

## Integration and marginalization in second-generation immigrants in Palermo: an empirical research

*Serena Giunta<sup>1</sup>, Chiara Mariaconcetta Colantoni<sup>2</sup>, Giuseppe Mannino<sup>3</sup>*

### Abstract

In recent decades, Italy has been affected by constant migratory flows of people, which have brought substantial changes to the social, cultural and economic structure of the country.

There are, in fact, many second-generation immigrants on the national territory, who induce political actors and institutions in charge of culture to develop programmes and build pathways to integration, appropriate to their needs. First of all, within the category of "second generation immigrants" there are numerous and heterogeneous individual experiences, whose common denominator is represented by the migratory experience, often experienced only by their parents.

This young generation appears, therefore, as suspended between two cultures, the ancestral one, relative to the homeland, and the dominant one, relative to the society of arrival. Numerous international studies (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Sayad, 2002; Palmas, 2012) highlight the possible paths of integration of second generations within the host societies, in order to promote valid and profitable pathways to integration.

As far as Italy is concerned, the picture is, however, more complex, since the phenomenon is inextricably linked to territorial variables of a different nature. Therefore, each region and small territorial entity has peculiar characteristics that require an ad hoc analysis.

The proposed research aims to highlight the most important aspects of the integration pathways of second-generation young immigrants in the Palermo area, striving to grasp the psychosocial dynamics of inclusion and marginalization

**Key words:** *Second generation immigrants; psychosocial aspects; integration; exclusion; assimilation.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Analysis of Devious Phenomena, LUMSA University, Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Analysis of Devious Phenomena Internal Chair, LUMSA University, Italy.

<sup>3</sup> Professor of Dynamic psychology, LUMSA University, Italy

## Introduction

The non-negligible presence of second-generation immigrants in Italy is closely linked to a phase of stabilization of immigration and establishes a substantial change in the cultural, social and economic structure of our country.

The phenomenon of increasing migration, recorded in recent years in the Mediterranean countries, is inevitably connected to the ever-increasing occurrence of second generations, which stand out in a multi-faceted socio-cultural horizon.

The concept of second generations, in fact, is very complex (Ambrosini, 2011; Molina, 2012 & Palmas, 2012) and does not lend itself to a precise and clear-cut definition. Within the category of "second generation immigrants" there are numerous and heterogeneous individual experiences, whose common denominator is represented by the migratory experience, often experienced only by their parents. Therefore, these types of young people form an *unintentional generation*, which more than the others is suspended between two different cultures, in the balance between belonging and extraneity (Edel M. et al., 2017).

Most of the second-generation young people were either born in Italy or arrived at an early age, and participate actively in the social life of the country, despite the stronger or weaker ties with the homeland. Such a condition inevitably implies some difficulties in the process of integration, of a juridical, bureaucratic, social and cultural nature. These young people express different needs from those of the "first generation" immigrants, therefore different inclusion policies and institutional practices are required, more suited to their needs. Despite the commitment of political and ministerial actors in order to create equal opportunities in an intercultural environment, many outstanding questions still remain, which inevitably generate inconveniences and difficulties.

First of all, emphasis must be placed on the absence of adequate knowledge of the real condition of minors of foreign origin, whose

information are very often distorted by media propaganda.

Therefore, for this purpose it is proposed a careful reflection, with the primary purpose of highlighting the hardships faced by this new generation, examining the real possibilities of integration and emancipation offered to them by the social context of the host nation.

### *Some psychosocial aspects*

The definition of second-generation immigrants has been the subject of numerous reflections in the literary field (Ambrosini, 2010; Molina, 2012; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). The concept denotes both children born and raised in the receiving society, and adolescents who were reunited with their families after completing an extensive socialization process in the country of origin. Children of interracial couples, nomads and unaccompanied minors belong to the same category. Moreover, the expression "second-generation immigrants" is contradictory. Sayad (2002: 382) duly emphasized the fact that speaking of "second-generation immigrants" appears as a contradiction, since they cannot be accused of choosing to migrate, representing themselves as the final phase of an already concluded process.

Maurizio Ambrosini, due to the difficulties in arriving at a precise definition, speak of «a typical example of the construction of a social category». "The country to which we connect them, they may have never seen it, or they may have visited it only occasionally during the holidays" (2011: 171).

