Degree Project

Level: Master's

The (Re)Creation of Second-Generation Eritreans' Identity in Bologna, Italy

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is analysing the way in which second-generation Eritreans in Bologna re-construct their Eritrean identity. The originality of the thesis is the fact that this type of research has not been done in Bologna yet: Bologna is a multicultural city where its left-wing tradition has appreciated cultural differences differently from other cities in Italy, such as Milan.

To reach the aim of the thesis I interviewed some second-generations Eritreans who were born and grew up in Italy. I also used some previous researches that have been conducted in Italy and abroad about the re-creation of second-generation Eritreans' identity. The whole research is framed in a theoretical framework, which is composed by the definition of four concepts that are useful for the research; these concepts are: culture, identity, nation, and, diaspora.

According to this study, there are many ways in which second-generation Eritreans shape their identity in Bologna. The main ways in which second-generation Eritreans shape their Eritrean identity in Bologna are: the encounter with other Eritreans, their parents' roots, the language, and the holiday trips back to Eritrea.

Key Words

- Second-generation;
- Eritrean people;
- Eritrean's identity;
- Eritreans in Bologna, Italy.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction – A Short Story

My interest in Eritrea started many years ago. While I was attending the university for my bachelor's degree, I met a girl. She had dark skin, dark hair, and dark eyes. One day, she took the "Moral Philosophy" exam and got a great grade, so I asked her if she could give to me her notes. I did not expect it, but she said yes, and she gave them to me. I had to do something to thank her so, as usual in Italy, I asked her to go to the coffee shop in front of the University and I offered her a coffee. We talked a lot, and, at the end, I asked her what her roots were. She said: "I am half Italian, half Eritrean", and she told me that her mother is Italian, and her father is Eritrean; I had never met an Eritrean before. I had so many questions to ask her, but that was our first meeting, so I preferred to give her my telephone number and I asked her to meet again. The more time I spent with her, the more I felt comfortable asking her about her father. She told me that her father came to Italy during the liberation war against Ethiopia: while he was in Eritrea, he was a member of the ELF[1], and after a while he had to migrate from there, then he started studying "Political Science" at the University of Bologna. Eventually, he got a job at the Hospital in Reggio Emilia, where he met his wife, my friend's mother.

As the time went by, that half Italian and half Eritrean girl became a close friend and I had the chance to meet her father. Although he has Italian citizenship, he identifies himself as Eritrean and his eyes shine when he talks about his home, his food, the liberation war, and all the symbols that allow him to define himself as Eritrean. But, what I am interested most is the fact that my friend, although she was born and grew up in Reggio Emilia, which is a city near Bologna, identifies herself as Eritrean as well. So, I started asking myself which are the main reasons why she does that. I discovered that there are many symbols, like her physical aspects or her dad's origin, that make her define herself as Eritrean. I discovered that there are processes and symbols that make 2nd generation Eritreans, who live in Italy, more specifically in Bologna, that make them identify themselves as people from Eritrea.

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[1] The ELF was the Eritrean Liberation Front, that fought against the Ethiopian Party.

Remotti (1996) asserted that the construction of identity depends on the space where people are in a particular time. It is not possible to talk about identity without putting into account the fact that identity changes over time, according to the space where people have various social relations and come in contact with other cultures. Starting from this point, it appears clear that studying the identity of second-generation Eritreans, means considering all the processes that happened during the migration and happen now. Important is also the Italian culture, which is an essential factor that influences the shaping of their identity.

1.2 Objective of the Thesis and Research Questions

The objective of my thesis is to analyse, whether and if so how second-generation Eritreans in Bologna, Italy, re-construct their Eritrean identity in a context of diaspora. When I talk about second-generation, I refer to those people who were born in Italy to Eritrean parents and grew up within Italian culture. I believe that, although they have been in contact with Italian culture and some of them got the Italian citizenship, there are some processes that make them identify with Eritrean culture.

The Eritrean identity is quite different from other African countries identities. This is because Eritrean identity is the result of the liberation struggle against Ethiopia and it is not only the set of circumstances in which the nation imagines itself as a community (Kifleyesus, 2007: 3-4). While many African countries´ identities were the result of the struggle against the colonial power, the Eritrean identity has been created by the Italian colonialism and it has been used against the Ethiopian power, as Kifleyesus (2007) asserted. So, Ethiopia and not the Italian occupation is more important with regard to Eritrean identity. The fact that the Eritrean identity was created also by the Italian colonial power means that there are some Italian aspects that shaped the Eritrean identity from the beginning.

I will analyse which Italian symbols that continue shaping second-generation Eritreans identity in Bologna. When people live in their home country, the symbols and the processes that shape identity belong to their own culture, while when people migrate also the symbols that are part of another culture influence the process of shaping identity. I believe, in fact, that, apart from those Italian symbols that shaped Eritrean identity during colonialism, there are some new symbols of Italian culture that shape the identity of second-generation of Eritreans. I will analyse the way in which Italian culture influences Eritrean culture in the diaspora.

To reach the objective of my thesis, I will answer three research questions. The main research question is:

- In which way do second-generation Eritreans shape their Eritrean identity in Bologna?

Connected to that question, there are also other research questions that will help me to find out how second-generation of Eritrean shape their identity in Bologna. These are:

- How do Eritrean parents affect this process of the creation of their identity?
- What are, if any, the Italian symbols that are present in their Eritrean identity?

I will divide my thesis in three parts: in the first one I will give a theoretical framework, four concepts that are closely connected to the aim of the study. Those are: identity, nation, diaspora and culture. In the second one, I will give some historical background: specifically, I will analyse Italian colonialism in Eritrea, and the first Eritrean migration, during the liberation war against Ethiopia. I will devote the third part to answer the two secondary research questions: through interviews that I will explore whether and how Eritrean parents are involved in the process of the creation of identity of second-generation Eritreans; in which way the fact that they live in Bologna influences the shape of their identity; and if there are Italian symbols that define their identity, I will analyse what these might be. In the conclusion I will summarise my study and answer the main research question, suggesting how the second-generation of Eritreans shape its Eritrean identity in Bologna.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

In order to reach the objective of my study, I will give a theoretical framework that will help me analyse in which ways second-generation Eritreans reshape their Eritrean identity within Bologna. I will define four main concepts that are useful to my study. These are: culture, nation, identity, and diaspora.

According to Wagner (2012) culture is a human invention, it exists only as a concept and it is an aspect of human creativity. The invention is unconscious, and it is most often defined when scholars try to represent objectively other people. Thus, scholars create the ideas and forms that belong to that specific ethnic group (Wagner, 2012: 12). Within anthropology, culture is often defined as a system of norms, beliefs, customs and habits that are used in the everyday life by a group of people. It is important to say that the culture is not related to the biological dimension of human beings – for example the skin colour is not a cultural aspect but a genetic one. It is very difficult,

though, to divide cultural aspects from biological one because also physical attributes could become culture. They become culture when it is analysed the way in which people perceive physical attributes. Regarding the case of second-generation Eritreans in Bologna, their skin colour becomes a culture aspect: in fact, they are not perceived as Italians because their skin is dark. To define something as culture, as it is possible to notice, it is necessary that this something is shared by a group of people (Wagner, 2012).

The concept of nation has been analysed by Anderson (2006). He pointed out that:

"The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself conterminous with mankind. […]. It is imagines as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion were inescapably confronted with the leaving pluralism of such religions […]. Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequity and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship." (Anderson, 2006: 7).

According to Anderson people started feeling that they were part of the same nation after the invention of the printing press. Within boundaries, people started sharing ideas, ideals, opinions. Furthermore, the fact that people shared and used the same language made them feeling part of the same culture. For this reason, although all people do not know one another within the boundaries of their country, they have the feeling of knowing one another. The sense of belonging and sharing the same identity is not based on the interaction face-to-face, but on the imagination of people that allows them to feel part of the same group.

I will use Remotti´s work (1996, 2010) to define identity. According to him, the concept of identity can be seen as a timeline: we should consider not only who we are in the present and the relationship that we have with others now, but also the relationship that we have had in the past with other people and the relationship that we will have in the future with others. Also, he asserted that identity depends on the space where people are. Identity can be seen as a story that people tell themselves and others to describe who they are. In the process of creation of identity, others are important: in fact, identity is not defined only by us, but it is also the result of what other people tell about us. If it has been said that identity depends on the space where people are at a certain time, it is

also possible to assert that immigrants´ identity depends on the relationship that they have with their home-state, and also on the relationship that they have with people in the new country. So, immigrants´ identity depends both on the background culture - the culture that belongs to their home, and on the encounter with new people who live in the country where immigrants migrate.

Finally, the diaspora concept. The term diaspora indicates a dispersed people who have the same origin in the world. Diaspora can be studied as a nation that survives outside its origin country. When people move from the same country to another one and settle in the latter, they start creating and sharing culture, political activities, languages, and ideals. In doing these, they expand their network in a new country where they also build institutions (Ben-Rafael, 2013). To explain the concept in other words, diaspora can be understood as a translocal[2] group of people who share common origins although they live in another country. Eritreans who live abroad share their common origins and, when they talk about their identity, they refer also to the Eritrean nation.

