in Greece. The lack of a relevant legislation became rather apparent as soon



as the children of the first migrants started coming of age. All of them came across a legal system that was not prepared and could not be applied to their case.

The Act 3838 was implemented 20 years after the first mass migratory flows arrived in Greece. It was promoted by the PASOK government and the Prime Minister Mr. Georgios Papandreou, and had the acquisition of citizenship for the second generation as its main aim. Most conspicuously, according to the Act 3838, the children of all migrants who had been legal residents of Greece for the previous five years were eligible for the Greek citizenship, after their birth and the submission of a statement from their parents. At the same time, it gave the right to all migrant children who had successfully completed six years of education in a Greek school to become Greek citizens, after the submission of a statement from their parents, both of whom had to have been legal residents of Greece for at least the previous five years. The children, who had already entered adulthood, were eligible to apply for the citizenship retrospectively if they were holders of a residence permit. Furthermore, it facilitated the naturalization process for the adult migrant population decreasing the period of continuous legal residence from ten to seven years. Moreover, it reduced the fees required from 1500 to 700 euros and for the first time introduced a time limit for the procedure (12+6 months), and the obligation of the State to justify a rejected application. Thus far, the procedure was rather ambivalent because the Law neither specified a time limit nor was the State obliged to justify a rejection. Finally, the Act 3838 gave the right to all legal migrants who were holders of a long-term residence permit to participate in the municipal elections<sup>20</sup>.

The Act 3838 was voted in March 2010. Almost six months later, a lawyer claimed that the article concerning the participation of migrants in the municipal election was anti-constitutional, and the case was taken to the State Council. Almost two years later, on the 13th November 2012, the decision of the State Council was published in the media and on the 5th February 2013 was officially published. The articles concerning the citizenship acquisition of the second generation as well as the one regarding the participation of migrants in the municipal elections were cancelled. The only articles that remained intact were those regulating naturalization.

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<sup>20</sup> The whole Act 3838 in Greek can be found at [http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/24e0c302-6021-4a6b-b7e4-8259e281e5f3/N\\_3838\\_1.pdf](http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/24e0c302-6021-4a6b-b7e4-8259e281e5f3/N_3838_1.pdf) and in translated in English at <http://www.athenspe.net/features/greeces-new-law-on-citizenship-and-voting-rights-of-migrants/>. For the article that regulates the access to citizenship for the second generation see p.185

At the moment the only way for a foreigner to acquire the Greek citizenship is through naturalization. There is no legislation regulating the citizenship acquisition for minors born and/or raised in the country from migrant parents.

### 2.2.2 AFRICAN MIGRATION IN GREECE

The first Africans arrived in Greece in the late 60's and early 70's mainly as students (mainly Nigerians and Sudanese). Many of them, after completing their studies, decided to stay in Greece, work and build their lives in the country. Even though they were not always able to find jobs relevant to their skills and degrees, they participated in the labor market and were holders of quite high educational capital (ed. Marvakis *et al.* 2001). Some Africans arrived during the 80's as economic migrants in order to work in agricultural and touristic facilities.

At the same time another significant percentage of the first Africans who arrived in Greece were those who were closely related to the Greek Orthodox Church (mainly Kenyans and Ugandans). Adults arrived mainly as priests or students of theological faculties. Also, many children were brought to and raised in church institutions in order to be educated and returned to Africa as members of the Orthodox Church. Those youngsters, who were separated from their families at a very early age and were raised in the church institutions completely away from their roots, were not willing to return to Africa after completing their studies. The vast majority of them remained in Greece and had to deal with a series of issues concerning their legal residence in the country after the age 18.

Moreover, during the 70's and 80's, many Africans arrived as refugees due to war and political unrest in their home countries. Most conspicuously, many Eritreans arrived as political refugees from 1961 till 1991. Some of them stayed in Greece but the great majority migrated to the rest of Europe, USA and Canada. Sudanese started arriving mainly as students in the mid 60's. In 1975 there were about 1000 Sudanese in Greece of whom 95% were students. Sudanese refugees started arriving after the coup d'état in Sudan in 1989. Ethiopians migrated to Greece mainly for political reasons due to the social unrest in Somalia in the 70's. Some were granted political asylum but many others used Greece as a transit country towards USA or Canada. Ghanaians firstly arrived in Greece in the 80's searching for better life opportunities and employment. The civil war in Sierra Leone forced its inhabitants to flee searching for a better life, and some of them came to Greece as students. Nigerians on the other hand, comprise the largest African community in Greece and one of the oldest as well. The first ones arrived in the mid 70's as students. Yet, the vast majority of the Nigerians residing at the moment in Greece

came after 1990 in search of better life opportunities (Marvakis *et al.* 2001:335-354). People from Tanzania, Senegal and Guinea started arriving after 1990.

Until the 90's the Africans were a slight minority of the immigrant population and frequently more fortunate due to the fact that they were not economic migrants. Most conspicuously, the Africans residing in Greece before 1990 did not outnumber a few hundred. Of course the situation changed completely in the early 90's when vast migration waves arrived in Greece. Although some Africans are still coming as students, the majority of those who arrived in Greece after the 90's were economic migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

Older African migrants are holders of different types of residence permits and some of them hold the status of a recognized refugee. Unfortunately, in the past few years, many of them failed to renew their residence permits mainly due to unemployment. Moreover, the only document almost all Africans who entered Greece after 2005<sup>21</sup> possess is a pink card or else, a document that proves that they have used the asylum procedure to obtain a legal status. In other words, due to the lack of any legalization process for economic migrants, all those who desired to reside legally in the country were 'forced' to apply for asylum. A pink card is considered a legal document and its holder cannot be deported until his application is examined. People who hold a pink card cannot be imprisoned and treated as irregular migrants, are free to move inside Greece, work and have free access to the healthcare system. Still though, those who desire to leave Greece do not apply for a pink card, and prefer to stay without any legal document and proof of their residence in Greece, in order to be able to leave the country more easily.

The majority of the Africans residing at the moment in Greece do not see Greece as their final destination. On the contrary, Greece is seen as a transit country, a gateway to Europe or even America. Anglophone and Francophone countries such as UK, France and Belgium, or even Scandinavia are considered final destinations for many Africans who find themselves trapped in Greece. The desire to depart (mainly because they never intended to stay) is more apparent with the new migration waves, who, besides the economic crisis, have to deal with rising xenophobia and racism. The older migrants consider another migration as a preferable solution to the current unemployment, the problems they face with their legal status and that of their children, and of course, the rise of the extreme-right rhetoric and practices in Greece.

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<sup>21</sup> In 2005 was implemented the last legitimization program according to the Act 3386/2005.

## 2.3 NATIONALISM

With the formation of the nation states in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, people acquired nationalities, a rather odd characteristic which made them different to the people across the border but similar to all those inside it. Without being based on any actual rational rules, the nation became the tool through which people were arbitrarily naturalized as distinct races, which were meant to inhabit specific territories defined by borderlines. Moreover, these territories were also naturalized as the loci of residence of a specific people who were the only ones who had a somewhat eternal but also divine right and privilege to be called its citizens and inhabit it. A nation is a group of people who imagines itself as a sovereign political community with specific borders. It is an imagined community because its members do not know all of their co-patriots and will never meet them, yet all of them live imagining their connections to each other and their common belonging to the same community (Anderson 1983).

At the same time, nations are also reconstructed communities which are constantly redefined through a process of inclusion and exclusion of diverse elements according to the political and social circumstances (Hobsbawm 1990). One of the characteristics of nation formation is this ability to interpret, select and reconstruct the past in its favor. Images and memories in forms of symbols and ceremonies are constructed and reproduced in order to eliminate difference, reinforce distinctiveness and produce a homogenous culture that may answer all questions concerning the origin of a people (Featherstone 1995). Nations imagine and construct their linkages with their pre-modern ancestors and their glorious past. In this respect, they appear as natural communities which have existed since ancient times and have the right to continue to exist in modern nation-states. Usually, the linkage among ancestors and forbearers is supported and demonstrated by elements such as language, religion, blood and culture (Gellner 1983; Hertzfeld 1992, 1996). Not all nations necessarily use the same elements to prove their timeless existence, yet a combination of specific elements is the case when concerning all modern nation-states.

### 2.3.1 *JUS SOLI* VERSUS *JUS SANGUINIS*

The formation of nations and nation-states followed a process based mainly on two distinct notions, *jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*. These two notions formed two ways of national belonging based either on soil or descent.

*Jus soli* as a concept of national belonging was developed after the French Revolution and had as a prerequisite for *frenchness* the will of oneself to become French. In other words, anyone who inhabited the newly born French state could become a French citizen if they spoke French and

were willing to obey the French Laws (Hobsbawm 1990). In other words, one becomes French, one is not born French and citizenship is seen more as a right of the people who are born and live in a country connected to each other through their common belonging to the same political community, whereas participation in the political community where they were born is seen as a person's right. The place of birth becomes more important than ethnic descent in citizenship acquisition, and countries which follow this model, are implementing a more flexible legislation concerning the citizenship acquisition of non nationals. The countries that follow the above model, conceive citizenship acquisition as a prerequisite for a successful integration of the migrant population. Moreover, the notion of integration is highly valued and the second generation is more likely to access citizenship by birth or as minors (Castles & Miller 1993).

On the other hand, *jus sanguinis* as a concept of national belonging was developed in Germany and supported the exact opposite to *jus soli*. According to *jus sanguinis*, one is born German, one cannot become one. Being German was seen as a matter of descent, not as a matter of choice, and German citizens were considered to be related through blood ties which distinguished them from the non-nationals, otherwise known as, the 'others' (Hobsbawm 1994). Most conspicuously, according to the German model, only those who share the same ethnic descent are entitled to citizenship. It is based on the notion of *jus sanguinis*, where common ethnicity, religion, language and culture are considered prerequisite for a person's access to rights, and therefore, citizenship is inherited from parents to children. The Nation is seen as the cornerstone of the State, the source and the reason for its existence. Moreover, the Nation is conceived as a family, where its members are connected to each other through blood ties. The countries which follow the ethnic model in granting citizenship have a rather strict legislation conceding the citizenship acquisition from non-nationals whereas *jus sanguinis* or the law of descent determines the process (Castles & Miller 1993).

Even if these two notions are distinct and opposite this does not mean that all nations of the world have adopted one or the other in order to support national belonging. On the contrary, the majority of nations including France and Germany have used a combination of those two notions in order to build their national myths. Yet, in any case some characteristics are considered more important than others in a national formation process and are those which are mainly promoted by each state.

### 2.3.2 GREEK NATIONALISM

As far as modern Greece is concerned, *jus sanguinis*, blood is considered the basic substance of Greek identity. A person is born Greek, they cannot become one. Blood is imagined as

something all Greeks have in common, as an essence which creates their common but unique identity. Blood has a double role to play; not only does it include some people in the imagery of what it means to be Greek and at the same time exclude others, but also connects modern Greeks to their ancestors through undissolved blood ties. It is a symbol and, as far as the creation of nation-states is concerned, the most powerful one. According to Bauman (1999:20), 'the term 'race' is a fallacious 19<sup>th</sup> century fiction, and the term 'ethnicity' in its presumed biological sense is its late 20<sup>th</sup> century photocopy'. Blood is turned into destiny (Herzfeld 1992) and it is exactly what Caro Baroja (1970) calls 'the myth of national character'.

Ethnicity, even if it is almost always associated with nature, ancestral lineages and forebearers, is nothing more than the product of human thought and action. But in reality ethnicity is not about blood as such; on the contrary, it is about the meaning that is given to blood. In other words, ethnicity is not produced by ancestry itself but from political and economic interests which are used as a marker of a person's identity. Ethnicity has no meaning by itself; meaning is attributed to it by people who claim they share or do not share one, and use it as a tool to organize their social life. At the same time, ethnicity has meaning as an experience for people and has more than one face according to the situation in which these people experience it. Most conspicuously, 'ethnic identities can be stressed or unstressed, enjoyed or resented, imposed or even denied, all depending on situation and context' (Bauman 1999:64.).

The creation of Greek ethnos in the years before Greek independence was promoted by intellectuals of the era who later passed on history as 'the teachers of the Genos' (Herzfeld 1992:42) where 'genos' in modern Greek as well as 'yenos' in ancient Greek meant both the same thing; patriline. Of course they were deliberately called this by their posteriors in order to support the claim of a common ancestry of the Greek people. Patriline presupposes a common ancestor and as far as the Greek case is concerned this shows clearly that Greek nationalism was founded on the notion of a common birth of a people. Ancient Greek city-states, the Macedonian Empire, Byzantium were seen all as creations of the one and the same Greek nation which, besides the 400 years under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, managed to rebel and form the Greek nation-State in the early 1830's.

Most conspicuously, for the Greeks, there is a lack of distinction between substance and code. Where code symbolizes kinship and substance blood, in the Greek case, these two are two terms conjunct (Schneider 1968). In other words, Greeks trace their ancestry in a common ancestor which means that they conceive their nation as a family where people do not share only common blood but are also all members of the same family. According to Herzfeld (1992:42) it was exactly 'this conflation [that] permitted the easy transformation of familial into national terms:

infused with one blood, the nation is a single enormous kin group (συγγενεία-syngenia) [...] defined by its common birth'. In other words, in the societies where ethnicity is defined by *jus sanguinis*, belonging is defined by agnatic continuity.

One of nationalism's main characteristics is that it treats nation as a family. Having as its main aim the protection of 'family members' from the 'Other', nationalist ideology reinforces the use of diverse stereotypes in order to achieve its goals. According to Herzfeld (1992:73), 'attributing some nasty character flaw to another family is not, except in terms of scale, appreciably different from attributing it to an ethnic group or a neighboring nation'. The 'other' is seen as something strange and potentially dangerous for the cultural and social cohesion of the nation and therefore he is treated as such. Acts of exclusion, physical or verbal language are many times considered to be nothing more than a legitimate defense tactic against otherness. Stereotypes are not just abstract ideas of otherness; on the contrary they are used many times even by official governments in order to define the alien; the other. As far Greece is concerned, official governments have always used stereotypes in order to describe diverse categories of people as 'others' (Christopoulos 2012; Margaritis 2005). First, the others were Muslims and Jews inhabiting the Greek territories, then minority people, non-nationals who lived across the border and finally the communists. In the last years this tactic has been used in order to describe migrants. They have become the distinct other inside the borderline and are not only seen as different but mainly as potentially harmful to the cultural and social identity of Greek people.

## **2.4 CITIZENSHIP IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

In order to understand the meaning of the terms nationality and citizenship in the Modern Greek state, a historical perspective should also be taken into consideration as well, because the terms trace their origin to the Ottoman Empire. Before Greece gained its independence in 1830 and as long as it territorially belonged to the Ottoman Empire, its inhabitants were organized in religious-ethnic groups called 'millets'. The 'millet' system did not take into consideration the territory to divide populations and as a result while the people belonging to the same 'millet' were dispersed throughout the Empire, people belonging to a different 'millet' lived together. In other words, the criteria for belonging to a specific 'millet' were culturally and most specifically religiously determined instead of territorial. Language was not taken into consideration for belonging; Rum-Orthodox populations of the mainland and the Aegean Islands belonged to a different 'millet' to the catholic Greek-speaking population of the same territories. The division

of the population in terms of religious faith resulted in the failure of population homogenization in the territories of the Ottoman Empire (Christopoulos 2012).

The linkage between ethnicity as faith and citizenship in the 'millet' system was responsible for the production of a different kind of national identity during and after Greek independence. Religious bonds were transformed to ethnic alliance and prerequisite for citizenship while in the rest of Europe, citizenship was initially characterized by territorial and secondarily by ethno-cultural criteria. The heritage of the Ottoman Empire was the creation of a notion of citizenship based on 'genos', in other words on population on a religious basis instead of a territorial one.

This resulted in the exclusion of Jewish and Muslim populations who lived in the territories of the newly founded Greek State but were denied their rights as citizens. At the same time though, other minority populations such as Vlachs and Albanians were included and given nationality and citizenship on the basis of a common faith even though they spoke a different dialect or language.

It wasn't till the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Balkan Wars, the 1<sup>st</sup> World War and the Greek invasion of Asia Minor (1912-1922) that minorities (Vlachs, Albanians etc) became a problematic category of citizens. It was after the population exchange among Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey that populations started being characterized in terms of consciousness of national belonging between Greece and Bulgaria and religious faith between Greece and Turkey (Margaritis 2005). The populations who did not participate in the exchange and remained in Greece, even if theoretically Greek citizens with equal rights and obligations, started being treated as second class citizens and were deprived of their rights by denying them access to nationality.

After the civil war (1946-1949) until the military junta in 1967, two categories of people, communists and those belonging to minority groups, were deprived of their nationality and citizenship. During this period, many people, who were considered to belong to the Left, were arrested and imprisoned while many others fled abroad as political refugees, deprived of their legal citizenship. Those who stayed behind were no longer considered to belong to the national community, were treated as traitors and were deprived of civil and political rights as well as no longer being considered citizens. It was only after the fall of the junta in 1974 that the concept of citizenship was re-established and included the majority of those excluded in previous historical periods. However, the people belonging to the Muslim minority of Thrace were only granted Greek citizenship in 1998.



#### 2.4.1 THE FORMATION OF THE GREEK CITIZENSHIP

As mentioned before, the creation of the Greek national identity experienced a variety of different phases before ending up at *jus sanguinis* as a prerequisite for citizenship acquisition. Most conspicuously, Greek intellectuals, influenced by the ideas promoted by European Enlightenment, had as their aim the creation of a nation-state according to the liberal ideas of the West. Yet, the reality was proved to be rather different.

According to Christopoulos (2012:45-46), the first century after the formation of the Greek State, which lasted from 1921 when the Greek Revolution began till the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1922, is called the century of inclusion. In other words, and paraphrasing Massimo d'Anzeglio, 'we are building Greece', meaning that Greece is formed by conquering new territories and by turning their inhabitants into the new citizens of the State. Still though, this did not mean that Greek citizenship was granted unconditionally; on the contrary, there were regulations and the most profound and important among those was the religious faith.

During the Independence War, the 1822 Provisional Polity of Greece (Προσωρινόν Πολίτευμα της Ελλάδος) defined Greek citizenship in terms of religion and place of birth. Most specifically, according to article 2, all 'native-born residents of the Hellenic state, who believe in Christ, are Greeks'. At the same time, articles 4 and 5 stated that foreigners who came to live in Greece could become Greek citizens by naturalization if they became Christians. Furthermore, any Muslim who would decide to convert could also obtain the Greek citizenship. It is rather obvious that religion plays the most important role in determining who is eligible for the citizenship and who is not. In other words, the core of the citizen is religious and not national identity. The Independence War was projected as a national liberation war and the new nation-state defined itself in religious terms by granting the privilege of belonging to its imagined community only to specific subjects. The new nation had to be homogeneous so as to exist as a nation-state and in order to create the desired homogeneity, had to exclude all subjects who had a different faith (Jews and Muslims). In this phase of the nation-building many non-Greek speaking orthodox populations were granted citizenship based on the fact that its acquisition was determined only by religious and territorial criteria (*jus religionis* is combined with *jus soli*) (Christopoulos 2012:46-50).

It was not until 1823 when language together with religion were considered prerequisites for the citizenship and 'all those coming from abroad who speak Greek as their mother tongue and who believe in Christ are Greeks'. The Political Constitution of Troezen (1927) added descent and all 'those living abroad who are born of a Greek father' were considered Greeks as well. It was

the first time *jus sanguinis* was introduced as an element able to grant citizenship, which, until then, had depended on religious and ethno-cultural criteria.

In 1835, the first citizenship law after the independence of Greece favoured *jus sanguinis* and stated that Greek citizens were all those descending from Greeks, all the philhellenes who had fought for a minimum of two years in the independence war, all Christians who had emigrated to the free state after the 16<sup>th</sup> June 1830 Protocol, all those who were born abroad of a Greek father. What is of major importance, however, is that all those who were born in Greece of foreign parents could still acquire the citizenship after coming of age. In other words, the 1835 citizenship law did not abandon *jus soli*, and continued recognizing belonging, coming from, residing in a place as adequate criteria for citizenship eligibility, no matter the origin of the father.

Unfortunately, the liberal spirit of the revolution did not last long. Even if the Greek Independence War had been inspired by the Enlightenment and the liberal ideas of the West, the newborn Orthodox Greek Church is considered one of the main advocates of the conservative turn by the end of the war. The church played a major part in the promotion of nationalism in the new State while it shaped and governed its character. All cultural elements, which had the slightest relation to the Ottoman Empire, were demonized and abolished and a long term process of cultural and ethnic cleansing was launched. The liberal constitution of 1922 was abolished and was replaced by a more conservative one. At the same time the secularization was abandoned and Providentialism became the master of the historical consciousness (Kitromilides 1979). The cosmopolitanism of the progressive constitution of Epidaurus was abandoned; *jus soli* was no more a determinant of citizenship. During the Independence War, the connection of soil to religion and the people was essential in order to promote Greek nationalism. Yet, with the formation of the Greek State, *jus sanguinis* was promoted as a prerequisite for nationality and *jus soli* was abandoned.

The 1835 Citizenship Act took its final form in 1844 and ‘citizens are all those who acquired or will acquire the characteristics of a citizen according to the Laws of the State’ (Dimakis in Christopoulos 2012:56). For the first time, citizenship acquisition is not related either to *jus soli* or *jus religionis*. On the contrary, for the first time in its short history, the Greek State may guarantee that first of all, its citizens are determined by *jus sanguinis*. The 1835 Citizenship Act was active till 1856 when the Greek Civic Act was voted (Christopoulos 2012). The Greek Civic Act was replaced only in 1955 by the Greek Nationality Code, though none of its core articles were changed. Most conspicuously, during the whole century till the Greek Nationality Code was voted, citizenship acquisition was governed by Article 14a of the Civic Act, ‘Greek

are all those born to a Greek father', highlighting the complete dominance of *jus sanguinis* on *jus soli* (2012:58).

What is also worth mentioning here is that it was not till 1984 that the Greek Nationality Code was reformed to include the phrase 'Greek mother' (*jus sanguinis a matre*). In other words, till 1984, Greek women were unable to transmit their nationality to their offspring unless they were of an unknown or a non-citizen father. For the first time in history, since the formation of the Greek State, women not only had the right to keep their own nationality after their marriage to a non-national man, but also acquired the right to transmit their own nationality to their children. In other words, at least at a constitutional level, gender equality was implemented as far as it concerned access to and transmission of nationality (Christopoulos 2012:105-107).

#### 2.4.2 NATIONALITY VERSUS CITIZENSHIP (OR NOT?)

Nationality and citizenship are two terms that despite meaning the same thing, are quite often misunderstood and considered to have different meanings. Yet, since the foundation of the Greek State, nationality and citizenship were used in all legal documents and Acts as synonymous (Christopoulos 2012:279). Furthermore, they are also used as synonymous in international law.

The confusion between the terms 'nationality' and 'citizenship' became rather apparent when the Act 3838/2010 was voted. Most conspicuously, some of its opponents based their rhetoric on the argument 'nationality is one thing, but citizenship is another' (Christopoulos 2012:278). In other words, they appeared flexible in granting citizenship to the children of migrant origin, but where nationality was concerned, they were totally negative. They perceived nationality as something one was born with, while citizenship was something that could be acquired. Moreover, they claimed that all those who perceived the two terms as synonymous were making a terrible mistake; confusing the natural fact of being born as a member of a specific nation with an administrative act, granting citizenship or even more becoming a citizen of a State (2012:278-279).

#### 2.4.3 WHO IS GREEK?

A debate about who is Greek or who can be Greek was opened for the first time since the foundation of the Greek State in the early 1830's. Until now, the discussions were reduced to who could not be Greek and included all people of non-Greek ancestry. *Jus sanguinis* was the cornerstone of Greek national identity and nationalism. According to them, one is born Greek, one cannot become one. Until 1990, Greece was considered a country with a rather

homogeneous population. The different ethnic groups and the refugees from Asia Minor were successfully assimilated but this fact was effectually suppressed by the official history of the Greek state (Margaritis 2005). Greek nationalism today originates from the false belief of a homogenous people who managed to stay unsullied from ‘the barbarians’ who once resided in its soil.

Greece became a destination country for migrant populations twenty years ago, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Until then, only minor flows from Poland, Philippines and Africa reached Greece. The mass arrival of Albanians in the early 1990’s, which was followed by the arrival of populations from Eastern Europe and later on from Asia and Africa resulted in migrants now comprising almost 7-10% of the population of Greece.

The Act 3838/2010 promoted by the PASOK government, became a major topic of discussion among politicians, citizens and migrants. It was the first time since the arrival of the migrants where a discussion about citizenship and who was eligible to it, was opened. Yet, especially for the parties of the right and extreme right, an Act that would facilitate the access to citizenship to non-nationals or else non-ethnic Greeks became a matter of national importance.

In 2009, for the first time since the fall of the military junta in 1974, an extreme right party entered the Greek parliament. LAOS<sup>22</sup> was founded in 2000. In the national elections the party entered the Greek parliament by winning 5,63% of the people’s votes. More specifically, in Athens they received 7,5% of the votes. For many analysts, these results were considered to be quite worrying due to the fact that the main focus of the LAOS electoral campaign was based on anti-immigration rhetoric.

For LAOS, being Greek was totally a matter of blood, ancestry and religion. Its motto was ‘for Greece with the Greeks’ and of course Greeks were believed to be only those of Greek ancestry. Religion (Orthodox Christian church) was considered to be the other major component of a Greek person’s identity and its importance was shown by the existence of the word ‘orthodox’ in the party’s name. In other words, Greeks had to be of Greek blood, white and orthodox Christians. Anyone who lacked any of those characteristics simply was not Greek and by no means had the right to reside in Greece but if one did, should be deprived of any kind of rights- not least mentioning access to citizenship.

For LAOS, migrants were the new ‘other’, the greatest threat to the country’s social, racial and religious purity. Totally against the Act 3838 that promoted the citizenship acquisition for the second generation, LAOS party found the perfect opportunity to impel fear, xenophobia, racism

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<sup>22</sup>In Greek the acronym composed from the party’s first letters is LAikos Orthodoxos Synagermos- [LA.O.S] and means Popular Orthodox Rally. Moreover the sound of the acronym in Greek is exactly the same as the words ‘the People’ [www.laos.gr]

and exclusion. Party members in their rhetoric blamed migrants for unemployment, criminality, social problems and degradation. Most conspicuously, the president of the LAOS party in his speech in the Greek parliament rejected the Act 3838 with arguments such as:

In a few years there will be a third generation of migrants. Our society and economy cannot afford having them here [...] How do migrants contribute to the country's economy and the social security system? Do all those who illegally sell at triple the price of what the legitimate local shop sells pay their contributions? [...] The government could consecrate a long-term residence permit for some of the migrants but why should we give citizenship to migrants from Albania and western Balkans since their countries will soon become members of the European Union? [...] the reality is that 60% of the heinous crimes are committed by migrants. Not all migrants are criminals but the devastating majority of those who have committed a crime are migrants. [...] Greece is the only country in the EU whose citizens need a visa in order to travel to the USA. This situation will not be solved when you (the government) legalize many thousands of Muslims [...] if in a block of flats only the owners have the right to decide and not the tenants, then why shouldn't the 'owners' of the State who are the Greek citizens decide alone on much more serious problems? (Karatzafaris, G., speech at the Greek parliament, 8 February 2010)

Obviously, such arguments are less than convincing, yet for many Greeks they sound completely reasonable and logical. The formulation of their public speech was carefully designed so as not to provoke more than necessary in order to achieve their goals. Moreover, they used language that could easily be understood by people of all educational backgrounds and they applied to public sentiment in order to promote their ideas. They blamed migrants for all the misfortunes of Greece such as unemployment and criminality, tended to forecast a worse future and pinpointed migrants as the scapegoats. Yet, if a closer look was taken at their arguments, they collapsed like a sand castle due to their complete lack of rationality. The problem however, was that their rhetoric was based on the promotion of nationalist and religious sentiments. They identified *greekness* as something inherited, unchangeable and static, as something precious, unique and superior that had to be preserved at any cost from any kind of otherness. They praised ethnic homogeneity and condemned mixing, and at the same time presented themselves as the only ones who cared for the purity of Greek identity, orthodoxy and national history. The nationalist rhetoric has always been quite appealing in periods of crisis of any kind. Migration is a rather new phenomenon in Greece and in the specific historical moment migrants were (and

still are) used as the other who not only endangered the economic and social sustainability of Greece but also its culture, religion and identity in general.

The Act 3838 was perceived by the parties of the right and extreme right as an Act that would promote illegal migration, transform Greece into a destination for undocumented migrants, and would threaten the cultural and social homogeneity of the country by transforming migrants into Greeks. What was never promoted successfully though by the supporters of the Act was whom this Act referred to. It was never made clear that it would facilitate the citizenship acquisition of the children of the migrants and not the migrants themselves. In other words, it was about the children born or/and raised in the country and not about people who had just entered the country (as it was largely presented by its opponents).

The core of the Act 3838 was the abandonment of *jus sanguinis* as sole prerequisite of citizenship acquisition. According to Dimitris Christopoulos, Professor in the department of Political Science and History in the University of Athens and president of the Hellenic League for Human Rights,

in Greece, the new Act introduces elements of *jus soli*. Furthermore, a new kind of *jus* seems to be developed which is neither *jus sanguinis* nor *jus soli*. It could be called *jus domicili* because a person who resides in a place acquires such strong ties with the place, independent of where he was born or where his parents originated, that he deserves to belong to the civil and political community of the place. In my opinion this is the greatest challenge of migration -and not the restoration of a classical type of *jus soli*- in Europe today; people are entitled to belong to the political community in which they live, independently of who their father is or where they were born (Avgi 17 January 2010).

What should be taken into consideration is that the Act3838 actually incorporated a certain category of people in the political community of the country, in other words it gave them rights and turned them into citizens. Still, the debate and the polemic promoted by the Act 3838 cannot be considered as something new or peculiar. On the contrary, every attempt to incorporate new groups in the political community always provoked reactions from the part of those whose rights were already established. After the French revolution and despite its principles (liberty-equality-fraternity) not everybody had the same rights. Jews became citizens and gained access to political rights in 1791 in France. The lower socioeconomic classes were granted political rights in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and women and black people gained political rights only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The incorporation of migrants in the political community could be seen as a continuance of

former forms of inclusion of religious minorities, social, racial and gendered groups in the political community (Vendura in Avgi 17 January 2010)<sup>23</sup>.

The 'other' is not a static category; on the contrary, it is a rather fluid one, which changes through time. Jews, women, blacks, communists and the poor used to be the 'other' in different historical periods and their inclusion always provoked reactions. When the refugees from Asia Minor came to Greece after the population exchange according to the Lausanne Treatment they were not easily accepted as equal citizens. Georgios Vlachos, the founder of Kathimerini newspaper wrote an article in 1928 in which he referred to the refugees of 1922 by saying: 'we do not want them either as voters, electors or eligible to be voted or citizens with the right to govern Greece' (Ios Eleftherotypia<sup>24</sup> 9 January 2009). Even if they were automatically given the Greek citizenship upon arrival in Greece, their incorporation in the Greek society was not easy. It was only after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War that they no longer considered being 'others'; communists had 'successfully' won the title of the 'other' by the end of the civil war. At the same time when women were fighting for their right to vote, many members of the so far male dominated society reacted. It was written in newspapers that women should not be given political rights because they are dangerous, hysterical and may destabilize queen's peace. Yet in 21<sup>st</sup> century Greece it seems natural for the descendants of the 1922 refugees, communists and women to have political rights. What is natural today was not however, 60 or 80 years ago. Migrants have replaced a previous 'threat' and have become the new 'others' of the contemporary Greek society (Kaplani in Avgi 17 January 2010).

It is argued that even if migrant origin youth and migrants themselves acquire citizenship it does not mean that they will be successfully incorporated in the society. Yet, citizenship acquisition can be seen as a prerequisite for a successful incorporation, especially as far as the second generation is concerned. The migrants from politically, and many times even socially, invisible become citizens, with rights and obligations. Nobody can be fully incorporated in a society if he is not granted equal rights as is the rest of the population. On the other hand though, citizenship cannot produce incorporation and should not be treated as a panacea. The problems of the migrants and of the second generation will not automatically be solved when they get their formal identity cards and passports. Incorporation does not happen from one day to the next,

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<sup>23</sup>While the citizenship issue was already being openly debated, Avgi Newspaper organized a discussion between Ms. LinaVendura (substitute Professor in the Department of Social and Educational Policy at the University of Peloponnese), Mr. Dimitris Christopoulos (Professor in the Department of Political Science and History at Panteion University and President of the Hellenic League for Human Rights) and Mr. Gazi Kaplani (writer and journalist originating from Albania who has lived in Greece for the past 20 years). The discussion was published on January 17 2010.