Among many proposals, worthy of note is the "graduated vision" of the second generation proposed by Rumbaut. The scholar has conceived a continuum on which to arrange the different cases of second-generation immigrants, segmenting the concept into decimal numbers, in relation to the processes of socialization undertaken and the ties with the homeland:

- The 1.5 generation, refers to people who arrive in another country after they have received initial socialization and education in

the country of origin, and then they complete it in schools in the foreign country;

- 1.25 generation, refers to people who move abroad between the ages of 13 and 17;
- 1.75 generation, refers to the people who emigrated in their early childhood, age 0–5 (1997: 923-924).

However, it seems that the trait d'union is represented by the migratory experience, bearer of different cultural practices, inherited, at a later time, by successive generations.

The concept of assimilation is of considerable importance in this context. The process is seen as taking places in a multi-generational immigrant population and its outcomes occur as changes in the features of a group in order to become similar to that of a native population (Brubaker, 2001: 531-48). The term assimilation has provoked criticisms and reflections. Some American scholars, in fact, have given rise to a debate on the concept, trying to cleanse it from the alleged cultural superiority, from which it arose. Brubaker (ibidem) gives two meanings to the concept of assimilation, one general, the other specific. In the first meaning, attention is placed on the process of assimilation, or on the process that leads to becoming similar. The second meaning is attributable to the final stage of the process: the complete absorption of the culture of the host society.

In this regard, Ambrosini states that «clearly, this second meaning of the term is today largely rejected. Even the first meaning, however, the transitive version of "becoming similar" appears problematic, since it seems to involve measures of forced assimilation, or at least programs that aim to assimilate people even against their will "(2004: 23).

The innovative and noteworthy aspect of the redefinition of the term proposed by the American sociologist is to have considered assimilation as an involuntary, collective, heterogeneous process that must be pursued by legislation at a socio-economic level.

Moreover, many scholars have offered significant contributions on the various possible processes of assimilation, through a comparison of living conditions among second-generation immigrants in different eras and societies.

These studies showed a significant deterioration of the conditions of the children of more recent immigrants<sup>1</sup>. Portes and Rumbaut (2001), in their study, in which they have analysed the American society, they have highlighted the existence of different outcomes, whose extremes are the total assimilation and, at the opposite pole, a downward assimilation with possible ghettoization.

This theory gives rise to the concept of selective assimilation, which consists of scholastic success and the economic progress of second-generation immigrants, favored by maintaining links with the communities of origin and distinct cultural codes.

Selective acculturation is the most successful assimilation outcome, since it presupposes the absorption of the traits of the dominant culture, and the simultaneous maintenance of traits of the ancestral culture.

In fact, on the integrative path there are economic factors and also factors relating to education, which refer to the two institutions responsible for this task, school and family (Lo Coco G. et al., 2015).

Family is the first institution encountered in the process of integration. Within the family nucleus, in the context of immigration, ambivalent cultural traits are conveyed, which derive from the maintenance of the traditional cultural code and the desire to be integrated into the host society.

The heterogeneous results of integration demonstrate a rich and varied range of attitudes towards the reference cultures. First of all, it is necessary to observe the persistence of certain conditions of fragility that hinder complete integration into the society of arrival.

<sup>1</sup> Portes (2001) identifies in the American economic structure of the years after 1970 a substantial change compared to the previous economy, that is a new economy characterized by an "hourglass" shape, a system

that does not allow social mobility, where immigrant workers accept the jobs that many U.S-born workforce are unwilling to take.

These include the fragmentation of the parental network or the fragmentation of the neighborhood network, or the absence of stable relationships within the community of origin. The resulting isolation weakens the educational role of the family institution, decreeing a possible scholastic and social failure in their children. In fact, it is not rare that children of immigrant origin undertake a rapid acculturation through school attendance, thus determining the reversal of roles.

This phenomenon consists in the superior level of assimilation of the children with respect to their parents, such as to "become, in certain aspects," the parents of their parents", those who take them to the doctor, in the relationship with the public offices, in the contacts with the scholastic institutions, etc. » (Ambrosini, 2011: 184; Pellerone M. et al., 2016). School is the second fundamental institution in the mediation among cultures, a place dedicated to the cultural formation of individuals. This is, in many respects, considered to be the possible springboard for social advancement and for the integration into the socio-economic fabric of the host community.