1.4 State of Research

A few studies have been done on the Eritrean diaspora. For example, Riggan (2013) has analysed the role that the return to Eritrea has in the imaginaries of children in the classroom in Eritrea. Although emigration is illegal in Eritrea, Eritreans have been living in the diaspora for a long time. Policies in Eritrea are very strict about the diaspora, and all the Eritreans who live abroad and earn money have to give financial resources to the government. Through debates, Eritrean students are able to understand the duties that they have to the Eritrean state: emigration becomes part of their national duties. Still, students criticise the Eritrean government's policies because those imply that Eritreans in the diaspora have to put lots of effort into giving financial resources to their home-state. Although students criticise the Eritrean policies, the fact that they are educated students, according to Riggan, means that they are ready to join the national service, but they were thinking of themselves as people who will travel, fulfilling their national duties. So, even if they criticise Eritrean policies, when they think about themselves, they also think that if they will leave Eritrea, they will also pay diaspora taxes to the government, in order to help their nation. Even if those students who think to leave the country are bother about paying the diaspora fees, they also think that it is the only way to help Eritrea.

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[2] Before the globalisation there was the concept of "local", which was defined and characterised by geographical and physical borders. With the globalisation and migrations, it is impossible to talk about local because each "local" is contaminated by other "locals". When people migrate, they connect places, people, and culture. Talking about translocality means talking about a process which produce relations between different people and places thanks to the migration of people in the world (Graf, Thieme, 2016).

Arnone (2011) has analysed tourism and the Eritrean diaspora in Milan. The research was conducted in Milan between 2003 and 2005, and the informants were Eritreans who were part of the Eritrean diaspora in Milan. She pointed out that Eritreans who live in Milan are less likely to go back to Eritrea because of the better living conditions in the diaspora. Furthermore, essential in their decision is the fact that in Eritrea the political and economic situations do not encourage them to go back. The only way to go back for them are holiday trips. Eritreans become tourists when they are in their home-state. Arnone "explores the narratives of Eritreans in Milan around going to Eritrea on holiday and returning from their vacation, and questions the impact of their imaginary of Eritrea as a place for leisure and tourism" (Arnone, 2011: 441). Doing this, she was able to give an account about the creation of identity for Eritreans in the diaspora.

Arnone (2011) was not the only one who took into account the trip that Eritreans make when they go back to their country. Graf (2017) analysed the meaning of holiday trips to Eritrea for second-generation Eritreans. He argued that the diaspora tourism creates interconnections between people and places. Remotti (1996) asserted that identity is shaped according to the space when people are in a certain time, so Graf (2017) does this. He supported the idea that diaspora tourism has a crucial role in shaping the identity of second-generation Eritreans. In his conclusion, in fact, he wrote that "diaspora tourism plays a key role in the construction of a diaspora identity" (Graf, 2017: 2723).

Nevertheless, holiday trips to Eritrea are not the only way through which second-generation Eritreans shape their identity in the diaspora. Graf and Thieme (2016) have analysed the way in which the encounter between second-generation Eritreans and new Eritrean refugees helps the former to re-shape their hybrid identity. "The concept of hybrid identity, which is one of the most recurrent theoretical concepts in post-colonial theory, is a critique of essentialist ideas of notions such as culture, nation, and identity. The term, which is borrowed from horticulture, refers to a mixing of cultural characteristics, narratives, identities, languages, and so on" (Skalle, 2017: 77). So, the hybrid identity is the one that is formed by symbols that belong to their home-culture and symbols that belong to the culture that belong to the place where people migrate. The research was conducted in Switzerland. The two authors asserted that new refugees make second-generation Eritrean rethink their roots and influence their identity and their relationships with Eritreans and Eritrea. If the shaping of identity is closely connected to narratives, memories, images, desires and encounters, it is possible to assert that in the diaspora context the encounter with Eritrean refugees helps second-generation Eritrean to reshape and strengthen their already hybrid identity.

Goitom (2015) has analysed another way in which second-generation Eritreans reshape their Eritrean identity in the diaspora. Important in the process is the parental influence. Her research was conducted in Toronto, among second-generation Ethiopians and Eritreans. The first generation has a very crucial role because it gives Eritrean values, beliefs, attitudes to second-generation Eritreans. In this way, second-generation Eritreans can learn Eritrean languages, social customs, and cultural values. This happens usually during childhood and allows second-generation Eritreans to develop and nurture their Eritrean roots.

Goitom (2017) has done another study exploring how second-generation Ethiopian and Eritrean young women reshape their identities in diaspora. The fact that they live in a different culture – in Toronto, Canada – means that their identity has a hybrid characteristic. They grow up immerging themselves in two different cultures: one is the Eritrean culture, transmitted by their parents; the other one is the Canadian one. At the end of her study, she asserted that the surrounding culture is very important, and it mixes with the maintenance of their traditional culture.

A similar study has been done by Arnone (2011) in Milan, Italy. Her study asserted that, due on the fact that second-generation Eritreans live within an Italian culture, but have Eritrean parents and roots, second-generation Eritreans in Milan have a hybrid culture. She wrote, in fact, that their identity is multiple. Second-generation Eritreans define themselves as black, African, Italian, and Eritrean. She clearly and deeply analysed the reasons why those Eritreans are not able to define themselves using only one adjective. Furthermore, they are challenging many traditions that belong to the Eritrean culture, mixing them with the Italian culture.

1.5 The Originality of my Study

These studies that I have mention above and have been done previously are the starting point for my study. The originality of my project is the fact that no study has been done in Bologna, Italy. Bologna is a particular city in Italy, where policies about immigration have always been different from those applied in other Italian cities, somewhat different from Milan, where a similar study has been conducted, Bologna has a left-wing tradition and, according to the centre-left coalition that governed from 1995 to 1999, immigration and immigrants were seen as resources. The government´s goal was to build a multicultural society where cultural diversity was appreciated, not only tolerated. This situation was very different from the one that there was in Milan, where the right-wing

government was negative toward immigration, because immigrants were said to bring with them illegal entries, bad behaviour, and criminality. Nowadays, the situation has not changed. Bologna is city where multiculturalism is seen as a resource, no as a problem that needs to be resolved (Caponio, Borkert, 2010).

1.6 Research Method

The study here will be a qualitative study; I will not use quantitative methods, nor statistics, nor numbers. In addition, to reach my objective I will use both primary and secondary sources.

Before going on with the study, it is important to define the difference between old generation and new generation Eritreans. The Eritrean diaspora is, in fact, formed by two generations of arrivals: those who moved from Eritrea during the independence war against Ethiopia; and those who moved from their home-state to escape from the authoritarian Eritrean state (Graf, 2017). The study here focuses on children of the old generation, those who were born or grew up in Bologna, Italy, and are defined as second-generation Eritreans.

As primary sources, I will interview second-generation Eritreans who grew up in Italy and now live in Bologna. I believe, in fact, that the symbols that the first generation use to define itself as Eritreans are different from those used by the second-generation. Furthermore, I will focus on the way in which second-generation Eritreans create their identity; which the symbols that they use to create their identity are; how much their parents are involved in the process; how the encounter between other Eritreans works; if they feel more Eritrean or Italian; how the Italian culture influence their Eritrean identity. To find the informants, I contacted a few associations in Bologna that deal with immigrants and they gave to me Abrahm's phone number. I met Abrham in a bar, he was with Muna and we drunk a cup of tea. After I spend some time with them, I asked them other contacts and they gave to me other second-generation Eritreans' phone numbers. I met with them few time and I had the opportunity to listen to their opinions while they were talking with each others, and to interview them. Many of their dialogues were about the Eritrean government and, although I did not ask anything about what they think about it, I had the opportunity to have an idea on what they thoughts are. Taking part of their dialogues helped me to find out information that are not useful to this study but helped me understanding their identity. I contacted as many second-generation Eritreans as I could: many of them did not want to answer to my question. I interviewed only second-generation Eritreans who wanted to tell me about their roots.

I decided to not write all the interviews because they told me several things that could not be written because of the Eritrean government. Many of the interviewed asked me to not write the whole interview to protect themselves in case of publishing the thesis. This is the reason why I decided to give them voices writing only what they told me I could write.

As secondary sources I will use, apart from those studies that are crucial to define my theoretical framework, other studies that have been made on the identity of second-generation Eritreans in the diaspora. These will help me to better understand the comments of my informants, allowing me to give a more specific account about the issue.

1.7 Informants

My informants having been briefed about the voluntary participation and having had a chance to look thorough the results. To give merit to them it is important to give them names and explain who they are and what they do in Italy. For the same reason I did not write the whole interviews, I will not write their full names here. I will write letters, but when they read the thesis, they will know who they are.

A is a woman, she lives in Reggio Emilia, near Bologna, but she is studying at the University of Bologna and she spends there most of the time. She is twenty-six years old and she studies anthropology. She has Italian citizenship since she was born, because her mother is Italian while her father is Eritrean. I met her when she was nineteen years old because we attended the University together.