<sup>24</sup><http://www.iospress.gr>

neither does a legal issue. It is rather important for migrants and their children to be not only legally but also socially accepted. Yet, as far as second generation is concerned, citizenship will further promote the process of incorporation already taking place, because these children will start being treated as equals, at least in a formal way. Keeping them in illegality and treating them as second class citizens would only promote ghettoization, downward assimilation, social and economic inequality and exclusion. Integration takes time, even generations, but a legal status and a citizenship are essential preconditions for social acceptance and inclusion.



### CHAPTER 3

## IS THERE SUCH A THING AS A BLACK GREEK? *AFRICANNESS* AND *GREEKNESS* AS BOTH IMPOSED AND CHOSEN MARKERS OF IDENTITY

The Africans who reside at the moment in Greece may be divided into two categories. The reason why I choose to mention the specific categorization is because it is highly connected to the integration process of both the first and the second generation. The first category consists of those who came as students after the mid 70's, and still work and live in the country. The second one consists of those who came as economic migrants in the 90's and onwards. The division of the first generation African population into two distinct categories is done solely for the purpose of the research in order to understand in a more complete way the role played by parents in the integration process of children. The vast majority of the African migrants live in Athens and this is where the second generation was born and raised. The older representatives of the second generation are children of the first Africans who came to Greece as students. This means that almost all of them were born in the country. Most of them are now between 18 and 35 years old, with those who are actually older than 27 being a minority. Sub-saharan African migrants in total do not comprise more than 3% of the total migrant population in Greece, and the second generation in total, minors and adults as well, are no more than a few hundred. A large percent of African origin second generation are still minors. This is explained by a variety of reasons, the main one being that Africans as economic migrants started arriving in Greece mainly after 1995. Family reunification is highly practiced among Africans and this explains why some of the second-generation children were born in the countries of origin. Still, this is a small percentage if we take into account the total numbers of second generation Africans residing in Athens<sup>25</sup>.

When I started doing my fieldwork in June 2010, I came across many second generation young adults. Some of them were really willing to help me with my research, others were not so interested. Still, I met some people who, besides helping me gain access to places I would never manage alone; we also became really close friends. Hanging around with them sometimes was even more valuable than interviews or round tables. Having them in my everyday life helped me develop skills and really – paraphrasing Malinowski (1922:25) - ‘grasp the *insiders*’ point of

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<sup>25</sup>There is no official data regarding the exact number of African origin youth born and raised in Greece. All information concerning population data is unofficial and was provided by the African communities and the Greek Migrant Forum [www.migrant.gr].

view', something it would have been impossible to do if we had stuck to formal relationships. Observing my reality with them, and by being actually and physically present in a number of incidents they describe, made me aware of their problems and their reality in multiple ways. Their life stories, either as they narrated them to me when I asked them to, or when they felt like doing so without me asking, are the bottom line, the key to understanding the complexity of their situation in the Greek society. Moreover, the narrations of incidents or stories by the youngsters themselves, are sometimes the most powerful tools to be used in order to explore their lives, their identities, the multiple ways they see their presence and trace (or do not trace) their belonging to Greece.

I intend to highlight the situation these youngsters find themselves in, by choosing to cite some of their life stories. In some cases, skin color and immigrant background are the only things some of the second generation children have in common. In other cases, you feel like constantly having déjà vu. The stories are the same; the same pattern is repeated by many different individuals. The fact is that I came across such different and yet such identical life stories.

### **3.1 PORTRAITS OF THE YOUTH OF AFRICAN BACKGROUND**

Alex was born in 1981 in Athens. His parents, both originating from Nigeria, came to Greece in the late 70's, in order to study. They met here and got married. Both of them managed to finish the Greek University; his mother studied economics and his father law. Yet, they never found a job equivalent to their qualifications and they always had different kinds of occupations. Alex grew up in the city center, in Patisia<sup>26</sup>, and went to the public school of his neighborhood. He was a total minority back then; there were very few black children in the city and he was the only one in his school. After finishing high school, he entered University, in the faculty he desired, yet he had to leave after only 3 months. The University was located in a city in northern Greece and his family could not afford the expenses. In addition, according to the law, he was an adult, which meant that he had to obtain a personal residence permit as he was no longer considered a protected family member. Moreover, his permit was linked to the labor market, meaning that in order to continue residing legally in Greece he had to find a full time job. At the age of 18, Alex had no passport and no residence permit. The only document he had was a paper from the hospital where he was born; he did not even have a birth certificate because children of migrants were not eligible for registration in the municipality's registrar.

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<sup>26</sup>Patisia is an Athenian neighborhood close to the city center. See map, p.103

When I reached 18, I did not know what to do, where to go, whom to ask. Finally, I managed to apply for a residence permit at the Immigration Service. When I went there, the policemen looked at me as if I was some sort of an alien. ‘How is it possible not having a Greek identity card?’ they asked me. I applied for a residence permit for humanitarian reasons. They gave me a plain protocol number, no photo, no name, nothing. For the State I was nothing but a number. One day, I was stopped again by the police. When I showed them this piece of paper they took me to the police station. They told me that I had to wait for a signal from the Police Head Office that my file was clear. A whole day passed yet nothing came. The commander said to put me in prison. I was shocked! I was put in a cell with drug addicts, thieves and pickpockets. I was 19 years old. I felt so scared but at the same time so embarrassed... The funny thing was that there was the good and the bad commander. When the good one was coming, they were taking me out of the cell and they had me sitting at an office. When the bad one was coming, I had to go back to the cell. Then, three days later, the good one decided to take me and go together to the centrals, in order to find my case file. They transported me with a police car and officers, as if I was some sort of a criminal. I remember we went to a basement full of drawers and files. It took them five minutes to find mine! I was set free. I will never forget that the good commander apologized to me... [...] What happened made me feel so upset. What I feared the most was this sentiment of injustice. Someone could end up in a cell without realizing how and why. At the age most people make dreams I had to fight for my papers. I had to resolve my residence permit problem so I would not end up in a cell again. I spent infinite hours, days, weeks queuing in municipalities and prefectures. I finally got my residence permit but it expired ten days later... I had to do the whole procedure all over again. Queues, lost days, lost life. What is left for me? One question. Why are they doing this? (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

Alex has never been in Nigeria, yet he has the Nigerian citizenship. This means that he has to renew his residence permit in order to reside legally in Greece. He managed to get a Nigerian passport after a ‘diplomatic episode’, as he refers to it. After getting his passport, he was eligible to apply for a residence permit as any migrant would do. There was no special type of permit for the children of the migrants who were born in the country and were reaching adulthood. In order to do this though, one had to find a full time job and get the required amount of *ensima*<sup>27</sup>. A year later he managed to enter another faculty in Athens, where he could attend classes and work at the same time. Alex is now 32 years old and works in the private sector. He never managed to finish University.

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<sup>27</sup>Unit of national social insurance contributions.

Victor has a similar life story. He was born in 1980 in Athens to Nigerian parents, and he is the oldest of four siblings. His father came to study in the 70's, and some years later he managed to bring his mother as well. Victor grew up and attended school in Patisia, a neighborhood very close to Kypseli. Even though he grew up in a neighborhood that is now inhabited by migrants, it was not the case when he was growing up. Patisia in the 80's and 90's was mainly inhabited by Greeks. His family was one of the very few African families in the neighborhood. For Victor, realizing he was a foreigner in the country where he was born came as soon as he reached adulthood.

I had just finished high school and one afternoon, while I was walking around, the police stopped me and asked for my documents. The only thing I had with me was my birth certificate. I thought it was more than enough concerning the fact that I was born here. They took me to the police station telling me that my papers were not ok. One of the police officers told me that I would be deported. 'You are going to deport me where?' I asked. 'At the border, so you'll go where you came from', he answered. 'But I did not come from anywhere. I was born here', I said. No answer was given. Deportation, borders, all these looked like a movie to me. I was terrified. I stayed there, in the dark, for three days, sleeping on the floor together with 2 guys from Pakistan who spoke neither English nor Greek. These 3 days changed everything. With the help of friends and lawyers I was set free. [...] Then came the queues, the certificates, the stamps, the offices, the employees, the endless waiting. And when you finally get your residence permit, you realize it has already expired. And that you have to do the whole thing from the beginning! (Victor, 33, born in Greece)

Victor and his siblings live and work at the moment in Athens. The whole family are holders of residence permits, and none of them has ever applied for either naturalization or citizenship with the Act 3838. Neither he, nor his siblings have ever been in Nigeria.

Emanuel's story is a rather interesting one. He has 5 brothers and sisters all of whom were born in Greece. He was born in the late 80's in Athens and grew up in Vironas, an area not so close to the city center. His grandfather was a Kenyan Priest who came to Greece in 1970 to study in a Hieratic School. He was one of the first Africans who migrated to Greece. After a while he managed to bring his wife and one of his children, while the rest of the family came in 1971. Emanuel's mother was 5 years old when she first came to Greece and has never left the country since then. She finished school in Athens and studied to become a nurse. As long as the grandfather was alive, he was helping his daughter cope with her five children, whom she raised all alone after divorcing her husband. As a single mother and a mother of many children, she

was unable most of the times to obtain the necessary *ensima* which resulted in her inability to renew her residence permit. For the children though, the lack of a residence permit was the least of their problems. With a mother originating from Kenya and a father originating from Nigeria, they failed to acquire citizenship from either country. According to the Greek legislation, they could not be registered in their municipality's registrar in Greece. Yet they were never registered at any registrar in their countries of origin either. In other words, those children do not exist, as they are officially non-citizens.

Even though the right to a nationality is one of the fundamental human rights there are many children born in Greece are not recognized either from Greece or from their parents' countries of origin. Without any document at all, it is impossible for them to acquire any kind of residence permit. Furthermore, their official non-existence makes them even more vulnerable, but at least protects them from deportation as there is no place to be deported to. Possessing a birth certificate as the only proof of their existence, they face extreme difficulties in graduating from school, entering University, finding and keeping a job or accessing the health care system. They cannot rent a house, buy a car, open a bank account, travel or be officially hired and insured. The possibilities to access higher education and acquire well-paid jobs are diminished dramatically, and one is destined to low-income and low-status jobs. Emmanuel's grandfather, besides being a priest, had a University Degree in Political Sciences from Panteion University, Athens. His mother studied and became a nurse. Neither Emanuel nor any of his brothers and sisters managed to go further than high school.

Still, there are a few children of African background that have completely different life stories to narrate.

My name is Andreas, and I was born in 1985 in Athens. [...] My primary school was in Vironas and my secondary in Pagrati<sup>28</sup>. School years... beautiful years, carefree, very few kids of migrant origin, I was the only one from Africa. This was rather good for me; my friends always took extra care of me, (he laughs) [...] I belong to the few lucky children whose parents started their own naturalization process while I was still a minor. This means, that when the parents acquire the citizenship, the children automatically take it as well. I have had the Greek citizenship since I was 8 years old, so I have never experienced this torture with long queues, expensive deposits, etc, in order to get papers which ensure me nothing, and wait for a paper that most likely will already be expired when I get it. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

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<sup>28</sup>Pagrati is an Athenian neighborhood. See map p.103

Andreas is one of the few lucky ones that never struggled for their papers. His parents began their own naturalization process very early and they acquired Greek citizenship when their children were still minors. Andreas has had the Greek citizenship since the age of eight. He acquired it automatically after his parents became Greek citizens. Both of his parents originate from Uganda and are holders of higher education degrees. His grandfather was an admirer of the Greek civilization and this is why he chose Greece as the destination country for his son's studies. Andreas' father, originating from a rather wealthy family, came to Greece at the age of 22 to study, after winning a scholarship. His mother came to Greece at the age of 12. She originated from a poor family and their parents decided to send her to Greece to live with her uncle, who was a member of the clergy in Greece, so she could have more opportunities and a better life than the one they could offer her. Andreas' parents met here and got married. The family lives in Vironas neighborhood and both Andreas and his younger sister went to public schools there. His parents realized very early the importance of citizenship acquisition for them and their children. Furthermore, it shows rather clearly that they had decided to stay and build their lives in Greece. Both of them have well-paid high status jobs and in combination with the citizenship, they travel often to Uganda to see family and friends. Andreas has a higher education degree and his sister is about to finish high school in a couple of years.

Harriet is 21 years old and has two siblings. She is studying in a TEI (Technical Education Institute) and working at the same time. She was born in Greece to a Nigerian father and a Kenyan mother, both of whom came here in order to study. Her mother holds 2 degrees, one in Tourism and Hotel Management, and another in Advertising. Her father holds a degree in Agriculture. Yet, none of them used their degree to find a job; her mother does not work and her father runs the family business. The plan was not to stay in Greece forever. They moved to Nigeria and stayed there for 3 years when Harriet was 4 years old. When they moved back to Greece, both she and her sister went to a private English speaking primary school. Harriet started attending a Greek public school at the age of 14. Greece was not supposed to be the final destination for the family, yet, for various reasons mainly related to the legal status of its members, they never left. Harriet's older sister is studying abroad at the moment and her younger sister is attending secondary school. Her mother, after all these years, still considers Greece a transit country and wants to migrate to the UK or the USA. Her father applied for naturalization almost 8 years ago but his application was rejected. Her mother has a valid residence permit but her father always receives his, already expired. Harriet and her older sister applied for the Greek citizenship a while after the Act 3838 was voted. They are the only African origin children who have received a positive answer so far. They were granted the

citizenship, they have taken the vow but they have not yet received their new ID cards. At the moment though, all the procedures are frozen and they do not know what will happen to their applications.

Ali's father was an economic migrant who came to Greece in the mid 90's. He and his mother followed a couple of years later, after his father's family reunification application was approved. Ali was born in Sierra Leone and came to Greece at the age of six. He is an only child and one of the few second generations originating from Sierra Leone. Yet, he is one of those lucky children, whose family never had big issues with their residence permits, allowing them to travel back to Sierra Leone quite often. His father is educated, works for a shipping company and travels a lot. Ali was actually raised by his mother who stayed behind in order to take care of him. She used to work as a cleaner but at the moment is unemployed. Both of his parents see Greece as a transit country, as a place to work for a few years and then go away, preferably to France or Canada, or even back to Sierra Leone when they grow older. Ali finished his schooling in Greece and is now attending University. He grew up in Kypseli and attended both an intercultural and a Greek school. He applied for the Greek citizenship with the Act 3838 but still has not received any answer. The reason why he wants citizenship so much is because it will allow him to study and live abroad. He dreams of going abroad to live, considering that Greece has not many employment opportunities to offer, especially to children of migrant origin. Both Christian and Colette were born in Congo in the late 80's. Their father came to Greece as a medical student in the early 90's. The rest of the family arrived in Greece in 1991, and their younger siblings were born in Athens in the 90's. Their mother worked as a cleaner for a couple of years but she stopped working when she gave birth to her younger daughters. Christian's father, even though highly educated, never managed to find a job either as a doctor or a male nurse. He had to find another job in order to economically support his large family. He worked as a housekeeper for many years and now works in construction. It was because of his job as a housekeeper that he managed to learn Greek. The whole family lives in Ambelokipous and all the children attended the Greek schools of their neighborhood. Christian is a professional athlete but has problems traveling abroad because of his residence permit. He wants to go abroad but considering the fact that as an athlete, he has no home, he goes wherever he is offered the best contract. Both he and his father applied for naturalization, but still none of them have received any answer. His mother and his sisters are still holders of residence permits. Colette also wanted to apply for the citizenship with the Act 3838 but she never did because her residence permit arrived already expired and she had to renew it before she could submit her papers.

Another very interesting story is that of Athena's. She is one of the many African origin youngsters that are non-citizens; in other words they do not have any citizenship at all. Athena was born and raised in Athens by Kenyan parents. Her father however, passed away before registering her in Kenya's registrar and her mother was unable to transmit her nationality to her daughter because in Kenya, as in Greece till 1984, *jus sanguinis a matre* was not recognized. At the same time, according to the Greek legislation, Athena was not eligible to acquire the Greek citizenship being born to foreign parents. As a result, Athena, currently 26 years old, has no citizenship. Even though the Greek legislation theoretically protects the non-citizens born on its soil by granting them the Greek citizenship, the specific Law is not being implemented in practice. Therefore, Athena has failed to acquire the Greek citizenship even though she has passed all the committees examining her case and her inability to acquire her mother's nationality. As a result, Athena has no passport, no identity card, finds it very difficult to apply for a residence permit, cannot enter University, cannot be insured, cannot work legally since she cannot have a fiscal number, cannot rent a house, open a bank account or acquire a driver's license. She finished high school and was forced to continue her studies in a private University since she could not be accepted at the public one without any form of formal ID. She was one of the top students in her class and won a scholarship to Harvard University in order to continue there for her Master's degree. She could not go because she has no passport. She cannot have a passport unless she becomes a citizen of a State. Luckily for her, she was allowed to attend the distance learning program of the University. At the moment, Athena holds a Master's degree from Harvard University but is working as a shop assistant. Nobody can legally hire her without any form of formal ID or a fiscal number.

### **3.2 IDENTITY FORMATION PROCESS OF THE YOUTH OF AFRICAN BACKGROUND**

In June 2010, I moved to Athens in order to start my fieldwork. I do not originate from the city, so for me it was the first time living in the capital. The reason I choose to mention this is because I grew up in a city where second generation was much less visible and was -and still is- mainly composed of Albanian or Russian origin children. Yet in Athens, this is not the case. The second generation there may also be highly represented by Eastern European and Albanian origin children, yet there are also many of Asian and African origin. The different phenotype of those children challenges their integration process as they are perceived as migrants due to their



external characteristics. This becomes more obvious as they enter adulthood and start interacting more actively with the society. Being treated as migrants both by the State and by a large part of the Greek society, the second generation is discriminated against and is deprived of their basic social, political and civic rights. Moreover, the numbers of migrant origin youth are rising, leading a significant part of the country's younger population into social degradation and exclusion.

The second generation in Greece today numbers approximately 200.000 people, the majority of whom are still minors. Still, the older representatives of the second generation make themselves visible in the universities, labor market, and society in general. As those children grow up, questions concerning the levels of their integration and their access to rights become more and more relevant, especially in the Greek setting, which does not have a formal or institutionalized model of integration and grants citizenship according to the *jus sanguinis* model. Citizenship acquisition, and the rights and obligations that accompany it, are considered a sole privilege of those of Greek descent only.

Greece was considered a rather homogeneous country and was conceived as such by its people as well. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the different ethnic groups that resided in the country together with the refugees from Asia Minor, were successfully assimilated or in case they resisted, they were either forced to flee or suffer an ethnic cleansing; however this fact was effectually suppressed by the official history of the Greek State (Margaritis 2005). Greek nationalism today originates from the false belief of a homogenous people who managed to stay unsullied from 'the barbarians' who once resided in its soil. It wasn't until the early 90's that Greece was transformed from an emigration to an immigration country. Large numbers of migrants started to arrive, yet the State was unprepared to accept them. Lack of migration policies for a long time, in combination with the adoption of fragmentary policies later on, have lead to an increasing number of problems regarding not only the legislation that governs migration, but also the integration process of both first and second generations.

Integration is a two-way long-term process which is facilitated or incomed by a number of factors. There is no such thing as straightforward and unproblematic integration of the second generation. The process indeed, is much more complex (Gans 1992). Factors such as gender, race, religion, educational or economic status, country of origin or host country, legislation and society, make the integration process a unique experience for each individual. Furthermore, identity formation is a continuous process and should be analyzed as such. In the Greek context, studying the second generation is rather challenging, taking into consideration the fact that it is being formed at the very moment. Greece has been an immigrants' destination for the past 20

years meaning that the children of migrants are coming of age as we speak. The vast majority of the second generation children are still minors, yet it is rather worthy to focus on the young adults, the children of all those people who arrived in the country long before the mass waves of immigration took place. These young adults of migrant background are aged from 18 to 38, and they are the first who have to deal with the harsh reality of the Greek society.

What makes second generation Africans special is their phenotype. Skin color cannot be hidden and it will always betray the foreign origin of an individual. The image of a person that speaks for and before the person itself posed the question for the first time in Greek society ‘is there such thing as a black Greek?’

It was rather challenging trying to explore the identity formation process of people who are not phenotypically the same as Greeks, as Eastern Europeans for example. What was made rather clear to me not only from my presence among youth of African background, but mainly from conversations I had with them was that a basic part of their identity is their *africanness*, and not being Nigerian, Kenyan or Congolese. They identified with Africa and not specific nations, not only because of skin color, but also because of exactly the same problems they were facing in the Greek society. This *africanness*, or being African as a vital part of their identity, is not a sum of specific characteristics. On the contrary, for every one of these youths, Africa represents different things. However, they all agree on one thing. Being of African origin in Greece makes things tough.

When I talk about second generation Africans in Greece, I talk about a few thousand children and young adults. The vast majority of second generation Africans is still under the age of 18. This is explained by the fact that the main waves of African immigration to Greece occurred after the mid 90’s. Yet, I chose to focus on the young adults; the African origin youth aged 18 to 38 mainly because among them, there are great differences. It was rather interesting for me to observe the differences those young adults had among them, and realize that the older they were, the more integrated they were. In other words, the older representatives of the second generation were much more integrated than their younger peers or even their younger siblings. But why? What facilitated the integration of the older second generation and what jeopardizes the integration of the younger second generation? And at the same time, how does integration affect the identity formation process of the youth of African background and vice versa?

I argue that, both integration (successful or unsuccessful) and the identity formation process of the second generation are directly linked to their legal status yet, at the same time are affected by a number of variables. However, as far as my field of study is concerned, particular importance is given to the first generation, the place of residence and the social representation of the

migrants and especially of their children. I investigate these three variables taking into consideration the legal status; not examining it though as a separate (fourth) variable, but as one that crosses and influences all the others. Most conspicuously, how a migrant origin child or young adult forms his identity is linked to multiple factors that influence and shape the process. Moreover, the particular process is subject to everyday changes that are directly connected to the environment in which a person grows up, lives and is socialized. African origin youth have one common characteristic; their skin color that betrays their migrant origin. In other words, their external appearance speaks for and before them. Skin color or racial characteristics in general matter and play a rather significant role in the identity formation process of those youngsters. In other words, race shapes both the way African origin youth perceive themselves, but also the way they are perceived by the society in which they live.

For the purpose of the research three variables are examined as the most influential in the identity formation process of the second generation. First of all, the role played by the first generation; including their integration in the host society focusing primarily on what I refer to as willingness to integrate. Parents and African communities in general promote various forms of ethnic enclosure jeopardizing the successful integration of the younger generations. Second, the place of residence proves to be of major importance in the facilitation of the process. Where a family lives is linked mainly to their economic capital which usually depends on their social and human capital, not so much in the possession as such but on how far migrants were able to use them in the host country. Moreover, the concentration of large numbers of migrant populations in Greece was observed in more degraded areas where the rents were low. One of these areas was Kypseli, where the majority of the African population residing in Athens is concentrated. Living and socializing mainly among other Africans, younger second generation have fewer contacts with the Greek society and at the same time start perceiving themselves as Africans only, endangering their social inclusion. Last, the social representation of migrants and their children play an important role in the identity formation of the youth of African background. Due to their distinct racial characteristics, Africans are perceived as 'others' ad hoc. And especially after the mass migration flows of the early 1990's, all those who do not look and act Greek are automatically perceived as migrants. Being both black and Greek are still mutually exclusive categories and youth of African background find themselves trapped into the category of the migrant even when born or/and raised in Greece (Andall 2002).

At the same time, the precarious legal status of all those children influences, and most conspicuously the formal denial of citizenship cross cuts all the variables mentioned above. At the moment, there is no Law granting citizenship to the children of foreign parents born or raised

in Greece, and the only way for those youngsters to acquire the Greek citizenship is through naturalization, a rather time-consuming, strict and expensive process. Moreover, paper issues, besides the practical difficulties they cause, have a rather important side-effect relating mostly to the notion of belonging. On the one hand, youth of migrant background fail to feel attached to Greece mainly because Greece does not recognize them as its citizens. On the other hand, those who feel they belong to Greece, feel betrayed by the State when they realize that those feelings are not only unrecognized, but also denied. Confusion, denial, frustration, disappointment or anger are some of the feelings expressed by the second generation interviewed, having a clear effect on the way they perceive themselves in the country they considered a home country for many years. Most conspicuously, feeling not Greek is partially imposed by the State policies and jeopardizes the integration of the second generation. Moreover, the majority of the Greek society does not perceive those children either as an integral part of theirs, thus promoting their ethnic enclosure and their false perception as migrants.

First generations' *willingness* to integrate, place of residence and the social representations of migrant origin youth are the three variables used in the research in order to investigate the identity formation of the youth of African background and will be discussed separately. Yet, those variables are not distinct or separate; on the contrary they are directly linked to each other, influencing and being influenced. Moreover, a fourth variable, the one related to the legal status and the access to citizenship by the second generation will be discussed in comparison to all three other variables and not as a distinct one since it cross cuts all the above.

### 3.2.1 THE FIRST GENERATION: SENSE OF TEMPORALITY AND *WILLINGNESS* TO INTEGRATE

The role of the State in excluding the second generation by not granting them citizenship and by treating them as migrants is of major significance. However, the responsibility of the migrant communities and the families of the children in also favoring ethnic enclosure is not to be forgotten. In other words, besides the social exclusion that is somewhat 'imposed' on the migrant origin youth on the part of the society and the state policies, there are some aspects of exclusion that are also favored by the migrant communities.

In order to comprehend the identity formation process of the second generation, a close examination of the first generation is necessary. The levels of integration of the second generation are influenced by the attitudes of the first generation, and are shape factors of the children's identity. The role played by the first generation in the integration process of the second is of major significance. In other words, how well the second generation is integrated, is

highly connected to the position the first generation holds in the host society. Social exclusion and problematic integration of the children is highly linked to their parents' unsuccessful integration.

The older representatives of the second generation are the children of the first Africans who came to Greece in the mid 70's mainly as students and not as economic migrants. The younger members of the second generation (mostly minors and a few adults) are mainly children of economic migrants and rarely of people who came here to study. This of course does not mean that they were not holders of higher education degrees from their countries of origin. Yet, having an educational capital that was not recognized in the country of settlement or having no educational capital at all, led them to occupy mostly low-income low-status jobs. Consequently, this created a series of problems concerning the renewal of their residence permits. Residence permits for migrants are directly connected to the labor market and their renewal is subject to the employment status of each individual. In other words, unemployment or black market employment may lead to the loss of a legal residence permit, as in both cases no *ensima*<sup>29</sup> are given to the migrant worker. At the same time, less educated migrants are most likely to face problems with the issuing or renewal of their residence permit because of their difficulty in understanding the legal procedures needed for the acquisition of a residence permit together with an insufficient knowledge of the Greek language. Furthermore, a low income leads to low economic capital for a migrant and his family. The main consequences of such a situation are that the migrant will probably not be able to pay the deposit on time which is needed for the renewal of his own and his family's permit and they also inhabit a degraded area where house rents are cheaper. Not being able to renew a residence permit deprives the whole family of a legal status and makes it harder for its members not only to find a subsequent job but also enroll the children at school or have access to the health care system.

Besides the legal and economic status as key factors for the integration of the first generation, the policies of the host country are also of major importance. Integration, as a two-way process, must be supported by state policies in order to be successful. Unfortunately, the lack of such policies in Greece, has transformed integration into a rather difficult and challenging process for the majority of the African migrants. However, as far as the children of the migrants are concerned, the successful or unsuccessful integration of the first generation is highly connected with the integration level of the second. In other words, more integrated parents are likely to raise successfully integrated children, whereas socially excluded parents have many possibilities of transmitting their social status to their children. Is integration however, a process that has to

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<sup>29</sup> See footnote 27, p.79

do only with the economic and legal status of the migrant on the one hand and the migration and integration policies of the host country on the other, or is there also another factor?

*Today I met Maria's mother for the first time. A rather tiny young woman, she did not look like a mother of a 20 year old girl at all. Actually she was more like her older sister. Maria introduced her to me in English. It was a bit weird for me to start speaking to Maria in English because we always communicated in Greek, but I introduced myself in English and I smiled. Maria's mother was rather shy and did not say much. She did not talk directly to me; she was looking mostly at Maria and let her do the talking. To be honest, I was rather surprised by the fact that she did not speak Greek. We had the entire conversation in English, but I expected that after 20 years of being in Greece she would have become rather fluent in Greek. Well, apparently not. Maria told me that she (her mother) spoke a bit of Greek but during the whole conversation I did not hear her utter a single word in Greek. I kept wondering why this was happening, I had really expected us to have the conversation in Greek and turn to English only in cases of emergency. On my way back home I couldn't stop thinking about the previous meeting. I could not fully understand how it was possible to live in a country for more than 20 years and still not speak the language. How can you find a job? How can you help your children with their homework? How can you socialize with the natives? How can you integrate in the society without speaking the language; if not perfectly, then at least moderately? The obvious answer is that you can't. Maria's mother was not integrated in the Greek society and, up to a certain point, this was her own fault. From what I knew from Maria from previous conversations we had had, her mother has always worked in the family business, socialized exclusively in the African community and has always wanted to leave. This way it made sense. She never learned Greek because she did not want to and moreover she did not actually need it since her whole life was surrounded only by Africans. [notes from my fieldwork diary]*

I argue that the *willingness* to integrate is of major importance in the equation. And this willingness is highly connected with whether the host country is seen as transit or a final destination. In other words, the sense of temporality that most of the African migrants have, affects their willingness to integrate. Those who considered Greece their final destination were willing to integrate and made an effort in this direction. Yet, the Africans who saw it as a transit country never made that effort, believing it was a waste of time as they would leave soon. Most conspicuously, willingness to integrate as far as the first generation is concerned, is associated with linguistic proficiency, legal status, studying, stable employment, and not practicing ethnic enclosure. Lack of linguistic skills was a rather more common characteristic among African migrants who did not consider Greece their final destination.

My mum speaks Kikuyu, Swahili and English. She doesn't speak Greek that well even though she has been here all these years. I guess, because she has a negative attitude towards Greece and Greek society, she never made an effort to sit and learn; to integrate... She can understand, she can speak a bit –the basics-in her everyday life she can manage. (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

Harriet's mother came to Greece in the late 80's. She speaks very little Greek and has no relationships with people outside the African Community. She still wants to leave and consciously denies integrating in the society believing that there is no reason to do so, because she will leave soon. Yet, more than 20 years have passed and she is still here. Cases like this are often seen among African families. Quite a few of my younger interviewees had parents who considered Greece a transit country; a gateway to Europe or the USA.

My parents still have a sense of temporality and this has become more obvious now with the crisis; the reasons that kept them here do not exist anymore. What kept them here was the fact that their business was going well. My mother managed to become integrated in the Greek society, but my father always wanted to leave. He still wants to. Not go back; he wants to go to the UK or the USA... (Anna, 20, born in Greece)

Many of the African migrants never left, yet they raised their families cultivating a sense of temporality and non belonging that jeopardized the integration of the children in the host society. What is rather important to investigate however, are the reasons behind the willingness or denial of the first generation to integrate.

Portes, Fernandez-Kelly and Haller (2009:1079) argued that there are some exogenous factors that indicate migrant people's futures in the host country. One of those exogenous factors is the social context that receives the migrants upon their arrival. Families who migrate into cities with already established communities of co-patriots are more likely to receive help and use the already existent links in order to find accommodation, jobs, and use their human capital. Furthermore, the laws concerning migration and the attitudes of the receiving society towards migrants should be taken into consideration. A hostile migration policy and society, in combination with a weak or non-existent ethnic community might jeopardize the transformation of their human capital into an equivalent occupation. In Greece however, this was mainly the case for the majority of the African migrants. With weak ethnic communities most African migrants failed to receive the help they needed upon arrival. Moreover, the migration policies implemented in Greece were (and still are) rather hostile, creating multiple problems usually related to the issuing of residence permits for migrants and their offspring. Having to face

multiple problems, many African migrants not only started seeing Greece as a transit country but also developed rather negative feelings towards it.

What I perceive as *willingness* to integrate is highly related to the exogenous factor of the receiving social context as argued by Portes, Fernandez-Kelly and Haller (2009:1079). Most conspicuously the *willingness* to integrate showed by the first generation is in many cases retrospective of the social conditions they found in the host country. Yet, refusing to integrate resulted in their definitive social exclusion. In other words, reacting to the social context they found in Greece contributed to their own stigmatization and marginalization. Unfortunately, this attitude resulted in jeopardizing the integration of their children in the only society they knew. In a conversation I had with Abi, a 19 year old girl originating from Sierra Leone, she admitted that due to the problems her parents faced when they first arrived in the country, she had difficulties seeing Greece as her country even though she was born here.