The school performance is affected by various factors, frequently connected to the family environment and to the culture of origin (Giunta S., & Verso G. L., 2012). Not infrequently, in fact, the educational success of the children depends on the ability and determination of their parents in supporting the school career. However, it is necessary that the school systems of the receiving societies show a certain openness towards the students with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Schools must support integration and support programs for pupils of immigrant origin, in order to offer them equal opportunities (Ambrosini, 2000). Unfortunately, there are many cases, especially in Europe, of school systems that not support practises of inclusion.

### *Possible psychopathologies of the migratory phenomenon*

The cultural belonging, the recognition of other people's diversity, one's sense of belonging and the consequent sense of extraneousness to other cultures also influence psychological processes related to the creation of one's own identity (Pergola, 2011; Gervasi A.M. et al., 2017).

Pioneers in the elaboration of a theoretical model on the importance of belonging to a group in the construction of the self were the psychologists Tajfel and Turner (1999), who from the 1970s onwards, in different studies, faced the problem of social identity, highlighting the salient aspects of the issue.

Social identity is the portion of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group, with particular emphasis given to the emotional sphere. One of the recurring hallmarks in the process of social identification is the concept of race. This concept is complex, since it implies a biological definition and, at the same time, also involves the cultural sphere.

Due to the difficulties encountered in identifying genetic and physical elements characterizing certain groups, the concept has gradually been replaced by the concept of ethnicity. By ethnicity we mean a group of individuals, more or less vast, which can be characterized by common biological traits, but its peculiarities are expressed through cultural practices, namely language, customs, religion and shared values.

In the young of immigrant origin, the process of creating social identity is complicated by the exposure to different culture influences (Coppo, 1999). Adolescents often develop a feeling of "tolerance" towards the dominant culture in order to avoid identity conflicts. Sometimes, instead, a "pragmatic" attitude prevails, on the bases of which, they maintain a traditionalist identity at home and they conform to their peers in extra-family environments (De Pasquale, 2012). Finally, they can avoid the conflict with a "complex coherence", which consists of selecting

aspects of the two cultures depending on the situation.

During the 20th century the contributions of various psychologists and psychiatrists have grown considerably, giving rise to a vast and exhaustive literature. Among the most important contributions we must mention the study by Garza-Guerrero, who developed the theory of "culture shock" and "transculturation stress" to describe reactions to the psychological disorientation most people experience when they move into a culture markedly different from their own and they have to become part of the new community, learning their language and lifestyles (1974: 408-429). This process of integration into a different community cannot be completed in a single generation, therefore it is up to subsequent generations, which, however, are affected by different issues compared to the adults of the first generation, because they live in a condition of "double belonging and / or double ethnicity (Giunta, S., Mannino G. & La Cascia C., 2018; Formica et al., 2017).

Each nation has made available different measures to deal with problems related to psychopathologies that have arisen because of the migratory processes. Tobie Nathan (1996) suggests the need to modify the traditional tools of psychoanalysis. In particular, the scholar recommends the respect of the person in its various aspects, using the patient's language and taking into account their spiritual values and their traditional practices. Also in Italy a certain interest in ethnicity has emerged in the psychiatric field.

Piero Coppo (1999), in fact, pays particular attention to the possible discomforts and disorders associated with the socio-cultural context of reference, in order to draw up diversified psychotherapeutic courses of treatment suited to the various circumstances. In particular, Coppo clarifies the importance of culture within the psychiatric sphere, with particular interest in the difference between traditional and western medicine.

In this regard, the reflection of Sayad takes on considerable importance, inviting us to consider migrants as human beings, who

beyond the phenomena of integration, adaptation and assimilation, aspire only to political and economic emancipation, in order to be able to achieve better living conditions (2002).

### *Italy, from land of emigrants to land of immigrants*

Italy boasts in its historical memory the presence of two opposing phenomena, but in many respects strictly connected, emigration and immigration. Italian emigrants and immigrants heading for Italy have certainly a series of distinct characteristics, related to the different historical period and to the different modalities of the process, but some constants remain in the phenomenon.