B is A's sister. She is thirty years old and she had been spending lots of time in Bologna because she used to live there. Now she is working on a cruise boat and she travels a lot. She has been in Eritrea two times: the first one was when she was a child, the second time was when she was twenty.

C is a man and he is thirty years old. She lives in Bologna and she studies agronomy at the University there. He is very involved in politics and he was telling me about the Eritrean government. He really loves Bologna, he would not live in another place in Italy.

D is a woman and she is twenty-two years old. She studies Italian literature at the University of Bologna. She was born in Bologna and she grew up there. She speaks Italian language with her parents from the first moment she started to speak. She does not know Tigrinya language.

E is a man, he is twenty-nine years old and he works in a car industry. He did not study at the University because he decided to start working after the high-school. He said that his parents were not wealthy person and he wanted to help his family earning his own money.

F is E's brother. He is younger than him, in fact he is twenty-seven. He works where his brother works. They grew up together and their ideas about their identity were very similar.

G is a woman, she is forty years old and she studied Arts at the University of Bologna. She recently organised an Eritrean party is a big museum in Bologna, because she published an art book and she exposed it at the museum. She was born in Italy and she grew up there. She does not speak Tigrinya, but she said that her next goal is trying to learn the language.

H is a man, he is thirty-four years old and he works in a shop. He loves Bologna, but he said that he would like to move to Milan, where his brother lives. He thinks that in Milan Italian people are not nice as in Bologna, but he wants to live near his brother, who is older than him.

I is a woman, she is twenty-four years old and she studies Pharmacy at the University of Bologna. She was born in Italy and she grew up in Bologna. She told me very much about when she was a child and she remembers funnily the differences that there were between her and her Italian friends.

L is a woman, she is twenty-seven years old and now she lives in the USA. She is doing a PhD in cultural anthropology, so she was very happy because I choose to interview her. She liked the topic of the thesis and she thinks that it has to be done something to prevent the discrimination between black and white and to see differences as strong points in a society, nor as weak ones.

M is a man, he is twenty-seven years old and he grew up in Casalecchio di Reno, near Bologna. He works in the Human Resources field. He went to Eritrean and he loved telling me about his experience while he was in Asmara.

N is a woman, she is eighteen years old and she was born and grew up in Bologna. She is the only one who does not have the Italian citizenship: she just started all the practices that she has to do to acquire it. For this reason, she felt less Italian than the other interviewed.

O is a woman, she is twenty-five years old and she studies Philosophy at the University of Bologna. She would like to go abroad when she will finish her studies. She is very interested in concepts such as "tolerance", "identity", and "culture". She was happy to be interviewed.

These are the main characters of the research. Every interview was a new discover. They narrate about their roots, their origins, their culture, and it was a great pleasure working with them.

Chapter 2
Culture, Nation, Identity, and Diaspora: Four Concepts that Need to be Defined

2.1 The Concept of Culture

The modern term of "culture" was used for the first time by the Ancient Romans, after Cicero said that the cultivation of the soul, or "cultura animi", is the development of a philosophical soul, which is the highest possible ideal for human development. After Cicero, and many years later, Pufendorf used the word to explain all the ways in which savages could become human beings ("Culture", 2018). In 1871 the concept of culture changed: the anthropologist Tylor defined it as a "complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, moral, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as member of society" (Tylor, 1871).

Nowadays, when we use the word culture, we agree that each people has its own tradition formed by many symbols, and that traditions are different among different peoples. Moreover, culture is a word used by many anthropologists who would like to distinguish among different peoples. "We ourselves belong to a culture, and we must assume all cultures to be equivalent (cultural relativity)" (Wagner, 2012: 3). This means that, although we belong to a cultural group, it is important not to think about this culture as the supreme one, but one´s culture has to be considered at the equal of others.

Within the anthropology, culture is defined as a system of norms, beliefs, costumes and habits that are used during the everyday life by a group of people. It is important to say that the culture is not related to the biological dimension of human beings – for example the skin colour is not a cultural aspect but a genetic one, although these physical characteristics are understood culturally. Culture represents the social and physic space where human beings live, and it is shared by a group of people or a society. To define something as cultural it is necessary that this something is shared by a group of people. In this group of people, though, there is an individual freedom that makes each person behaving the way he wants within his culture ("Cultura", 2018).

Culture is not a static concept. It changes also according to the place, the happenings, the history that people experienced. Wars, technology, migration and everything happens within one area, which could be small – as a city – or big – as a country - makes the culture shaping itself and anthropologists can look at differences that they find between their cultures and other ones. This is possible by

studying myths, rituals, kinship and so on. Before the two World Wars, scholars used to think that culture was a fixed system that could not change over time. Now, they admit that culture can change because of the formation of new symbols or because of the relation with other cultures. The relation between cultures implies the assimilation of various elements that come from different backgrounds. Because of this, modern scholars are aware that it is impossible to analyse a cultural element without considering the relation that exists between different cultures ("Cultura", 2018).

Nowadays the idea of hybrid culture has been developing. The fact that people from different cultures move around the world make different cultures encounter themselves. In fact, "migrations, invasions and deportations have sometimes been connected to the emergence of hybrid styles" (Altaweel, Squitieri, 2018: 179). It is possible to say that a culture becomes hybrid the moment it encounters other cultures and modifies, reinterprets, and adapts its local symbols.

According to Wagner (2012) culture is only a human invention, it exists only as a concept and it is a phenomenon of human creativity. The invention is unconscious, and it exists when scholars try to represent objectively other people. While this process happens, scholars creates the ideas and forms that belong to a specific ethnic group (Wagner, 2012: 12).

> "Since anthropology exists, through the idea of culture, this has become its overall idiom, a way of talking about, understanding, and dealing with things, and it is incidental to ask whether cultures exist. They exist through the fact of their being invented, and through the effectiveness of this invention." (Wagner, 2012: 10).

It is important to notice that the study of culture is itself our culture: in fact, we operate using our form, we create it using our term, we borrow our words and concepts and we recreate an identity using our basis for comparison (Wagner, 2012: 16). Culture is not the only invention made by human beings; another invention that is important to define before talking about identity, is the concept of nation.

2.2 Nation as Imagined Community

One scholar who elaborated the concept of nation is Benedict Anderson. Anderson elaborated the concept of imagined communities in 1983. The concept of imagined communities arose in the context of a reflection that Anderson was making on the great historical processes of decolonization and nation building, which had radically changed the appearance and balance of the 20th century.

Benedict Anderson's reflection, following the work of George Mosse, reaffirms the proposal to consider the nation as the product of particular cultural and conceptual processes, as an artificial construct.

Anderson argued that any political community cannot rely on the perception of belonging to a group of people where interaction between its members is face-to-face. The sense of belonging to a common identity, and the internal cohesion of the community, must necessarily be based on the *imagination* of the people that allows them to perceive themselves as members of that group (Anderson, 2006).

The emergence of nationalisms is a historical phenomenon that dates back to the 18th and 19th centuries, but the proponents of nationalism rest on the assumption that the nations have always existed: where this assumption is not sustainable due to the existence of evident historical breakdowns, the need arises to "invent", to refer to the awakening – or the discovery – of an alleged dormant/lost nation. Anderson's reflection, a line of research in historiography on the modern and contemporary age, had investigated the theme of invented traditions. The cultural paradigm coined by Anderson, however, is not on "imagined" social realities and this avoids the inauthenticity inherent in the adjective "invented". According to Anderson, in fact, communities do not judge and distinguish themselves according to their falsity/authenticity but according to the style in which they were imagined. The imagined nation has some characteristics. As Anderson pointed out:

> "The nation is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself conterminous with mankind. […]. It is imagines as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion were inescapably confronted with the leaving pluralism of such religions […]. Finally, it is imagined as a community, because, regardless of the actual inequity and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship." (Anderson, 2006: 7).

The print in the vernacular allowed the dissemination and the proliferation of products in a capitalist market. The spreading of newspapers made the idea of time as homogeneous: time became measurable by clocks and calendars and everyone who read the journal could be sure that they share the same time with other readers, even if they could not meet each of them. This made people feeling

that they belonged to the same nation. The origins of this process of "vernacularisation" are traced in the Protestant Reformation, with the translation of the Bible in German by Martin Luther - the so-called Luther Bible - which gave to a wider audience of readers the possibility of "imagining" themselves as a unit (Redfield, 1999).

The nation to exist does not necessarily have to encounter other nations, differently from identity and culture. According to Smith (1991), in fact, a nation exists when the members who belong to it, share historic territory, memories and myths, and they also have common economy, legal rights and public culture (Grotenhuis, 2016).