It's because of my parents I think. I can understand where this rage comes from, and why. My parents came here, had lots of trouble and they ended up disliking the country. There are many reasons for this situation though, I mean they didn't manage to integrate and the State did not help them to do so. They have a negative image of the country and I can sense it. I grew up feeling that Greece is not my country, I just happened to live here. They raised me telling me that Greece is not my country; that we would leave soon. I don't know how I feel exactly. I can't say I feel Greek...I have never been to Sierra Leone though [...] my dad always said that we would go to the UK one day. But, as you see, I am still here. (Abi, 19, born in Greece)

I have exactly the same problems as my parents do. I mean I must have a residence permit and really cannot understand why. I was born here and until a few years ago I thought I was like my Greek friends. My parents used to say to me that I was different; that we are Africans; that we are migrants. I did not want to believe them. I remember my dad always talking about going to France or Belgium. My uncle lives there and things are much better for Africans there. But I liked it here and I did not want to leave ...Big mistake... I am like my parents, a migrant. Only I don't know where I migrated from. At least, if I go to Belgium, I will know... I will be a migrant from Greece! It may sound funny but for me it sucks, really. (Lamin, 20, born in Greece)

Many times, the negative experiences of the first generation are transmitted to the children, who start seeing Greece through the eyes of their parents. Yet, not having ever lived in another country besides Greece, there is nowhere they can trace their belonging to. Most conspicuously, feelings of non-belonging expressed by the children were increased by the denial of parents to



integrate. The first generation, regarding Greece a host society, never took into consideration that for the second generation it was the only homeland they knew.

A sense of belonging is a vital part of the integration process, not only for the first but mainly for the second generation. The first generation may feel a sentimental sense of belonging to their country of origin and a more rational one to the country of settlement, but for the second generation their parents' country of origin cannot represent any real form of belonging. On the contrary a sense of belonging is developed for the place they have lived their entire lives, not having had any actual experience of living in another country. In other words, the fact that second generation children grow up not having any sense of belonging to Greece can be attributed to their parents' attitude towards their host country. Children, who internalize their parents' negative feelings and experiences, tend to develop a negative attitude towards Greece, without realizing that they end up cutting themselves off from the only place they have lived.

On the other hand, children who were raised in families who had chosen Greece as a country of settlement followed a completely different behavior pattern. The attitude of the parents towards the Greek society and their place within it resulted in children being more secure about their own presence in their parents' host country. Families that manage to achieve a middle class status on arrival, or, after a while because of possessing high human capital, are more likely to maintain or improve their status in the second or third generation. The majority of such families face upward assimilation by practicing consonant acculturation where the whole family focuses on learning and adopting the culture and language of the host country (Portes *et al.* 2009). Yet, in Greece, the attitude of the parents towards the Greek society highly determines the formation of the primal stable forms of belonging to Greece. According to my research, the socio-economic status of the parents (including their human capital) was not always indicative of the integration level of either generation. Among my informants were children belonging to the middle classes (considering the family income) yet their parents had little or no willingness to integrate while others, having chosen Greece as a country of permanent settlement, no matter their human or economic capital, were rather integrated. Moreover, the feelings of belonging children expressed towards Greece were not always indicative of their socio-economic position either. Yet, in the few rare cases when children were holders of the Greek citizenship, their feelings of belonging to Greece were not in question as in all cases they conceived their presence and social position in the society as something natural. The possession of an identity card and a passport was the vivid proof of their secure and acknowledged position in the Greek society and their 'official' belonging to it (Colombo *et al.* 2011).

My country, my home is here. I am one of the lucky ones because my parents took care of our papers when we were little. [...] I was always rather relaxed; I never had to chase anything. (Katerina, 22, born in Greece)

I never had to prove why I was here. I just was. For me it was something natural. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

The role of the family in the integration process of the children is of major importance. The children, being socialized first of all in the family, are influenced by their parents in multiple ways. At the same time, parents are responsible for transmitting their social or cultural capital to their children (Bourdieu 1986), through which children negotiate their own position in the society. For any kind of capital to be used though, a legal status that permits its use should be acquired in the first place. Lack of a residence permit for the first generation and citizenship for the second may endanger their upward social mobility. Moreover, for migrant origin youth, the use of any capital provided by the family is in constant dialogue with their integration process. In other words, the integration of the second generation facilitates and is facilitated by the acquisition of diverse forms of capital. Parents, by denying to integrating or by not managing to integrate, jeopardize the integration process of their children as well. The unsuccessful integration of the first generation is translated in anger and they usually disdain the host society, considering it a transit country both for them and their children as well. Most of them, having known no other homeland, find it difficult to identify with Greece because of their parents' attitude on the one hand, and because of issues regarding their legal status on the other. For other second generation though, paper issues, as frustrating as they were, were not enough to rupture their feelings of belonging to Greece.

### 3.2.1.1 YOUTH IN MOTION

Going away is a common dream among migrant youth of African background. Many of them have been raised in families that still see Greece as a transit country, after 15 or 20 years of residence. Yet this notion of temporality and non-belonging is transmitted to the younger generation who see their future away from Greece. A future that becomes a reality for very few children though, mainly due to problems with their residence permits.

A desire to leave Greece was articulated by many of my interviewees regardless of their sense of belonging. The sense of belonging they felt or did not feel, affected the way they perceived their departure from the country. For the majority of the second generation, the desire to leave was supported by their precarious legal status, the lack of opportunities, and the constant

discrimination and social exclusion they were subject to on behalf of the State policies and the society. Many of the younger second generation were confident that their lives would be affected positively if they moved abroad. They highlighted the difficulty to acquire formal citizenship in Greece and as Adam (20, born in Greece) stated, 'if I am to be treated as a migrant in the country I was born, I would rather become one and move to London'. Unfortunately though, mainly younger second generation tended to romanticize the rest of the Western countries, the same way their parents did. However, not all children decided to leave for the reasons mentioned above. Personal goals and ambitions in combination with Greece's financial crisis has led both migrant and non migrant youth to look for a better future abroad, without denying their strong connections to Greece.

One of the main characteristics of the African migrants living in Greece is their sense of temporality. They consider Greece a transit country even after having spent more than 15 or 20 years here. This sense of temporality is transmitted usually to the children as well, who see their future outside Greece. Yet, practical problems, having to do mainly with legal residence permits, hold parents and children alike trapped in the country. Still, though, this sense of temporality can be seen as the reason why Africans are considered one of the less integrated migrant communities, even though they are among the first who arrived in the country.

The sense of temporality may hinder the integration process of both first and second generation. Feelings of non-belonging in the country were mainly encountered in young adults who were raised by parents who perceived Greece as a transit country.

If they call me tomorrow to tell me that my identity card is ready, I will finish my University semester and I will leave [...] there is nothing to hold me here. The only thing that holds me back at this very moment is my inability to leave. But as soon as I have the chance, I will.  
(Jamal, 19, came at age 5)

Jamal originates from Tanzania and came to Greece when he was 5 years old. His parents came as economic migrants in the late 90's. He is currently studying in a Private English University in Athens. He applied for the Greek citizenship a year ago and is still waiting for an answer. Yet, the main reason he wants the citizenship is because it will facilitate his plans to leave the country.

*England, France and Belgium are seen as paradise cities for many of the young people I met so far. Even though most of them have never visited those countries, almost all of them have an aunt, an uncle or a cousin who lives there. And what I see happening is exactly the same thing that happens with Africans*

*and their relatives back in Africa. The same way the first generation describe life in Europe as idyllic to their families back home, the same way family members present Paris or London as places where racism is low, employment is easy to find, quality of life is much better and opportunities are all over the place. They describe their lives there as perfect and this has resulted in many second generation youngsters living in Athens, having a completely distorted idea about cities such as London or Paris. They are desperate to move there, actually believing that their lives would change magically from one moment to the next. I have discussed it with Sarah a million times but I cannot make her change her mind about London. Every time she comes to my place she begs me to show her photos of London and tell her about my life there. And she keeps looking at me as if I am describing heaven. So sometimes I just say the nice things because I don't want to spoil her dream. She lies on my bed looking at the ceiling and keeps dreaming about all the fabulous things she could do if she went there. And I feel sad... On the one hand her life here hasn't been a fairytale either; on the contrary, it has been and still is quite tough. So maybe what was tough for me in London, for her is going to be just normal. Every time we meet and we talk about London, all I can see in the end is a girl full of dreams and potential that is desperate to leave because Greece is not offering her anything. No recognition even though she was born here, no birth certificate, no citizenship, not even a valid residence permit. What can possibly be her future here? Would I want to stay if I were in her shoes?*

*Whenever I talk about difficulties or try to tell her that life there is not a fairytale she always says, 'come on, it's London! It can't be like this!' or 'you are so lucky you've lived there. I really can't understand why you came back'. And then she keeps talking about all the opportunities her cousins who live there have, and how great their life is compared to hers. I do not disagree that there are plenty of opportunities in London but what I am always trying to tell her is that the society and the system there are not perfect either. She will be a migrant there as well, she is going to need a residence permit as well, and people may treat her in a racist way there as well. But Sarah insists, 'my cousins say that things like this don't happen there, and even if they do it's just the exception'. [notes from my fieldwork diary]*

The notion of temporality many first generation Africans have, is nourished by the belief that in other European countries things are much better. Countries such as the UK, the USA or Canada for the English speakers, and France or Belgium for the French speakers are considered to be the ideal final destinations. These destinations are often depicted as the 'lands of opportunity', a place where it is worth going at any cost. These countries are seen as places where racism and social inequality do not exist, where black people are visibly present in a range of jobs and professions, and the acquisition of a legal status is a fairer and less bureaucratic procedure.

Many children want to go away because they don't see this country as a place to build their life; they just see it as a gateway to Europe. (Pavlos, 34, came at age 6)

I want to go to England. I have cousins there and they tell me that [in the UK] they give you papers right away. It's not like here where you have to wait for ages. They treat you much better there [...] I will leave as soon as I can, because there you have more opportunities and I can earn more money as well. (Sarah, 21, born in Greece)

Sometimes, the place of residence in many cases becomes more important than the quality of life. The social status it bears is more important than the consequences that follow such a decision. Living in a basement in London is much more appreciated than living in a penthouse in Athens, due to the importance of specific locations in migration flows. Places are idealized and everything else loses its importance. Additionally, the very same act gains a completely different meaning according to the location in which it takes place. The importance of the location becomes the explanatory tool that unlocks the symbolic meaning of certain actions.

I would not mind so much being treated in a racist way in England. Here though, I would never accept it. (Michael, 19, came at age 2)

There are children who go away, and come back here pretending to be important, when actually they do nothing, they clean stairs wherever they are. And I don't say that in a derogatory way, there is nothing wrong with cleaning stairs. Africans have this mentality, one should go abroad even if in the end it is worse there than here. They don't care. From the moment one goes to England, everything is perfect! This is not true though... Many kids want to leave Greece because of this mentality. (Nadia, 28, came at age 1)

Yet there were people among my interviewees willing to acknowledge their connection to Greece and admit that the reason why they were choosing to leave had nothing to do with the notion of belonging. The possibility of a better education, a better job, or more opportunities abroad is a common target for the majority of the youth of both migrant and non migrant background who see their dreams collapse in Greece, mainly because of the current economic situation.

My parents want me to go abroad to study and even live there. They think it is much better than here now, more opportunities for me and my sisters as well. It's not only about the papers; it's about life in general. Things are getting tougher here every day, unemployment is rising and there aren't many opportunities for my Greek friends, -and when I say Greek I mean those who have the citizenship-, imagine for me then [...] My parents want to stay here though, they like it,

they have their life here but most importantly they don't want to migrate again. It was hard enough the first time and they don't want to go through this again. I don't know if I want to leave, my friends are here and I like it here, really. But even if I do, I will always come back to visit my parents and my friends. Plus, for the summer vacation there is no place better than the islands. I love the sun and sea and I wouldn't miss this for anything, really. (Maria-Christina, 19 born in Greece)

Wherever I go, I will come back often. I mean, Greece is a part of me. I like Greece and this started happening from the age of 18. Till then I was more like, 'I'll leave, what am I doing here? I will never come back'. Now that I am more and more integrated, I have other reasons for going away. I want to do things in my life and I cannot do them here. It is so simple. [...] If I leave, I will do it with the same mentality that Greeks leave though, not with the mentality of a migrant because I am not one. How Greek kids go to study in England; it is the same with me. (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

Leaving to study or see other things is rather different from leaving because one feels a foreigner. Yet, the majority of the children wanted to leave because they did not feel they belonged to the country. This notion of non-belonging was accompanied by the belief that in Europe or America, things would be very different. The responsibility of the family in cultivating the sense of temporality in the children in combination with a general African attitude to perceive other western countries as final destinations, was highlighted by many youngsters as a characteristic of the African Diaspora in Greece and as one of the determiners of the unsuccessful integration of the first generation. When I discussed the reasons behind the willingness to leave Greece observed by many younger second generation, some of their peers expressed their disagreement, criticizing both the families and the children. The critique was mainly targeted not at the fact that they wanted to leave Greece, but at the reasons behind such a decision and the non existence of the perfect society.

It happened, for good or for bad, you were born somewhere. Take as much as you can from that place and move on. Use all the things you were given as much as you can in order to become the best you can. I don't get how some people believe that if they go away everything will be different. How can they be different? You will still be a foreigner! When you grow up in a country that is not your country of origin, you will be a stranger everywhere! Even if they go back to Africa, they will be considered strangers there as well. (Katerina, 22, born in Greece)

I really don't get how some children can believe that in England everything is better. It is the same as here. It is stupid to believe that if you move there suddenly your life will be perfect. You will be an immigrant there as well; you will be black there as well. It doesn't make any sense. They just listen to their parents who complain all day about Greece and idolize England or France. (Dimitris, 25, born in Greece)

How a third country is depicted in the eyes of migrants is highly connected to the reality they face in the chosen (or not) country of residence. Most conspicuously, when migrants end up in the country of their preference or -in the case they do not- still manage to integrate in the country they live, they tend to have more positive attitudes towards the receiving society. They see it one way or another as a destination country and many times as a second homeland. In such a case, their children too develop a positive attitude towards what for them is a home country, and they recognize it as such. A sense of belonging to the actual place they live is fundamental for their integration in the society and their identity formation as well. Moreover, as mentioned also by some youngsters, going away from Greece has nothing to do with their emotional attachment to it; on the contrary, Greece is recognized as the homeland they leave in order to search for better life opportunities abroad, as many of their Greek origin peers do.

### 3.2.2 THE PLACE OF RESIDENCE

While I was doing my fieldwork research and for as long as I was trying to understand the identity formation process of migrant origin youth, I realized I was coming across some patterns of attitude and behavior. It was rather incomprehensible for me, at the beginning at least, the fact that older second generation (25-38 years old), tended to be much better integrated in the Greek society than the younger second generation (18-24 years old), who had socialization issues and were less integrated. I was rather concerned about the reasons why such a thing could be happening. I had to find an explanation for this phenomenon because it had more the characteristics of a pattern than of a single or a few cases. What were the differences between older and younger second generation? But most importantly why did these differences occur? How different was the Greek society of the 80's and 90's from the one of the 00's? And how did these changes affect the integration of the second generation?

It all became rather clear when I realized that the integration of the second generation in the society had to do, among other things, with the place of residence. In other words, I argue that the levels of integration of the second generation have to do with where they live and grow up. Moreover, many younger second generation children have integration issues exactly because they live in Kypseli.

Kypseli has become one of the most deprived areas in the city center and is inhabited by large numbers of migrants, mainly due to cheap rents. The majority of the African second generation grew up and live in this particular area. The past few years, increasing migratory flows in combination with the current economic crisis, have turned migrants into a scapegoat for many social and financial problems in Greece. The younger second generation grew up in an era where the social stigma of their parents' migrant status was transferred to them, without actually being migrants themselves. Often, they face social exclusion, and some of those younger second generation have great socialization problems. They are rejecting Greek society the same way the society rejects them. Quite often as well, they develop a reverse form of racism. Having experienced fear, rejection and social exclusion from a very early age for no particular reason except their skin color, they internalized those feelings and reacted by now rejecting, first and foremost, the ones who were different. In this case, skin color becomes a means of discrimination; this time excluding those who are white.

### 3.2.2.1 THE SO-CALLED 'KYPSELI-GHETTO'

When the first African migrants arrived in Greece, mainly as students, the so-called 'Kypseli ghetto' of today, did not even exist. In the mid 70's till mid 80's, Kypseli was an area still inhabited almost exclusively by middle class Greeks. In the 60's and 70's it used to be an upper middle-class neighborhood, but now very few of the old inhabitants of the area still live there. It was in the 80's when the more prosperous Greeks started moving out of Kypseli, following what was to be the dream of every middle class family in the era; a house in the suburbs. Its native inhabitants, who searched for a higher quality of life, away from the city center, were the first to abandon Kypseli. Some of the reasons why Greeks abandoned Kypseli were the narrow streets, the lack of infrastructures and the high buildings attached to each other leaving no space for light to pass through. The rising numbers of migrants who started coming to the country in the 90's, quickly filled the gap. Kypseli was a rather convenient neighborhood for them due to its closeness to the city center and the constantly declining house prices. Nowadays, Kypseli is mainly inhabited by working class Greeks, migrants- old and new-, students, and a few middle or upper class Greeks; the remains of the glorious past of the area.

According to a research made by the sociologist Iris Polyzou and the architect Dimitris Balabanidis<sup>30</sup>(Ta Nea 4 November 2012) 14% of the apartments in Kypseli are empty, while

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<sup>30</sup>Iris Polyzou and Dimitris Balabanidis conducted a research called 'The presence of migrants in the Center of Athens - Housing, trade and free spaces in Kypseli' [Η παρουσία των μεταναστών στο Κέντρο της Αθήνας -



migrants and natives inhabit the rest. New migrants usually inhabit underground or ground floor apartment. Greeks and older migrants with their families inhabit the floors, while the upper floors with the big terraces are almost exclusively inhabited by Greeks. The reason why Kypseli is considered an area with many urban problems is due to the lack of infrastructures, the abandoned buildings, the lack of open spaces, the very high buildings in narrow streets, and the occupation of pavements by vehicles and garbage bins. The vast majority of the African migrants live in Kypseli area, where they have their shops and restaurants. In the same area, there are the offices of almost all African Communities and the majority of their places of worship, unofficial churches or mosques. Very few Africans live outside of the broader Kypseli area, which includes Axarnon and Patision Street, Koliatsou, Kypseli and Amerikis Square. When migrants first come to a foreign country, they usually approach compatriots or their homeland's community in order to feel more secure.

Our parents, when they move to another country, search for a place to live near their compatriots. I find it rather normal. My father chose Kypseli for us to live because he had a very close friend here, who had come to Greece a few years before we came. It was more a reference point for my dad I think, because in the beginning, every time he had a problem, his friend, who spoke Greek, was there to help him out. If we had gone elsewhere, there wouldn't have been anybody to help us in the beginning. (Dion, 21, came at age 1)

When we came to Greece, we found a flat in Kypseli because my dad's cousin lived there as well. (Francis, 19, came at age 2)

It is common in capitals with a high migrant rate, to observe the creation of areas mainly inhabited by people originating from the same country, as for example Chinatown (mainly inhabited by Chinese) or Astoria (mainly inhabited by Greeks) in New York. Kypseli though, is not an area mainly inhabited by Africans but is the area where the majority of the African migrants reside. Living in Kypseli is not a result only of ethnic enclosure of the specific group. On the contrary, Africans who manage to find high-income employment tend to move out of Kypseli. This clearly shows that inhabiting Kypseli is more a need than a choice; a need for cheap housing and security for both newcomers and older migrants. Most conspicuously, living in Kypseli can be seen more as a result of low economic capital and less as a moral choice of the people.

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Στέγαση, εμπορικές δραστηριότητες και ελεύθεροι χώροι στην Κυψέλη]. The research was finished in 2012 but results have not yet been published.

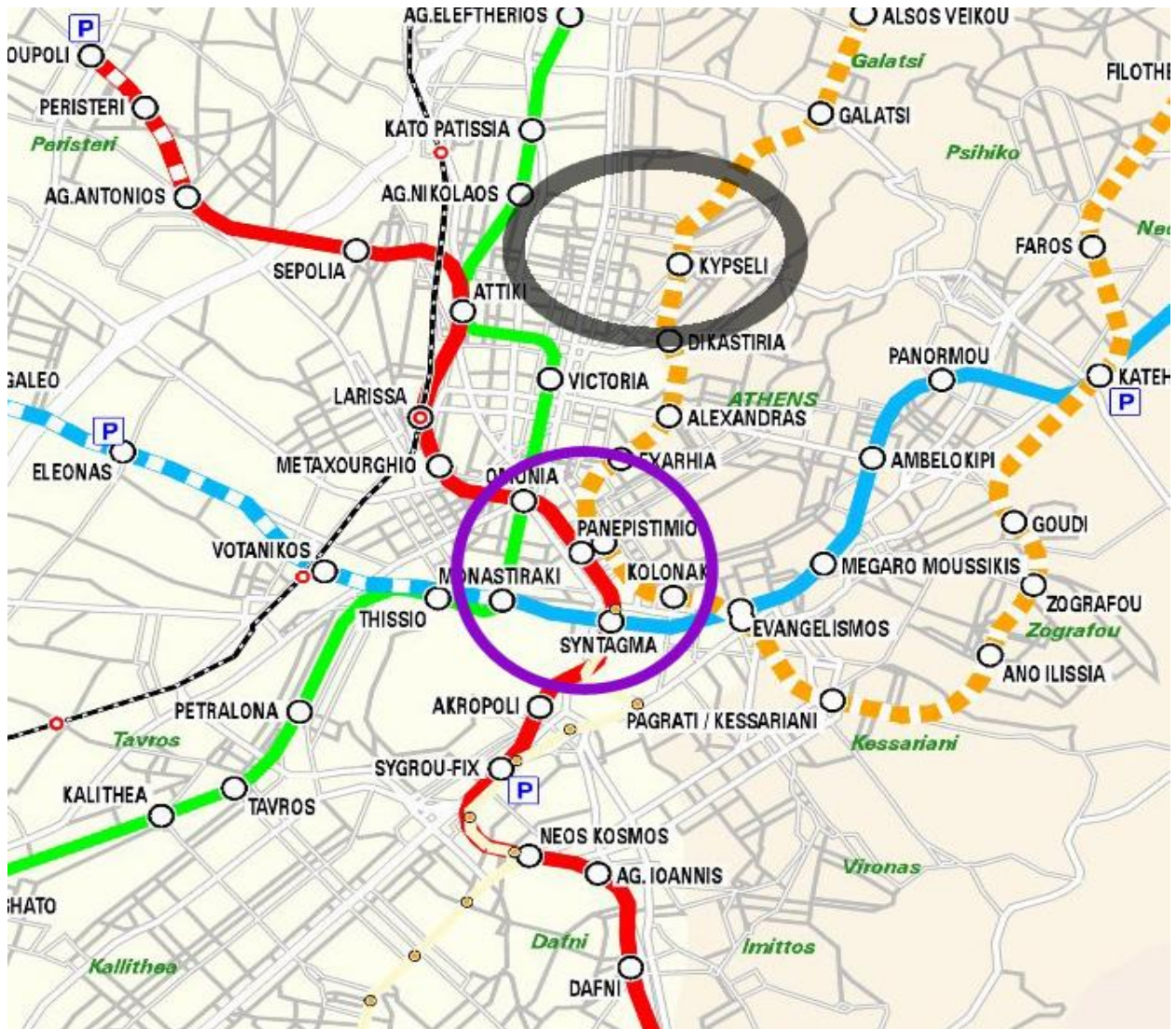
The area of Kypseli, is constantly demonized by mass media and is always referred to as an enclosed 'ghetto' in the heart of the city where wandering alone is dangerous mainly because of the large percentage of immigrant population that reside there. At the same time, migrants are considered to be linked to organized crime, and Kypseli is an area where gangs and their illegal activities flourish. The role of the mass media in transforming -mainly in the public speech- the heart of the city into a ghetto is rather significant. This has resulted in many referring to Kypseli- even though they may not be familiar with the term- as a ghetto. Rather shocking though is that this word is used both by natives and migrants, residents and non residents of the area. In reality though, things are rather different. Kypseli bears no resemblance to the classic ghetto like those that exist in New York or Paris. It may have some characteristics in common but on the whole is rather different.

What is worth mentioning however, is another peculiarity of Athens in comparison to the rest of European capitals. In all European capitals such as London, Paris, Rome or Madrid, the more impoverished areas, heavily inhabited by migrant population, are always located in the suburbs of the city. The famous *banlieus* of Paris lie in the outskirts of the city. Poor migrants live outside the city center, away from the middle class neighborhoods. They exist but they do not 'pollute' the image of the city. Yet in Athens exactly the opposite is happening. The poorest and more deprived areas lie in the heart of the city. Kypseli lies at the center of the city and the majority of the city's migrant population live there. The middle class prefers the northern or the southern suburbs where the quality of life is considered to be higher mainly due to much better infrastructures.

Having an area such as Kypseli in the city center, makes not only the area but its inhabitants as well, much more visible. They are not isolated in the suburbs; on the contrary, they live and work in the center of Athens. Visibility has its pros and cons though. On the one hand, it makes them more vulnerable and visible as targets of racist attacks or the scapegoats of all the evils in the Greek society. On the other hand, Kypseli is located in the center of the city and is not an abandoned neighborhood of the suburbs. More possibilities for social mobility, especially for the second generation, are offered due to its closeness to the city center. Geographically, Kypseli is located in the heart of Athens.

Yet, besides its closeness to the city center, its African residents rarely come out of its invisible borders. For the first generation, the rest of the city remains an unexplored area that frightens them; a feeling that has been transmitted to their offspring as well. The children tend to follow the same behavior pattern unless reasons such as employment or University 'force' them to visit other areas of the city. Most of the times, when such reasons occur, second generation youth

encounter a completely different reality than the one they have experienced growing up and living in Kypseli. Usually, their integration issues become more apparent when they come out of Kypseli, and the greatest challenge they face is dealing and overcoming those issues and not returning to what seems to be the safe option; to keep practicing ethnic enclosure.



[Athens map including the area of Kypseli]<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup>The map shows the broader central area of Athens. The grey circle shows where Kypseli area is located while the purple circle shows the core of Athens, including Syntagma Square, Athens central square where the Greek Parliament is located. The distance on foot from Omonoia Square to Kypseli is 2,2kms [approx. 20-30 mins on foot], while from Syntagma Square it is 3,2kms [approx. 35-40 mins on foot].

### 3.2.2.2 KYPSELI: THE VICIOUS CIRCLE OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION

After meeting many youngsters who live in Kypseli as well as in other areas in Athens, I realized that specific patterns of behavior I came across had to do with the social environment they lived in. This could also explain the differences between older and younger second generation and those among the younger second generation as well.

The first Africans came to Greece in the late 70's and early 80's, mainly as students, to attend university. Very few of the Africans who came before the 90's, were economic migrants. This resulted in a high educational capital of the first generation, even though many times they were unable to use it in order to find high income and high status employment. Nevertheless, they were holders of an educational and social capital that facilitated their integration in the host society. As I have argued before, the more integrated the first generation is, the better integrated the second one becomes. The older second generation are the children of the Africans who came to Greece as students. The human capital of the parents is translated into the kind of employment they might find, which is translated into the social and economic status they might receive in the host society (Portes *et al.* 2009). With educated parents, usually fluent enough in Greek as well, and houses in middle class neighborhoods, those children were less likely to face social exclusion. Furthermore, most of those older second generation grew up at a time where migration and most specifically migration from Africa was not a mass phenomenon. Integration was a one-way road for the first generation mainly due to the lack of a strong presence of compatriots. This of course does not mean that all first generation managed to integrate or that there was no racism or social exclusion towards themselves or their children. On the contrary, the older second generation had to face completely different problems to their younger peers. Yet, growing up in an environment where they were the total minority and lacking the possibility of alternative forms of socialization, forced them in a way to integrate in the Greek society. Moreover, the first African families were dispersed in the city, and did not inhabit a specific territory. Even those who inhabited Kypseli, were living exclusively among Greeks till the early 90's. Plus, the ghettoization of Kypseli did not start taking place until the mid 00's.

The Africans who arrived in Greece after 1990, were mainly economic migrants and less often refugees or students. As economic migrants in a period where mass migration was taking place in the country for the first time, they were stigmatized as poor and uneducated even if they were not. Even those who possessed higher education degrees found it almost impossible to validate them and ended up employed in low-income and low status jobs. In other words, migrants who arrived after 1990 rarely managed to use the educational capital they possessed and found themselves in the same social position as their unqualified compatriots. The employment

opportunities offered to migrants who at the same time were not fluent in Greek, were few and underpaid. At the same time, they had difficulties renewing their residence permits due to the fact that they were linked to the labor market and the acquisition of *ensima*<sup>32</sup>. Lack of economic capital drove them to seek housing in the poorest and most densely populated areas of the city such as Kypseli where the rents were really low, and were inhabited mainly by migrants. Working all day they had few opportunities to learn the language and their children grew up in socially degraded areas, with parents carrying the social stigma of the poor migrant. In other words, the integration of the first generation and retrospectively that of their children was highly linked to the fragment of the society migrants ended up assimilating to (Crul & Vermeulen 2003). Those who managed to use their human capital had more and better possibilities of upward social mobility in the host society in opposition to those who lacked or did not manage to use their human capital.

The second generation are socialized within the African Communities and the so-called ghetto, having few contacts with people outside the broader Kypseli area. Moreover, exactly because of their place of inhabitation, they experience racism and social exclusion more often than their peers who live in other parts of the city. These two elements, affect their identity formation process and feeling of belonging, jeopardizing their integration in the Greek society. The unsuccessful integration of the second generation might lead to their social exclusion and stigmatization as migrants, leaving no space for upward social mobility; indeed, downward social mobility might be experienced by most of them. In other words, unless the second generation manage to integrate in the host society, they are less likely to break the vicious circle of their social exclusion. The problem remains however; how can the second generation integrate in a society which excludes them, not only formally by not granting them citizenship but also virtually, by treating them as migrants? How can the second generation integrate when they grow up in an area which is highly stigmatized as a ghetto?

Migrants choose to move to another country in order to have access to a better future, both for themselves and their families. Their children, born in the host country, most of the times have to deal with the choices their parents made, and live stigmatized as migrants even if they are not. The second generation find themselves trapped in the so-called ghetto and have had to deal with such a situation from a very early age. What does it mean however to grow up in Kypseli?

*Selena is one of the first African second generation I met in Athens. She doesn't speak much and whenever she opens her mouth you never know what is going to come out. I met her today and I felt very*

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<sup>32</sup> See footnote 27, p.79

*weird when she was looking at me. It was as if I could feel her disapproval. I tried to act naturally, pretending everything was ok but her body language was showing me clearly her feelings towards me. We did not say much, it was obvious she did not want to talk to me [...] Today I met her for the second time. It is her birthday and she was supposed to go for lunch with a common friend of ours. He invited me as well, and I arrived in the small restaurant a few minutes before she did. I will never forget the look on her face when she saw me... It was something between 'what are you doing here' and 'why don't you just leave'. I felt awful again. Again, I tried to pretend nothing happened, that we were fine, so I kept smiling and talking. When we sat down, I gave her a silly little present I had bought for her on my way to the restaurant. It was nothing special, just a Kinder Egg. She took the egg and she said 'is this for me? You got me a present? I said 'yes, but it's nothing special'. She kept staring at me as if I was a sort of alien. She was shocked; she lost her words and then, out of nowhere, she hugged me. It was my turn to get shocked by her reaction but I was very happy. After this particular incident her behavior towards me changed radically. Selena smiled at me, she became much friendlier and we had a great lunch all together. I keep wondering though, what was so special about my gesture that made her completely change her attitude towards me? A Kinder Egg as a present is nothing special as such, but from my point of view, it was the gesture that touched her. She felt appreciated, cared about, and maybe it was the first time she looked at me as another girl and not as a white girl... [notes from my fieldwork diary]*

Selena, a 20 year old girl, narrated me her story a while after we met each other. She was born in Sierra Leone but came to Greece at the age of three with her father and her older sister. Her two younger brothers were born in Greece. Her father studied Economics in the Greek University and is one of the few African migrants who managed to find a job equivalent to his studies. Selena grew up in Kypseli and she still lives there with her family. She managed to enter the Greek University and she is currently studying Psychology. She is a top student and she is expected to graduate next year. She is a very intelligent but sometimes shy girl, who loves to read, learn new things and offer to other people. One of the first things she confessed to me when we first started meeting each other, was that a year ago, if anybody had told her that she would be hanging around and chatting with a white girl, she would have laughed in their face. But as she admits,

I am a lot different now...two years ago I wouldn't even speak to a white girl and now you are my friend. [...] I made fun of all those who hung out with Greeks thinking they were too posh to hang around with us. But it is not like this after all...now I have both white and black friends.  
(Selena, 20, came at age 2)

But why? Why was she like that before and what made her change her attitude? Selena, compared to her four year older sister, had adopted a rather hostile behavior towards Greek society and white people in general during her adolescence. All of her friends were of African origin; they were hanging out in places where only Africans used to go and they rarely left Kypseli. She and her friends disliked their African peers who hung out with non-Africans, considered them arrogant, and could not understand what she could have in common with ‘the whites’, as she called them.