First of all, the migration process brings with it pain and suffering, the feelings of melancholy and nostalgia, the construction of the myth of return, the integration into the new community, the exclusion and the cultural isolation and, finally, the negative effects of labeling, stereotypes, and prejudice. The migration flow in Italy began in the 1970s, coinciding with the restrictive policies of Northern Europe, thus favoring immigration to southern European countries. The phenomenon of immigration in Italy has seen a constant increase, and, although Italy is frequently a region of passage towards new destination, immigrants often settle in the country permanently. Therefore numerous are the "children of immigration", which also show a remarkable growth over the most recent years.

The integration within the Italian community for this children of immigration is possible only if supported and guaranteed by the legislation.

Italy, like any other country in the international community, has got extended autonomy in identifying its own people, by laying down conditions and ways to acquire or lose the status civitatis (Morozzo della Rocca, 2015: 365). Currently the modalities of acquisition and loss of the right of citizenship are established by the law 5 February 1992, n.91, which over the years has

undergone modifications but in substance has remain unchanged.

The legislative text confirms the centrality of the *iure sanguinis*, that is the transmission of the “*iure sanguinis*” citizenship by paternal lineage. Citizenship *iure soli*, or by birth on the Italian territory, is contemplated only in extreme cases, when no new citizenship can be recognized to the newborn.

Therefore, second-generation immigrants, although born and raised in Italy, are not recognized as Italian citizens. However, the law considers other ways of acquiring the status *civitatis*, of which the children of immigrants can benefit from, although they are asked for some fundamental prerequisites (for example, having resided legally and continuously in Italy until they come of age).

Even today the granting of citizenship to second-generation immigrants is at the center of numerous political debates. The *iure sanguinis* itself is also doubted by many. In order to set up new methods of acquisition of citizenship by second-generation immigrants in Italy, a reform has been promoted in recent years, which provides for two additional methods of acquisition: *ius soli temperato* and *ius culturae*. The reform, approved by the Chamber of Deputies in 2015, it is now before the Senate for examination<sup>2</sup>.

For more than three decades, Italy has been a country of immigration with more than 5 million foreigners, with a regular residence permit. However, even today it is very difficult to provide a precise estimate of the presence of second-generation immigrants in Italy, since the category is very wide and encompasses several cases. The impossibility of providing a precise estimates of the extent

of the phenomenon is placed at the center of the studies conducted by Queirolo Palmas, who defines the data held by the second generations in Italy «photographs perpetually blurred, with many variations linked to the territories, to the cities, to the nationality of origin, to the genders, to school orders” (Palmas, 2012: 60). The scholar, however, believes that “this blurred image returns a forward movement and a continuous expansion of presences” (ibidem).

Despite the efforts made by individuals to undertake pathways of assimilation and integration, however, there are many obstacles to the creation of a modern intercultural society, which allows the inclusion of subjects, harbingers of cultural diversity, considering them a source of wealth and not as a cause of “social distortion” (Novara C. et al., 2018; Lo Coco G. et al., 2018).

Integration presents itself above all as a complex process, consisting of aspects that vary in form and manner in relation to the context in which it is realized. In particular, the study of integration processes has led to the awareness that these social processes “are strongly characterized from a historical point of view, which are achieved through the continuous and constant activity of people, who daily relate to each other” ( Gilardoni, 2008: 65). Various empirical researches (Gilardoni 2008; ITAGEN 2<sup>3</sup>, 2008; Casacchia O. et al., 2008; Palmas, 2012) highlighted the persistence of different outcomes in relation to different socio-territorial contexts, albeit within a widespread assimilation process.

<sup>2</sup> The *ius soli temperato* provides for the acquisition of citizenship is acquired by birth by he/she who is born in the territory of the Republic, from foreign parents of which at least one who has been granted permanent residency or is in possession of a long-term residency permit granted by the European Union. The second mode of acquisition of citizenship is the *ius culturae*: Italian citizenship is acquired by the minor foreigner either born in Italy or who entered Italy within completing his/her twelfth birthday, and who has regularly attended, in accordance with current legislation, at least 5 years of regular instruction or participated in, within

the national territory, programs offered by an institution that is part of nationally approved professional training, that has a duration of three or four years, inasmuch as the program confers a professional qualification. In the event that the course in question is that of primary education, it is also necessary to complete this course.

<sup>3</sup> ITAGEN 2 represents the first quantitative and national survey on the second generations in Italy. The research was conducted by researchers from universities and research institutes, coordinated by the Department of Statistical Sciences of the University of Padua.