If it is true that the nation is created by a group of people who share beliefs, images, opinions knowledge, and myths, it is possible to compare the nation with the religion. Religion is defined by Pender-Cudlip (1974) as a social phenomenon that relies on shared beliefs, knowledges, imagines and rituals. Many people use the adjective sacred to describe both nation and religion: some people would die for saving the nation, as some people would die in the name of their religion. The nation is created by human beings who create and narrate stories about the origin of their nation, as people do when they talk about their religion. Many nations have their own symbols and their own monuments that reaffirm that people belong to that nation, as the religion has. If the comparison is possible, it is also important to underline the devotion that people have regarding their religion, that could be the same that people have regarding their nation. This devotion, as the interviews showed, does not disappear when people migrate and live in diaspora: interviewees' origin nation will be a sacred place.

I want to point out that the concept of nation is different from that of the state. While nation emphasises the community formed by members who share same identity, same imagination and same culture, the state is objective and deals with institutions, people and territory. Furthermore, while nationhood is necessary for the feeling of belonging to a state, the state is not a prerequisite for the existence of a nation. The nation is a reality and it exists even if a state does not exist. This is because the legitimacy of a nation is founded on the assumption of a shared identity among its people, which allows them to distinct themselves from other peoples (Grotenhuis, 2016). The difference between state and nation can be seen in the interviews: all second-generation Eritreans whom I interviewed, apart from one who has not gotten Italian citizenship, declared that their state is the Italian one because there are Italian citizens, but their nation is Eritrea, because that one is the place where a part of their culture belongs. So, it is possible to say that Eritreans in Italy are a community in the Italian

state: second-generation Eritreans share their Eritrean identity but they have Italian citizenship and they live in the Italian state, they have Italian duties, they also have relations with Italian people, and they live within Italian boundaries.

2.3 Identity: Why Should We Talk About this Concept?

When we think about ourselves, we use to ask: "who are we?" or "from where we come from?" or "why are we Italians?". Identity in the social sciences is the conception that a person has of him - or herself - and their society. So, identity is formed by many aspects that make someone as unique, unmistakable and different from others. But, it is important to see that identities change according to many factors and to the relationship that a people have with others.

When I write about identity, I do not refer to the individual one, but to the collective one. This is the kind of identity that people have when they are in a group with other human beings. Each of us has many identities and those change according to the various situations we find ourselves in. So, each of us has a multiple social or national identity. When and when we refer to identity it is very important to underline otherness. Identity is always relational and to define it there has to be another who defines us and makes us define ourselves.

According to Remotti (1992) being with others is an activity which changes also our identity. We incorporate and acquire some of the aspects that belong to other cultures. This happens even if we strongly try to not acquire symbols from others into our culture. The other gives us an image of what we are not. According to Remotti (1992), if we would have taken other roads, we would not have been who we are at the moment.

Many scholars look at identity as a system of different symbols like: languages, traditions, religions, places, and many others. One people´s identity is different from another because different peoples do not share the same whole system of symbols (Fabietti, 1995). It is important to underline that we have to define ourselves not only in relation of what we think about ourselves but also in relation of what others think of ourselves. Defining ourselves does not mean that we can have a look only at those symbols that surround us in that precisely moment; defining our identity means also looking at the relations that we have now, that we have had in the past, and that we will have in the future with others. This is the reason why when we talk about Eritrean identity of second-generation of Eritreans, it is necessary to look at the relationship that Eritrea has had with Italy, especially during

and after colonialism, and the relationship that it has had with Ethiopia, during the struggle for the independence and after. Eritrean identity, in fact, is the product of the relationship between traditions and modernity: traditions that there were in the country before the encounter with Europeans, and modernity that was brought in the continent during and after the colonial period.

The concept of identity is very closely related to the word "us"; when peoples talk about and try to define themselves, they underline that they are different from other peoples. Identities are different from each other and when a people define its identity, it takes care to point out that its identity is very different from others. In this prospective, otherness is very important when one identity encounter others and start a relationship with them. In this context, the encounter with the otherness or the ´other´ is necessary to define identities.

2.4 Diaspora: how did the concept develop over years?

The concept of diaspora has been developing and changing over years. The roots of the term diaspora are Greek, and the word is the translation of the Hebrew world *Galut,* or exile. "The term initially referred to the setting of colonies of Jews outside Palestine after the Babylonian exile and has assumed a more general connotation of people settled away from their ancestral homelands" (Shuval, 2003, cit. in Anteby-Yemini, Berthomière, 2005: 262). At first, the term was used to refer to the Jewish diaspora. Only later was the term was used to describe Armenian and Greek diasporas, which have become 'classical diasporas' (Brubaker, 2005). Nowadays, the world diaspora is used to indicate an invisible nation that exists outside the border of a state. That means that when a large amount of people migrates, they sometimes maintain contacts with other people who migrate from the same country and they keep alive their nation outside their borders. As Beine, Docquier, and Ozden (2011) asserted, when people migrate, they sometimes maintain their roots and their tradition abroad, as they continued living in their home country.

The term diaspora was introduced in the social sciences only during 1960s. Before that, when peoples moved from a country to another one, they had to assimilate local norms and those who were not able to do it, were not admitted to the new country. During 1970s, the term was used to describe migrants who maintained their traditions and felt collectiveness with people who come from the same country (Anteby-Yemini, Berthomière, 2005). Sheffer (1976) asserted that the term diaspora is defined using three criteria: the first one is the creation and the maintenance of an identity among diasporic people; the second one is the creation of an internal organisation within a people, which is

different from the one they had when they lived in their homeland; the last one, is the maintenance of a contact with their homeland: these contacts could be real or symbolic ones (Sheffer, 1976 cit. in Anteby-Yemini, Berthomière, 2005).

In time, other scholars tried to define the concept. Sheffer (1993) found out that there are two kinds of diasporas: the stateless diaspora and the state-based one. The first is formed by people who move from their nation, but they do not have a state – this can be the case of Palestinians; the second is formed by those people who move from their state. But diaspora concept is not classified only by territory. In fact, Cohen (1997) divided five different kinds of diaspora using empirical observations. He found out that diasporas can be divided into labour one, imperial one, trade one, cultural one, and the Caribbean one (Antemby-Yemini, Berthomière, 2005).

In 1994, Blan, Bash and Glick-Schiller asserted that nowadays diasporas are "nation unbound" who "reinscribe" space in a new way. According to them people can be considered citizens because, even if they live within boundaries of many other countries, they share common values of their homeland, while in the past "nation-states were defined in terms of a people sharing a common culture within a bounded territory" (Antemby-Yemini, Berthomière, 2005: 266).

More recently, van Hear (1998) clarified the difference between a transnational community and a diaspora. According to him, there are three aspects of a diaspora. Those are: the dispersion, the homeland orientation and the boundary maintenance. The first criterium has to be interpreted as forced or traumatic dispersion of a people in the world; the second one is the orientation to an imagined or real homeland: this orientation is created sharing a collective memory about home, considering home as a place where people could and will return, being relate to home, and maintaining the prosperity of the homeland; the third is the maintenance of the identity although people live in another country. Although boundaries and original identity are maintained, people who live in diasporas eventually assimilate symbols from other cultures and their identity becomes hybrid, which means that their identity is formed by both symbols that belong to their original culture and other ones that belong to the new country culture (Brubaker, 2005).

If at the beginning the term diaspora indicated only the fact that people who live abroad used to maintain culture and symbols that belong to their home-country, nowadays scholars argue that in the diaspora people not only keep their culture but mix it with the culture of the new country.

So, when and how did the Eritrean diaspora start?

Chapter 3
Italian Colonialism in Eritrea and Eritrean diasporas

Fanon's idea that national identity can be reached only with the struggle for national liberation can be seen in Eritrea (Fanon, 1961). In fact, many symbols of Eritreans identity have been produced during the Italian colonial period.

> "It is generally assumed that Italian colonialism has left tangible marks on Eritrean society; however, apart from the apparent impact on urban architecture and modes of living, there is much less agreement on the relevance of this historical experience for the political history of the region." (Dirar, 2007:256)

Although some scholars did not agree with the fact that Italian colonialism has created a big part of the Eritrean history and has helped Eritreans to shape their identity, it is impossible to ignore that there are some phenomena that happened in Eritrea that are the consequences of the Italian colonisation. For example, many Eritreans emigrated to Italy because they already knew Italian: this is because, during colonialism, the main language in schools was Italian and Eritreans who attended those schools knew how to speak perfect Italian, as Abrham asserted during the interview. According to the results of the comments of informants, the impact that Italian colonialism has had on Eritrean society is not only apparent, but it is real: they are symbols that belonged to Italian culture that have been assimilated by Eritrean culture and have been brought to Italy in the diaspora.

It is important to know about the Italian history in Eritrea because it was after the colonisation that first Eritreans started to migrate to other parts of the world. Furthermore, listening to the dialogues among the interviewees, made understanding the position that second-generation Eritreans have regarding the Eritrean government. Children of Eritreans who migrate during the first diaspora think about Isaias, the Eritrean president, as a saviour: they think that without him the Eritrean nation could not be exist. On the contrary, children of Eritreans who migrate during the second diaspora do not support the government and will hope that President Isaias will end soon his political carrier. This conflict might depend from the fact that Eritreans who migrate during the first diaspora did not experience President Isaias' cruelty in person, but only experienced him as a person who made Eritrean nation becoming a state, while Eritreans who migrate during the second diaspora experienced President Isaias cruelty and dictatorship. Second-generation Eritreans did not experience the Eritrean government at all, so their thoughts about President Isaias might depend on what their parents think ad have experienced with him.