A year ago all my friends were black, we went out only where blacks go out, we dressed like blacks...but now it is different; I am different; I don't want be this person any more, I mean you are fun, I like spending time with you even if you are white. [...] I still have my African friends, but I have a lot of new friends at the University. I thought I wouldn't have anything to talk about with my classmates but in the end they are not so different to me. I like attending classes and hang out in other places besides Kypseli. (Selena, 20, came at age 2)

Selena's attitude and beliefs were differentiated when she entered University and had to attend classes. In order to do so, she had to leave Kypseli and cross half of the city in order to reach the University Campus, which was located in a part of the city she had never been to before. In the University, she talked to her Professors and participated actively in their classes, and she met her fellow students as well. In other words, she came in contact with those who so far for her had been the ‘others’. She came to realize that maybe white people were not so different from her in the end. Most importantly however, she realized that she was prejudiced against white people because she took it for granted that they would be prejudiced against her. When she realized that this was not always the case, that her skin color or origin did not matter, and she was not discriminated against because of her appearance, she calmed down and opened up. For Selena, entering University was a gateway to the Greek society, a ticket to the world outside Kypseli and the so-called ghetto. She came to realize that not everybody would devalue her because she was black, unless she devalued herself first. However, if she hadn't entered the University, she would probably still think and behave the same way as before.

Most of the second generation who grew up in Kypseli follows this behavior pattern. They have lived their entire lives surrounded mainly by other Africans, which left little or no space at all for relations with peers outside the African community. Many of them have huge socialization issues, never leave Kypseli, have no friends who live in other parts of the city, hang out in specific places, are dressed in specific ways and according to Michael, 20 ‘we Africans dress like this, I don't really like Africans who try to act like Greeks’. There are specific patterns of

behavior within Kypseli followed by many second generation. Furthermore, Kypseli is often referred to as a 'ghetto' by the mass media and in public speech, creating negative connotations not only for the area but also for its inhabitants.

Growing and spending their whole childhood and adolescence in Kypseli, and failing to enter University because of either low grades or issues regarding their residence permit, leaves those youngsters with few choices. Anger and rejection towards the system are common and make their integration a rather challenging process. Moreover, upon reaching adulthood, they have to acquire an individual residence permit, and legal status problems are added to the identity crisis they experience. They are looking for identification and belonging, yet the only country they know is the one that does not recognize them as full members of the society. They get rejected by Greece long before they reject it and they tend to practice reactive identification seeking for belonging to their parents countries of origin or in a general notion of *africanness*. Migrant origin youth tend to identify with their countries of origin rejecting any form of identification with the host country mainly as a result of constant discrimination, social exclusion and segregation. This form of ethnicity is usually practiced among individuals with lower human, social and economic capital who have failed to achieve their social inclusion in the majority society (Brown & Bean 2006).

However, most of those children have a very vague idea about their country of origin, even though they consider themselves part of it. Most of them know very little or nothing about the history, the political situation or the culture of any African country or Africa in general, and many of them are not even fluent in a regional language besides English or French. Furthermore, it was also very common among second generation youngsters, due to the lack of legal status and/or economic means that they had never been to their countries of origin.

What I realized though after getting to know some of them better was the fact that they usually identified with African-Americans instead of Africans. The image they had of the typical African was much closer to MTV rap and r'n'b singers than the reality. Yet, they considered they had much more in common with an African who crossed the border two months ago than with an African origin peer who grew up in another part of the city.

*The first time I went to Kypseli was when I was 20 years old (2003). I had come to Athens to visit a friend who had moved there in order to attend University. I remember I never felt any more afraid wandering around in that area than I felt in other parts of the city, yet when I moved to Athens for my fieldwork (in 2010) many of the people I met had a completely different opinion of the specific area. Words like 'dangerous' or 'degraded' were always used to describe the area and the question that followed was usually 'why would you go there?' And then there were other people; those who lived there,*



*both Greeks and foreigners who admitted that their area had a few problems but it was not so different to any other poor Athenian neighborhood. What I realized when I started visiting the area regularly myself, was that the presence of migrants themselves was responsible for the rumors. Migrants were seen as 'others', so radically different –especially if they looked different or spoke a different language- that the negative connotations seemed inevitable. It is true that when you walk around Kypseli you see all different kinds of people, hear all kinds of different languages and come across shops, restaurants or unofficial worship places that you don't often see in other parts of the city. And it is also true that one probably won't meet all those people in another part of the city simply because most of them never leave the area. They rarely cross its invisible borders; as if inside them they are safe. What impressed me was that an African origin friend of mine told me once that he never leaves Kypseli at night; he wants to be in the area when it gets dark because it is dangerous to move around in other parts of the city. His perception of what was dangerous and what was not, was the complete opposite to what my majority of Greek friends believed (i.e. that I should never walk around Kypseli by myself after dark). In both cases though, the core of the argument was the same; never be in the area of the 'other' after dark. Migrants are afraid of the natives and vice versa. In other words, both natives and migrants are afraid of what the 'other', who tends to be perceived as a threat, represents to them. Hearing this from a second generation though, made the situation even more problematic and revealed to me in the most simplistic way the great integration issues the youngsters who live in Kypseli face. I had never heard such an argument from the second generation who live in other neighborhoods. On the contrary they could understand the reasons why Kypseli was so stigmatized as an area. Moreover, they used to laugh whenever they heard that one was not coming for drinks or anything else because it was late and they were scared... What is rather interesting though is the way I internalized the fear for the area. I realized that I was avoiding wandering alone in specific streets late at night and if I did, I used to run to the bus station and be more alert than usual. Still though, the fear I felt and feel every time I find myself late there is related to the degradation of the area, which means not much light in the streets and very narrow streets and pavements, which made some dark corners ideal places for all sorts of illegal activity. Kypseli is as dangerous as other deprived Athenian neighborhoods, but what makes danger more apparent in people's minds, is the presence of the unknown 'other'. [notes from my fieldwork diary]*

Kypseli is a particular area of Athens, unknown nowadays to most of the Athenians who do not reside there, mainly because of its reputation as a dangerous area, or ghetto, where the crime rate is high. Even though many of its inhabitants recognize the problems related to their neighborhood, it does not mean that it ceases to be a lively neighborhood; degraded, but still Athens' most multicultural area. It was rather interesting to discuss Kypseli with youth of African background who did not reside there. Most conspicuously, many second generation were rather prejudiced about the area, the same way Greek people were. The differences between youngsters who grew up and live in other parts of the city and their peers who grew up

and live in Kypseli were more than obvious in many cases. Successfully integrated, usually holders of higher education degrees and with more cosmopolitan views about life, those second generation tended to be much more confident about their place in the Greek society. Interestingly enough was the fact that most of them traced the core of the integration issues their peers face, to the place of residence. In other words, Kypseli is also considered by many second generation as an enclosed area; a small Africa in the core of Athens, whose borders are difficult to cross.

I totally believe that one of the greatest gifts my parents ever gave me was that they chose to live in another neighborhood and not in Kypseli. This helped us develop a completely different way of seeing life, a different way of perceiving the social environment around us. On the one hand, I did not have African friends, but on the other I learned to communicate with Greeks. I see them from their point of view, not from an outsider's point of view. Kypseli is like a little Africa in Athens but in a negative way. And it is their fault as well, they can't express themselves the same way, they can't think the same way. (Katerina, 22, born in Greece)

One of side effects of the ethnic enclosure practiced by the migrant parents for a variety of reasons is the integration issues many second generation youngsters face. The adaptation of the children to the social environment of the host country tends to be problematic in many cases despite the fact that most of those youngsters were born or came to Greece at a very early age. In other words, Kypseli and the ghettoization it usually promotes, is recognized by the second generation youth themselves, as one of the main factors that leads to the social exclusion of their peers. Others though, without denying the importance of the place of residence, conceived the integration issues of the second generation as the main consequence of the unsuccessful integration of the first generation. However, they emphasized the importance of the personal choice and character in the integration process.

The *willingness* to integrate does not concern the first generation only; it concerns the second as well. Yet, for the first one it is a conscious choice from the first day of their arrival in the host country. At the same time, what for the first generation is a host country, is a homeland for their offspring, meaning that for the second generation the situation turns out to be much more complicated. Being raised in an ethnic enclosed environment shapes the identity of the child and a certain mentality or way of thinking concerning Greece; they are in a way imposed both by the family and the social environment. In other words, migrants who deny or find it difficult to integrate in the host country's society jeopardize the integration process of their children in the only society they have ever lived. How far integration might be considered a conscious choice

for the second generation is to be questioned and it only refers to children after a certain age. However, there are children who consciously break this vicious circle of social exclusion and succeed in being incorporated successfully in the society not only because they were willing, but also because they grasped the opportunities they were given.

The children who grow up in Kypseli live in a ghetto. They are not integrated in the Greek society, but I think that some of those kids came to Greece late, I mean after the age of 10. Or, exactly because their parents chose to live there, the parents did not manage to integrate, not the children. [...] Of course where you grow up matters, but it is not what matters the most. There are kids who did not get influenced by this situation. I know kids who grew up like that, and I had classmates as well in the intercultural school who were more like 'blacks should hang out with blacks, Chinese with Chinese, etc', but there were also kids who did not even care about such things. (Nadia, 28, came at age 1)

The responsibility of the first generation towards the second is highlighted by many of my interviewees. They acknowledge that parents, having failed to integrate successfully or fulfill the dreams they had upon arrival, transmit their bitterness and their disappointment to their children who start conceiving themselves as incapable of doing anything. Besides losing hope for the future, younger second generation lose their confidence and self-esteem. Moreover, many times they develop a passive or negative attitude towards their own abilities and connect their failures or denial to put effort into anything with the assumption that, not only are they incapable of achieving things, but also, even though they are capable, they will not be given the opportunity because of their skin color.

Children who do not live in this area, are doing more things in their lives, this is a fact. I could give you so many examples. People who live there [Kypseli], have many stereotypes. They just brainwash their children telling them that they can do certain things only. And here the family is to blame; all the things parents failed to do in Greece, they transmit those feelings to their children. And the children take it for granted that they cannot do anything. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

Stereotypes regarding the abilities of both parents and their children are to be blamed for the rather low levels of self-esteem among second generation Africans. Those stereotypes though are highly related to the unsuccessful integration of the first generation that, according to some of my interviewees, was related to the ghettoization of Kypseli. Pavlos, a 34 year old young

man, was one of those who traced the integration issues that many younger second generation face, to the ghettoization of Kypseli.

These youngsters become adults without being integrated 100% in the Greek society. [...] A child, who lives in a ghettoized area, will not be assimilated as easily as another one who grows up in another neighborhood, and has other stimuli and a different social environment. I know children whose friends are Greeks. In my point of view, those children will be integrated more easily compared to those whose friends are Africans only. Why? Because the area has become a ghetto, and I am talking about Kypseli. And in this case a double effort should be made. The natives are not interested in helping migrants integrate, and migrants, because of the whole situation, are not interested in integrating. (Pavlos, 34, came at age 6)

When we discussed Kypseli, the different opinions expressed by my interviewees who grew up and live in different areas, had a common element. The integration issues younger second generation face, were linked to their place of residence. The children who grew up and live in Kypseli have fewer possibilities of experiencing a successful integration in comparison to their peers who grew up and live in other neighborhoods. The transformation of the area into a ghetto trapped those youngsters into stereotypes regarding both themselves and the others; not only how they perceived themselves and the others but also how others perceived those children. Unfortunately, in many cases, those stereotypes were strengthened by their families as well. Moreover, the social exclusion they experienced, and their stigmatization as migrants on behalf of the society, reinforced a negative and aggressive attitude towards non-blacks and supported ethnic enclosure. I argue that education of the second generation is the key to a successful integration and a means to breaking the vicious circle of social exclusion and ghettoization.

Selena admitted that entering University made her reassess not only the way she perceived herself in the society, but also her attitude towards the society as well. She was not the only one though. All second generation who entered University considered it a positive experience, which altered their way of thinking and conceptualizing the society and the world.

When I went to the University, I discovered a completely different reality than the one I had experienced in Kypseli so far. I came across a different way of thinking; I saw it as a life-time opportunity, 'look, you could get a degree'. (Petros, 28, came at age 2)

As I have already mentioned before, education may offer an alternative to the ghettoization many younger second generation experience and enable them to break the vicious circle of their

social exclusion. Most conspicuously, second generation who acquire human capital, have more possibilities of being offered a high income, high status employment. Moreover, in acquiring such a capital, they have not only come out of Kypseli, but also have daily contact with the Greek society, and ultimately achieve a successful integration.

As far as the first generation is concerned, those migrants who manage to be employed in stable, medium or high income positions tend to move out of Kypseli in order to avoid stigmatization, ghettoization, hostility and racism, and to increase the possibilities of their upward social mobility. The second generation are expected to follow that pattern even more collectively if it is understood that they are more likely to be much better integrated. The role of education is highlighted as a key factor to upward social mobility by many second generation who themselves are holders of higher education degrees.

We should help de-ghettoize those children; all of us. They could enter University, have an education, and that would help them see things in a different way, make dreams. (Theodor, 31, born in Greece)

We should say to those children, 'hey, you know what? You can do this, you can do that, and you can study. This is the only way to get back their self-esteem and their confidence. It's not so much about the papers, it's about real integration [...] All the children, even those who live in the worst areas should have the same opportunities. (Dimitris, 25, born in Greece)

Both Theodor and Dimitris have finished University and are working in the private sector. Even though their degrees cannot be fully translated into economic capital because none of them is a holder of the Greek citizenship and therefore are excluded from some aspects of the labor markets, both of them highlighted the importance of education as a means of social upward mobility. The knowledge the University offers is what transforms individuals, and not its translation into a high-income employment. Knowledge as such is what transforms people into active citizens, broadens their horizons and should be valued the most. Moreover, the importance of education as a family priority for the younger members is a key factor in a successful integration process. Well-educated parents are more likely to push their children towards higher education, acknowledging its importance in social and economic success. Less educated or illiterate parents are less likely to push their children towards higher education (Portes *et al.* 2009:1079). For the second generation, education is indeed the means to break the vicious circle of social exclusion. Moreover, access to higher education may facilitate their

integration process and transform marginalized youth into integrated citizens-to-be and eventually, full, active citizens full of self-esteem and confidence.

### 3.2.3 SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MIGRANT ORIGIN YOUTH

To the question ‘What is the greatest problem second generation children face in Greece?’, the majority of my Greek Interviewees responded with a question. ‘What does ‘second generation children’ mean?’; ‘Who are those children? What does it mean?’ When I was explaining to them that the term ‘second generation’ means all the children of the migrant population residing in Greece, who were either born or came at a very early age to the country, many of them continued to stare at me not being sure about whom we were talking. Those few people who were familiar with the term and with who all those children were, posed racism and unemployment as their biggest issues. Then, I posed the complementary question. ‘Those children do not have Greek citizenship, they have residence permits. Don’t you consider this a major issue?’ The answer yet to come by the majority of them was even more shocking to me. ‘Are you kidding me? How is it possible not to have the Greek citizenship? They were born here!’ Very few people of my total sample were familiar either with the term ‘second generation’ or with the problems those children face, putting in the front line social exclusion, lack of nationality and issues regarding their residence permits as their most serious problems.

Perhaps the greatest problem the second generation face in Greece is neither racism nor their precarious legal status. Perhaps the greatest problem they have to deal with has to do with visibility, or perhaps even better, the lack of it. In other words, children of migrant background are invisible both to the State and the society. At the moment, there is no legislation on citizenship acquisition for the children of migrant origin, except by naturalization. The Act 3838/2010 that was voted by the Greek Parliament in 2010 was considered anti-constitutional, and the articles that regulated the citizenship acquisition by minors were cancelled by the State Council in 2013. According to the Act 3838/2010, all children born in the country of migrant parents who were permanent and legal residents of the country for at least five years in a row could acquire the Greek citizenship. Also eligible to acquire the Greek citizenship were the children who were born abroad but had successfully completed six classes of the Greek school. In other words, it offered the possibility to minors of migrant origin to become full citizens before turning 18.

The greatest part of the Greek society is not only unaware of the problems those children face, but more importantly, it ignores the very existence of those children. In other words, the

children exist but are not visible as migrant origin youth. They are visible as migrants (Zinn 2011).

On the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2012, in Athens, the Greek Migrant Forum, in cooperation with the Migrants' Integration Council of the Municipality of Athens, and with the support of the Greek Branch of the European Antiracist Network (ENAR GREECE), organized a conference with the title: 'Bridging the Gap. From legal residents to citizens'. The main target of the conference was the presentation of a new integration model for the children of migrant origin. The Greek Government was represented by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Charalambos Athanasiou. Characteristic is the incident described below that took place between the Minister (CA) and a second generation child (XX). As (YY) I refer to Dimitris Christopoulos, the President of the Hellenic League for Human Rights.

XX. My name is X; I am from the second generation association<sup>33</sup>, and I would like to pose one question. Earlier in your speech, you said that second generation children are an organic part of the Greek society. The question is, how can this be when the Greek State does not treat them as equal citizens. For example, I was born here; I am 30 years old and I have never been treated equal to any classmate or friend of mine.

CA. Do you have the Greek citizenship?

XX. No.

CA. You have two ways.

XX. Still, but now with the Act [3838/10] one is frozen.

CA. All that time, why didn't you apply? You were born here.

XX. Mr. Athanasiou, you know how our system works here. You are aware of the big and serious problems we have with our residence permits. When we apply for a residence permit, we have to wait for an amount of time for the decree to be issued. Without this decree I cannot apply either for citizenship or naturalization. When the decree finally gets issued, it is already expired, and still I cannot apply. And this is how I can justify those 30 years of my life which have passed and I did not acquire the Greek citizenship.

CA. I don't know your case, but if everything you say is true, you are entitled to apply for naturalization as well, and I wonder why you haven't thought about it. I don't know now, because you should know that the Law, both the old Act, and the Act3838, don't give...they have prerequisites negative and positive...

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<sup>33</sup> 'Generation 2.0' is the official association of second generation youth in Greece. Young people of both migrant and Greek origin participate in the group and are fighting together for the rights of their peers. Young people, regardless of their origin, conceive themselves as the New Generation of Greek Citizens and demand their formal recognition as such [[www.secondgenerationgreece.blogspot.gr](http://www.secondgenerationgreece.blogspot.gr)].

XX. [interrupting] I explained to you before the issues we have with the residence permits. If one does not have the final decree of their residence permit, they cannot apply for anything.

CA. Yes, if one does not have a legal residence permit, he is lathrometanastis, and this is

XX. You are wrong.

YY. A 'lathrometanastis' who was born here?

CA. Oh, was he born here? Well, he could get according to the Act

??<sup>34</sup>. Which Act? The Act 3838 is frozen to be cancelled!

CA. Wait a minute, naturalization has been implemented throughout the past 30 years.

YY. Yes but it involves a legal residence permit he does not have. He is specific. According to the law, he cannot apply

CA. You should come to my office and take a look at your file.

XX. Mr. Athanasiou, I am being specific. I am talking about hundreds of thousands of residence permits in abeyance, the decrees are not issued and the children cannot apply.

The reason I chose to cite this conversation here is because of one particular term that was used by the Minister when referring to a second generation child born in Greece without the final decree of his residence permit. He referred to him as 'lathrometanasti' (smuggled migrant, clandestino), which is a derogatory term to refer to migrants who enter the country without documents. Plus, the specific term is publicly condemned as both inaccurate and disparaging by political scientists, sociologists and human rights activists. The use of the term 'lathrometanastis' in the public speech when referring to undocumented migrants was favored by mass media and was adopted by politicians in their formal political speech as well. Yet, the use of it in a conversation with the person involved clearly shows two things. First of all, in such conferences or open public debates, Ministers usually express the opinion of the government and not just their personal beliefs. In other words, probably not just the Minister, but the political party he belongs to, do not see these children as citizens to be. They do not recognize them as the new Greeks but as migrants, no matter where they were born. The vivid proof of such an attitude was also the official but illegal freezing of the Act 3838 on behalf of the Minister of Internal Affairs before the official decree of the State Council was published<sup>35</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Unidentified individual from the public.

<sup>35</sup>The official decision of the State Council was published in February 2013. Yet, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Athanasiou had ordered the freezing of the Act in November 2012. When the order was sent to the municipalities, the mayors of Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras, Volos, Ioannina and Ag. Ioannis-Rendis refused to follow the Minister's order and continued to implement the Act3838 by continuing to accept the files of the children who applied for the citizenship. They claimed that as long as the State Council has not yet published its decision, no Minister has the right to suspend a Law at will.

<http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=22768&subid=2&pubid=63748576>



What is usually referred to as the structural dimension of integration, is the one that has the possibility to access rights as its main characteristic. One of the main aspects of the structural integration is the access to political institutions and most conspicuously, as far as the second generation is concerned, the acquisition of citizenship (Vermeulen 2002). The State, denying access to citizenship to the migrant origin children, deprives them of their basic rights, automatically transforming people born and raised on its soil into foreigners (Riccio & Russo, Zinn 2011). Giving second generation children the possibility to become full citizens, Greece would facilitate their integration process. Yet, by treating them as ‘others’ some of them actually become ‘others’ by rejecting Greece and their belonging to it (Brown & Bean 2006). In other words, official immigrant policies that restrict access to citizenship for the migrant origin children born or raised in the country jeopardize their structural integration and promote stigmatization and marginalization.

*I never thought that a Minister would ever call a second-generation boy born in Greece ‘lathrometanasti’ to his face. How disrespectful can one be? I was shocked. Almost everybody in the hall was shocked. The minister had no idea what he was talking about. He showed a complete lack of knowledge of the legal and bureaucratic aspects of the citizenship acquisition process. In my personal opinion, he is missing the point. He did not actually know to whom the Act 3838 was referring. He only knew that it was too flexible, too open, yet the arguments he used were irrelevant to the actual preconditions of the Act. And XX was right! How can you say in public that you consider the second generation an organic part of the Greek society and then favor the cancellation of the only Act that ever gave those children the possibility to become full citizens? Luckily, the public and the rest of the speakers gave an instant reaction when the word ‘lathrometanastis’ was heard. I was so relieved and positively surprised. People are so used to this word, that it almost seems natural. The reaction did not come only from the group of second generation youth with whom I was sitting. It was collective and rather firm, especially on the part of the speakers, the majority of whom were people favoring the citizenship acquisition of the second generation. [...] Alex was furious. Repeatedly he kept asking how a person that is so unaware of the real situation, both the problems and procedure, could be in such a position. Trying to put myself in Alex’s shoes I realized that there can’t be a more frustrating thing than to have people who literally decide your life and not only do they not care about your problems, but they see you as a problem as well. And this is more than true unfortunately. [notes from my fieldwork diary]*

For the past decade, and mainly after the 2004 Olympic Games, migrants have been transformed into the source of all evils in the Greek society. They are mainly depicted as illegal, violent, carriers of diseases, uneducated, inassimilable, and culturally ‘others’. The negative connotations that accompany the social representations of migrants, has shaped the image of the

second generation as well. The children of migrants are also perceived as culturally others, neglecting the fact that they are schooled and live in Greece. The role of mass media in the production and reproduction of such images is of major importance. Television, newspapers and the Internet are used as tools to construct images and events that are considered a necessary part in a continuous nation building process (Featherstone 1995). On the one hand the nation is depicted as homogeneous and on the other the second generation as culturally 'others' who -by claiming the Greek citizenship- are putting the national and cultural 'purity' of the Greek people in danger. Over the past few years, whenever there is a news report about second generation, it is usually accompanied by images of impoverished migrants who have just entered the country<sup>36</sup>. This results in society having a completely distorted image of the youth of migrant background. Moreover, stereotypes regarding their origin, profession and behavior are produced and reproduced daily, challenging their feelings of belonging to Greece, and many youngsters find themselves trapped in these.

The other time, I went to a shop to buy a pair of shoes. When the shop assistant approached me, I told her that I wanted to try a pair of grey shoes. She brought them to me and she asked me in English how they were. I replied in Greek that they were fine. We kept talking for a while; I was speaking in Greek and she was constantly replying in English! I got mad and asked her why she was doing that. She got totally confused, and it was then that she realized that I had been talking to her in Greek all this time. She apologized saying that it was very rare to see a black guy fluent in Greek. I am so sick of it, really. I mean we have been here all these years; why can't people get used to us! Of course I am fluent in Greek; I live here; I went to school here! People are so narrow-minded. (Ousemane, 18, born in Greece)

This was so humiliating for me, really... I wanted to go to Pagrati and I didn't know which bus to take so I approached a lady in the bus station to ask her. Before I even opened my mouth she said to me, 'no, I don't want a CD'. I got so embarrassed and angry at the same time but I said nothing; I just left. I went on foot to Pagrati because I did not want to ask anybody else... Why does everybody think that black people sell CDs anyway? (Abet, 21, born in Greece)

When I meet someone for the first time, they always, always ask me, where I am from. I always say I am from Ethiopia because people expect me to answer something like that. Once I said that I was from Athens and they started laughing at me. I felt really bad... Why can't I say that I am from Athens? I was born here. Where am I from? Very few people understand that you can be

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<sup>36</sup>See Images, p.189

black and from Athens at the same time. But I don't want to risk being mocked again so I say that I am from Ethiopia and everybody is happy. (Mulu, 19, born in Greece)

Second generation are considered migrants and are treated as such, both by the State and the society. The State considers them migrants by denying them access to citizenship, even to those born in the country. The society considers them migrants and equates them with the first generation which is highly stigmatized (Zinn 2011). Ignorance and stereotypes which accompany the first generation, are inherited by the second, jeopardizing the integration process of the youth of migrant background. Stereotypes such as those of the black people who either sell CDs or are basketball players, or of the foreigners in general who are not expected to be fluent in Greek no matter how long they have been residing in the country are some the 'light' stereotypes compared to others such as African girls = prostitutes, Africans = drug sellers or black people = migrants or even 'lathrometanastes'. Stereotypes that accompany migrants represent long-established prejudices and exclusions and are used to justify stigmatization and discrimination on the part of the major society. The exclusion of the 'other' is legitimized in order to defend the cultural value of a people and in this case, of the Greek people (Herzfeld 1992).

The second generation grow up having to deal with those stereotypes that have already formed the way they are perceived by the society. Moreover, they have to face the institutionalized discrimination that denies them access to citizenship and places them in the municipalities trying to renew a residence permit like their parents or the newly arrived migrants, ignoring the fact that these children were born and/or raised in Greece. As Herzfeld (1992:72) argues, stereotypes 'render intimate, and sometimes menacing, the abstraction of otherness. They are thus the building materials of practical nationalism'. And it is this practical nationalism, adopted by both the State and the majority society that excludes those children not only from the Nation but also from the society.

The main target of the second generation is to become citizens of their country. However, the equality those children seek is dual. On the one hand, there is the institutionalized equality which is consolidated through citizenship acquisition and therefore, access to political, social and civic rights. On the other hand, there is the social equality which is perceived as the result of a successful integration process, and acceptance on behalf of the Greek society.

### 3.2.3.1 THE POLITICS OF RACE

Andall (2002) argued that in Italy, being black and being Italian are still seen as mutually exclusive categories. In Greece, being black and being Greek are seen as incompatible concepts as well. The phenotype, or else the external characteristics of an individual, automatically makes one inassimilable, and raises the possibilities of being socially excluded (Riccio 2010; Riccio & Russo 2011). Race plays an important role in the integration process of the second generation. Yet, it is not race and racial characteristics as such that determines the integration process of migrant youth but the meaning assigned to them in the course of social interaction (Portes *et al.* 2009:1080). In Greece, the dominant group are white and African or Asian origin children find themselves stigmatized as culturally and physically ‘others’ or ‘different’. This harsh reality is highly acknowledged by second generation who are discriminated against and marginalized more often than their white migrant origin peers.

Race, skin colors, say it as you like, matters. Afghans or Pakistanis still have a different skin color. In other words, I believe that things might be tough for a Ukrainian origin kid, because he is a foreigner as well, but it won't be as tough as for us for example. Let me tell you something, it's something I have discussed many times but a European... no wait, a white person might hide oneself, how can I explain it better, they can be incorporated in the society and you can't tell who is who. A black person can't. (Marion, 29, born in Greece)

Even though racial discrimination is officially condemned by both State and civil society, and many times denied as well, the reality proves to be rather different. Racial discrimination, or else, discrimination based on an individuals' natural characteristics is present and ‘the racialized body has become the most illegitimate object of social differentiation, yet one whose existence can no longer be denied’ (Fassin 2001:3). Youth of African background, because of their skin color are considered foreigners ad hoc. As foreigners, they are considered to be either holders of a residence permit, or are undocumented. A black person holding a Greek ID card is a rather rare case, which most of the times is encountered with surprise, since being both black and Greek are seen as mutually exclusive categories. The incompatibility of those concepts though, becomes even more problematic when adopted by the State policies. Police consider everybody who does not ‘look like Greek’ as a potential threat and potentially undocumented, resorting to offensive and sometimes violent or racist behavior. The visibility of black youth makes them a target in routine checks and they are frequently stopped by the police, especially when they are in groups.

Pavlos, a 34 year old man of African origin, came to Greece at the age of 6. He applied for naturalization in 1994 and acquired the Greek citizenship in 2007. He was stopped by the police in a routine check along with some friends of his. As he explained to me, Africans are stopped quite often as they are usually thought to be undocumented. Coming across a young man of African background with a Greek ID was rather a shocking experience for the policeman on duty.

A week ago, I was stopped by the police in Amerikis Square [in Kypseli]. I was passing by with some [African] friends when the policemen asked for our papers. I was the only one among them who had a Greek ID. The policeman was shocked when he saw it, but freaked out even more when I told him that I had served time in the army as well. He just gave me my ID back and told me, 'go'. (Pavlos, 34, came at age 6)

Second generation youth is subject to everyday racism and discrimination by police officers. This happens mainly because they are thought to be migrants and more often undocumented ones, and are treated as such. They are not considered to be full citizens or even potential citizens. In other words, paraphrasing Stanley, those who look and act 'Greek' are assumed to be citizens whereas those who look and act 'other' are assumed to be non-citizens (2008:43). Being black put those youngsters automatically in the category of non-citizen, and as Stanley argues, *greekness* becomes equivalent to political and legal belonging.

One of the problems children come across here is that...they [policemen] treat you as if you are a criminal or something; even if you are very young. [...] And this is because of skin color, I mean, even if you are well dressed and everything, he'll do something, he'll say something to make you feel like a criminal or a prostitute. And here the cops, they see young children, around 15 or 16, coming back from school and they stop them in the middle of the street, and they search their bags! They even arrest kids for papers. They arrested my brother the other day and he is only 16. They didn't let him call mum or anything for 2 hours. When my dad brought him home, he was terrified and angry; he did not want to go to school the next day. Why are they doing this? (Lea, 21, born in Greece)

The sense of non-belonging many young people of African background feel, is strengthened by behaviors such as those mentioned above, while both the State and the society are boycotting the integration process of those youngsters. Fassin (2001:3) argued that, 'inequalities had to be analyzed not simply in terms of the traditional categories of social class, profession, or even

nationality, but also from the point of view of origin, real or presumed, as identified through skin color or foreign-sounding names'. Stereotypes that have to do with assumed origin, the nature of their employment, if and how well they speak the language, if they have papers or not, are situations they deal with every day. The African second generation has to deal with a diversity that is imposed from above. In other words, they are constantly reminded of how different they are, even if they don't feel like that. They start to feel that they are different by the way they are treated in the society.