This condition of heterogeneity of the phenomenon clarifies the need to analyze the issue taking into account the data relating to the territorial areas. Despite this, attempts to provide information on the entire Italian territory were not lacking. The first national research on second generations (ITAGEN 2, 2005/2006) started with the aim of learning about the integration processes of "foreign" minors in Italy.

The research, in general, confirms that pupils with non Italian citizenship are today a structural component of Italian school, and also confirms that in the last decade children of immigrants are continuing to grow in numbers. First of all, the investigation shows a process of convergence, or assimilation, of foreigners. In fact, a certain similarity was found among young people of foreign origin and native peers, especially those belonging to the weaker social classes. This convergence is documented not only in external attitudes (habits, friendships with Italians, clothing), but also in the most intimate value aspects (religiosity, dreams for the future, work expectations). There are, however, some obstacles to their integration and inclusion in the community, determined by widespread hostility and closure towards foreigners.

Many Italian young people, in fact, often influenced by their cultural background and by their parents' beliefs, express a certain mistrust towards immigrants, which frequently turns into attitudes of closure and rejection of otherness. This is attributable to the widespread idea, unfounded in many respects, that high immigration causes a break in the socio-economic structure of the country, with the risk of distorting the social structure (Mannino G. & Caronia., 2017).

The Italian school system is also being examined by researchers, who noticed a certain incongruity between the educational programs proposed and the real needs of learners of foreign origin. In general, the Italian school system is not adequate for the training of young foreigners, because it requires, as a fundamental prerequisite for good scholastic achievement, a medium-high level of education for the parents.

Furthermore, considerable financial resources are necessary to cover expenditure related to the scholastic equipment and to support individual learning. Therefore, the lack of cultural resources and the scarce linguistic abilities of the immigrant family create unfavorable conditions for educational success. However, the phenomenon is extremely varied and connected to a series of variables of different nature, such that each small territorial entity can present original and divergent paths with respect to the territorial area to which it belongs. Each region of Italy, in fact, has peculiar characteristics regarding the inclusion of immigrant communities in its own social fabric, with consequent heterogeneous results.

### *Research: second-generation immigrants in the city of Palermo*

A particular significance is given to the relative pathways of integration of students of foreign origin in the city of Palermo. The Sicilian capital, crossroads of countless peoples and cultures for several centuries, has been interested in constant migratory flows in recent decades, which have contributed to an irreversible socio-cultural transformation, with obvious consequences also on the economic structure of the city (Casacchia O. et al., 2008).

Although aware of the existence of some objective difficulties, the focus is mainly on second-generation students who attend first-level secondary schools, distributed within the urban perimeter. The main goal of the present investigation is the knowledge of a complex and, in many respects, unknown reality, which allows to establish a dialogue between institutions and young learners of foreign origin present within the city walls. In particular, the specific goals of the investigation can be summarized in this five points:

1. Analysis of the family context, with particular regard to the economic condition, the cultural level and the parental relationship;

2. Knowledge of possible difficulties on the part of the subjects involved concerning linguistic competences and the educational pathways;
3. Knowledge of individual aspirations: training courses, professional goals and the possible difficulties in the realization of personal projects;
4. Analysis of the peculiar condition of "second-generation immigrants" in relation to the city and the neighborhood in which they live;
5. Analysis of the emotional ties with the country of origin and the social context of the host society.

Therefore, in order to provide a clear picture of the processes of assimilation and integration involving the young generations of immigrant origin, a questionnaire, developed ad hoc, was proposed (Giunta S. & Colantoni C., 2018), administered to a sample of 56 students of foreign origin, attending secondary school located in three different areas of the city<sup>4</sup>. 59% of the participants are female, aged between 10 and 15 years old.

The empirical data relating to the survey provide a rather heterogeneous picture regarding the origin and distribution within the city walls. In fact, with reference to the location of the three schools examined, there is a tendency on the part of the immigrant communities to prefer the city centre, to the detriment of the peripheral ones.