3.1 Italians in Eritrea: A Different Colonisation

According to Valeria Deplano[3], Italian colonialism has always been described as marginal kind of colonialism. According to many scholars, it was very difficult to place it in the global history. One of the reasons why it was difficult was that the Italian empire was too small to be considered a real empire. Mussolini tried to occupy Ethiopia to become a real empire, but it was too late because during that period, the idea of decolonisation was already in the air and the other European countries, such as French, were dealing with insurgent movements in Africa. According to Deplano, it is important to notice that there is a difference between the fascist period and the one after fascism. To understand the difference, it is important to underline that colonialism become important to fascism for many reasons. The first reason was that fascism had to legitimate itself as heir of Roman empire, to link itself to the ancient Rome: to make others think that if you are the son of the Roman empire, first of all you need an empire – and this is the reason why Mussolini tried to expand his boundaries. One of the goals of Fascism was to make Italy stronger and colonies were seen as places where Italians could have seen as warriors by Italians who stayed in Italy.

When Italy started to look at Africa, it was the period of the scramble for the continent. Italy started to plan the occupation of the Horn of Africa, to make Italy a bigger country with international prestige. Furthermore, there was a strong connection between colonialism and racism. Italian fascism goal was to civilise Africans through contact with the European countries (De Napoli, 2013). When Italy started to claim the occupation, it wanted to occupy some area of Ethiopia, which was a strong and very organised empire. Ethiopia, in fact, thanks to its polices, was able to defend itself against external aggressions, and was able to enforce the union of the country. Local chiefs used to rule Ethiopia, so when Italy wanted to colonise Eritrea, it had to dial with them. (Taddia, 1986).

In 1889, Menelik II, the Ethiopian emperor, and the prime minister of Italy signed a treaty, by which Menelik II gave Italy some Eritrean territories. This is the way in which Eritrea was created as a colony. But in Eritrea there were cultural and religious diversities (Taddia, 1986). Valeria Deplano supported the idea that Eritrea was an invention, because creating Eritrea made different peoples, who were not together before, encounter and live together. In Eritrea, the Italian presence was massive: there were many more Italians living there than in other colonies, such as Ethiopia and Somalia.

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[3]Notes taken from the lectures on 28th and 30th November 2017 by Valeria Deplano.

While the Italians were there, apartheid was imposed, and the space was organised in order to separate white and black people. There was an idea of nation founded on race and the idea of race founded on blood. The blood had to be pure according to the thought of blood purity. After 1937, the regime wanted Italian soldiers thinking that Africans were beasts. Italians wanted to create a white colony where there was not space for blacks. Every interracial marriage was punished by the regime and "meticci" – kids who were born from the encounter between a coloniser and a colonised – were not recognised. The meticci were depicted as monsters, they were not considered Italians (De Napoli, 2013).

Valeria Deplano also asserted that Fascism in the Horn of Africa brought so many changes into social-political-economic spheres. Education, for example, was one of them. In fact, during colonialism, education was used as a tool to revolutionise the colonised countries and to change their values according to the values of the colonisers. The aim was to educate people in the colonies and to accept the rules of the colonial order. The question is: what values did the regime want to transfer to the Africans?

Before Fascism, education was very important to produce a labor force, to diffuse Italian values and to civilise. This was the reason why Italy opened the first government school. Schools for Eritreans were divided into three categories: there were schools of art and crafts, where pupils could learn arithmetic and geometry, Italian and local language; elementary schools, where there were taught the previous subjects plus humanistic ones, such as geography, calligraphy, physical training; and, they opened only one secondary school. During Fascism schools' programs changed a little: in fact, they included the instruction of Italian, geography, the history of ancient Italy and hygiene. All schools and educational programs had to be approved by the colonial government before being taught. There were also special training programs in order to introduce the Italian language and fascism culture, to equip people and to prepare them for the military system, because military education was also very important during Fascism. The aim was to separate Italians and Africans in order to keep the prestige of Italians. Educating them for work and respect Italian's laws was the primary goal of fascist regime (Ben-Ghiat, Fuller, 2005).

Citizenship was another one, it defines people´s duties and rights. In the colonial context, it was very difficult to talk about full citizenship. There were citizen policies, but they did not create a full condition of citizenship, they only created another status. What was this new status? How did it

change during the time? Before Fascism, Eritreans did not have Italian citizenship, but they received a status of subject hood. They did not have the chance to have political or administration positions.

There were two ways to obtain the full Italian citizenship: first of all, mixed children who were born in a regular marriage could become Italian, if the father recognised them, naturalisation was regarded as exceptional and it was reserved to those who deserved a civic prise or something like this; secondly, if people knew the Italian language and culture and, above all, if they had the features of Italians, they could achieve the citizenship. It is clear that, especially the second way is a direct implication of the idea of races that was spread out during Fascism. Being an Italian citizen was the only way to get a good position, to travel and to have lots of benefits. It was not a question of prestige, but a practical issue - it could help colonised people have a better life. Italians were not interested in giving the Italian citizenship to meticci, and it can be seen with the fact that the law took many years before it was approved. Among Italians who were in Eritrea there was the idea that the race could not be mixed, and that Italians should not marry nor have children with Eritreans, who were considered inferior and unable to think. In fact, the meticci law was approved in 1933, and in 1934 Benito Mussolini disavowed the law. In 1937, another law penalises those Italians who lived in Eritrea and maintain relations with Eritrean women (De Napoli, 2013).

So, as Valeria Deplano pointed out, before 1936 the goals were the centralisation of power and the Italianisation of Eritreans. After 1936, the goals were others: the spread of Fascism and the militarisation of Eritreans, even though also before 1936 there was fascism.

3.2 After Colonialism: The Struggle Against Ethiopia

During the spring 1941, Eritrea was invaded by the British army after the Cheren battle. Until 1947, the British army stayed in Eritrea that became a British protectorate until 1952 when the UN declared it part of the federation of Ethiopia. In 1952, Tedla Bairu became the first governor of Eritrea. Eritrean Muslims were the first who suffered when Haile Selassie governed, and they formed the first opposition movement in 1960: the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF). They started a war that lasted for three decades against Ethiopia. In 1961, under the command of Hamid Idris Awate, the ELF started the Eritrean revolution. During those years we can identify the first Eritrean diaspora: Muslims emigrated to Sudan, Middle Ease, and Egypt while Christians emigrated to the West and Ethiopia (Dahre, 2007).

At the end of the 1960s, also Christian students started joining the ELF in opposition to the regime of Haile Selassie. The problem was that Hamid Idris Awate was resident in Cairo so many of the members of the ELF left the movement and started creating the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), which was a Marxist and secular organization (Hirt, 2014). Because of a second civil war between ELF and EPLF that lasted from 1980 to 1981, many fighters from ELF emigrated to Europe and North America, and the Eritrean diaspora continued (Dahre, 2007).

By 1974 the Ethiopian regime collapsed, the two liberation fronts liberated most of the Eritrean territories and by 1977 it looked like Eritrea could liberate itself. But it didn't happen because a new Marxist Ethiopian regime, armed and assisted by the Soviet Union, started attacking Eritrea again. In 1980s the struggle was carried on by the EPLF and the ELF was left out – this means that the EPLF became the symbol of Eritrean national identity. At the end of the 1980s, the Soviet Union stopped its military aid and Ethiopia could not find another alley to help them to occupy Eritrea, so Eritrean people leap at the opportunity to reach Addis Ababa without the Soviet Union military aid to Ethiopia. This was a very important event for Eritrea that, in 1991 led by the Tigray People's Liberation Front – which was an independent group that was fighting to gain the autonomy of Tigray in Ethiopia – reached Addis Ababa. On 24th of May the EPLF assumed control of Eritrea, which was then proclaimed independent. It took two years before Eritrea was recognised as an independent nation by other countries; furthermore, in 1994 the EPLF renamed itself as People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) (Hirt, 2014).

In 1998 another war against Ethiopia happened in Eritrea (Dahre, 2007). The fact that 100,000 Eritreans died during the two years of war against Ethiopia made President Isaias Afewerki change the Eritrean political order. Eritrea become a totalitarian country, where recruitment in the national service was compulsory. Furthermore, President Isaias set an isolationist foreign policy (Hirt, 2014). This event led to another migration which was mainly the effect of both the fear of a war against Ethiopia and the forcible recruitment in the national service. Both diasporas had a political aspect: during the first one, Eritreans moved to other countries to run away from the colonial power and continued their opposition from abroad; the second one was the result of the totalitarianism that President Isaias imposed within the country (Dahre, 2007).