Since I was little, I knew I was different, but I never thought it was a problem, I mean, I never thought it would be a problem for the others. [...] I had not realized I was black at school until I went to the Greek school. In other words, nobody had treated me as 'black'. I never had to deal with my skin color until I went to the Greek school. While I was in the English school, it had never crossed my mind; I had no problem with it, people did not treat me differently. It was in the Greek school where some kids started mocking me. And even the professors, they had it, not the bad kind of racism, the other kind, the 'you are different' kind. There is the direct kind of racism when they get you into trouble because I have different skin color, and there is also the 'I adore you' kind of racism. You are being treated differently either because you are inferior or you are different, exotic. I saw this thing in the Greek school. The most simple example, professors were saying 'oh, I have seen a documentary about your country, and how is life there?', those stupid things. Oh, and the other thing! Just because you are black they take for granted that you are an athlete or a runner! Silly things! Or, they ask you about your country, as if I have ever lived there. (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

The Greek society is not ready at all [to accept a second generation that looks different]. And I do not mean only older people and those over 40. [The society] is not ready generally. I'll give you a very simple example. Last week, I went to Crete, and there was a girl from Ierapetra I think, who was studying at Rethymno, but I think she had seen 2-3 blacks in her life in general! We were at the same table together with some common friends, and I introduced myself and we started talking. She was left with her mouth wide open! The whole evening she was constantly repeating how shocked she was by the fact that I speak Greek that well. Another friend of ours tried to explain this to me, -because I really could not understand her reaction-, I mean how a girl of our age, not a small child who grew up in a village, a girl of our age, who has studied, who is politically active in SYRIZA<sup>37</sup> who is involved, -she does not live in a cave- might react like that! And this comrade of hers in SYRIZA, he was trying to convince me that 'it is normal, she grew

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<sup>37</sup>SYRIZA, Synaspismos Rizospastikis Aristera is a left party in the Parliament. In the elections of 2012 it won 26,89% of the votes, the highest percentage in its history and became the loyal opposition of the New Democracy, PASOK and Dimokratiki Aristera Coalition Government.

up in Ierapetra'. I told him that this is crazy, this girl is in SYRIZA, she is not in HEN<sup>38</sup> and so she wouldn't know anything. I told him, 'she is a SYRIZA member, she is supposed to follow politics, and she should know'. It's not that the migrants entered Greece 10 years ago- even though 10 years is enough to learn the language-. We are talking about second and even third generation! There are people here since the 60's. He tells me, 'what? She insulted you?' And I said, 'no, it's just ridiculous when someone tells me oh, you are so fluent in Greek'. And really I am so tired listening to it, it is unbelievable, it is crazy! If you have lived in a country for many years, wouldn't you learn the language? If the younger generation still cannot understand it and accept it...this is a problem. (Nadia, 28, came at age 1)

A feeling of frustration is common among second generation who have to deal with stereotyping and ignorance of their position in the Greek society on a daily basis. They are perceived as foreigners because of their external appearance and are subject to diverse forms of racism. Second generation Africans are discriminated against because of their presumed origin, in an either 'positive' or 'negative' way. In other words, they are not treated as equals from either their peers or the society. For those young people to become full Greek citizens, besides citizenship, something much more substantial is needed. They have to become visible, not as second generation migrants, but as Greeks. The redefinition of *greekness* is a necessary requirement for the equality and integration of the youth of African background. 'One is born Greek, cannot become one' should be transformed into 'one can either be born or become Greek', which means that *greekness* ceases to be an element transmitted through blood, and it becomes a matter of choice. Moreover, a change on how *greekness* is comprehended by Greeks themselves might be considered a prerequisite in order to change the way migrant origin youth are perceived.

The notions of nation and identity are not bounded; indeed, they are fluid and subject to daily transformation. Those youngsters are *and* Greek, as they are *and* Nigerians, *and* Tanzanians or *and* African in general. The hyphenated identity they claim is the result of the acknowledgement of their dual ethnic identity and the possibility to be fully part of both, without having to abandon one for the sake of the other (Colombo & Rebughini 2012). Moreover, they can also choose to be *and* Muslims, or *and* Christians, or *and* vegetarians, or *and* Rastafarian. This *and*, represents a multiple identity which allows the coexistence of many different characteristics in a sole individual.

Moreover, as far as the claims of citizenship acquisition on behalf of the second generation are concerned, they too are based on a dual aim; on the one hand, to eradicate official discrimination

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<sup>38</sup>XEN, Christianiki Adelfotita Neon [HEN] is a Christian Brotherhood.

and legitimize both their presence and their belonging to Greece, and on the other, to activate their access to opportunities and equal participation in the society. In other words, the participation of each person in the society and its treatment as an equal member, is to be determined not by *jus sanguinis*, but by the right to be a citizen of the country where they were born or raised, no matter where their parents come from (Christopoulos 2010). The enactment of legislation on citizenship acquisition for the second generation is rather important, because its lack is a means of discrimination towards a part of the population residing in the country (Riccio 2010).

### 3.3 IDENTITY AND BELONGING

If they ask me ‘where are you from?’, I say ‘Greece’. If they ask me ‘what’s your heritage?’, I say ‘African’. (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

How second generation Africans choose to identify themselves is a rather complicated procedure. I came across many different explanations when I posed questions about identity or belonging. All of them, in one way or another, linked their identity with where they felt they belonged and where they did not. For some the answer was immediate, others took a minute to think about it. Some of them also confessed that it was something they had been constantly thinking about, but were never sure about the answer. In other words, answering if they felt Nigerian, Ghanaian, Congolese, African or Greek was one part of the question. The other, and most challenging part, was to describe why they identified themselves as such, and what Africa or Greece meant to them. After long discussions, many contradictions, lots of laughter and a conclusion that maybe one is more attached to places he denies being attached to made this question my favorite one to pose. It is rather important to mention here that the people I interviewed were not persons I met only once for an interview. On the contrary, the majority of my interviews took place during the last semester of my fieldwork, after having established deep relationships of friendship with many of my informants. Besides the answers they gave me, I add the feeling I got from each individual, the body language, and all the other tiny details of things; reactions, random conversations and relaxing we had over the past months. Sometimes, spending quality time with people and getting to know them better offers more genuine information about their personalities, and the way they see life in general, than asking them to describe themselves to you.



### 3.3.1 WHO AM I OR WHO AM I SUPPOSED TO BE?

How I identify myself is not a question that I could easily answer. Sometimes it is easier to put labels on other people than yourself. Putting myself in the same position as my informants, I came to realize that the question is much more complicated than it sounds. Multiple factors influence, shape, and reshape a person's identity and sense of belonging to a particular place or to multiple places. Ethnic self-awareness, according to Rumbaut (1994:754), is subject to mutation and enhancement that depend on 'the degree of dissonance or consonance of the social contexts which are basic to identity formation'. In other words, the level of ethnic self-awareness of an individual is influenced by the way they are characterized by and positioned in the society. Ethnic awareness may lead to group self-consciousness, yet the levels of the consciousness may also be different among the group members. How each individual experiences their identity formation process, or how they display their belonging, which can also be multiple, is subject to a continuous process of self-definition. People change and reshape their identities daily, discharging elements that no longer represent them and adopting new ones that seem more suitable. As children grow up and enter the adult world, their microcosm is transformed into something bigger and more challenging, inside which they have to find their place. For the youth of African background though, leaving their microcosm is often a quite shocking experience. They suddenly realize that they are not considered full members of the society and that they need a residence permit in order to stay in the country where they were born or raised. Some of them found out in a brutal way that no matter how they felt, they were considered foreigners.

It was then that questions started torturing me. Who am I? I finally understood why I was never called in to serve in the army as my friends were. 'Buddy, you are a foreigner', I kept saying to myself. Still I did not want to believe it. The police probably made a sort of mistake; it couldn't be possible. It was my internal defense to keep me from falling apart. Papers, papers, papers. When the words 'papers' and 'foreigner' entered my life, all was made crystal clear to me. I asked the municipality employees if I could have a Greek ID. The answer was 'No'. [...] Greek is your language... you feel like there is a gap growing between you and your friends. [...] And then, more questions arise. You were born here, you are singing Greece's national anthem, and at school you recited poems for the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> of March. Yet, you are considered a foreigner. You have never been to Nigeria. Greek is your mother tongue. Who are you? You have to be totally crazy in order to avoid going crazy! You have to fight against a reality that is tearing you apart. (Victor, 33, born in Greece)

Incidents like these are characteristic among older second generation, and are perceived as turning points in the self-definition of each individual. Victor was 18 years old when he was arrested for the first time because he had nothing but a certificate from the hospital where he was born as proof of his legal residence in the country. The fact that maybe this was not enough had never crossed his mind. In 1998, for the police, a 19 year old African was nothing more than a migrant, and probably an undocumented one. Nobody at that time could ever imagine that Victor was actually born in the country. Still, this was not enough, and he ended up in prison. A certificate from the hospital was not a legal residence permit. Being born in the country did not automatically make him a citizen. On the contrary, for the police, he was a foreigner, and more importantly, an undocumented one.

Being the only foreigner in his school, he never thought of himself as different from his classmates and friends. He came across reality when he left his microcosm and entered the adult world. Yet, what actually turned his world upside down was not so much the fact that he needed a residence permit, but the denial of his identity that caused him such a shock. Until this incident he never thought himself as anything but Greek. He had never been to Nigeria, he did not speak any Nigerian dialect and the only thing that betrayed his origin was his skin color. Victor considered himself Greek, he felt Greek, yet the others did not think of him as such. When he was denied his *greekness*, he felt lost. There was nowhere to look for roots, for belonging. He started questioning his *greekness* himself by trying to reshape his identity in order to adapt to the new reality; the one which thought of him, and treated him, as a migrant who had just entered the country. Victor told me his story a few months after we met for the first time. Yet, it took me over a year observing him before I asked him, ‘and now? How do you feel now?’

Africa for me is its culture and art. This is Africa for me. I haven’t lived with its people; I don’t even know if we have anything in common. I am connected to Africa through its artists, its culture, and its civilization. And through my family and relatives of course. [...] Greek on the other hand...because I have the Greek mentality, it does not mean that I feel Greek. But this has to do with the social environment as well. If the social environment was more positive, maybe I would feel, but because it is not, I don’t [feel Greek]. You are here and they call you a foreigner, you go to Africa and they call you a foreigner as well, so... I just believe that these two cultures find a meeting point inside me. This meeting point is what I am trying to shape right now. Not only inside me, but be able to express it out loud some day. (Victor, 33, born in Greece)

Despite his sayings, Victor is among the few completely assimilated second generation. His way of speaking, behaving and reacting in combination with his actual bond with the African heritage contradict his sayings (Rattansi & Phoenix 1997). He denies his *greekness* and his belonging to Greece only because the Greek State rejected him first by not granting him citizenship. Very few children admit they have been assimilated. On the contrary, most of the assimilated children failed to see their assimilation and tried to identify to a culture they didn't know or thought they knew. For those who had acquired the Greek citizenship from an early age however, assimilation was seen as a normal process, and mainly because they never had to deal with any different legal status besides the one of the national, they tended to be more self aware of their situation.

Assimilation or integration? Assimilation is what comes straight away to mind. I mean, if I take a look at my life so far, I was assimilated, I never had to show other people I belonged here, I just was...which means I am assimilated. This is both good and bad I guess...when I was younger I caught myself many times not knowing much about my roots, my heritage. [...] At home, with my mum, I speak only Greek.. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

The older second generation grew up in a time when migration was a rather new phenomenon. Cultural diversity was not desired mainly because it could not be appreciated, and assimilation was a one way route for many older second generation. Many children of African background became assimilated without realizing it most of the times. This assimilation process turned them into culturally Greeks only, erasing all the elements of their parents' culture. The assimilation many older second generation experienced though is a result of either their personal attitude or the attitude of the family, but it can also be a combination of both. Among my informants, there were some who were, in a way, responsible for their own acculturation denying anything that had to do with their roots while trying to hide their difference and become as similar as possible to their native peers (Colombo *et al.* 2009). The outcomes of such an attitude were adults lacking in an intrinsic part of their identity out of personal choice without taking into consideration though that there was an element that would always betray their foreign origin, no matter how well they tried to hide it: their skin color.

In the late 80's and early 90's there were few migrant origin children enrolled in Greek public schools. The school system favored a rather particular assimilation process and did not recognize any sort of diversity. Foreign sounding names were transformed into Greek ones, and parents were often advised not to speak to their children in any other languages but Greek. These policies, in combination with a rather ethnocentric educational system, put aside any

forms of diversity all those second generation children carried with them. Growing up as Greeks, they never felt different in any way; indeed, they felt Greek. They thought they were Greeks, yet the Law in one single day transformed them into foreigners. Besides the legal issues they had to take care of, there was also the psychological trauma that stigmatized them the most. Suddenly, they found themselves ‘neither here nor there’, and they were forced to deal with an identity crisis, which challenged the very core of their being.

In Greece, there isn't a policy, a ‘paideia’ (culture) that allows migrant origin children to learn about their countries of origin. These children grow up having the feeling that they are Greek. I mean, we go to school and our names become Greek, -we have different names at home-, the first words we learn are Greek words; everything we do is Greek. On the one hand this is good, but on the other hand there are huge gaps. For example, it would have been nice if there had been an intercultural school in 1990, where I could learn the history of my country of origin, and teach me about diversity, everything. This thing did not exist then. Today, we've reached a point of understanding the problems; the fact that the Law considers us foreigners when we turn 18. Not before! And all this integration we had, from kindergarten till high school...we thought we were Greek, we thought we could do everything just as our friends could...yet, we have to do it all over again; we have to start thinking of ourselves as foreigners and try to get in touch with our parents' countries. This is very tough. [...] African children today, when they turn 18, have huge identity issues. They don't know who they are and what they want to do. Second generation needs psychological support. It may sound ridiculous, but we have to find our identity. (Petros, 28, came at age 2)

The question ‘who am I?’ bedeviled the older second generation upon reaching adulthood. They grew up as Greeks, having little or no contact at all with their countries of origin while very few of them had actually visited their countries of origin. Moreover, they had few opportunities to meet many compatriots of their parents mainly due to the small numbers of African migrants in the late 80's in Greece. Most of the times the only connection some of those children had, was the African dialect they spoke at home. Besides that, they were culturally integrated if not assimilated in the Greek society, yet, this successful integration had an expiry date they were not aware of. At the age of 18, they had to start feeling Nigerian or Congolese, or African in general, not because they wanted it, but because the Law forced them to do so. The gap between the identity they had and the identity they should have, was huge. And the process to bridge this gap was rather painful for most of them.

I can't understand how in a country that wants to call itself European, in a country which respects itself, there are people –whether they have papers or not- who have lived there for 20-30 years and curse they day they ever came. When people asked us where we were from, in the beginning and just for fun we replied, 'I am from Thessaloniki', or, 'I am from Kalamata'. But in the end we had to say 'I am from Congo', or, 'I am from Nigeria', despite having no connections with those countries, only because it would sound reasonable to the people asking the question. No, our identity is the Greek identity. Most of the African origin kids have been through a lot to arrive at the point they are now. And all those children are in the middle of nowhere! And I am not talking about papers. I am talking about their identity, for what they feel inside them. How can this thing change? [...] At this very moment, because Greece is becoming more and more conservative, fewer and fewer African origin children feel they belong to Greece. Those children just want a plastic ID card, a passport; they want the citizenship so they can get out of here. This is so sad. (Christian, 26, came at age 3)

Younger second generation, have a totally different experience on the matter compared to the older second generation. They grew up in a time where migration was a reality for the Greek society and many migrant origin children were enrolled in public schools. They have lived their entire lives in a society that constantly reminded both them and their parents, that they were foreigners. Racism and social discrimination made clear to most of them from the beginning that they were different. At the same time, African migration in Greece was rising, migrant communities were multiplying, and children were growing up having a stronger ethnic self-awareness.

Jamal was the only one among my informants who had an accent when he spoke Greek and strongly identified himself as Tanzanian only. He denied any belonging to Greece, and perceived himself more as a migrant and not as a member of the second generation.

I am Tanzanian, I feel Tanzanian, I don't feel Greek at all, I mean... I don't have the Greek mentality at all.

[How is it possible not to take anything? You live here].

Okay, maybe I have a few elements; it isn't possible to take nothing, you are right, I speak your language but in matters of culture, let's say I have not taken much...Greece is a country that even if they give you your rights, it is not the same, you stick to your roots. They don't make you feel you really belong here. I have friends who have Greek papers, still they feel Sudanese, 'I am like you' they say, 'I just have the papers' [...] in other countries it is different though. I have cousins who live in the UK and Canada, and there they got their rights immediately, citizenship and all. They are treated as equals. I mean, they treat my cousin and an English guy the same way. For

them he is English even if he is black! They don't judge you from your skin color as they do here. When I went there once, they asked me where I was from, and I always replied, 'I am from Tanzania'. 'No, no, which city are you from? London or what?' He thought I was English, he did not take for granted I was foreigner! And I was so surprised because if someone in Greece asks me where I am from and I say Athens for example, he will say, 'No, no, which country are you from?'. I had never seen such a thing before... And my cousins, when they come here, if you ask them if they are Tanzanian, they will say 'No, I am English'. And they say it with pride. Here I could never say that I am Greek even if I felt I was [...] I have a friend in College, I can say he is quite conservative, and even he tells me, 'what are you talking about?', because usually when I speak, I say, 'you Greeks'. I always do that; it is not that I am doing it on purpose; I have got used to doing it because I am not Greek and I don't feel Greek. And he always says: 'You Greeks...Why do you always say that? You are Greek, you live here since you were little'. I always tell him, 'You think it is like that. I don't'. I cannot say 'we here'. I have felt in my whole life that I belong here. I just want to fix my papers and go somewhere I will be treated as equal. (Jamal, 19, came at age 5)

Tanzanians arrived in Greece after 1990 mainly as economic migrants, as part of the mass migration wave. Jamal, at the age of 19, is one of the few adult second generation Tanzanians. He came to Greece at the age of five, but travelled back to Tanzania quite often. Being in constant touch with his country of origin helped him strengthen his ethnic self-awareness as Tanzanian and not develop a pluralistic identity as both Tanzanian and Greek. At the same time, he was socialized mainly among adults inside the Tanzanian Community where the development of a strong community identity was facilitated. As an active member of the Community himself he was aware of the problems he would face upon reaching adulthood. Still, he has applied for the Greek citizenship, but sees the identity card he will get more as a travel document to leave the country. He considers himself integrated in the society since he speaks the language and has lived here for the past 14 years. Yet, he envies his cousins who can proudly say 'I am English' and considers them lucky to have grown up in the UK. The idea he has about the UK, as a country where people get the citizenship immediately and at the same time are treated as equals is common among African migrants, and this is the reason why most of them want to move there. As far as belonging to Greece is concerned, this is something he denies, tracing the origin of his self-definition, not so much to the fact that he was not given his rights immediately, but to the fact that Africans are subject to mistreatment, racism and social exclusion (Brown & Bean 2006). Citizenship acquisition is just the official recognition of his rights and has nothing to do with belonging to Greece.

What emerged from many interviews and conversations as well was a difficulty in self-definition all in all. One explanation could be the fact that second generation has no clear position within the Greek society. At the same time, the way they identify themselves may be rather different from the way they are perceived by the society, leading to an inevitable identity crisis. Where I feel I belong versus where everybody thinks I should belong, or, who am I versus who I should or cannot be.

How I identify myself is something that I've been thinking about since I was very young. I have decided to identify myself as a citizen of the world. It is the easiest option. I see other people who are migrants in different countries; when you grow up, you choose to keep the positive elements and characteristics of each side, or those that may function better and help you achieve more things in your life and evolve yourself. For example if you are a Greek in Germany, it is good to adopt things like punctuality, but also keep things like cleverness or being able to take life less seriously, while in your job you are very serious. This is what I am trying to do; take bits and pieces. (Katerina, 22, born in Greece)

'I am a citizen of the world' was a rather common answer among girls aged 20 to 28. Those girls rejected ethnic identification with any country, yet they embraced their plural identities and their multiple belonging to many places. They thought of themselves more 'both here and there' and not 'neither here nor there', a rather common experience among younger second generation. More secure about their position in the Greek society, they were able to negotiate their multiple belonging and feel proud of it. Migrant origin youth tend to choose when, how and which elements of their ethnic background they will use in order to achieve access to rights, the labor market, and institutions of the host country. Selective acculturation is usually practiced among migrant origin youth with higher levels of education that acknowledge the importance of their dual or triple belongings (Brown & Bean 2006). Still though, second generation who expressed themselves this way were among those who had grown up in various Athenian neighborhoods (and not Kypseli), were all students or holders of higher education degrees, had travelled and were much more open-minded regarding their notions of belonging. Furthermore, regardless of their legal status (citizens or holders of a residence permit) they recognized the complexity of their situation without denying though their connections to Greece.

I've been to Ghana several times. As an adult I went there twice by myself. It's the same as here. I mean, there, I am not Ghanaian, I am Greek. And here I am Ghanaian, I am not Greek. [...] I am a citizen of the world. I am nothing else. I am who I declare to be. [...] This is the

truth, really. In your country of origin they tell you that you are not from there; then your own relatives say, 'oh, you are not African, you are not from Ghana', and then, you come back here and they tell you 'you are not Greek'. Also, they might as well say 'theoretically you can be Greek, but actually you are not'; it is the same, but on the contrary. I am in between, I am nowhere in particular. Even if I go away from here, if I go to England for my Master's for example, they will ask me and I won't know what to say. I had my oral exams in English and they asked me 'where are you from?' I always reply, 'It's complicated'. I mean, I was born in Lebanon, I grew up in Greece and my parents are from Ghana, and maybe I am going to live the rest of my life in another country! Where am I from? (Christine, 28, came at age 1)

Choosing to identify themselves as 'citizens of the world', not as Greek or Nigerian, can also be considered a safe option, an option that would not be negatively criticized by many, when publicly expressed. Identifying themselves as any of the above, would put them in a constant process of proving, denying or explaining their feelings of belonging. In a country such as Greece, where Greeks are thought to be those of Greek origin only, and foreigners even if they feel they belong to Greece, are excluded legally and socially from the 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983), it is rather hard to feel only Greek, when almost everybody around them reminds them that they are not. On the other hand, feeling only Nigerian or Congolese, was also not the case, when all of them grew up in Greece and in one way or another felt they belonged here as well. In other words, coming from multiple cultural backgrounds and growing up in a third country made things rather complicated.

Identifying themselves as 'citizens of the world' besides being the 'easiest option', as some of them admitted, was also a matter of choice; a conscious decision. They were aware, not only of the multiplicity of their identities, but also of the fact that the majority of the people would not understand or accept the complicity of their situation. People usually conceive identity as something single, inherited, static or unchangeable. For the Greeks, if one is black, one is necessarily African, one cannot be anything else. For the Africans, one is not a true African, even if they are black, unless they were born and raised in Africa. Andall (2002:396) has argued that 'ethnicity and identity cannot then simply be viewed as static, essentialized constructs'. Identity is far from unilateral or fixed. Identity is fluid, multiple and under constant change. Young people tend to understand these particular features of identity all in all, even if they cannot explain them. They conceive identity as a sum of personal choices, of different elements and characteristics, and not as something imposed from above. In other words, they consciously chose to identify themselves with broader categories that allow the coexistence of multiple identities within.



Many children emphasized the role roots play in their identity formation, without denying though the importance of the environment they grew up in. Yet they felt more comfortable identifying themselves with a broader European identity, instead of a Greek one, the same way they chose a broader African instead of a Nigerian or a Congolese. Maria's parents originate from Kenya and Sierra Leone, but she and her siblings were born and raised in Greece.

I feel... African-European. I feel that my connection with Africa besides my skin color is the heritage, the way you have been brought up and that's all. I feel European. And do you know what? I don't know if I feel Greek, because I still have not understood what it means to be Greek. [...] Yes, I feel European, with plenty of Greek elements as well. I think I am closer to Africa though, but not in the African way of thinking! [laughter] When I say Africa, I mean the way my parents brought me up. Well...I mean they brought me up in a more international and liberal way. Not fully African, not fully Greek, not fully European. A little bit of everything. [...] When I think about the word 'identity', the first thing that crosses my mind is where I originate from. Where you come from makes you who you are. This is it. When I think of identity, I think of origin. I am African European. It is a mixture of where I come from. Roots are important. But where I was born and raised and how, is also very important. (Maria, 21, born in Greece)

Others acknowledged and identified with their mainly Greek identity highlighting though the importance of their African heritage,

Uganda for me represents a sacred place, a place where my roots are, a place that inspires, a place that lies in my heart even if it is very far away. There were people who gave up everything, so I can be here today. It means a lot, a lot... [...] I consider myself Ugandan as well. I am a Greek of Ugandan origin, as my best friend is a Greek of Kalamata Origin; it's the same thing for me. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

The way second generation Africans perceived the notions of roots and heritage varied according to the levels of belonging they expressed for Greece and retrospectively for their parents' countries of origin. At the same time, the acknowledgment of any form of belonging to Greece was usually accompanied by more or less positive and actual feelings of belonging towards Greece, while Africa represented a more vague feeling of respect for origin and roots. On the contrary, second generation Africans that identified themselves with their parents' countries of origin, tended to develop rather negative feelings for Greece and denied any form of belonging to it.

### 3.3.2 *TOO GREEK, TOO AFRICAN*

Victor is *too* Greek! He is Greek with black skin! He is more Greek than the Greeks! [...] Let me tell you something, he doesn't have the way; he doesn't have our way of thinking. Alex though, even though they are in the same generation and grew up in the same way, he would understand. (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

When I first heard this particular phrase [that someone is *too* Greek] from Harriet while she was talking about a common friend of ours, I did not pay much attention to it. It was not until the week after when another boy used the same phrase referring to another guy. It was then that I suddenly realized that something rather interesting could be hiding behind such a phrase and I could not wait to meet Harriet again. When I saw her, I explained my thoughts to her and posed the question. What do you mean when you say that someone is *too* Greek? She started laughing and told me that this was actually a rather long story. For her, calling someone *too* Greek, meant that this person was perceived as totally assimilated; someone who was thought to have left all his African characteristics behind, except of course his skin color. Someone who had adopted the Greek way of thinking so much that he could no longer understand the African mentality at all. As Harriet confessed in the end, for her, becoming *too* Greek was also a matter of choice of the individual but it was something mainly encountered among the older second generation. She was using the phrase mainly as a kind of joke, or to mock someone. Still though, many people used the phrase as an insult. In order to better understand what she really meant when she referred to someone as totally assimilated, I realized that the person I should talk to was Alex. Harriet could tell the difference between Victor and Alex, so what I needed to find out was Alex's opinion on the matter. His response was no different to what I expected to hear, realizing that assimilation as a process is criticized among second generation, mainly because it bears the personal responsibility of the individual as well. So, what about Victor?

Victor is assimilated. I won't say integrated, I say assimilated. First of all he knew nothing about the other side, the family's side. He didn't know the language, he didn't know the culture, and he never learned it. He still doesn't know it. And you saw weird things as well. I mean, we grew up listening to black music, and suddenly he starts listening to goa trans! Out of nowhere! [...] Among the second generation Nigerians only two other girls were listening to this particular music, you know who I am referring to, and you know how assimilated those girls are. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

Because I really knew the girls Alex was referring to, and I also knew Victor and his family, I realized that Harriet had a point, not only on how she perceived Victor but on how she perceived Alex as well. Alex, being both my main informant and a close friend, considered himself integrated and this is exactly how I would characterize him as well. Fluent in his mother tongue besides English and Greek, he had a Greek mentality combined with a deep knowledge of his heritage. Few second generation such as Harriet or Alex for example, were able to distinguish assimilation from integration or 'ghettoization' when they were referring either to themselves or their peers. And for both Harriet and Alex, there was nothing African about Victor besides his skin color. His mentality, his way of thinking, his attitude was totally Greek, and in combination with no actual knowledge of his parents' culture, this transformed him into an assimilated individual, totally responsible for his personal choices. Maybe Alex, Victor and Peter (Victor's brother) were the same age and were family friends as well; however, they were very different to each other. All of them grew up in families where cultural preservation was important, yet the way the second generation managed their cultural diversity was very different. Alex embraced his heritage while Victor rejected it. It is rather important to mention here that Victor's younger sisters both speak Yoruba, their parents' maternal language and are closer to their African roots. Victor on the other hand was assimilated and Peter is somewhere in between, being a bit closer to his African heritage than his older brother.

To many younger second generation, many older second generation are considered to be too Greek. Older second generation mainly, and some individuals from the younger second generation, are denied their *africanness* because of their supposed *greekness*. They are considered assimilated in a negative way, as if they have betrayed their origins by becoming (like) Greeks.

[When one calls me too Greek] I get mad and argue. They say it in a negative way. It's like, 'How did you end up like that'? It has nothing to do with how I behave in the society I live in, with the obligations I have. If you think that I am worse than you, then why are you where you are? You can't be at the bottom and complain that I stepped on you in order to get where I am. I am where I am because I earned it. I am here because I have tried a lot in my life. (Theofilos, 35, came at age 6)

So, on what criteria is one's *africanness* or *greekness* based?

I have been told twice in my life, 'oh, you are not African!' The first time I was hurt, the second time I laughed. The first time, I was talking to a guy and at some point he asks me if I have the

Greek citizenship, - I'm sure he would love to have it as well-, and when I said yes, he told me that I was not African. The second time I was at a mall, where those who consider themselves 'original' Africans go as well, and because of my profession and way of life, they told me I was not a true African. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

To become like Greek or *too* Greek, it is usually associated with almost all aspects of a persons' life. How they are dressed, how they speak, where they live, what kind of jobs they do, where they hang out, or, with whom they hang out, become criteria of *africanness* or *greekness*. Those characteristics though are highly constructed and are used as a means of a reverse form of discrimination. For many younger second generation, mocking people who bear the same characteristics as Greeks, becomes a defense method, and at the same time a means to rationalize their own supposed diversity. But what does it mean to be African to those youngsters?

The degree of ethnic self-awareness is higher among younger second generation who identify themselves mostly with their parents' countries of origin. Yet they do it in a reactive way, mainly to avoid identifying with Greece, but without knowing most of the times many things about these countries or what it means to be Congolese, Nigerian, or Kenyan. In other words, the group self-consciousness they express has more to do with a general notion of *africanness* and not with tracing their belonging to a specific country. It is mostly 'we Africans do this or that' and less 'we Congolese' or 'we Kenyans'. Stereotypes among Africans coming from different countries exist as well, yet, as far as the second generation is concerned, all those differences are put aside and they all get united under a broader African identity. But what exactly is this African identity?

I have never thought about it you know...Maybe it's just the way I am, the way I behave, my mentality. I mean, when I am with my African friends we can understand each other, I never have to explain much. Okay, I have some Greek friends as well, but they can't always understand my problems. I prefer to talk to my African friends, because they will. (Dion, 21, came at age 1)

African identity? It's me and my friends, we are Africans! We like our music and we don't wear these nerdy clothes. We have our style, and we like to hang out in our places. And of course we don't like posh people. (Ben, 19, came at age 4)

Well, I don't know how to explain it...besides my skin color? I don't know...(Collete, 24, came at age 1)

You can have a Greek ID card, but does this make you Greek? I am black, how can I be Greek? I have to be African even if I was born here. This is what people think when they see me. Once, a kid at school asked me where I was from. I said that I am from Athens, but he started laughing at me. He said that I cannot be from Athens because I am black. I don't know, maybe I am African because I am black. But I have never been to Africa... I really don't know, really...(Anna, 20, born in Greece)

*Africanness* in my mind is something that connects all of us who originate from that continent. Everybody knows that when Africans meet each other in the street, even if they don't know each other, they greet each other, even if one comes from East Africa and the other from West Africa. (Lamin, 20, born in Greece)

Most of the children who identify with Africa, failed to explain the reasons why they do so in a very clear way. Everybody felt connected to Africa for different reasons, varying from skin color to mentality. Yet, rather interesting was the fact that many children chose to identify with Africa because they were denied their belonging to other places. The most important outcome of such conversations though, was the realization that most of the interviewees knew very few things about their parents' countries of origin and Africa in general.

Rattansi and Phoenix (1997:131) argue that 'knowing how young people label themselves does not indicate how they live their lives or what are their cultural practices'. In other words, and as far as my interviewees are concerned, those who considered themselves Africans did not have very different opinions and experiences concerning their countries of origin compared to the persons who, according to them, were not behaving the way Africans were supposed to behave.

One day, I heard my sister [15 year old] say,-even though I believe she said it in order to prove to her friends that she is not integrated-, I heard her say, 'ok, because I have a plastic identity card does not mean I am Greek'. I'm sure she said it in order to convince her friends who don't have one. I see total confusion in her generation. I can see that their situation is much more complicated than ours. My sister has dozens of African friends. I only had my cousins and the children of another [African] family. My sister, I repeat, has hundreds of friends from Africa, from Philippines, and from all over the world, and still I see and hear stuff, we would never ever say! [...] I told her once, 'maybe -as you say-, you are not Greek, but you don't know your country's language. You don't know the National Days, you don't know the country'. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

It was argued by some older second generation that mainly younger second generation have huge identity problems because they chose to identify with something they do not know much about. However, the younger second generation, can at least acknowledge their diversity, and even though they do not know much about it, they embrace it. On the other hand, they do not favor integration because in their understanding, it is equivalent to assimilation. Younger second generation trace their belonging to Africa, rejecting at the same time any belonging to Greece, even if they were born or raised here and the majority of them have never been to Africa.

There is this sort of defense they use, that Africa is their homeland or something. I know that they know nothing about Africa and it's normal, okay? I go there every summer, and I still cannot tell you that I know my country of origin. I go there for vacation, so I cannot say that I know how life is there and how things work. [...] Imagine them then, they never go to their countries of origin, not because they don't want to but because they cannot because of their papers. [...] Us, and when I say us I mean the children who don't put such labels on ourselves,-okay maybe it sounds cruel-, but we laugh at those who act like that. I mean, okay, you try to prove to everybody that you are African and that you don't belong here. Fair enough. No matter if you were born or raised here. Instead of using the rhythm, the flow, the philosophy of your African heritage, you use something you have seen on MTV! It certainly has to do with a situation that is totally messed up... but maybe sometimes it's also in fashion to be like that, no? (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

Those children are clueless! They say they are Africans but take them to live there and come and tell me about it! There is a huge problem because they identify with something that doesn't represent them. And not only that, why should you identify with something that oppresses you? And it does oppress them! Simply because you don't want to identify with Greece or Europe, how can I say it... you don't get along. They identify with something that stops them from getting along. Why? For me it is so stupid. Let me tell you something though. They don't identify with Africa! They identify with something in between, with nonsense. You want to identify with Africa? Learn what it is first! Some of them identify with the ghetto for example. That happens sometimes. Others identify with the African-Americans! That's what I am talking about, they identify with irrelevant things, with things that don't help them and don't let them get along. They are out of space. I can't tell you exactly what they identify with; but I totally believe that they have chosen something that does not represent them. (Maria, 21, born in Greece)

Why is this happening though? Why do younger second generation trace their belonging to Africa and at the same time reject any sort of belonging to Greece? Why do they perceive

themselves as radically diverse from their Greek peers? But more importantly, how do they negotiate their own identities and what is the actual meaning behind the labels 'Greek' or 'African'?