As far as the origins are concerned, the most widespread nationalities are Bengali and Romanian, and a small part attributable to other nationalities. These percentages do not correspond to those provided by the survey ITAGEN 2 (Casacchia O. et al., 2008) relating to the southern regions of Sicily and Calabria, where the most widespread nationalities were those of North Africa (Tunisian and Moroccan), Eastern European and Sinhalese. We could therefore hypothesize a mutation in the migratory pathways that characterize the island, and the

city of Palermo, which over the years has witnessed the drastic reduction of some ethnic groups and, at the same time, the establishment of new ones. However, it must be emphasized that the question of immigration does not lend itself, by its very nature, to rigid classifications and general categorization, because of its close connection to variables of different nature at an international level (Palmas, 2012; Gilardoni, 2008).

The family background is rather homogeneous, since almost the entire sample comes from families with low to medium-low economic conditions, whose parents perform unqualified and low-paid jobs. It finds full confirmation in the ITAGEN 2 survey (Casacchia O. et al., 2008) regarding the southern regions of Italy. This survey also underlines that this situation can determine the occurrence of hostile attitudes within the native community, which perceives the foreigner as a threat to the already precarious socio-economic balance (Casacchia O. et al., 2008; Giunta, Lo Verso & Mannino, 2017; Giunta, et al., 2018).

Moreover, most of the students involved consider their economic status "neither rich nor poor", and the remaining part consider their economic status as "well-off" and only a small percentage indicates a situation of poverty. A diachronic analysis, carried out in order to explain any evolutionary parables, indicates a reduced improvement in family finances with respect to the previous five years, while the majority claims to maintain an average status, neither rich nor poor. This economic immobility over time is confirmed by the national ITAGEN2 survey (Casacchia O. et al., 2008), which indicates the southern regions of Italy as territories with little inclination towards the economic improvement of immigrant families, in opposition to the northern regions (Lombardy, Veneto, Piedmont), where a

<sup>4</sup> The proposed research is inspired by the method developed by the scholars Glaser and Strauss (2009), defined as Grounded Theory, applied in various studies pertinent to the psychological field (Cimigalli, 2003;

Corbetta, 1999; Del Corno, Lo Coco, 2018; Giorgi, Giunta, Coppola, Lo verso, 2017; Giunta, Lo Verso, Mannino, 2017; Giunta, Lo verso, Mannino, 2018; Kadzin, 2008).

certain economic progress is observed (ibidem).

A salient aspect for a good integration process within the host society is the presence of an extended parental networks. The absence of such component can determine, as Ambrosini states, a condition of isolation such as to weaken the educational role of the family institution, decreeing a widespread socio-economic failure. The sample examined, in this regard, shows in large part the occurrence of standard and stable households (father, mother, children), and only a small part claims to live far from their brothers.

With regard to school performance, almost all respondents say they do not encounter difficulties with the Italian language, although only a small part declares their use Italian at home. The use of the Italian language at home is considered by many as an indicator of the integration of the family in the social fabric of the host society, and the absence of this ability could lay the foundations for the isolation of parents from the host community, with the consequent acquisition by the children of a higher level of assimilation with respect to their parents (Ambrosini, 2011: 184).

The occurrence of a high percentage of students who declare profitable training paths, with a consequent satisfaction with the scholastic work on the promotion of inclusive paths, is also relevant. The data obtained through research on a national scale, ITAGEN 2 (Casacchia O. et al., 2008) and MIUR (Portale Unico dei Dati della Scuola, n.d.) indicate, instead, a certain delay accumulated by students of immigrant origin, especially of sex masculine, data that are not confirmed by the present investigation, offering us the possibility to hypothesize a certain degree of integration on the part of the subjects involved within the city social fabric, or the fulfillment of that natural osmotic process, which leads to their progressive absorption in the Italian population (Stefano Molina S., 2012).

An extremely significant datum is represented by the widespread opinion in the most of the interviewees of the absence of peculiarities inherent to the condition of "immigrants", claiming their belonging to the Italian

community. Furthermore, a good part of the interviewees declares to have built good relationships with autochthonous mates in the extra-curricular hours, without noticeable gender variations (Mannino G. et al., 2017).

As regards the future projects of the second generations under examination, a further goal of the present investigation, the data seem to confirm broadly the general trend resulting from the previous national surveys (ITAGEN 2 and MIUR). In fact, most of the girls interviewed state that they want to continue their studies by enrolling in a high school, followed in the same choice by a fairly high percentage of boys. Technical-professional institutes are a sought-after destination for adolescents, while there are plenty of students who show uncertainty about their future at school. Likewise, most of the interviewees, with a preponderance of women, state that they want to go to university, while only a small percentage is uncertain.