Furthermore, the Eritrean country took advantage of the Eritrean diaspora. Using the excuse that Eritrea did not receive any support from both the Western world and the Eastern bloc during the liberation war, President Isaias imposed two things: Eritrea started asking help from Eritrean people

and institutionalise the diaspora as a funding source. In fact, Eritrean government introduced a tax for all the Eritreans who lived abroad: they had to give the two percent of their annual income to their home-country. Also, those Eritreans who lived in another country and had been naturalised had to pay the tax, which purpose was to help the reconstruction of the war-devastated Eritrea (Hirt, 2014).

In 2005, around 510,000 Eritreans were living abroad. It was hoped that after the Eritrean independence many Eritreans, who fled to other countries, especially before 1991, would have come back to their land. Although the war for independence had finished, the impositions for the Eritreans who live in diaspora are very strict. The actual government, in fact, imposed for those Eritreans who live in diaspora a tax: Eritreans in the diaspora have to send a part of their income – 2% of their annual income – to the Eritrean state and if they refuse to do so, they cannot go back to Eritrea, sell or acquire new proprieties in Eritrea, or send money to their relatives. The reason why this tax was imposed was because also Eritreans in diaspora had to help the Eritrean state to reconstruct what the war had destroyed but, nowadays, the diaspora tax is still valid in Eritrea. This is the reason why many Eritreans did not go back to their home and continue living abroad, in Italy as well (Dahre, 2007).

Chapter 4
Eritrean Identity in Bologna

4.1 Italian Policies and the Struggle to Acquire the Italian Citizenship

Italy became a destination for immigration, while years ago it was a country of emigration. The fact that it has become a country for immigration creates the emergence of a second-generation of immigrants, who are not considered fully Italians. If we look at the statistics, we can see that in Italy from the beginning of 2010 there are 932,675 immigrants and 573,00 of them were born in Italy. If we consider also those children who were born from one Italian parent and one non-Italian parent, the number grows up to one million. Many of them, due to Italian policies, have not been able to acquire Italian citizenship until they are eighteen years old (Zinn, 2011).

Because of the lack of Italian policies which guarantee rights to second-generations, from the middle of 1990s, the second-generations started to create associations, who interface with Italian institutions and maintain connections with the home country. The main goal of these associations is to struggle for the recognition of people's social position: they try to make Italian people not to think as them as migrants but as Italians, also because many of them were born in Italy and some of them manage to acquire Italian citizenship (Riccio, Russo, 2011). They also fight to change the citizenship law in order to facilitate acquiring Italian citizenship for second-generation of immigrants who come from South America and Africa, and they fight against discrimination and racism that make Italian people seeing them as blacks not as Italians. Bologna has been affected by the decline of the Italian population, who migrate to other countries, and the arrival of foreigners. In fact, it is possible to notice that in 2009 there were 43,600 people who came from other 150 countries; those were: Romani, Philippines, Bangladesh and Morocco. 5,500 of 43,600 people were second-generations (Zinn, 2011).

The Italian law for acquiring the Italian citizenship has not been changed since 1992. This means that, although nowadays there are many more immigrants that there were before 1992 – and many of them are second-generations, born and grew up in Italy – the Italian government has not been able to deal with the growing phenomena. The Italian citizenship law made more difficult for immigrants to acquire citizenship, and it made even more difficult for second-generations to become Italians. According to the article 4.2 of the law, a foreigner who was born in Italy and who legally resided there without interruption until they are eighteen years old, becomes a citizen if he declares he wants to acquire the Italian citizenship within a year from the aforementioned date (LEGGE 5

febbraio 1992, n.91). Hiweth was the only girl who I interviewed who is still an Eritrean citizen because she is eighteen years old and she just started all the practices she has do to for gaining Italian citizenship. Although all the other people who I interviewed are Italian citizens, they all asserted that being black and living in Italy make difficult for them to feel Italians and totally accepted by the society.

In Italy, in fact, being black means being stigmatised by white Italian people. Zula is an Italian citizen and she said during the interview that every time she has to deal with issues like finding an apartment in Bologna, she feels not Italian but African. She told me that while she was looking for a flat in Bologna, she met a woman who was the owner of the flat. Although Zula speaks perfect Italian and she also has an Emilia Romagna[4]'s accent when she speaks, the owner of the flat asked her if she had the Italian citizenship because "she was darker than Italians". According to her the Italian language is not enough to make white Italians seeing her as an Italian citizen: more important is the colour of the skin that underlines that you are not Italian, and you will never be. This was the thought of the other interviewees.

Even though all stressed the fact that being black in Italy means not being accepted as Italian citizenship, Zula was the only one who said that, when she is with white Italian people who she does not know, she feels African instead of Eritrean. According to her, in Bologna there are not so many Eritreans and many white Italians do not know the differences among Africans; "for them we are all Africans, there are no differences between an Eritrean and a Cameroonian. They do not even know where the countries are in the African continent", she said. According to Andall (2002), who studied the second-generation of Africans in Milan, "being black and being Italian are seen as mutually exclusive categories" (2002: 389).

"How can I feel Italian if every time they ask me the place where I am from I cannot even say that I am Italian? I was born in Bologna, I grew up here, but I am not Italian. And this is only because policies in Italy are very old and they do not want to change them. White Italians are scared of black people and I will never be as Italians as they are. I am sorry for this because I love Italy and when I am in Bologna I feel home. Although I am not Italian, Bologna is my home." (Hiwet. Interview, 2018).

It is important to know about policies that there are in Italy because identity depends from both the way in which people see themselves and the way in which other people see them. If becoming

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[4] Emilia Romagna is one the Italian regions. Bologna is the main city of the county.

Italians is very difficult, and second-generation of immigrants are not able to gain the citizenship until they are eighteen years old, they will not see themselves as Italians and white Italian people will not see them as Italians. Having these hard citizenship policies make difficult for second-generation Eritreans to feel Italian, although they were born and grew up in Italy.

4.2 A Little bit of Italian Culture into the Eritrean one

"I do not know what the Eritrean and what the Italian symbols are. I do not also know how I can define Italian culture nor Eritrean ones. I was born in Italy and I grew up in Bologna. While I was growing up my parents thought me something which was very Eritrean, like eating Eritrean food or following Eritrean politic. But I also learned how to cook Italian food and how to vote in Italy. So, I would define Eritrean culture, I really know what to say. I can tell you that we have a different writing and that we do not look at elders in the eyes when we meet them in the street, but I think it is something that you also have into the Italian culture. Do you look in the eyes someone, if they are older than you and you do not know them?" (Muna. Interview, 2018)

According to Muna, it is very difficult to make a distinction between the two cultures. When we deal with second-generation it is almost impossible to define which symbols are Italian and which one are Eritrean. Although it is a difficult mission, since Italy colonised Eritrea there are many symbols that Italy brought to Eritrea that belonged to its own culture. First of all, the language. Italian colonialists tried to suppress the Tigrinya language and tried to make Italian as the official one. Language, in fact, was considered as a cohesive factor also in the education sphere. During colonialism, schools in Eritrea were bilingual: Italian was the first language and, depending on the school, Arabic or Tigrinya were the second languages – Arabic was taught in the Muslim schools and Tigrinya in the Christian schools (Dirar, 2007: 267). Winta, a second-generation Eritrean woman, told me that her grandfather used to speak Italian perfectly although he had never been in Italy. He was born in Asmara and he attended Italian schools during colonialism. The fact that the grandfather spoke Italian, helped Winta's father when he moved to Italy; in fact, before moving to Bologna, he knew a little bit of Italian that he used when he first arrived in Bologna. Winta admitted that she does not know Tigrinya because when she was born, her parents used to speak a good Italian due to the fact that both of them knew it before coming to Italy.

"When I was a little boy, my parents used to talk to me in Italian. I could not understand the difference between their accent and the Bolognaise one when they were talking. To me their Italian was perfect. And it is true, their Italian is still perfect. Now that I am a little older I can understand the

differences between my parents' accent and Bolognaise one. But their Italian grammar is perfect, and I think it depends from the fact that they knew Italian language before moving to Italy. I think this can be seen as an Italian symbol that is present into the Eritrean culture and shapes my identity" (Winta. Interview, 2018).

The language is not the only Italian symbol that was brought to Eritrean during colonialism, but it is also possible to find into the Eritrean one. An interesting symbol is the bar. Before colonisation, in Eritrea people used to meet each other in the streets and they did not drink espresso coffee. When Italians arrived there, they tried to recreate the same urban space that they had in Italy. Apart from building the railway, courts and palaces, they also built bars and brought with them the tradition of espresso coffee. From that moment on, as Abrham said, Eritreans started to meet each other in bars, drinking coffee and discussing for hours. According to him, as soon as Eritreans arrived in Bologna, they started to open bars: for example, there are three Eritrean bars in one street in Bologna. Abrham said that when he was a child, his parents used to go to bars with him and those bars were always owned by Eritreans. It was only when he was allowed to go out with his friends that he started to go to other bars, not only Eritrean ones.