Youth identities are characterized by an intrinsic 'fluidity and hybridity', and these characteristics are more apparent in identity construction of migrant origin youth (Rattansi & Phoenix 1997:143). Young people shape and reshape their identities constantly and those of migrant origin have to do it more imperatively in order to adapt to the ways society perceives them. In other words, feeling Greek is not enough. They have to be allowed to feel Greek in a way by the society. Unfortunately, they are not, so, they deny (at least publicly) any belonging to Greece and try to trace it to a constructed and hybrid *africanness*.

Younger children have images we did not have when we were growing up. You will see things like 'our way of speaking', or, 'our way of dressing'. When they see us, they say, 'oh, they look more like the natives'. You can see that they have started developing various kinds of defenses, something that we never had to do when we were young. (Petros, 28, came at age 2)

Both older and younger second generation trace their different approach towards *greekness* and *africanness* to their age gap as well. Older second generation grew up in the 90's where the rhetoric concerning migrants was less aggressive. The feelings of non belonging that many younger second generation express, can possibly be traced to the demonization of migrants and their children by the mass media, and to the negative politicization of the migration phenomenon in the 00's in Greece, as it happened in Italy in the 90's (Andall 2002).

For many young people of African background, Kypseli was their microcosm till the age of 18. They grew up in the neighborhood, they were socialized mainly in the African Communities and less in the Greek society, and they absorbed all the negative impact of the hostile public rhetoric about migrants. For those who did not manage to enter University or find a job outside Kypseli, getting in touch with other parts of the Greek society was almost impossible. For Selena, meeting other people of the same origin who were so different from the pattern she was used to came as a shock. As she explained to me, it was rather weird to see black people speak and act like whites. She considered them totally assimilated, as Greeks with black skin. They did not behave as blacks were supposed to behave, they did not live in Kypseli and they spoke Greek like Greeks and not like Africans. Most importantly though, they were successful in their professional lives. And all these characteristics together made them not African. The incident described below, clearly shows how second generation perceive each other and negotiate their own identities in the social space. Selena, a younger second generation, went with her friend

Harriet, to meet Alex and Theofilos, two older second generation who at the time were working on empowerment of the second generation in a local NGO. For Selena, it was one of the rare times she got out of Kypseli.

Oh, come on! When we first met her she was wild. Theofilos and I were talking to her and she was like ‘how, why do you speak like that? You are posh!’, and I was asking her, ‘Selena, what do you mean? What do you want to say by ‘posh’?’ and she replied ‘you are...you think you are white!’ Do you get me right now? (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

You should ask Harriet to tell you how I reacted the first time I saw Alex and Theofilos and I heard them speaking in Greek. Really, I had never seen this before. I mean, blacks –except my dad- who were rather fluent in Greek, reading articles and writing articles, I was all the time like ‘did you write this? Did you write that?’ And they were saying, ‘yes’! I say ‘Blacks?’, and they were laughing! They were looking at me as if I had said the weirdest thing in the world...for them it was because they had not grown up in Kypseli and they are old! They couldn’t understand I wasn’t making fun of them; I really was like that, I had never seen that before. (Selena, 21, came at age 2)

Identifying themselves as Africans, or even ‘blacks’ many times, younger second generation internalize the social exclusion and the identity crisis they experience. In other words, younger second generation have transformed skin color into the scapegoat for their social invisibility and vulnerability. The lack of role models in the public sphere, subconsciously cultivates the image of a black person as impossible, but also as incapable of being employed in high-income high-status jobs. Younger second generation trap themselves in stereotypes and lose hope for a better future.

One of the most revealing incidents I observed was a conversation about employment, between two second generation boys. Initially, Michael had approached Alex in order to help him with his papers. A few months later, he reapproached him in order to help him find a job. We were all sitting together at a coffee place when Michael arrived. After chatting a bit about life and work in general, he asked Alex if he had found him a job. Alex asked him what kind of job he was looking for. And Michael, replied, ‘man, find me a job for blacks’. I was left with my mouth wide open, and I asked Michael what he meant exactly when he said ‘a job for blacks’. Were there different jobs for blacks and for whites? He looked at me as if I had said the silliest thing in the world. He replied ‘yes’, and he continued by saying that a job for blacks was a job where not many people would see him. Alex remained silent during our little chat; he only



asked Michael why he hadn't sent him his CV as they had agreed. Michael remaining extremely calm, replied, 'no, I haven't. You told me you knew the boss. Just tell him to slot me in, man'. This specific incident is rather important for two reasons. The first one is Michael's belief that there are different jobs black and white people do, at least in Greece, because as he said 'people here are racists'. So he was actually looking for one of these 'invisible' jobs because nobody else would hire him anyway because he was black. Interestingly, he said all these things not only in front of me, but in front of five other young people of African background, all of whom were employed or studying at the University. The second reason is that he asked to be hired unofficially, to be 'slotted in'. To be slotted in, is a rather unique characteristic of the Greek mentality, or else 'nootropia' (Hertzfeld 1992). I met Michael a few times after this incident and we had a couple of conversations. My main target was to get to know him a bit better before coming to any kind of conclusion regarding the above conversation. Most conspicuously, Michael is a young man who identifies himself either as black or Nigerian, even though he left Nigeria when he was two years old. He denies all sorts of belonging to Greece and rejects having adopted Greek elements in his character, even though he has lived here his whole life. Yet, without realizing it, Michael has internalized unique characteristics of the Greek culture, such as the 'slotting in' mentality. For Michael, denying his belonging to Greece has a dual significance. On the one hand, he rejects a society to which he was in a way denied access; a society that does not recognize him as an equal member. On the other hand, he seeks to identify himself with his parents' country of origin, using his skin color as a means of belonging. Skin color for many migrants became the boundary between themselves and the Greek society. The visibility of black people made their integration a far more difficult process. Failing to integrate, the first generation developed various sorts of defenses, and skin color was promoted as a means of discrimination by both Africans and Greeks. For many Africans, integration was perceived as assimilation and became synonymous to origin denial and betrayal.

A few days ago, I was on the bus with some friends, all of them black but we spoke in Greek because we all come from different African countries, and a black woman comes and asks us in English with a very angry and ironic tone in her voice 'Why are you speaking Greek? Why don't you speak English or French? Have you become Greeks now? Do you think you are so much better than us?' And all that because we spoke in Greek! Well, Greek is my mother tongue as well; I came here when I was two! I got so upset...I mean...why do people have to be so stupid and mean?...A year ago I was more like her though... (Nora, 19, came at the age 2)

For the second generation skin color can also become a boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’. They are treated as ‘others’ by the Greek society and they turn into ‘others’ in order to cope with the identity crisis they experience. It was during one of our relaxed conversations when Selena confessed her personal experience:

I love your skirt you know. I bought exactly the same skirt during the summer but my friend made me return it the next day. She said ‘why do you wanna wear this skirt? It looks like pajamas; only a white girl would wear that! This is a skirt for a white girl; you should wear skirts for black girls! Who do you think you are? A white girl?’ ...and I returned it and now I regret it! Do you want to come shopping with me next time? I don’t want go shopping with her again, she’s always gonna say ‘this is for white girls, that is for white girls’... (Selena, 20, came at the age 2)

Stereotypes regulating behavior and assumptions are not a sole characteristic of the Greek society towards the way migrants and their offspring are perceived. On the contrary, stereotyping exists among migrants themselves, and most specifically, the way Greeks -and whites in general- are perceived by blacks. Skin color becomes the boundary that is used by both sides to impose notions of constructed difference and incompatibility. ‘Clothes for white girls’, ‘clubs for Africans’, ‘our way’, ‘their way’ were a few of the phrases used to explain a difference that many times was far less obvious. In other words, mutual stereotyping is responsible for creating boundaries between Greeks and Africans, many times trapping second generation and mixed race youth in the middle. One cannot be both black and white; one should behave according to their origin, and as far as youth of African background is concerned, showing *willingness* to integrate or crossing the invisible borders, is many times perceived by other Africans as elitist behavior and treason of their roots.

Moreover, besides the stigmatization on the part of their African compatriots, second generation youth has to deal with the Greek reality. Both migrants and their children are subject to continuous stereotyping, assumptions and ignorance by the Greek society. Yet, a lack of alternative role models for the youth has led to an internalization of the stereotypes projected. Race is perceived as a burden or an obstacle by many young second generation in their social mobility. Younger second generation is experiencing a strong identity crisis that is related not only to their position in the society as migrant origin youth, but as human beings in general.

The worst thing you can do is to have a negative image about yourself. If you do so, even if one wants to start looking at you in a different way, you don’t let him...(Theofilos, 35, came at age 6)

We should be the first to respect ourselves. I hear from many African kids that they don't like their nose, their lips or the color of their skin. We have reached a point where children curse themselves for being black! In other countries there are role models; you see a black successful guy and you say, 'oh, I want to be like him'. [...] What matters is the real integration. And this person to feel Greek and not be influenced by his skin color. How could a foreigner become President of Athens Bar? How? How could a Greek of migrant origin participate in the political scene of his country? ... (Petros, 28, came at the age 2)

This internalized sense of inferiority though, is not only a characteristic of the younger second generation; it is encountered mainly in the first generation and is transmitted to the second. In a conversation I had with some older second generation, Max emphasized the family's responsibility in nurturing such behavior and way of thinking.

There is a hidden embarrassment coming from the families. 'Just accept it and don't do anything, or else things could get worse', they say. They teach them subconsciously, how can I say it... 'Swallow your pride'. They believe they do not have the power to change things. They believe that things are like that and one should just accept it. (Max, 36, born in Greece)

Younger second generation devalue and consider themselves inferior to Greeks or to whites in general, and develop a reverse form of racism towards those who either associate with Greeks, or have hypothetically become like Greeks. Becoming like Greek is mostly associated with place of residence, proper use of the Greek language, ways of dressing, behavior, employment status and relationship formation outside the African Community. The phrase has a negative connotation and it is used as a derogatory term among Africans. The incident described below took place between two younger second generation, aged 18-19.

The other time I went to a club with a friend of mine and he was looking at them, and he was asking me all the time, 'Who are they?', 'Are they really famous or what?', 'How can they be famous? They are black!' (Abi, 19, born in Greece)

Those 'them' they were talking about, were two older second generation boys who were rather famous musicians. Abi knew the older boys and explained to her friend who they were. Her friend though had difficulties in believing her words, considering the words 'famous' and 'black' as mutually exclusive categories –at least as far as Greece is concerned. Most children cannot imagine doing anything else in their lives other than low-income low-status jobs. Many of them

perceive themselves as inferior to whites and project their social invisibility as a consequence of their skin color. The lack of role models in combination with stigmatization and social exclusion in both formal and substantial way has been internalized by many youth of African background leading to self-devaluation and rather low levels of self-esteem. Most conspicuously, they perceive themselves first of all as *blacks*, conceiving their skin color as a barrier between them and the majority society on the one hand or between their personal ambitions and real success in professional life. In other words, race has become a more powerful obstacle than migrant origin on the way towards upward social mobility for many young people of African background.

I do not suggest that race does not play a role –as least as far as Greek society is concerned-, yet, I argue that it is an obstacle constructed by themselves as well. Many younger second generation tended to trace at their skin color the source of most of the problems they faced in their lives without taking under consideration any other factor. ‘They did not hire me because I am black’ was a phrase I heard by many younger second generation in many informal conversations. Skin color may be indeed be an obstacle in some cases but it was turned into the scapegoat of all misfortunes in a their life. Perceiving their skin color as a barrier and using it as an excuse they were actually legitimizing it as the most powerful means of exclusion.

**CHAPTER 4**

**WHO CAN (NOT) BE GREEK? CITIZENSHIP ACQUISITION AND ITS  
FORMAL AND SUBSTANTIAL OUTCOMES FOR THE YOUTH OF  
AFRICAN BACKGROUND.**

**4.1 IDENTITY FORMATION THROUGH THE LENS OF GREEK NATIONALISM:  
SECOND GENERATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

Until the implementation of the Act 3838/10, the only way for a child to acquire Greek citizenship was to be born of a Greek parent. After the Act 3838 was voted, also eligible for the Greek citizenship were children born or raised in Greece of non-Greek parents who were legal residents of the country. Until 2010, the only way someone could become a Greek citizen, was through naturalization. Yet, naturalization addressed mainly migrants and not the second generation. In other words, there was no legislation that could assure that the children of migrants born in the country would be eligible for a permanent legal status, such as the one they would enjoy if their access to citizenship was legislated.

Children who were born in Greece of migrant parents are not enrolled at the municipality's registrar. Therefore, they do not have a birth certificate. The only document that proves their existence is a certificate given by the hospital where they are born. According to the Greek legislation, the legal status of the second generation is linked to the one of their parents. Undocumented parents mean that children do not enjoy any legal status despite being born in the country. At the same time, regardless of the legal status of the parents, when children reach adulthood, they are required to be holders of their own personal residence permits for migrants are linked to the labor market, which means that youngsters of migrant origin upon reaching adulthood, even if they were born and/or raised in the country, have to find a full time job in order to be eligible for a residence permit<sup>39</sup>. At the same time, those who have entered University cannot apply for a student's residence permit because they lack a student's entry visa on their passports. A student's entry visa is impossible to get since they were born or raised in the country.

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<sup>39</sup>Since 2008, those born in the country can apply for a long-term residence permit designed for the second generation. The only requirements are to be born in Greece and to have completed 9 years of compulsory education. However, those who were not born in Greece have to enter the labor market in order to secure their presence in the country.

When I was 19, I applied for the first time for my own residence permit. I applied for a student's residence permit but my application got rejected because they said that there was no entry visa in my passport. I did not know much about the procedure back then so I went with a lawyer. I told them that when I entered the country I was 1 year old and obviously my parents could not have me enter as a student! They looked at me with their mouths wide open, not knowing what to do. They were just repeating 'we are sorry but the procedure is like that'. I was working and studying at the same time, yet my lawyer said it would be better to apply for a student's permit even though I could have applied for a work permit and gotten it without any problem. She was totally clueless, and from then on I started taking care of my papers by myself. (Christine, 28, came at age 1)

Many of the older second generation after finishing high school and while trying to find out how things worked with the residence permits in Greece, were told by the personnel in the municipalities that the easiest way to obtain a student's residence permit, was to go back to their country of origin, apply there, and re-enter Greece as foreign students. The legislation governing migration was deficient; most of the employers were unqualified and many times were even unwilling to deal with the problems second generation youth faced. Since 2000, many legislative Acts have been promoted in order to solve the problems the children of the migrants faced upon reaching adulthood. Yet, their implementation has proved rather problematic mainly due to the inefficiency of the public sector in following them.

Until 1990, Greece was not a traditional immigration destination and therefore the need to legislate and implement a migration policy was not required. When Greece was transformed into a migrants' destination, such a necessity indeed occurred. Yet, no government managed to enact an effective migration policy, mainly due to the fact that migration was never considered a priority issue for the State. Meanwhile, the children of the first migrants who arrived in the country in the late 70's or 80's started coming of age in the early 00's. Yet, the State was unprepared for the first generation, let alone the second. Before 2000 in Greece, the term 'second generation' was not applicable to any category of people, -not adults at least. The legislation was poor, insufficient and not designed for the second generation, and therefore could not deal with the legal status problems those youngsters faced. Still though, second generation existed and they were trapped in bureaucracy and legal gaps, and at the same time faced arrest and deportation from the country they were born in.

#### 4.1.1 THE NEW NATIONALITY CODE: THE ACT 3838/2010

Migration policies all States implement are retrospective of their perception of citizenship (Soysal 1994). In Greece until 2010 there was no legislation regulating the access to citizenship for the children of non-nationals even though the country had been transformed into a migrants' destination since 1990. In other words, children of non- Greek origin, no matter if they were born in the country, were not considered by the Greek State as citizens to be.

The New Nationality Code or else the Act 3838/10 was promoted by the PASOK government and the ex-Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou and aimed at the acquisition of citizenship for the second generation. An attempt to cover the legal gap concerning the citizenship acquisition by the second generation, was made for the first time since the first mass immigration flows of the early 1990's had taken place. So far, only children born to at least one Greek parent were eligible to acquire Greek citizenship. The Act 3838 was a novelty because it gave access to citizenship to children born or raised in Greece by non-Greek parents.

Most conspicuously, according to the Act 3838, the children of all legal migrants who had been legal residents of Greece for the previous five years were eligible for the Greek citizenship, after their birth and the submission of a statement from their parents. At the same time, it gave the right to become Greek citizens to all migrant children who had successfully completed six years of education in a Greek school, after the submission of a statement from their parents, both of whom had been legal residents of Greece for at least the previous five years. The children who had already entered adulthood were eligible to apply for the citizenship retrospectively if they were holders of a residence permit. Furthermore, it facilitated the naturalization process for the adult migrant population, decreasing the period of continuous legal residence from ten to seven years. Finally, it gave restricted access to political rights to legal migrants, holders of a long term residence permit, by allowing them to vote and be elected in the municipal elections.

The Act 3838 was a personal choice, a sort of personal bet for the then Prime Minister, Giorgios Papandreou. At the same time, the Minister of Internal Affairs Ioannis Ragousis, was also very fond of the Act. The Act was created by Andreas Takis, a Jurist Doctor and former Counselor of the Citizen, who had a deep knowledge of the matter. Yet, besides its rationality, and the fact that certain groups of people were well aware of the situation of the second generation, society was not ready for such an innovation. The Act was changing the core of greekness in order to include 'others'. 'Others' that the vast majority of the people were not even aware existed.

A public debate was quickly opened and it was rather difficult for people to handle, not only because of lack of relevant information concerning the migrant origin children, but also because of a massive propaganda rhetoric that was performed by the opponents.

The conservative party New Democracy and the right wing party LAOS used a rather popularistic rhetoric in order to oppose the Act before it was voted. Most conspicuously, LAOS proposed that a referendum be conducted where its main question would be whether migrants should get Greek citizenship and the right to vote. The referendum never took place. The president of New Democracy party, Antonis Samaras, -and prime minister since June 2012-, stated in his speech at the Parliament on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010 ‘New Democracy will vote against the Act promoted by the government. Not only will we vote against it, but we will abolish it when our party gets elected to govern the country’.

A national campaign to support the Act before and after it was voted by the Greek Parliament never took place. PASOK, being the party which took the initiative to change the Citizenship Law and the political risk of enacting it, failed to support the Act 3838. The lack of a national campaign to support the Act had multiple consequences on its implementation as well. The Greek society never fully understood to whom this Act was referring. The term ‘second generation’ was never clarified, and the children of migrant origin were depicted as migrants by opponents and mass media. All too often the Act 3838 was talked about in the news and videos were shown of degraded city areas and migrants who had entered the country a few months previously. Opponents accused the PASOK government that the Act would transform Greece into a magnet for undocumented migrants if citizenship was granted so easily.

In March 2011, an Athenian lawyer claimed that the Act 3838 should be abolished supporting that the article referring to the voting rights of the long residence permit holders in the local (municipal) elections was anti-constitutional. The case was referred to the State Council, even though before the Act was voted, its constitutionality had been checked by the relevant parliamentary committee. According to the Act 3838, long term residence permit holders were eligible to vote in the local elections after being registered in the specific catalogues. According to the Greek Constitution, the right to vote and be voted in the National election required Greek citizenship as a prerequisite. Yet, it was not made clear that citizenship was also a prerequisite for the local elections, and based on that the parliamentary committee which examined the Act before it was voted, approved it. Moreover, the constitutionality of the Act was questioned during the parliamentary debate on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010, before the Act was voted. The MPs of LAOS, the extreme right wing party, questioned the right of non-nationals to vote in the local elections, yet the party’s claim was rejected by all the other political parties (Triandafyllidou 2012).

On 13<sup>th</sup> November 2012, the decision of the State Council was published in the media. The Act 3838/10 was considered anti-constitutional not only because it gave the right to vote to non-



citizens in the local elections but also because being born in the country, or having attended 6 years of school (when the obligatory education is 9 years) for the children of migrants raised in Greece, were not considered a 'real bond' with the country upon which they could claim the citizenship. At the same time, as far as naturalization was concerned, neither could the length of legal residence in the country of an individual prove a 'real bond' with Greece. The majority of the State Council judges supported the above arguments; while only a minority (13 out of 30) rejected the claims and supported that being born or raised in the country are indeed adequate to prove an individual's real bond with the country. The decision of the State Council has not been published yet, which means the Act is still active. Yet, the Minister of Internal Affairs, a week after the decision was published in the media, sent an order to all municipalities around the country to stop accepting applications for citizenship acquisition and naturalization according to the Act 3838.

From the one hundred Municipalities of the country, six municipalities refused to follow his orders, claiming that as long as the State Council has not yet published its decision, the Minister does not have the jurisdiction to suspend the Act. The six Mayors stated that in their Municipalities applications would continue to be accepted until the decision of the State Council that would cancel the Law was published (Ta Nea 5 December 2012).

However, the conservative party, New Democracy, is about to prepare a new Bill, promoting a rather conservative and restrictive way to govern the citizenship acquisition. The new mentality of the bill is depicted in the statement of the Minister of Internal Affairs, on 20-01-2013, according to which, 'citizenship should be granted to someone not in order to facilitate the integration process of a legally residing migrant, but should be awarded to those proven integrated in the country as a reward of their effort. Most conspicuously, 'citizenship is not a migrant's right. It is the State's will to grant it under specific preconditions' (To Vima 20 January 2013).

Many scholars have argued that access to citizenship through naturalization for the first generation, and through citizenship acquisition by birth for the second, could be a step towards a meaningful integration in the society (Faist *et al.* 2007; Joppke 1999). For the Greek State though, successful integration is seen as a prerequisite for citizenship acquisition. Citizenship is considered a reward, not a right for the first generation, let alone for the second. What is meant by the phrase 'successful integration' though on the part of the Greek State and what the implications of such an attitude for the second generation will be, are yet to be seen.

#### 4.1.2 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT 3838/2010

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in 2011, 16.854 children applied and 6.074 were granted the citizenship based on the Article 1A of the Act 3838<sup>40</sup>. Why did only approximately 17.000 children apply for the citizenship when the second generation numbers almost 200.000 people? The lack of a campaign to support the Act back lashed on the Act itself and few children of migrant origin applied for Greek citizenship.

When the Act 3838 was still a bill, I personally expressed my skepticism as far as the protection of the bill was concerned; how it should be protected before it became an Act. I mean that, perhaps the Prime Minister knew who the second generation were and their problems; maybe the Minister knew who the second generation was and what their problems were; the lawmaker knew from personal experience for sure. My concern, though, was that Greek people did not know. And an Act was voted, and many of us who worked on it, many of us did not manage to react; react in a good sense, support, embrace something that it is obvious we support. [...] There was no campaign, and what I am interested is what they say to me, ‘you don’t have the citizenship? How come?’, ‘why don’t you have the citizenship?’, ‘you don’t have a Greek ID? How is this possible?’ Policemen stopped me and they said, ‘you don’t have a Greek ID card? How is this possible?’ Do you get it? If they stopped someone who was not fluent in Greek or spoke no Greek at all or had only been here the past two years, these people would never say, ‘but why doesn’t he have a Greek ID?’ They would never wonder why he does not have a Greek ID. Because the image speaks for itself; it is rational for someone who is not fluent in Greek or doesn’t speak at all not to have a Greek ID. The Act 3838 was a law for the children who were born here, and many people who have never been in contact with the second generation still get surprised and say, ‘wow, you speak better Greek than I do’. And they are the same people who two years ago, when they first heard about the Act said, ‘oh God, where are we giving the citizenship?’ (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

The Act was not actively communicated to the migrant communities on the one hand, and on the other, the communities failed to inform their members. As far as African communities in general are concerned, there is an issue of mistrust towards the Greek state and in combination with deficient knowledge of the Greek language on the part of the first generation, the mere existence of the Act, never reached the people that could benefit from it. As far as minors are concerned, the application should have been made by the parents.

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<sup>40</sup>The complete report (in Greek) on the implementation results of the Act 3838/2010 can be found at <http://www.tovima.gr/files/1/2012/07/16/nomosallodapoi.pdf>

Most of the children did not apply because their parents were rather suspicious. Children are led by their parents. If parents were informed correctly, the results would have been positive. (Pavlos, 34, came at age 6)

The Act 3838 was voted, yet it was not supported either by the government or by the migrants; not even by the second generation. Why? Because many of the first generation thought it was just another Act, a new Act like all the rest. And even if they heard talk, - because they did hear talk of identity cards, about citizenship, about passports, -Greek passports-, still they were very skeptical. They were like, 'ok, let someone get it first, and then I will go as well. If somebody gets it, I will apply as well. Let's see first what it's all about; maybe it's a trap or something, maybe it's something else. Maybe it's something we cannot even imagine; it's better to wait and see first'. And here comes what I told you before, that the Act was not supported by the government, or by those the Act referred to. There was no campaign on the part of the government regarding who all these Greek citizens to be were, and it was not clear for those interested either. There was no campaign, nothing, not even a formal invitation to the migrant communities to inform them, to tell them, 'look, this is what it is all about; inform your own people that the Act is about this or that'. Very few people were aware of the Act 3838, and I personally know many people who expected me to get it first; they were like, 'if you don't get, how can I get it? How can my children get it, they are younger than you'. It's very simple. As far as how migrant communities function is concerned, things are very simple. If someone pays a bit of attention, they can solve many problems. It's very simple. People say, 'you get it first, you have been here for 30 years; you were born here; you have done this or that and you know stuff, and let us follow you'. It's very simple. People wanted to see if it was working with their own eyes. Theoretically, I am among the privileged, among those who have all the typical qualifications to acquire the citizenship, but I cannot because it sticks in bureaucratic issues. I did not have a valid residence permit, I was with a *vevaiosi*<sup>41</sup>, and then I had problems with the certificate from the hospital I was born, misspelling or missing out my middle name, and many other bureaucratic issues. Imagine how these people feel... they were already skeptical but they got totally disappointed. I had a specific problem; others had other kinds of problems, no valid residence permit or no residence permit at all even though they were born here. Others had all the documents required, and went to the Secondary Education Public Office to get a document required to prove they had successfully completed 6 grades of the Greek school to apply for the citizenship, and it was January for example but they were scheduled an appointment in May to come and pick up the document. To give them one document! You can understand now what happened if their residence permit expired by then. I mean, my residence permit is valid now; I

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<sup>41</sup> See footnote 9, p.7

need the document now in order to apply now. In May, I won't have a residence permit, I will have a *vevaiosi*<sup>42</sup>... (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

Alex still has not managed to solve his problem with his missing middle name on his certificate from the hospital where he was born. He cannot apply for citizenship because of this even though he fulfills all requirements needed.

Most of the second generation adults, who wanted to apply, had problems with their residence permits. In order to apply for citizenship or naturalization, they had to have a valid residence permit in their hands. When migrants and their offspring apply for a residence permit, they get a *vevaiosi* that proves that they have applied but it cannot be used as a valid residence permit. Due to severe bureaucratic problems though, most of the residence permits arrive already expired, and the children cannot apply for citizenship. At the same time, there were many other bureaucratic problems in issuing the required documents in order to apply. Moreover, time-consuming procedures prevented many second generation from applying because they never managed to have all of the documents required valid at the same time.

The children did not apply because they could not apply, they still cannot apply. There are some bureaucratic issues that are the States' responsibility to solve. Many of those children who are entitled to apply cannot because they don't have a valid residence permit or a residence permit at all, even though they were born or raised here. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

I wanted to apply last summer but my residence permit arrived expired as usual. Now I am with a *vevaiosi* and I cannot apply. (Lea, 21, born in Greece)

Another significant default of the Act 3838 was that it gave three years notice to all adult second generation to apply retrospectively, otherwise they would lose the chance and would have to go through naturalization if they wanted to acquire the citizenship. The three years notice was to expire in March 2013, three years after the Act was voted. For the reasons mentioned above that concerned the issuing of the residence permit, many children would not have managed to apply and would have had to follow the naturalization process which is more expensive and time-consuming. Plus, the applications were received by the Municipalities by appointment, and on many occasions, children were given dates after March 2013.

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<sup>42</sup> See footnote 9, p.7

This time limit... Many children realized it quite late; a girl got the citizenship and after that everybody wanted to apply. The employees though scheduled their appointments for April or even May 2013. It was too late. (Pavlos, 34, came at age 6)

Rather problematic I would say. Personally speaking, the time limit should not exist. It can't happen. From the moment a second generation child might have applied for a residence permit for exceptional reasons<sup>43</sup>, they can be one or two years with a *vevaiosi*<sup>44</sup> when the residence permit they have applied is valid for 1 year. (Marion, 29, born in Greece)

The personal responsibility was highlighted by some second generation as the main reason why many children did not apply for the citizenship. Katerina criticized her peers' attitude towards what it means to be an active individual, responsible for oneself, however, she was among the few children who was given the Greek citizenship at a very early age when her parents got naturalized. Therefore, she was not aware of the technical problems many second generation faced with their residence permits. Still though, she had a point, as the attitude of 'I didn't know' is rather diffused among African second generation.

The Act 3838 was such a sudden step. There was nothing and then suddenly six years of schooling and you could get citizenship. Do you think that the Greek society was ready for it? I think the migrants themselves were not ready for something like that. I think there wasn't any background. And then what? How many went to apply? Few. I don't know, maybe because I am working in an organization I had easy access to information concerning the Act. But I don't find it normal to post in facebook 'hey guys, enter the Internal Affairs Ministry website to give your opinion on the public discussion section concerning the citizenship reform', and the only ones who entered and discussed it were my Greek friends! And the rest of them just 'liked' the page. Enter the site and give your opinion! You are 16, 17 years old, I don't care! Enter and give your opinion! Not just post Vis Khalifa on your facebook wall! It is your problem after all! The simplest thing, you enter university, don't you want to go Erasmus? Get a driver's license; rent a house, the simplest things! Legally! Get a job? Your father who is a migrant can get a job easier than you who was born here, because you don't belong anywhere! This is totally our responsibility. Totally! I called my friends and they said, 'Is there such a thing?' Excuse me but there was plenty of information! It was all over the news for days! There is no excuse, TV is in

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<sup>43</sup>Exceptional reasons (humanitarian reasons) is a type of residence permit many second generation youngsters apply for when they do not fulfill the qualifications for any other kind (student permit or work permit). They are granted this particular kind of permit for a year based on the fact that they were born or raised in Greece and therefore they are in a way entitled to stay. For more information on the different types of the exceptional reasons residence permit visit the site of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [[www.ypes.gr](http://www.ypes.gr)].

<sup>44</sup> See footnote 9, p7

every house, and it was all over the place! Something was given to us. We should have grasped it. As my mother says, opportunity is a woman with hair in front of her face but the rest of her head is bald. If she passes by, there is nowhere to grasp her from....she is gone. (Katerina, 22, born in Greece)

Besides its problems, the Act was considered by many, scholars and second generation included, as a rather innovative legislation. It was the first time the State acknowledged the presence of the second generation and considered them as citizens to be. The citizenship acquisition ceased to be a privilege for those of Greek descent only, and became a right of those born and/or raised in the country as well, recognizing their entitlement to access all the rights reserved for citizens. Even though the logic behind the Act was correct, its implementation was proved rather problematic. As mentioned above, there was no campaign made to inform the people it referred to. At the same time, bureaucratic problems jeopardized the application procedure for many second generation. Most conspicuously, some employees refused to accept the applications of the children, or, many children were excluded from applying exactly because of their problematic legal status. And this was the severest critique to the Act on the part of the second generation. The Act in itself might have been a rather positive and innovative step, yet it was very difficult to be implemented because of the bureaucratic issues the second generation had to deal with before or even while applying.

An Act can always be better. It would have offered so much more if it had been communicated to the migrants whose children would have benefitted from its implementation. It could also have been more flexible, there was this three year time limit and also, it was up to the employee to accept or not accept the application. (Pavlos, 34, came at age 6)

The Act 3838 was a very positive step because it clarified some things regarding how and who could get the citizenship, at least for the second generation. Personally for me it was more than clear; I mean you had to submit 5-6 documents and that was it! You could gather them in a very short time, and then you had to pass three interviews and it was over! For me it was very good. This is as far as citizenship acquisition is concerned. About naturalization I don't know much. (Nadia, 28, came at age 1)

To begin with, the Act 3838 is a positive step because it recognizes that there are people [of migrant origin] born or raised in the country. And this is a very good, a very positive step. [...] Of course, there are cases of children that this Act does not include, like for example children who have problems with their passports, and they won't be able to have all the documents

required. And then, there are children whose parents have problems with their legal status...it does not help those kind of families. [...] I want to apply next month; I am collecting all the documents right now. (Victor, 33, born in Greece)

Victor never applied for the citizenship. Two weeks after we had this conversation, the decision of the State Council was published on the media and the Act 3838 was considered anti-constitutional. The Minister of the Internal Affairs ordered all Municipalities to stop implementing the Act. Therefore, many second generation never managed to submit their applications.