The tendency towards assimilation towards the dominant culture is also confirmed by the general aspiration, found in most of the interviewees, for making a career in the entertainment industry and the desire to lead a worldy sort of life (Mannino G. & Faraci E., 2017).

This convergence of styles between immigrants and natives has been found in other Italian urban contexts (Gilardoni, 2008), confirming Molina's hypothesis (2012) on the future "invisibility" of the second generations. Furthermore, this general tendency towards convergence between natives and immigrants' styles is confirmed by the fact that a good part of the participants does not indicate any obstacle to the realization of their own desire. Moreover, most of the interviewees do not consider their starting economic condition and the difficulties faced in the educational process as obstacles in the process of personal affirmation.

However, it is necessary to highlight the occurrence, albeit small, of different positions, which focus attention on linguistic and cultural inequalities.

From the same investigation results the poor connection with the land of origin, to which

most of the participants do not associate any image, while for the rest of the participants the appearance of their land of origin refers to stereotyped images mainly constituted through the stories told by their parents. Nevertheless, most of the participants declare to practice and participate in traditional ceremonies, thus confirming a certain continuity with ancestral cultural practices (Pergola, 2010; Ambrosini, 2008).

Eventually, a certain convergence of styles between "immigrants" and natives can also be seen in the relationship with the city of Palermo: a large part of the participants believe it is necessary to move to more prosperous cities, indicating, as a reason, the limited possibilities of economic growth (Mannino & Giunta, 2015). On the other hand, different considerations can be observed, albeit minimally, which lead to the desire to remain in the same city or to an uncertain and indefinite future.

### Conclusions

In light of what has been stated so far, the proposed empirical investigation shows a certain degree of assimilation by young people of foreign origin with respect to local lifestyles, recognizable in some positions and considerations in relation to the chosen research areas. In particular, young people of immigrant origin in Palermo are well integrated into the urban social fabric, showing poor ties with the land of origin, which, however, is present in

filigree through the cultural practices to which the families are still devoted. To this faded vision of the land of origin corresponds a certain bond with the Sicilian city, where they started, from a very early age, socialization and educational processes.

Within the examined sample, however, there are plenty of opposing considerations, attributable to a generic feeling of extraneousness towards the city, often connected to the dynamics of exclusion by the host society, which tends to highlight ethnic and somatic differences (Granieri A. et al., 2015). However, even those who have experienced some difficulties related to the integration process declare that they feel an integral part of the Palermo community, considering themselves to be extraneous to stereotypes of any kind.

Therefore, on the basis of the present investigation it is possible to deduce that the young people of immigrant origin present in the city of Palermo are involved in processes of integration and productive assimilation, which take place above all within school walls and in the organization of free time.

Italians for culture and lifestyle, foreigners for a fleeting patriotic feeling breathed in at home, these young people constitute a substantial part of the modern social fabric of the city, which presents itself to our eyes in an eternal change, towards the constitution of an intercultural generation (Colloca, 2012), which includes young natives and immigrants, sharing the same position in a common era.

### References

- Ambrosini, M. (2000). *Utiles invasori: L'inserimento degli immigrati nel mercato del lavoro italiano*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Ambrosini, M., & Molina, S. (Eds.). (2004). *Seconde Generazioni: Un'introduzione al futuro dell'immigrazione in Italia*. Torino: Edizioni Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli.
- Ambrosini, M. (2008). *Un'altra globalizzazione: La sfida delle migrazioni transnazionali*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Ambrosini, M. (2010). *Richiesti e respinti: L'immigrazione in Italia. Come e perché*. Milano: Il Saggiatore.
- Ambrosini, M. (2011). *Sociologia delle migrazioni*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Benadusi, M. (2012). Apprendistato e cittadinanza: che fatica per le seconde generazioni! In Daher L. M. (Ed.), *Migranti di seconda generazione, nuovi cittadini in cerca di una identità*. Roma: Aracne.