This was also the Melake's story, a man who was born and grew up in Bologna. He also added that when he realised that bars could also be owned by non-Eritreans, he put his attention trying to notice if there were differences among Eritreans´ and non-Eritreans´ bars. He said that the only difference is that Eritrean bars are mostly frequented by Eritreans while it is rare to find an Eritrean in other bars. It is interesting to observe that bars also cause problems within the domestic space. Robel remembers his parents fighting because his father used to spend a lot of time in bar, without spending so much time with his family. But he also remembers bars as spaces where he could meet his Eritreans friends with whom he used to play games walking barefoot. Rebel said that being with other Eritreans make him feel more Eritrean that he feels when he spends his time with white Italians.

4.3 The Encounter among Eritreans: how Does it Affect the Sense of Belonging to the Eritrean Culture?

Spending time in Eritrean bars was a way to encounter other Eritreans and reinforced Eritrean identity. Going to a bar means encountering so many Eritreans: those who moved during the first and the second Eritrean diaspora, those who grew up in Italy, and also those who are still refugees and have been living in Italy for not so long. The word refugee is a juridical word that is used to describe those people who escaped from their home countries because of their religion, nationality, ethic group

or because in their home country there is war. After they escape, they find hospitality in a new country that have to recognise them the status of refugees (Boano, Floris, 2005).

The encounter between second-generation Eritreans and Eritrean refugees makes the former aware about social traditions that there are in Eritrea but are not still alive in Italy. For example, Kefleyesus told me that when Eritreans meet each other, they do not usually look into the eyes of the person that they meet. It is respectful to look down without making eye contact. This reminded him about his roots, which are not those related to Bologna, the place where he grew up, but are related to the place where his parents were born.

Eritrean refugees help second-generation Eritreans to recognise who they are and their roots. When new refugees arrive in Italy, they say "hello" to those whom they recognise as Eritreans. Those could also be second-generation Eritreans. The encounter makes second-generation Eritreans aware of who they are, and which are their roots. The physical appearance of refugees makes second-generation Eritreans aware of what they look alike. Furthermore, it helps them create memories of their Eritrean roots or their parental origin. Although all of Eritreans I interviewed do not speak Eritrean languages, the fact that most of the time refugees speak to them using their mother-tongue – also because they do not speak Italian language – makes second-generation Eritreans remember their roots. This happens because the only people who talk in Eritrean local languages with them are Eritreans and listening to them makes second-generation Eritreans remember their relatives who live both in Italy or Eritrea. Furthermore, four of them told me that they can understand Tigrinya, and they feel at home when refugees use that language when they talk to them.

Although many of them told me that the encounter helps them understand who they are, and which are their roots, Afdera told me another history. Her father is Eritrean while her mother is Italian. She said that many times Eritrean people do not recognise her as Eritrean because she does not look alike them, and no all her physical aspects belong to Eritreans. Moreover, she does not speak Tigrinya, which means that when Eritreans talk to her, she does not understand what they are telling her. The encounter with other Eritreans makes Afdera realising that she is not fully Eritrean and, if when she spends time with Italians she feels Eritrean, the encounter makes her feel less Eritrean than others.

"When I meet Eritreans, I realise that I am not fully Eritrean as them. My identity becomes unclear. I think in a different way, they have traditions that I even do not know because my mother is Italian. When Eritreans talk about how the Eritrean women dance and how they play drums during the dances, I do not even know what they are talking about. This is because my mother has never danced

as Eritrean women do. So, how should I feel? When I am with them I am not Eritrean, when I am with Italians they see the dark colour of my skin. It is difficult to define myself" (Afdera, interview 2018).

From Afdera words it is possible to say that identity depends a lot also on the people that are surrounding her. Her identity, in fact, is defined by the way in which people see themselves and how other see them. This is the reason why it is important to analyse the role that parents have in shaping second-generation Eritrean identity.

4.4 Mother and Father Help Shaping the Identity of their Children

Second-generation's parents try to transmit their identity to their children, establishing social connection in order to maintain their national identity. In doing so, they transmit their language of origin and their traditions. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972) language is one of the primary aspect which is transmitted from parents to second-generations (Goitom, 2015). This is because, according to the interviews, parents see themselves as the only example that second-generations have to maintain their Eritrean identity. Sharing cultural values become an important goal for parents when they raise their children. Another aspect that is transmitted is the religion because it is seen as a whole system of values that is expressed in cultural, religious, and other activities; furthermore, it provides a world view and a specific ethos (Goitom, 2015).

Although Goitom (2015) asserted that language is one of the first skills and symbols that parents transmit to their second-generation children, none of my interviewees speak their parents' language. Some of them told me that they can understand a few words in Tigrinya, but none of them is able to speak Tigrinya fluently. Afdera told me that when she was an infant, her father used to talk to her in Tigrinya while her mother talked to her in Italian. When her mother started to realise that Afdera spoke only Tigrinya and not Italian, also when they were with other white Italian people, she asked her husband to stop talking in Tigrinya with her daughter. Afdera can understand a few Tigrinya words nowadays and she regrets the fact that her father stopped talking to her using his mother-tongue.

While language has been not taught by parents of second-generation Eritreans, religion has been transmitted from parents to children. Many of them told me that they still celebrate Eritrean Christmas and Easter, although they have been living in Bologna for years. When I asked Zula which the relationship that she has with the Eritrean culture is, she told me that the first thing that she thought about when I asked was the religion. She is not religious at all but when it is Christmas or Easter time

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she celebrates the Orthodox Eritrean traditions. Although she does not believe, those festivities are occasions to her to meet her Eritrean relatives, to eat Eritrean food, listen to her relatives and her parents' friends talking in Tigrinya, eating injera and zighinì[5], drinking Eritrean coffee and watching an Eritrean channel on television that is possible to watch in streaming in Italy. Furthermore, she knows exactly which the differences between Orthodox and Catholic rituals are: the former is much longer and important than the latter. This does not mean that for her the Eritrean culture is only represented by the religion but, although she does not believe nor do her parents, religion was one of the first traditions that Zula remembers being taught.

Religion is also one of the reason why many Orthodox Eritreans are in Italy: during the diasporas Orthodox and Catholic Eritreans moved to Italy which was a Catholic country. Nowadays, religion is does not seem a reason why Eritreans move to Italy. As Muna told me, having relatives somewhere in the world helps new immigrants choosing the country where to go.

> "My parents moved to Italy because they did not have to change their faith: they wanted to go to a Catholic country and Italy suited them. Although I do not have any faith, I remember that my parents made me pray in Tigrinya. I know many Tigrinya prayers, and those are the only things I know in my parents' language. They did not teach me their language, they teach me how to pray in their language. I think, though, that nowadays having relatives somewhere in the world is the main reason why new people who migrate choose a place instead of another. If I was in Eritrea and I had to move abroad, I would not choose a place where none of my family member was." (Muna. Interview, 2018)

A part from religion, I want to highlight that Eritrean food is another symbol of the Eritrean culture that parents transmit to their second-generation children. All of my interviewees eat Eritrean food, go to African markets and are used to eating spicy food. It is interesting what Afdera told me. She said that while her mother was pregnant and after when she was breastfeeding, her father made her eating spicy and hot food in order to make Afdera get used to eat chili pepper: nowadays she loves spicy and hot food and also when she eats Italian food, she uses to add chili pepper even if the Italian recipe does not include it. Neghesti told me that she had some problems when she was a little girl and she used to invite her friends at her house for lunch or dinner. She was born in Italy a few months after her parents arrived in Italy. Sometimes, while she was a child, her mother forgot that Italians do not eat as spicy and hot as Eritrean do so it happened that her Italian friends could not eat what her mother made because it was too spicy and hot for them.

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[5] Injera and zighinì are two traditional Eritrean dishes that come from the mountains near Asmara, the capital of the country.

"Have you ever seen a gavì? It is a white duvet that people use in Asmara because during the winter Asmara is a cold place. I would like to show you one, it is very warm and if you try it you cannot survive another winter without using it!" (Lemlem. Interview, 2018)

One history that was very interesting had to do with a traditional cover that is used in Asmara's mountains: this blanket is called *gavì*. It is a typical cover that people from Asmara make and it is a symbol of their culture. Lemlem told me that since she was born, she used to cover herself with the *gavì* that her parents brought to Bologna when they moved from Asmara. She does not remember a winter time when she did not use the *gavì* on top of her bed. Moreover, she said that when she was a girl, she used to walk in her home wearing the *gavì*, as it was a cloth. When I asked her why, she said that when she went to Eritrea for the first time, she noticed that her grandmother used to cover herself with the *gavì* so, when she came back to Italy, she used to do what her grandmother did in Eritrea. Lemlem said that wearing the *gavì* was a way to feel closer to grandmother, so while she was wearing it, she used to think that she was a woman and she was living in Asmara, the only place the she felt as home. When her friends used to go to her house, she wore the *gavì* and she played as she was a woman in Eritrea and her friends came to visit her there. It is possible to assert that, although people live in another country, they can feel that their identity is the one of their parents when they wear clothes that belong to their parents' culture.

Another phenomenon that makes second-generation of Eritrean feel that their identity is Eritrean is the journey back home that they do with their parents.