#### 4.1.3 WHO CAN BE GREEK? THE DEBATE

Before the Act 3838 was voted, a debate on who can be Greek was opened in the Greek public scene. Politicians, academics, journalists, students, human rights activists, second generation and every day people participated in order to express their opinion on the Bill proposed by the PASOK government. The reason why the specific Bill became a reference point for a minimum of three months was the importance of the issue it negotiated. For the first time in Greek political history, a change in the Nationality Code was proposed in order to involve more categories of people in those eligible for citizenship acquisition (Christopoulos 2012). So far, Greek citizenship was a sole privilege of those born to at least one Greek parent. For those who were born of foreign parents, the only way to acquire the Greek citizenship was through naturalization.

The large immigration wave Greece faced in the early 90's changed the demography of the country's population. The migrants who settled in the country brought along their families or made families and gave birth to their children in Greece. The children of the migrants, or else, the second generation, either born or raised in the country are deprived of basic rights. Knowing no other homeland other than Greece, second generation are denied access to citizenship because of their migrant background. In other words, they inherited the migrant status of their parents even if there was no place from which they had migrated. When the older second generation started coming of age, they had to deal with multiple practical problems besides the identity crisis they had to deal with. At the age of eighteen, they had to apply for a personal residence permit otherwise they would be treated as undocumented migrants even if they were born in the country. The legal gap concerning the legal status of those children in the society needed to be filled in.

Yet, changing the way citizenship was granted was a big step for the Greek people who had experienced migration mainly as an emigration and not an immigration country. At the same time, exactly because Greek citizenship was granted at birth, symbolizing the common origin of the Greek people, this made it difficult to accept anybody of non-Greek origin as part of the Greek nation.

The Act 3838/10 was rather innovative, introducing for the first time the right of a person to citizenship because he is born or raised on Greek soil, no matter where one originates from. The abandonment of *jus sanguinis* as sole prerequisite for citizenship is an important step towards the transformation of the very essence of the Greek people itself. Dimitris Christopoulos, president of the Hellenic League for Human Rights, argues that,

*Jus sanguinis* exists in all states. Still though, there are states where it co-exists with *jus soli*, and by this I mean automatic or semi-automatic acquisition of citizenship for the children of migrants under specific preconditions. In Greece, the bill introduces elements of *jus soli*. Plus, it seems to develop a new kind of *jus*, which is neither *jus soli* nor *jus sanguinis*. It may well be called *jus domicili* that is the right of a person, who, because of living somewhere, has such strong ties with the place regardless of being born there or his parents originating from there, has the right to belong to the political community of that place. I think this is the greatest challenge of migration in Europe, and not the re-introduction of a classical type of *jus soli*; people should belong to the political community in which they live, regardless of where they were born (Avgi 17 January 2010).

As mentioned above, the Act 3838 might well be considered an interception as far as what Greek people are. Most conspicuously, it transforms what Greek people have been so far, not only in a legal, but also in a symbolic way. *Greekness* is no longer inherited only through blood; it is transformed into participation in the Greek society. Social belonging becomes more important than blood, and highlights the citizenship (the notion of citizen) as the cornerstone of belonging. *Jus domicili* thus highlights the necessity of evolvement of the classic notions of citizenship based on either *jus soli* or *jus sanguinis* in order to conform to the needs of the modern states (Papadopoulou 2009). This change was rather significant for it was the first time a public debate about who can be Greek was opened. So far, nothing has ever been discussed in public except who cannot be Greek. *Greekness* was seen as a natural characteristic of a person and not as something one could acquire by participating in the society. The Act 3838 aimed to enlarge the specific notion in order to include more categories of people. This change was unique and opened a rather interesting debate in the mass media, society and political scene of the country



on who is Greek, who can be Greek and what it means to be Greek (Christopoulos in Avgi 20 January 2010).

Until the Act 3838 was voted, who was Greek was a clear and solid category. Greeks were only those of Greek ethnic descent and were perceived as the sole bearers of the Greek cultural identity. At the same time, according to a nationalist narrative depicting the nation as a family, its members should be phenotypically Caucasian, Christian Orthodox, and speak Greek. Minorities with different characteristics were oppressed and persecuted unless they assimilated throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The notion of ethnic homogeneity of the Greek people was therefore embedded in the national narrative and preserved by the *jus sanguinis* principle.

The Act 3838 changed the ethnic notion of belonging and at the same time challenged the traditional notion of *greekness*. Ethnic descent was no longer a sole prerequisite for citizenship acquisition, shifting the ethnic understanding of citizenship into a civic one. Moreover, Greek society was forced to acknowledge its transformation into a migrants' destination, the existence of the second generation and their belonging to Greece. The second generation, whether born or raised in Greece, inherit the migrant status of their parents and are perceived as non-citizens due to their different ethnic origin.

According to the 2011 census, almost 7% of the total population residing in Greece are foreign citizens. Out of 10.8 million people, approximately 800.000 are foreigners. More interestingly though, the foreign born people residing in Greece comprise 11% of the total population, out of which 3% were born in a EU country and 8% in a non EU country. There are approximately 200.000 children of migrant origin, born or raised in the country, comprising 10% of the total school population<sup>45</sup>.

Still though, in the public speech, migrants and their children were depicted as culturally 'others' who threaten the cultural and ethnic cohesion of the country. Civic and territorial ties are not considered strong enough to prove an individual's belonging to Greece. The second generation, born, raised and schooled in the country, are denied their bonds to the Greek society and are excluded from the civic corpus. Their cultural diversity is highlighted as an obstacle towards integration and therefore access to citizenship is restricted. Greek culture is conceived as an unchangeable and bounded entity, threatened by the growing numbers of culturally 'others' who have resided in Greece since the beginning of the 90's.

The innovation promoted by the Act 3838 was the transformation of the sense of belonging, from ethnic only, to civic as well. People residing in Greece were entitled to belong as citizens

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<sup>45</sup>Ministry of Interior database, <http://www.ypes.gr>

and not only as members of the nation. In other words, people of non-Greek origin could acquire Greek citizenship because their civic bonds with Greece were acknowledged.

The Act 3838, by facilitating the access to citizenship for the children of migrants, transformed them from non-citizens, to citizens, with rights and obligations. So far, being non-citizens, they had had many obligations towards the Greek State, but, very few rights. As Anna Triandafyllidou (2012) argues, 'Greek citizenship is about democracy, equality, solidarity. It is not about violence, authoritarianism and blood ties. It is about a 'daily plebiscite' as Ernest Renan put it nearly 200 years ago of wanting to be a Greek citizen and share common territory, a common system of governance, a common set of laws and a common culture'. This common culture which is constantly changing and negotiated among those who live together in a society includes at the very moment the children of the migrants who were born and/or raised in Greece. Before the Act 3838 was voted, and during the public debate, one of the arguments heavily used by many, politicians and journalists, was that granting citizenship to the children of migrants did not mean that they would automatically integrate. This particular argument was used both by defenders and opponents of the Act 3838. For some of the defenders, the Act was not innovative enough, and for the opponents it was far more innovative than it should have been. The defenders, especially those of the left and the extreme left, even though they considered the Act as a step in the right direction, they recognized the fact that it did not include all categories of second generation and at the same time did not solve the integration issues many of these children faced. On the other hand, the opponents supported that it was too early to give access to migrant origin youth because they were considered unsuccessfully integrated. Access to citizenship was portrayed as a right of ethnic Greeks that should be given only to those migrants who had proved their integration. In other words, migrant origin youth were perceived as migrants, and should be treated as such, until they, somehow, proved their integration. They supported that from the moment there was a naturalization process for the adults, there was no actual reason to change the citizenship law and grant citizenship to minors of migrant background.

At the same time, a debate concerning integration of migrants in the Greek society was enacted. Yet, there was no separation made between the first and the second generation and the different issues they face. For the first generation, integration is a challenging process. They have to learn a language, find a job and try to get socially included in the host society. They are migrants, and they trace their belonging mainly to their countries of origin, while the host country may become a second homeland, this is not always the case. For the second generation though, the situation is slightly different. Being born or raised in their parents' host country, for

them it becomes their home country. They are socialized in the migrant communities but in the society as well, and all of them are schooled in Greece. They might trace their belonging to their parents' countries of origin, but at the same time they have also developed bonds with Greece. However, I argue that how successful the integration process of the second generation will be, is highly connected to the migration policies of the host country. The integration of the youth of migrant origin is a long-term process in all societies and nobody expects that Greece will be the exception. Countries with a long tradition in hosting migrant populations, such as France or the UK, still face many problems as far as the integration of migrant origin youth is concerned. Different policies work, or, do not work in different countries at different times. Each and every country is unique, as is the process of integration for the different categories of people who inhabit it. Greece became a host country a few years ago, and till then it had been considered to be one of the most homogeneous States in the European Union, having rather efficiently managed to assimilate all different kinds of people who inhabited the country after its independence in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The migrant origin youth that live now in the country are actually the first second generation in the country's history, and it counts for more than 200.000 members. However, the greatest challenge Greek society has to face, is not the second generation originating from Albania or ex-Soviet Union Countries; those children, due to their phenotype and religion, are considered to be more easily integrated and in some cases even assimilated. The greatest challenge for the Greek society is to accept its transformation into a multicultural society and as part of the new generations of Greek citizens, to accept children with completely different external characteristics or religious beliefs (Andall 2002; Colombo *et al.* 2011; Colombo & Rebughini 2012). In other words, African or Asian origin youth are those who suffer the most from social exclusion amongst the second generation in general, due to their different phenotype. A second generation Polish person is far more acceptable than a second generation Nigerian or Philippino, mainly because he looks like a Greek and is considered more assimilable. External appearance becomes a boundary and automatically separates those who do not look like Greeks from those who are or those who are not, but look like Greeks. Race matters and being both black and Greek are seen as mutually exclusive categories (Andall 2002). It is important to mention that citizenship acquisition is not a panacea; it will not automatically solve all problems the second generation face in Greece. Neither will it make inequality or injustice disappear, nor transform Greece into a tolerant, multicultural society, from one day to the next. However, it is the way through which migrant origin youth can negotiate their social and political participation, identity and belonging to the country in which they were born or raised. By giving them access to citizenship, the second generation are transformed from

migrants to citizens, which means that their belonging to the country is acknowledged; they have political rights and a permanent legal status.

Most of the problems the second generation face are linked to their legal status. Being perceived as migrants and not as citizens from a very early age, they are discriminated against and are not offered the same opportunities as their Greek peers. Perhaps their access to the educational system is guaranteed regardless of their parents' legal status, yet they have restricted access to the labor market and hence to upward social mobility. Moreover, the most serious issue second generation face due to the lack of citizenship, is an identity crisis that jeopardizes their integration process. How can a child or a young adult feel they belong to a society that demands from them a residence permit and does not grant them equal rights? Or, even if they feel that they belong to Greece, how are these feelings influenced by police harassment, exclusion from the labor market and discrimination only because of their presumed origin? The social exclusion of the African second generation and their integration issues are highly connected with their legal status. And I do not refer here only to the lack of citizenship; I refer to all the problems they face with the issuing and renewal of their residence permits.

For the African second generation themselves though, what does it mean to be Greek? Not all of my interviewees were aware of the debate that had taken place in the country in 2009-10. Some of them were still minors, others were not interested so much in politics, and yet others knew every little detail about it. The second generation were denied access to citizenship due to lack of *greekness*. Yet, it was a *greekness* impossible for them to acquire because it was translated by most as descent. Origin was the substance of *greekness* and second generation were automatically excluded because of their migrant non-Greek origin. When the Act was still a bill, the debate was transformed from who cannot be Greek to who can be Greek. Elements besides origin were highlighted as essential to *greekness* which was separated from the national and approached the cultural and the civic. It was argued that Greek could include all the people who were born on Greek soil, or educated by the Greek educational system. At the same time, the notion of belonging to a place was highlighted as essential for citizenship acquisition; a belonging which was related to everyday life, socialization and participation in a particular society, and not to blood ties and origin. I asked many people, both of migrant and non migrant background, what it meant to be Greek; what it meant to belong to a country. I received many different answers from very different people. Yet the best answer I got was from Harriet, a 21 year old girl.

I think belonging to a country is not just about the nation. It is much simpler, it is what I told you before; it's the small details. If I am to feel Greek, it has to do with my upbringing. It all starts at home, even if you don't realize it; it comes from grandma. Tradition is not about remembering National Days. The simplest things, for example how we set the table; there is always cheese [feta] on the table, in little pieces; there is always a salad in the middle. This answers what it means to be [Greek] to me; the most simple traditions. Things you never think about; things that are present in your daily life, so you never think 'oh, this is Greek.' But when you go to a foreign country and some things are missing, then you understand what tradition is, and how you grew up and all that. So, yes, I have Greek elements in me, in my way of living and thinking. And I realized I had them when I travelled abroad and found out that they did not exist there. It's impossible to take nothing. Waking up and drinking coffee is Greek. Drinking frappe coffee is even more Greek. For me this is it; the little everyday traditions. Some think that being Greek is all about nationalism, and the Nation, and the flag, and yelling; no, it's not that. It's the simplest things; going for summer holidays to your grandma's village, and having her prepare you her best traditional dish. This is Greek. (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

#### 4.2 ID CARD VERSUS IDENTITY: THE RIGHT TO CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Second generation highlight the distinction between national identity and citizenship (Colombo *et al.* 2011; Hussain & Bagguley 2005), and their existence makes the problems related to the association of social participation with national belonging more obvious. In historical perspective, the notions of citizenship and nationality coincided according to the equation 'a nation-state = a land = a people = a citizenry' (Colombo *et al.* 2011:334). In the modern western world, citizenship has always been closely tied to the nation-state and was perceived as the sum of rights and duties distributed to a people sharing a common heritage and a land. Most nation-states being rather homogeneous tended to exclude from their 'imagined community' (Anderson 1983) all those who bore different characteristics, and possession or not of citizenship was equivalent to belonging.

When migratory flows became more apparent and intense, the strict bond between national identity, citizenship and the access to rights was indeed challenged. Most conspicuously, belonging to a particular nation-state only as a national and not as a citizen was questioned, and the right to cultural diversity was posed in what seemed to be the beginning of a globalizing process (Appadurai 1996; Beck 1999). The dilemma of whether rights should or should not be accredited to people not as members of the nation but as citizens of a State, provoked a series of debates over sovereignty and identity (Castles & Davidson, Delanty 2000).

Migrants are seen as bearers of a foreign culture, yet, after a period of legal residence in a country, are entitled to rights (political, social and civil) which they access through citizenship acquisition. For the first generation, participation in the social life as citizens deconstructs the notion of the nation as a bounded entity. This becomes even more apparent when the second generation claim access to citizenship, highlighting both a cultural and a civic belonging to the country, supporting at the same time their rights to cultural diversity. The children of the migrants, born or raised in Greece, assert their right to citizenship as citizens and not as members of the nation. Citizenship is the tool through which the second generation can negotiate their social and political participation, identity and belonging (Bianchi 2011; Colombo 2010; Colombo *et al.* 2011; Riccio 2010; Zinn 2011).

The mode, through which a nation-state distributes its citizenship, mirrors the way it perceives the notion of belonging. At the same time, citizenship divides the society into two; those who can access it and those who cannot. Yet, identification with the nation and citizenship is not the same thing. The second generation claim their access to citizenship not by identifying themselves with the nation; on the contrary, they highlight their right to cultural diversity rejecting assimilation, and focus on other forms of belonging they have with Greece, promoting thus, their civic belonging to the country (Christiansen & Hedetoft 2004; Colombo *et al.* 2011; Rummens 2003; Sicakkan & Lithman 2004).

I don't know if I feel Greek, Ghanaian or African, really. And I don't really care about these things; they are just labels people put on each other. I feel me; I was born here. I feel I belong to my city; my neighborhood. It's not fair to be excluded because my parents are migrants. I am not. I grew up like my classmates. What should I do in order to be accepted? I mean, Albanian origin kids change their names and suddenly they become Greek; they are not discriminated against at school or in the labor market; it's much easier for them to assimilate. What can I do? Even if I change my name, I can't change my skin color. And I don't want to, ok? As I told you before, I don't know if I feel African but still there are some elements of my parents' culture I really like. I like it when I can speak a different language with my sister in the street and nobody can understand us. And I love the way my mother cooks both Greek and Ghanaian dishes. I am trying to learn now, and I'm getting pretty good you know, you should come for dinner! [...] The best part though is, when my father narrates stories from his childhood in Africa... I really want to go there sometime, even though I already know I will be like a European tourist to them, even though I speak the language. Only for vacation though; I don't think I could live there. [...] I don't have the African mentality so much and my mum always says, 'oh, I don't know why you behave like that, in Africa this wouldn't be acceptable!', and I always reply, 'mum, this is

Greece, get over it! This is how people behave!’ She can’t always understand it but for me it’s natural; I don’t know how else I could behave. (Sandra, 23, born in Greece)

I was not born here; I came when I was four. [...] I went to school and I am studying now, and I am doing everything to follow the rules, really. I mean, I am integrated; I am no different to the Greeks. Why don’t they give me the citizenship so I won’t have to pay all this money to renew my permit? It makes me feel like a foreigner, totally. What more do they want? My life is here now; I pay taxes; I follow the law; I do everything. Why can’t I have my rights? (Patrick, 24, came at age 4)

The dilemma posed to the Greek society regarding the access to citizenship for the second generation before and after the Act 3838 was voted, provoked a debate in the Greek society. Politicians, journalists, NGOs, migrants’ organizations and everyday people participated in a debate that was argued however, in a rather simplistic way. Is citizenship a prerequisite for integration or is integration a prerequisite for citizenship acquisition? Will access to citizenship facilitate the integration process of the second generation, or does the second generation have to integrate in the society before they are granted the citizenship?

Both ‘citizenship acquisition’ and ‘integration’ were used as stable and solid categories; as separate processes, each presupposing that one should pre-exist for the other to take place. Moreover, integration was conceived many times as incorporation or even assimilation on behalf of the social actors and the State as well. How ready is the Greek society to accept as Greeks, people who look different? How ready is the Greek society to accept as Greeks all those children born to migrant parents, who want to keep cultural aspects of their parents’ countries of origin? How tolerant is the Greek society when it comes to cultural diversity among its nationals? But more importantly, how can the right to citizenship be combined with the right to cultural diversity?

For the second generation access to citizenship equals their inclusion in the Greek society in a formal way as well (Bianchi 2011; Colombo *et al.* 2011; Wessendorf 2008; Zinn 2011). Rights that are reserved for Greeks only, will be granted to them as well, transforming them from non-citizens to citizens. Social, political and professional rights, in combination with a permanent legal status, are to be guaranteed. At the same time, a sense of belonging, not necessarily to the Nation but to the State, will be acknowledged. The only way for the second generation to involve themselves and negotiate their social and political participation, identity and belonging, is through citizenship acquisition.

My parents always told me to participate, not just observe. And that is what I am trying to do. Because even if my problem gets solved, it doesn't mean that I won't fight for the children who were not born but grew up here; they too are entitled to an identity card and the citizenship. Or for my parents, who have lived in Greece for more than 20 years. Aren't all these people Greek citizens? Why shouldn't I vote in the national and municipal elections? Because I am black and I am of African origin? I was born here, I studied here, I live here and I am a Greek citizen and I want to have the same rights as all my peers. Give them to me! (Harriet, 21, born in Greece)

In a country like Greece, where citizenship is inherited through kinship and the nation is envisioned as a family whose members relate to each other through blood ties, it is rather hard to accept anyone who does not relate to the imagined community as a member of the nation (Anderson 1983). Second generation cannot be conceived as Greeks to be, even if they were born, raised and schooled in the country. Their external characteristics, especially for those of African background, will always keep them apart from what is perceived as a true Greek (Andall 2002). Yet, those children assert their right to become members of the Greek political community and not the Greek Nation. In other words, second generation claim their rights as citizens and not as members of the Nation.

By claiming rights as citizens, their right to cultural diversity is put in the front line. Coming from different cultural backgrounds, they trace their belonging to more than one culture. The combination of the two cultures makes them who they are, and they do not negotiate abandoning one for the sake of the other (Brettell & Nibbs 2009). For Alex, combining elements of both cultures is perceived as the core of his being, what makes him who he is.

My parents considered it rather important for me to integrate in the Greek society while keeping in touch with my roots. My culture, my mentality is Greek. At the same time, I have kept elements of my parents' culture as well. This helps me, I don't know how to explain it; it keeps me in a balance, mentally and emotionally. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

The preservation of cultural elements and language on the part of the second generation are key factors towards a successful integration process. When the culture of the country of origin is combined with that of the host country, the most likely result is a well balanced individual, aware of his dual or triple belonging. Moreover, the sense of pride that accompanies such a hyphenated identification transforms it into a conscious choice for the second generation youth who claim it. The coexistence of multiple cultural characteristics in a sole individual manifests



the inevitable and at the same time the problematic nature of a sole and coherent belonging to a sole ethnic group in a situation of pluralism (Colombo & Rebughini 2012).

#### 4.2.1 THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE: INTEGRATION AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION

Born or raised in their parents' host country and the one of their origin, second generation have few possibilities to speak the maternal language unless it is spoken at home. On the other hand, they are more likely to be rather fluent in Greek from a very early age as long as they are schooled in Greece, unlike their parents who might face difficulties in acquiring proficiency in the host country's language.

Languages are considered the most powerful element of cultures as they 'not only have a communicative value, but they are also crucial regarding the ways we see the world and as markers of individual and collective identities' (Vertovec & Wessendorf 2004:34). Individuals who share a culture, find in language a common means of communication which distinguishes them from the outsiders, or else the bearers of a different culture, and at the same time develop a common way of perceiving the world (Papastergiadis 2000). Among immigrant communities, language preservation is seen as a common bond among certain individuals and a tool for their cultural preservation. For the second generation, language is considered a linkage to the country of origin as well. Yet, what is the relation between successful integration and cultural preservation for both the first and the second generation? How can the second generation keep their cultural and linguistic diversity without risking marginalization and social exclusion? And how much can affect the first generation's attitude in keeping this balance?

A key factor for the successful integration of the first generation in the host country is learning the host country's language. Language proficiency offers more possibilities for social inclusion and inclusion in the labor market as well. The Africans who came here as students and studied in Greek Universities are most likely to be fluent in Greek. This gives an advantage to their children compared to those whose parents are only fluent in an African dialect, English or French. Being fluent in Greek or at least knowing the language at a desirable level, helps in the integration process of the parents and facilitates the integration of the children as well, especially when their schooling begins. This is not always the case; however it is more likely to encounter better integrated children in families where at least one of the parents is fluent in Greek.

Many children traced their inability to speak any other language but Greek to the Greek educational system. In the late 80's and early 90's, few children of African origin attended Greek public primary schools. According to them, school teachers, encouraged their parents to speak to them only in Greek in order to avoid language mixing and facilitate at least the

linguistic assimilation of the pupils. However, in order to do so, parents themselves had to be, if not fluent, at least average speakers of Greek.

At home we used to speak English and a Nigerian dialect. This was creating problems with my school homework though. One day, the teacher called my parents and told them that we should speak Greek at home. As time passed by, we started speaking only Greek at home [...]. Since I was 9 years old, I have only spoken Greek. I speak English as well, and I understand but I cannot speak Nigerian any more. (Victor, 33, born in Greece)

At home we spoke my mother's tongue as well besides Greek. When I went to the kindergarten, I used to mix the two languages, so my teachers called my parents and complained about it. I was speaking half –half to the rest of the kids! So, my parents stopped using this dialect. I can still understand, but my accent sucks...the worst thing though, is that my younger sister does not understand a word. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

This was indeed the case among some of my interviewees, and parents, believing that this would be in the best interest of the children, and make their integration in the school environment easier, chose to follow the teachers' recommendations. Nowadays though, as migrant numbers, together with the numbers of second generation enrolled in school, increase, it seems less likely that a teacher would insist that parents speak to their children only in Greek, especially when they are aware of the status of the parents as economic migrants, who rarely speak Greek at all. Choosing not to speak any language besides Greek at home may indeed help the child and facilitate the learning process at school. Still, it is not the only reason why parents choose to speak a specific language to their children. The main and most severe consequence of such a decision on behalf of the parents though, is the loss of a vital part of the child's identity. On the other hand though, as other interviewees admit, teachers' recommendations were not always the justification for the inability of the second generation to speak another language but Greek.

I don't remember any teacher telling me, or anybody else I knew to quit a language. I don't say it didn't happen, but for me it sounds weird. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

Discussing the matter more thoroughly with Alex, he traced language inadequacy of the second generation to the family itself.

Ugandans are...because I have known many families, and their children since they were little, are one of the very few African Communities in Greece that keep both cultures. You won't find any

Ugandan of the first generation who is not fluent in Greek. The way they speak their own language, is the way they speak Greek. But none of the Uganda origin children, no one at all, speaks their mother's tongue. Not a single one. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

In order to verify Alex's sayings, I had to trace some of those people and find out for myself if this was indeed the case, and of course why it was happening. Speaking with the parents and with people from the African Community in general as well, I came across a very interesting conclusion. In some cases, parents themselves were fonder of an assimilation process, instead of integration, especially in cases where they themselves had become naturalized Greek citizens and they had already transmitted their status to their children. In other words, parents facilitated the assimilation process of their children by not transmitting elements of their culture of origin to them, such as language for example, when at the same time among the first generation, cultural preservation was highly valued. Cultural and linguistic preservation was seen as an obstacle and a possible means of discrimination on behalf of the first generation as far as the second was concerned. Some of my interviewees who grew up this way, while admitting their assimilation, became interested in getting in touch with their roots at an older age, and valued their country of origin culture in a way they did not while they were younger.

I have told my mother that when I have kids, she should teach them our tribe's language. She should do that; they should speak better than I do. [...] I've never dated an African girl, so let's say that I have kids with a Greek girl. Those kids will be of mixed race, right? [...] I am assimilated; my kids will probably be assimilated as well by the Greek society, and from the moment they will live in Greece, they will also have more chance themselves of marrying Greek girls. And after a couple of generations, their children and grandchildren will be white. And let's say, maybe in 50 years, the Basasira family might be white! It's a bit crazy if you think about it but it may happen. This is why they should keep the language; they should keep the roots. And another thing, we give two names. I have an African name as well, which is given in a special ceremony. I don't know how to do this very well, but I have started studying it, just in case. I want to do this for my kids; I don't want to let it go as a tradition. I am learning how to do this, so they won't lose their roots; the history. (Andreas, 27, born in Greece)

For many second generation, keeping in touch with their roots is expressed through their desire to keep customs and language alive not only for them but for the generations after them as well. Some of the older second generation, acknowledging their assimilation by the Greek society, have decided to re approach what they perceive as roots, (mainly language and some customs) in order to transmit them to their children. However, customs and language are treated as stable

cultural elements and not the essence of a culture. Being raised in the Greek society and not having any influence from their parents' culture, they approach it as an outsider would do, lacking the internal reflexes to negotiate their own existence through it.

In some other cases though, exactly the opposite process took place. The children opposed their parents' wish to transmit to them the language and culture of their countries of origin. Moreover, parents, even if not fluent themselves, were forced in a way by their children to speak in a specific language, usually the one of the host country.

If someone imposed the Greek language at home, it was Victor and Peter. I used to go to their place. Their parents spoke Yoruba<sup>46</sup>, nothing else. But they always replied in Greek. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

Children, among the older second generation mainly, tried to negotiate their position in the society, rejecting the migrant status of their parents and together with it their whole cultural and linguistic background. In order to fit in, they subconsciously chose, or, were forced to assimilate, while missing at the same time a legal status that would allow them to do so more easily. In other words, unaware of the way they were perceived by the State and the rejection they would face later in their lives, those children chose assimilation as the preferred option to express their feelings of belonging.

Many children, instead of speaking to their parents in Greek or in an African Dialect, use English or French for their daily communication in the family. Which language is preferred, depends on the broader region the parents come from. Those of western and central Africa with the exception of Ghana and Nigeria are French Speakers, while in the rest of Africa, English is the language more broadly spoken. The use of English or French instead of a traditional dialect or language is mainly the case when parents come from different African countries or different tribes in the same country. They communicate between them in English or French in the first place, because they do not speak each others' mother tongue. The dilemma of speaking or not speaking an African dialect at home is never posed due to the fact that there is not a common one between the two parents.

My mum is from Nigeria and my dad from Kenya, but unfortunately at home we did not speak another language besides English. [...] It was easier with English, more convenient. Which

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<sup>46</sup>Yoruba is an African dialect spoken in Nigeria by the homonymous tribe.

dialect should I learn? Swahili<sup>47</sup> or Yoruba? If I learn Swahili, I can communicate only with my father; if I learn Yoruba, only with my father. (Maria, 21, born in Greece)

In cases where a second language besides English is used at home, this could be either Greek,

At home we spoke different languages at different periods of times. Greek, English, Swahili, Luo<sup>48</sup>, Uganda language. But I was diagnosed with dyslexia, so the teachers advised my parents to keep two languages only; English and Greek. A big mistake because after a while you really stop mixing them; they should have kept at least a third one; Swahili for example. The problem there would be that my mum does not speak Swahili. So we kept the two languages that both my parents spoke. (Katerina, 22, born in Greece)

In some cases parents deliberately choose to speak English or French to their children in order to make them bilingual. They take for granted that the children will become fluent in Greek from the moment they live in Greece, so speaking to them in a different language at home mainly targets giving them extra skills and keeping some parts of their African identity alive. Very few second generation were not fluent in a minimum of at least two languages. Most conspicuously, all of them were fluent in Greek from the moment they were schooled and lived in Greece. At the same time, mainly due to the fact that parents were not Greek native speakers, they transmitted to their children either the language they communicated between them, and/or an African language.

At home we speak Greek and Lingala<sup>49</sup>. Lingala is an African dialect; there are some French words as well. My parents speak French as well but I do not. I speak the basic but I understand very well. I speak Greek to my sister. We speak Lingala as well when we want to make fun of something because the language is a bit funny, so when we want to make fun of something we say it in Lingala in order to laugh more. (Christian, 26, came at age 3)

At home we don't speak Greek. I speak Greek to my brother but to our mum we speak English and a Ghanaian dialect. (Sandra, 23, born in Greece)

Till I was six, I used to speak English or Yoruba (the language of my parent's tribe) to my parents. In primary school I used to think first in English or Yoruba and then express myself in

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<sup>47</sup>Swahili is widely spoken in East Africa.

<sup>48</sup>Luo is both a tribe and a language. Luo people are mainly encountered in Kenya.

<sup>49</sup>Lingala is spoken in Congo.

Greek. It was rather easy for me pass from the one language to the other. It was like being at home, going from one room to the other. I started speaking to my parents in Greek around puberty. We used English for theoretical conversations. In Yoruba we fought or discussed family matters. We spoke in Greek when we were happy and relaxed. I am trilingual then. [...] Most of the children of Nigerian migrants that I know do not know Yoruba because they don't use the language at home. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

Still, being fluent in an African dialect is not always the case among the youth of African background. Very few of the children I met actually spoke their parents' mother tongue. Some could understand a few words or a simple conversation, but especially those coming from mixed marriages did not speak at all. On the other hand, very few of them were not fluent in either English or French. Speaking a different language at home is a connection with their parents' culture for many of them. Almost all of them were initially socialized in the African Community and they do feel the connection with Africa, not just through skin color but also through a different language as well.

English and French are the two languages Africans use to communicate with each other. The linguistic proliferation of the continent makes it impossible even for people belonging to the same nation-State to communicate with each other unless they use one of those two languages. As mentioned before, French is used mainly by the West Africans, with the exception of Nigerians and Ghanaians, and English by the rest of them. These two languages facilitate the communication among the migrant communities and their members. In addition, they are vaguely used by Africans, both newcomers and older residents, in order to communicate within the Greek society. In fact, being fluent in either English or French dramatically diminishes the possibilities of Africans becoming fluent in Greek. The result of such a situation is that Africans even though they are one of the oldest migrant communities in the country, they are less fluent in Greek in comparison to any other migrant community.

Children of migrant origin tend to be bilingual and sometimes even trilingual. The languages used at home vary from Greek- in a very few cases though- to English, French, and a variety of African languages and dialects. The languages the children usually speak are not always or only those in which the parents are more fluent but also those which are more convenient to use in the family. Sometimes, the choices the parents make are based on the need to find a common language to communicate at home, especially when they come from different tribes or countries, and much less on their willingness or denial to transmit an African dialect to their children. But what is both the symbolic and the actual meaning of language preservation in the identity formation process of the second generation?

Language is considered a key element of a culture, and especially among migrants and Diaspora. It represents both actual and symbolic bonds with the country of origin. For the first generation language proficiency, as far as the language of the country of origin is concerned is given, but for the second generation, proficiency in Greek is considered given. The children of the migrants can only learn their country's language at home and practice it only with family members or compatriots, thus diminishing the possibilities of mastering it. Being fluent in an African language helps second generation trace their belonging to a specific country and not to Africa in general. The youth of African background fluent in an African idiom are more likely to identify with a specific culture and not with a general notion of *africanness*. On the contrary, most of the children who speak English or French but do not speak any of the languages of their countries of origin, despite identifying with a specific country, face a difficulty in expressing specific cultural characteristics that they feel connected to. In other words, the essence of a culture, as transmitted through linguistic expressions, is irreplaceable and creates unique forms of connection.

As mentioned above, the lack of the country of origin as a reference point, may lead to assimilation of the second generation. At the same time, ethnic enclosure might lead to a problematic or unsuccessful integration and lead to social exclusion. The equilibrium between the cultures of the home and the host country is more likely to support a successful integration process for the second generation.

#### 4.2.2 SECOND GENERATION AND ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP

Greece's citizenship model is based on descent and children of migrant origin find themselves legally excluded from it. The dichotomy of being born or raised in a country without being treated as a full citizen, challenges notions of identity and belonging for the second generation (Ambrosini & Molina 2004; Rumbaut 2004). The reasons why the children of migrants want the Greek citizenship are mainly the acquisition of a legal status, access to political rights, access to professional rights, a recognition of their belonging to Greece and the Greek society, access to free movement, and an end to institutional forms of discrimination. All of these are components, in one way or another, of one of the four dimensions of citizenship. Citizenship as a concept is composed of four basic elements: the legal status, the rights, the political and other forms of participation in society, and the sense of belonging (Bianchi 2011; Bloemraad *et al.* 2008; Brubaker 1992; Faist 2000).

The legal status determines the position individuals hold within the nation-State. It differentiates citizens from non-citizens, or else, those who are entitled to hold a country's nationality from

those who are not. Citizenship may be granted by descent (*jus sanguinis*), envisioning the nation-State as a family unit whose members are connected through blood ties or by place of birth (*jus soli*), emphasizing the importance of the territory as a missing link among the individuals who inhabit the country. Still, there are countries which use a combination of *jus soli* and *jus sanguine* in order to grant citizenship to their members. States, such as Greece, which favor *jus sanguinis* are less likely to adopt policies which include migrants and usually have a rather strict naturalization process. Citizenship is conceived as an exclusive right of those who are members of the imagined community and denies access to all those who are seen as aliens (Anderson 1983).

The dimension of rights has to do with the social contract between the state and the individual, with rights and obligations on both sides (Rousseau 1762). The individual has to fulfill certain obligations towards the State such as pay taxes, follow the Law, serve in the army (obligatory for males in Greece), and complete mandatory education, while the State is obliged to protect its citizens, allow them to reside in its territory, and give them access to social rights, such as those of education or health care (Bianchi 2011). Legal migrants, even without being granted citizenship, usually enjoy all the above rights, and have to fulfill the described obligations as well, with the exception of serving in the army which refers to citizens only.

The third dimension is one of the political rights, which is granted to citizens only. Through access to political rights, citizens participate in the governance of the State. Political participation through the right to vote and be voted is considered to strengthen the relationship between the State and the people, making each individual responsible for the political situation of the country (Bianchi 2011).

The notion of national belonging is the last dimension of citizenship. The members of a nation share common cultural characteristics which differentiates them from the outsiders and promote social cohesion within it (Faist 2000). In other words, the sense of national belonging exists in order to include or exclude individuals or groups, and justify in a way the mode in which citizenship is granted or denied. The outsiders may be present inside or outside the physical borders of the nation-State. Yet, when those who are perceived as outsiders are inside, such as ethnic minorities or migrants, nationalism tends to rise. What happens though when those who are considered outsiders trace their belonging to the nation-State, such as the second generation for example?

In March 2010, the Act 3838, or else the New Nationality Code, was voted by the Greek Parliament, even though the political parties of the right voted against it. According to the Act 3838/10, the children of all legal migrants who had been residents of Greece for the previous



five years were eligible for the Greek citizenship, after their birth and after the submission of a statement from their parents. At the same time it gave the right to become Greek citizens to all migrant children who were not born in the country but had attended a Greek school for a total of at least six years, after the submission of a statement from their parents (they too having been holders of a legal residence permit for at least five years). The children who had already entered adulthood were eligible to apply for citizenship retrospectively if they were holders of a residence permit. Furthermore, it facilitated the naturalization process for migrants, decreasing the minimum period of legal residence from ten to seven years. Finally, it gave restricted access to political rights to legal migrants who were holders of a long-term residence permit, by allowing them to vote and be elected in the municipal elections. Yet, at the beginning of 2011, an Athenian lawyer considered some articles of the Act anti-constitutional and the case was indicted to Greece's State Council. A year later, the State Council found some of its articles anti-constitutional and those regulating the access to citizenship for the migrant origin children born or raised in the country were cancelled.

At the moment, the only way for a second generation to acquire Greek citizenship is through naturalization, a process that has been designed for adult legal migrants and long-term residents of the country, and not their children. Minors can acquire the Greek citizenship only if their parents become Greek citizens through naturalization. In other words, being born or raised in Greece is not enough for one to become a citizen of the country. For this to happen, one has to be born to Greek parents.

After 2000, the children of the first migrants started coming of age. Every year since then, more children of migrant origin enter the adult world and encounter the same problems their parents have. At the moment, the total population of the second generation, both adults and minors, is about 200.000 people, a rather significant number in a country of approximately 10.8 million people. As long as they are minors, their legal status is linked to that of their parents. In other words, they are listed on their parents' residence permit and they do not need a personal one. At the same time, as holders of a residence permit and not as citizens, they are subject to all the restriction their legal status implies. Fortunately, a legal residence permit is not a prerequisite for school enrolment, giving access to education to all children regardless of their parents' legal status. Yet, in order to have access to the Pan-Hellenic (National) exams in order to enter University, they have to be holders of a residence permit. As children of migrant origin turn eighteen, they are treated as migrants in the country they were either born or raised in by having to acquire a personal residence permit in order to reside legally in Greece. So, why do second generation want the Greek citizenship?

Among my interviewees, there were very few children who were Greek citizens. They had acquired the Greek citizenship through their parents after they got naturalized. The vast majority of my interviewees were citizens of their parents' countries of origin, even though they were either born or came to Greece before the age of six. Still, there were a few others who were non-citizens, having failed to acquire the citizenship of any country. As far as their attitude towards the Act 3838 was concerned, some had applied for the Greek citizenship and were waiting for an answer. Others had not applied because of bureaucratic problems, as they were lacking some of the documents required. Others still, did not apply because they were not even aware that the Act 3838 referred to them. Yet, with the exception of a sole individual, the rest of them when asked if they desired to acquire the Greek citizenship, they answered 'yes' for a variety of different reasons, interpreting it though mostly as equivalent to a legal document.

For the youth of migrant origin, acquiring the Greek citizenship has multidimensional outcomes. Yet at its core, citizenship, stripped from its sentimental or cultural dimensions, is interpreted as a 'legal document'. The legitimacy such a document offers to their holders is what makes its acquisition a rational claim. On the one hand, in its formal form, citizenship transforms its holders from a 'migrant' or an 'alien' to a 'citizen' or else a 'person with rights' legitimizing their presence in the country. In addition, it allows admittance; formal citizenship is seen as a tool to achieve equality (at least in its legal form), access to rights and protection from discrimination (Colombo *et al.* 2011: 338). On the other hand, citizenship acquisition was the tool through which a sentimental and cultural (and not necessarily a national) belonging to the country was recognized. Moreover, full participation in the social life as equal members was facilitated, and access mainly to political rights was highlighted as intrinsic in the transformation of migrant origin youth into full and active citizens.

Most of my interviewees focused one way or another on what they perceived as the most important outcome should they acquire Greek citizenship referring at the same time to their personal experiences and shortcomings of not possessing it. For many of them, the desire to possess such a document was mostly connected with facilitating everyday life, and less with a notion of belonging. In other words, formal citizenship was seen as a tool to access rights, social and political, and, avoid discrimination and bureaucracy. Many of my interviewees confessed that the most irritating aspect of not having the citizenship were all these humiliating, and, time and money consuming processes in order to renew their residence permits. They have to go through such a process to assure their legitimate presence in the country, something they conceive as their right to be there. Becoming a Greek citizen, for almost all of my interviewees was linked to the practical problems it resolved in the first place, before and above anything else.

I applied for naturalization many years ago and I finally got it. [Why?] I didn't want to be nervous about renewing my residence permit. (Pavlos, 34, came at age 6)

At the same time, for others, formal citizenship is conceived as a means of recognition as a full person, a real citizen with rights and obligations. Without the formal aspect of citizenship, second generation perceive themselves as sub-human as they have obligations but no rights (Melucci 1996). To be able to act as human beings and be recognized as such, citizenship is considered an official precondition.

I was born here, why should I pay all this money to renew my residence permit? Why should I have a residence permit in the first place? It's not fair. Why can't I be Greek? Why can't I have a Greek passport? Why can't I be the same as everybody else? I mean, I was born here, I went to school here, I pay taxes here, I work here, I live here, but I am treated as a second class citizen...it sucks. (Sarah, 21, born in Greece)

Another important element that differentiates the holders of Greek citizenship from those who are third country nationals is the access to specific sectors of the labor market. In other words, the possession or not of a certain citizenship makes a difference in inclusion or exclusion of individuals and second generation see the acquisition of Greek citizenship as a means through which their rights will be guaranteed (Colombo *et al.* 2011). In Greece, certain jobs are available only to those who are Greek Nationals. In order to be employed in the public sector, including schools and hospitals, or be allowed to access the Athens Bar, Greek citizenship is a prerequisite. For many second generation, exclusion from the labor market not because of qualifications but because of nationality, is seen as an injustice and discrimination. Deprivation of professional rights produces limitations and jeopardizes upward social mobility for the youth of migrant origin taking into consideration that inclusion in the labor market is an important factor of structural integration (Castles & Miller 2003).

If I had the citizenship, I would be able to find a job as a lawyer. I always wanted to become a lawyer. I studied law, but because I don't have the citizenship I cannot do the exams at the Athens Bar and I will never be a real lawyer. I hate it...I've studied so hard; it was my dream. And I was good enough to finish the Law school, but I am not Greek enough to work as a lawyer. [...] I work as a shop assistant [...] I was born here, it's not fair. (Marion, 29, born in Greece)

Another practical issue linked to citizenship acquisition as stated by many interviewees was the ability to travel. Becoming holders of a European Union Passport, would allow them not only to travel or study abroad without a visa, but also live in any EU country without having to apply for a residence permit. The possibilities for social mobility enhanced by the passport in general are transforming a certain document to an entry ticket to the globalized world (Balibar 1988). Possession of the right passport may facilitate the participation of an individual in the global community while the possession of a wrong passport or no passport at all, may trap its holder in the borders of a nation-State.

I just want it [the citizenship] so I can go away. I want the passport... (Adam, 20, born in Greece)

I applied for the Greek citizenship with the Act 3838 but I haven't got an answer yet. I want the citizenship because I want to go and study abroad and it is easier this way. And who knows, maybe I will stay in England forever. If I get it, I will be able to live there, but come here whenever I want to visit my family. And I won't have to worry about my residence permit any more. I will be free. (Nora, 19, came at age 2)

Yet, for many second generation, citizenship, besides the practical problems it may solve, is desired because it is considered a 'natural element' (Colombo *et al.* 2011) of their story and their self-perception. How those youngsters see themselves in the society they live in is affected by the way they are treated by the society itself and the State. On the one hand, they cannot distinguish themselves from their Greek peers in terms of education or lifestyle, yet on the other they feel socially excluded only because of their origin. This controversy frustrates them and is perceived as a not comprehensible situation which produces an unjustified exclusion.

I want the citizenship more for practical reasons; to be able to vote or access all jobs in the labor market. A few years ago I wanted it because I believed it was my right to have it; if Greek is the one who embraces the Greek education, then yes, I believe I am entitled to have it. And from the moment I grew up here, I am no different to you or them...with the exception of skin color [laughter]. Seriously now, I am no different to any Greek citizen. (Nadia, 28, came at age 1)

A sense of belonging was highlighted by some second generation, born in Greece in particular, as one of the reasons why they want the citizenship. Identifying with the country and without being able to express any other reason why they want to become Greek citizens clearly shows to

where some of them trace their belonging. Citizenship acquisition is perceived as a natural right that would formalize their feelings of belonging, as an acknowledgement of their feeling on behalf of the State. Especially for the children born in Greece and who have never visited their parents' home country, Greece is perceived as the only homeland. Therefore, the levels of identification are higher; their presence in the country being taken for granted.

Why do I want the citizenship? I don't know why, I just feel like I should have it. Greece is my country. (Emmanuel, 24, born in Greece)

Well, besides the practical problems, I want the citizenship because I really feel I belong here. I would like to be able to say that I am Greek. Everything I have is here, my friends, my family, and my job. I have never been to any other country besides Greece, yet it's weird to stand in queues waiting for my residence permit to be issued. It sucks because I don't think I am different to you. (Athena, 27, born in Greece)

Citizenship as a formal acceptance of an individual as a full citizen, and a concession of rights, combines the right to belong, participate and be treated as equal. Active involvement in form of political rights emphasizes the desire to influence and participate in the political scene of the country they live in. Being able to shape and be actively involved in any process that affects their lives transforms them from mere witnesses to active players. Citizenship acquisition may also be seen as a 'reference point', assuring the connections of an individual with a certain place. The emphasis given on the notion of stability as a reason to desire the citizenship reduces feelings of precariousness and exclusion and increases feelings of belonging, not necessarily as a national but as a citizen.

Look, the most important thing the Greek citizenship is going to give me, is a reference point. [...] And then it is going to solve more practical matters. I will be able to travel. I won't be harassed on the streets. I will be able to have my own business, -not that now I cannot-, but it will be much easier. And political rights. They are important to me, especially the right to vote. Being able to vote is very important. (Theodor, 33, born in Greece)

The answers given by my interviewees expressed a wide range of different opinions and at the same time gave me valuable information about the question itself. Yet, what was common among all the second generation was their desire to be recognized first of all as people and then as citizens (Colombo *et al.* 2011). Most of them traced their social exclusion and discrimination

to their migrant background, which ostracized them from the category of the 'citizen' jeopardizing at the same time their human status. Access to citizenship was seen as a means to transform themselves from sub-human to human, from migrants to persons with rights.

The multiple dimensions of citizenship were acknowledged by the interviewees, even if each one of them prioritized them according to their own perception and understanding. Yet, the common element of all interviews was the unfairness of the situation that youth of migrant origin experience. Actually how unfair their exclusion from access to citizenship was, was the central point highlighted by all of my interviewees. The possession of Greek citizenship, besides the practical everyday problems it would resolve, was considered an indispensable element in their evolvement from 'aliens' to 'citizens'. Access to all sorts of rights was claimed considering the argument of their foreign origin as an unjustifiable and irrational means of discrimination and exclusion.

Yet, none of them conceived the acquisition of citizenship as assimilation; on the contrary, they took it as granted their ability to maintain their multiple identities and belongings. The formal recognition of their belonging to Greece was conceived as the core element of accessing Greek citizenship. In other words, claiming rights only the State can assert, second generation make a clear statement of their right to participate equally in the political community in which they were born and raised as citizens and not as members of the Nation (Colombo *et al.* 2011; Christopoulos 2012).

## CONCLUSION

‘Who can (*not*) be Greek’ was the question behind the research project I conducted in Athens. I have to admit that trying to answer the above question proved a much more challenging process than was expected, not only for me but also for the youth of migrant background involved in the project. Being able to identify themselves and explain at the same time the reasons for choosing a specific self-identification was a process that encompassed many contradictions, challenges and a lot of thought.

Until 1990, Greece was considered a rather homogeneous country as it had successfully assimilated a variety of different minorities residing on its soil throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. *Greekness* was perceived as the core element of the Greek identity, inherited from father to son. Moreover, the nation was conceived as a big family whose members were related to each other through unbreakable blood ties (Hertzfeld 1992, 1996). Few migrants were residing in Greece before the early 90’s when mass migrant flows started to arrive after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the communist regimes (1981 census)<sup>50</sup>. The fact that many of the migrants had chosen Greece as a country of settlement became clear as their children started coming of age. At the same time though the problems of the second generation became more apparent. Not being able to access the Greek citizenship, those youngsters inherited the migrant status of their parents and with it, all the problems. Being perceived as migrants themselves, even when born and raised in Greece, they had to apply for a personal residence permit upon reaching adulthood since they were no longer considered protected family members. The migrant status they inherited from their parents was thus the boundary line between them and their native peers.

As far as youth of African background is concerned, they had to deal with a double form of *otherness*. On the one hand they had to face the *otherness* originating from the migrant status of their parents, stigmatizing them also as migrants, while on the other, there was the *otherness* originating from their phenotype and cultural background. Skin color became a means of discrimination and stigmatization as it betrayed the foreign origin of their bearer and spoke for and before them. In contemporary Greece, ethnic minorities that do not bear the classic Caucasian phenotype tend to be excluded and discriminated against as bearers of an inassimilable and incompatible culture. In this perspective, cultures are indeed perceived as bound and absolute entities. This attitude is rather common towards migrants; however their offspring are also influenced as they too are perceived as migrants by the majority society. Skin

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<sup>50</sup>For more information on the results of the 1981 census visit [www.statistics.gr](http://www.statistics.gr).

color in specific becomes a cultural boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’ as it is considered an absolute marker of diversity, and youth of African background suffer from stigmatization and social exclusion that are legitimized by the contemporary cultural racism discourse (Riccio 2010).

Most conspicuously, it was under the lens of the contemporary cultural racism discourse that the access to citizenship for the youth of migrant background was discussed. In March 2010, the Act 3838 or else the New Nationality Code was voted, aiming to transform what was perceived so far as the essence of *greekness*. *Jus sanguinis*, the sole regulator of citizenship acquisition, was enriched with *jus soli* and with what was perceived as *jus domicili*, the right of ‘a person who [because] he resides in a place acquires such strong ties with the place, independent of where he was born or where his parents originated, that he deserves to belong to the civil and political community of the place’ (Christopoulos in Avgi 17 January 2010). The Act 3838 gave second generation the opportunity to acquire the Greek citizenship under specific preconditions when minors if they were born or schooled in Greece. In other words, it gave the opportunity to the children of migrants born and/or raised in the country to become full citizens and be accepted as equal members in the society.

The debate that such a legislation enacted focused mainly on the argument that nationality was too precious to be given away to people perceived as culturally and phenotypically inassimilable ‘others’. Yet, who actually were those ‘others’?

These ‘others’ were not people who had just entered the country<sup>51</sup> as it was quite often publicly claimed by the mass media creating a series of ‘moral panics’ (Grillo 2009; Queirolo Palmas 2006); on the contrary they were people born, raised and schooled in Greece. They were the children of the first economic migrants who entered the country in the early 90’s and in some cases in the late 70’s and 80’s; the so-called ‘second generation’. The most problematic aspect of the citizenship claims on behalf of the second generation was that they were perceived by the majority society as ‘migrants’ and not as the ‘children of immigration’ (Zinn 2011:375). In other words, their visibility not as something different than migrants was responsible for their social invisibility. Yet, concerning the children originating from Asia or Africa, they were far too ‘different’ to be accepted as non-migrants or full citizens, let alone as Greeks. Black skin was perceived as incompatible to *greekness*, therefore an insurmountable obstacle for their

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<sup>51</sup>In the mass media (both newspapers and television) images of impoverished migrants often held in detention centers or waiting in queues to apply for asylum usually accompany articles or reportages related to the Act 3838, its cancellation by the State Council, the access to citizenship or the second generation in general. Those images create both negative connotations and stereotypes but most importantly are nurturing a distorted image of who the children of migrants are. See Images on p.189



assimilation (Andall 2002). So, is there such a thing as a black Greek? And if there is, how do they define their *greekness*?

What it means to be Greek or African for the second generation themselves and the meaning they give to the notions of *africanness* and *greekness* was of major importance in order to understand their identity formation and feelings of belonging. However, youth of African background could not and was not treated as a sole category; on the contrary great differences occur among them that influence not only their self-identification but, most importantly, their integration in the society.

The integration of populations that are bearers of a different phenotype is a far more challenging process compared to the phenotypically compatible populations. However, as far as the African population residing in Greece is concerned, their *willingness* to integrate was of major importance in the process. Most specifically, even though Africans were one of the oldest migrant communities in the country, they were among the less integrated ones mainly because most of its members, considering Greece as merely a transit country, denied to integrate. Therefore, the responsibility of the first generation in the integration of the second is of significant importance. The first generation, by practicing ethnic enclosure, put into jeopardy the integration of their offspring, who grew up considering Greece a transit country as well. Encouraged to feel African both by their parents and the society, many of those children were discouraged to trace their belonging to Greece, even though for most of them it was the only homeland they had known. However, the role played by the society and the State in the stigmatization of those children as migrants should not be neglected. Being perceived and treated as second-class citizens, migrant origin youth have restricted access to rights as they are not granted the Greek citizenship.

How individuals, and most specifically second generation youth, form their self-identification and where they trace their belonging, are the results of complex processes influenced by a variety of different factors. The outcomes might be as multiple as the young adults involved; therefore there cannot be a solid categorization of the possible outcomes as if they were bound and distinct entities. I have argued that the variables shaping the identity of the youth of African background are the *willingness* of the first generation to integrate in the host society, the place of residence and most specifically the situation in Kypseli, and the social representations of the second generation. These three variables are crosscut by a fourth one which is the precarious legal status of the vast majority of the migrant origin youth.

Not being recognized as citizens of the country in which they were born or raised, a variety of identifications are imposed or denied to those children by the society, the State and their ethnic

communities as well. Moreover, those identifications are usually mutually exclusive and fail to recognize the complexity of the multiple belongings those children have. Most conspicuously, they are perceived as Africans and are considered to trace their belonging to their parents' countries of origin by the majority society and the State that fail to see that by being born, raised and schooled in Greece, a form of belonging to it was developed as well. Moreover, this sole identification to Africa is highly encouraged by the families as well who favor ethnic enclosure due to a sense of temporality and the negative experiences they had as migrants. On the other hand, they are not perceived as Greeks despite the fact that they were born, schooled and raised here, because their phenotype betrays their foreign origin and their external and cultural characteristics are incompatible with those that are perceived as Greek (being both Caucasian and Christian). This has resulted in many second generation highlighting their *africanness* as a reaction to their denied *greekness* and ending up discriminating not only against those who are white, but, most interestingly, against their peers who embrace their dual belonging and do not favor one identity over the other. Most conspicuously, being *too* Greek was used by some younger second generation as a derogatory term referring to those peers of theirs perceived as having betrayed their origin in order to become socially accepted. Living in their microcosm until the age of 18, many younger second generation never had to interact with the Greek society in a social environment broader than their school. Growing up in Kypseli, a neighborhood where the majority of the African population in Athens resides, and socializing mainly among their ethnic communities, they have adopted the negative perspectives of their parents regarding the Greek society. Perceiving themselves as Africans only, they highlight their skin color not only as the most determinative element of their identity but also as a bearer of a reified cultural identity incompatible to *greekness*. However, they fail to acknowledge that most of the times those who they perceive as *too* Greek are their peers who have successfully managed to combine their dual belonging and not so their peers who favored their Greek identity over their African one. However, there are some second generation who have been assimilated indeed by rejecting their African cultural elements, both consciously and subconsciously, without realizing though that their skin color would always betray both their origin and their migrant background no matter how well they were trying to hide it. In other words, a hostile social environment was responsible for the creation of two contradictory types of self-identifications among the youth of African background. On the one hand, there were those youngsters who sought social inclusion and acceptance inside their ethnic communities, highlighting the African side of their identity and rejecting the Greek one. On the other, mainly among the older second generation, they favored their *greekness* over the African elements of their identity in order to achieve social

inclusion in the majority society, ending up culturally assimilating and perceiving themselves as Greeks only, regardless of their legal status.

Both those self-identifications were the result of an initially hostile social environment that did not favor the acceptance of the dual identity those children bore. However, there were many children in between those two categories who expressed a hyphenated self-identification, acknowledging not only their dual belonging but also the failure of the State and the majority society to accept it (Ricchio 2010). In other words, the hyphenated identities that many of those youngsters developed failed to be recognized since being both black and Greek were seen as incompatible and mutually exclusive categories. Most conspicuously, this assumed incompatibility, besides the social exclusion and stigmatization, also takes the form of an institutionalized discrimination against children born to migrant parents by denying them access to formal citizenship.

For the State, unconditional access to citizenship is reserved for those born to Greek parents, considering *jus sanguinis* a prerequisite for its acquisition since citizenship is perceived first and foremost as the formal linkage of an individual with the Nation and not with the State. Yet, what second generation claim is the recognition of their linkage to the State and not to the Nation. In other words, they claim their rights as citizens and not as members of the Nation.

For the second generation the acquisition of the citizenship, besides the practical problems it would solve, was seen as the formal recognition of their belonging to Greece; a reference point and place to call their homeland. But most importantly, it would transform them from 'aliens' to 'citizens', giving them the right to participate equally in the social and political life of the country. Citizenship was perceived as their right and a 'natural element' (Colombo *et al.* 2011) of their story and their self-perception even though they were discriminated against by both the majority society and the State. Without being able to distinguish themselves from their peers, youth of African background were experiencing social exclusion because of their origin and their - imposed from above- migrant status.

Having spent the past two and a half years in Athens I observed firsthand the implementation and the cancellation of the Act 3838, the economic crisis, the rise of the extreme-right rhetoric, xenophobia and the racist attacks that have become a daily phenomenon. At a time where the 'other' is constantly stigmatized and demonized, the second generation are in search of their own identity. So, what does it mean to be Greek but first and foremost who can (*not*) be Greek?

What does it mean being Greek? It doesn't mean anything. I think it is such a silly question. I mean, is it some sort of exotic fruit? It is a useless label! Why don't we ask what it means to be

Spanish, or Italian, or Bulgarian? Even if you ask Greeks themselves they will not know what to answer. (Alex, 31, born in Greece)

In contemporary Greece, the notion of *greekness*, or else what is perceived as the essence of being Greek, even though its exact definition means something different to each individual, is used as a tool to formally exclude those who are considered ‘different’ in terms of culture, religion or phenotype from the access to rights. Under this perspective, the children of African background have to deal with a dual form of restricted access to *greekness*; on the one hand because of their migrant background they are also perceived as migrants and on the other, because of their phenotype, they are forever considered inassimilable ‘others’. However, the presumption of *greekness* as a distinctive and unchangeable entity being the product of the nationalist rhetoric and the rather successful assimilation policies of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, is challenged by the growing numbers of second generation children born and raised in the country. Those youngsters are the vivid proof that globalization and migration have produced novel forms of belonging that challenge ‘the sense of belonging in terms of an alliance to a nation-state’ (Papastergiadis 2000:2).

Unfortunately, Greece has failed to acknowledge the positive outcomes produced by the successful integration of the second generation in the society. Moreover, by perceiving them as forever ‘others’ this has resulted in a failure to recognize their belonging to Greece. Formally supporting their marginalization and social exclusion by not only denying them access to citizenship but by making the issuing of their residence permits more difficult, this jeopardizes the social cohesion since in a few years time a significant percentage of the population will be people without rights.

[Who can (*not*) be Greek then?] I can be Greek. Why not? (Alex 31, born in Greece)

## LEGISLATION

The Article A1 of the Act 3838/2010 regulating the access to citizenship for the second generation born and/or schooled in Greece was the one considered anti-constitutional and therefore cancelled by the State Council<sup>52</sup>.

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Updated provisions on the acquisition of Greek citizenship and the political participation of Greeks abroad and migrants who legally reside in Greece. Other provisions.

#### CHAPTER A. AMENDMENTS OF THE CODE ON GREEK CITIZENSHIP

##### Article 1

1. Article 1 of the Code on Greek Citizenship, as it was ratified by Law 3284/2004 (government gazette 217A) is hereby amended as follows:

By right, by birth.

##### Article 1

1. The child of a Greek national acquires Greek citizenship by birth.
2. Any person who is born on Greek territory acquires Greek citizenship provided that:
  - a. one of his/her parents is born in Greece and resides permanently in the Country since his/her birth, or

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<sup>52</sup> The whole Act 3838 in Greek can be reached at [http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/24e0c302-6021-4a6b-b7e4-8259e281e5f3/N\\_3838\\_1.pdf](http://www.ypes.gr/UserFiles/24e0c302-6021-4a6b-b7e4-8259e281e5f3/N_3838_1.pdf) and in translated in English at <http://www.athenspe.net/features/greeces-new-law-on-citizenship-and-voting-rights-of-migrants/>

- b. the person does not acquire foreign citizenship at birth nor can it acquire foreign citizenship following official statement of the parents before the local foreign authorities, if such statement is required by the Law of the parents' country, or
  - c. the person is declared of unknown origin, as long as the fact that it is impossible to establish the eventually acquired foreign citizenship by birth is not due to the parent's refusal to cooperate.
2. Article 1A is added after Article 1 and reads as follows:
- Ia. Upon statement or application on the grounds that he/she was born in Greece or he/she studies in a school in Greece.

#### Article 1A

1. The child of alien parents who is born in Greece and continues to reside in Greece and whose parents have been both legally residing Greece for at least five consecutive years acquires greek citizenship by birth, provided that parents submit (my mutual consent) the relevant affidavit and file the application for the registration of their child to the municipal rolls of the local municipality of their permanent residence. In this case, the child acquires citizenship from the date of their affidavit. If the child was born before the completion of the five year legal stay of both parents in Greece, the joint affidavit as well the application for the child's registration shall be submitted upon the completion of the five year legal stay of the second parent. The child acquires Greek citizenship upon submission of their affidavit.
2. The child of alien parents who has successfully completed at least 6 grades of a Greek school in Greece and resides legally and permanently in Greece acquires Greek citizenship upon completion of the 6th grade. The child's parents should file a joint affidavit and an application for their child's registration to the municipal rolls of the local municipality of their permanent residence. In case of subsequent submission of the affidavit and the application and until the child becomes of legal age, citizenship shall be acquired upon submission of the relevant affidavit and application.
3. Greek citizenship may be acquired by children of alien parents upon affidavit of the parents, in accordance with the preceding paragraphs, only if both parents have been residing legally in Greece and are holders of a valid document proving their legal stay.
4. In case the child has only one parent or in case the child's parents have acquired the refugee status, the parent or the person who is assigned the custody of the child may apply for the child's citizenship, in conformity with the preceding paragraphs (provided

that the provisions of the preceding paragraphs are also met). In case of unaccompanied children who avail of the status of international protection, the affidavit and application shall be submitted by the commissioner or the child's representative, who must have been appointed in conformity with paragraph 1, article 30 of Presidential Decree No.906/2008 (Government Gazette No. 152A')

5. Prior to the registration in the municipal rolls, the municipality forwards copies of the supporting documents to the relevant issuing authorities, so as to confirm their accuracy. Within 15 days from receipt of such confirmation, the municipality forwards the application and supporting documents to the competent authorities of the local Regional Directorate. Within two months from receipt of the file, the Secretary General of the Regional Directorate issues an order for the local municipality to register the child in its Municipal Rolls. Said order is published in the Government Gazette. The child's registration in the Municipal Rolls takes place within 6 months from the submission of both, the affidavit and the application.
6. In case the parents failed to submit the joint affidavit and application until the child reached the legal age, the child is entitled to personally submit said affidavit and application at the local municipality of his/her legal permanent residence, provided that he/she is a holder of valid documents. The child avails of this right within the exclusive period of 3 years from completion of the age 18. The application can be rejected if there is a penal impediment or on the grounds of national security. The competent authorities will check the existence of any negative record of the child within a deadline of 6 months at the maximum. The above-mentioned procedure and deadlines may be suspended in accordance with the provision of paragraph 4 of article 31. The decision of the Secretary General of the Regional Directorate is being issued within a year from submission of the affidavit and application. In this case, Greek citizenship is being acquired from the time of submission of the affidavit and application.
7. In accordance with the definition provided for by the present Law, certifications of submission of supporting documents or other documents allowing the holder to temporarily stay in Greece until examination of his/her application by the competent administrative or juridical authorities or awaiting administrative decision, are not considered documents establishing legal residence in the country. The law stipulates that there is a competent authority which is in charge of examining the validity of the permanent residence permit of the parents and child, when the affidavit and application are submitted when the child is already of legal age.

8. Upon submission of the affidavit and the application for the child's registration in the Municipal Rolls, a fee of 100 Euro should be paid to the local municipality.



## IMAGES



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