4.5 Going Home, Visiting Relatives, and Discovering Eritrean Roots

"It is like a discovering of the sacred. When I went there I felt like I was doing a mystical experience. The experience started as soon as I got off the plane and it finished when I put again my feet on the plane to go back to Bologna. I remember every single moment I spent there, it was my first time, but I felt I belonged there since I was born. I am worried that you cannot understand my experience, but trust me, it was magic" (Awen, interview 2018).

Awen felt at home when he landed in Asmara. Places where people feel comfortable or at home are those places that affect the sense of belonging of people Those places can be small, like neighbourhoods, or ever big, like nations. Going back home means finding an opportunity to

experience localities of their ancestors and get in touch with their origin. Travelling to their home country means shaping their identity because second-generation are able to experience the place where they belong. Travelling to Eritrea means re-discovering Eritrean traditions, symbols, experiences, also those that were not brought to Italy and second-generation Eritreans did not know. Journeys are so important because second-generation has only a few interactions with their origins, so while they are travelling they get engaged with Eritrea (Graf, 2017).

When Zula went to Eritrea she also felt that she belonged to that country. She met all her parents' friends and relatives and that create a sense of belonging to Eritrea. She said that she remembers that when she got off from the plane, all the people who were getting off started kissing the ground. She was just a little girl, but she emulated others and she kissed the ground as well. She did not understand that gesture at that time but nowadays she says that kissing the ground made her feeling part of Eritrean culture. Another tradition that she remembers is the fact that she used to walk barefoot as soon as she used to reach the street where her relatives lived. This made her feel at home.

The language is also an important symbol that make people feeling home when they go back to Eritrea. Afdera said that the fact that she did not speak Tigrinya made a gap between them and Eritreans. Her skin is not as dark as Eritreans' one because her mother is Italian, but she underlined during the interview that the colour of the skin is not as important there as the language to make Eritreans see her as part of their group of people. There are many Italians who live there and are white but the fact that they speak Tigrinya make other Eritreans consider them as Eritreans. Although she is black, the fact that she did not speak Tigrinya made others in Eritrea feel that she was not one of them. According to Afdera, while in Italian the colour of the skin is more important than the language that you speak when we talk about how Italians see and define her, in Eritrea the language in more important than the colour of the skin. Even if you are black, if you do not speak Eritrean language and you are in Eritrea, Eritrean people do not consider you as Eritrean.

Fiore has been in Eritrea twice - once when she was four and another time when she was twenty. She told me that when she went back to Eritrea for the second time many things had changed: her grandmother was not there anymore, her parents' house was owned by other people, many shops were closed. All these changes made her feel she did not belong to that place anymore. Everything that looked big when she was a child, was not big anymore. Her feelings were different, she felt that her own traditions were much more Italian than Eritrean.

The journey back to Eritrea shaped the identity of second-generation Eritreans. It could create a strong sense of belonging, as Graf (2017) asserted, but it can also create a refuse to those traditions, spaces, and symbols that do not belong anymore to second-generation Eritreans who go there only for holiday. The only one who has not been to Eritrea is Abrham, because their parents are still Eritrean citizens and they refuse to pay the diaspora tax, so they cannot go back to Eritrea. Abrham is, in fact, very against the President Isaias' government because of the impositions that he applies to Eritreans who live abroad. He sees the Eritrean government as a dictatorship and he always argue when other second-generation Eritreans see President Isaias as a saviour of the Eritrean state. According to him, in fact, Eritreans should be aware that nowadays Eritrea is one of the worst dictatorship in the world, and he compares Eritrean state with the North-Korean one. A part from Abrham, none of the interviewees mentioned the Eritrean government when they were talking about their holidays back in Eritrea: they instead referred to what they experienced when they were there and which were the things that they have learned once they were there, things that they did not know before going to their relatives' home.

Chapter 5
Conclusion

According to this study, there are many ways in which second-generation Eritreans shape their identity in Bologna. The main ways in which second-generation Eritreans shape their Eritrean identity in Bologna are: the encounter with other Eritreans, their parents' roots, the language, and the holiday trip back to Eritrea.

According to Graf and Thieme (2017), the encounter with second-generation Eritreans and new refugees help remind second-generation of their Eritrean root. From the interviews it emerged that second-generation Eritreans in Bologna feel more Eritrean than Italian when they meet other Eritreans, especially refugees, because many of them do not know Italian and speak to second-generation Eritreans using their local languages. Furthermore, the encounter with other Eritreans, make second-generation knowing stories about their roots. Many often during holidays, such as Easter or Christmas, second-generation Eritreans spend their time with their families and, during the dinner, first-generation Eritreans tell them stories about their home-land, about their ancestor. Doing this the memory of second-generation is re-invoked and they said that they feel closer to Eritrean culture than when they spend their time with Italians.

The parental influence is also an important factor that make second-generation Eritreans shaping their Eritrean identity. According to Goitom (2015) the language is one of the first skill that Eritrean parents transmit to their children. According to what interviewees said, language is not what their parents taught them about Eritrea. Religion was much more important than language. Although many of them are not religious, they celebrate religious holidays in the same way their parents do. During these holidays they eat Eritrean food, they listen to their parents praying in local languages, they watch Eritrean television. Same important as the religion, is the food. During many interviews, second-generation Eritreans said that they eat very spicy and hot food, that Italian usually do not like. For this reason, they also feel Eritrean when they go to Italian restaurant and they ask for chili pepper to add to their dishes. Furthermore, when their parents arrived in Italy, they brought with them some things that belong to Eritrean culture. This can be the case of the *gavì*, a blanket that people in Asmara put on beds during the winter. It is impossible to buy a *gavì* in Italy but, as Lemlem said, some second-generation Eritreans do not remember a winter time when they did not use the *gavì* to cover themselves and do not feel the cold during the night.

Another way in which second-generation Eritreans reinforce their Eritrean identity is the holiday journey back to Eritrea. Thanks to their parents there are able to go back to those places where their parents grew up and to know more about Eritrea and its culture. According to Graf (2017) going back to Eritrea is a crucial event in shaping Eritrean identity in diaspora, also because it is a chance to get engaged with Eritrea. According to second-generation Eritreans, Eritrea is like a sacred place that they need to discover. Second-generation Eritreans when travel, rediscover those traditions that were not brought to Italy but are still Eritrean: for example, when Zula went back there, she used to walk barefoot in the street where her relatives live but she would never do that in Italy.

Bringing into account the fact the how others define them is really crucial when they define themselves and their identity, make their identity not clear. They sometimes feel Africans, other times Italians, other Eritreans, and other blacks. According to what they said, in fact, in Italy the colour of the skin is very important and, although they speak a perfect Italian, when they walk around Bologna or they deal with Bolognaises, they feel that they are Eritreans or Africans, more than Italians. For example, Zula feels African because according to her many Bolognaises do not know where Eritrea is, and they consider her African, or black. When they go to Eritrea, they instead feel more Italians than Eritreans. There, language is more important than the colour of the skin so, although they are black, the fact that they do not speak local languages make Eritreans seeing them ad Italians. Their identity is hybrid, as Arnone (2011) and Goitom (2017) asserted: many times they are not able to use only one adjective to define themselves also because their identity is mixed with both Italian and Eritrean cultures. Furthermore, according to this study, defining what is Italian and what is Eritrean sometimes result difficult for second-generation Eritreans, also because some Italian symbols and tradition have been brought to Eritrea during colonialism and Eritreans brought them back to Italy during the first diaspora.

Bologna becomes a place where second-generation Eritreans re-invent their Eritrean identity including Eritrean symbols in the whole system of symbols that belong to the Bolognaise culture. Some of the interviewees love ragù Bolognaise, which is a typical dish from Bologna, but they also add chili pepper when they eat it. They support the Bologna's football team, but when Italy plays against Eritrea, they do not know which team they are supporting. Their culture is hybrid, as it is they identity: none of them know for sure what they answer when other people ask them who they are, and their answer changes according to the people to whom they are talking to.

APPENDIX
Interview

- Would you like to tell me about the relation that you have with the Eritrean culture?
- Which is the relation that you have with Italian culture?
- What is the relationship that you have with Eritreans?
- And with Italians?
- What is your citizenship? Since when?
- When people ask you where you are from, what do you say?
- Which are the symbols that allow you to identify yourself with Eritrean people?
- How does your parents influence your Eritrean identity?
- How do you behave when you encounter Eritreans in Bologna?
- How does the encounter influence your sense of belonging to Italy or Eritrea?
- How often do you go back to Eritrea?
- What does the journey back mean to you?
- Which are the symbols that allow you to identify yourself with Italian people?
- Is there any aspect that you think belong to Italian culture but are also present into Eritrean one?
- Do you feel integrated?
- What do you feel when Italians ask you where you are from?
- What does the fact that you grew up in Bologna mean to you?
- Which kind of food do you eat?
- Which languages do you speak?
- Which one do you prefer? Why?
- Would you like to add anything else?
- Can I come back to you if I have other doubts?

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