- Casacchia, O., Natale, L., Paterno, A. & Terzera L. (Eds.). (2008). *Studiare insieme, crescere insieme?: Un'indagine sulle seconde generazioni in dieci regioni italiane*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Cimagalli, F. (2003). *Valutazione e ricerca sociale: Orientamenti di base per gli operatori sociali*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Colloca, C. (2012). I figli degli immigrati e le forme dell'appartenenza socio-territoriale. In Daher L. M. (Ed.), *Migranti di seconda generazione, nuovi cittadini in cerca di una identità*. Roma: Aracne.
- Coppo, P. (1999). *Etnopsichiatria*. Milano: Il Saggiatore.
- Corbetta, P. (1999). *Metodologia e tecniche della ricerca sociale*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Del Corno, F. & Lo Coco, G. (2018). *Disegni di ricerca in psicologia clinica: Metodi quantitativi, qualitativi e misti*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- De pasquale, C. (2012). Aspetti psicopatologici del fenomeno migratorio. In Daher L. M. (Ed.), *Migranti di seconda generazione, nuovi cittadini in cerca di una identità*. Roma: Aracne.
- Edel, A.M., Raaf, V., Dimaggio, G., Buchheim, A. & Brune, M. (2017). *Exploring the effectiveness of combined mentalization-based group therapy and dialectical behaviour therapy for inpatients with borderline personality disorder*. A pilot study, in «British journal of Clinical Psychology», 56, 1-15.
- Formica, I., Pellerone, M., Morabito, C., Barberis, N., Ramaci, T., Di Giorgio, A., et al. (2017). *The existential suspension of the young-adult in times of liquid modernity: A differential analysis of identity uneasiness in precarious times*. Mediterranean journal of clinical psychology, vol. 5, ISSN: 2282-1619
- Garza-Guerrero, A.C. (1974), *Culture Shock: Its Mourning and the Vicissitudes of Identity*. «Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association», <https://journals.sagepub.com/>, 2018.
- Gervasi, A.M., La Marca, L., Lombardo, E.M.C., Mannino, G., Iacolino, C., & Schimmenti, A. (2017). *Maladaptive personality traits and internet addiction symptoms among young adults: A study based on the alternative DSM-5 model for personality disorders*. Clinical neuropsychiatry, vol. 14, ISSN: 1724-4935
- Gilardoni, G. (2008). Gli immigrati di seconda generazione a Milano. In Casacchia O., Natale L., Paterno A., & Terzera L. (Eds.), *Studiare insieme, crescere insieme? Un'indagine sulle seconde generazioni in dieci regioni italiane*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Giorgi, A., Giunta, S., Coppola, E., & Lo Verso, G. (2017). *Territori in controllo: Ricerche psicologiche sul fenomeno mafioso*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Giunta, S., Lo Verso, G., & Mannino G. (2013). *Il mondo mafioso: tra pratica clinica ed interventi nella polis*. Quaderno Report n.18, CSR. Genova. ISSN: 2037-5727.
- Giunta, S., & Verso, G. L. (2012). *Nel nome del padrino*. International Journal of Psychoanalysis and Education.
- Giunta, S., Lo Verso, G., & Mannino, G. (2017). *La dignità tradita: Uno studio psico-sociale sul crimine dei colletti bianchi*. Franco Angeli: Milano.
- Giunta, S., Mannino, G., & La Cascia, C. (2018). *Pathological gambling in adolescence: a narrative review*. Mediterranean Journal of Clinical Psychology MJCP, Vol. 6 N.1.
- Giunta, S., Mannino, G., Bizzarri, C., & La Fiura, G. (2018). *Being Mafia Children: An Empirical Transgenerational Research*. Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, 9(1), 191.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2009). *La scoperta della grounded theory: Strategie per la ricerca qualitativa*. Roma: Armando Editore.
- Granieri, A., La Marca, L., Mannino, G., Giunta, S., Guglielmucci, F., & Schimmenti, A. (2017), *The relationship between defense patterns and DSM-5 maladaptive personality domains*. Front. Psychol.
- Gullo, S., Lo Coco, G., Di Fratello, C., Giannone, F., Mannino, G., & Burlingame, G. (2015). *Group Climate, Cohesion, and Curative Climate: A Study on the Common Factors in the Group Process and Their Relation with Members' Attachment Dimensions*. Research in psychotherapy, vol. 18. ISSN: 2239-8031, doi: DOI: 10.7411/RP.2014.023.
- Kazdin, A. E. (2008). *Metodi di ricerca in psicologia clinica*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Lo Coco, G., Mannino, G., Salerno, L., Oieni, V., Di Fratello, C., Profita, G., et al. (2018). *The Italian Version of the Inventory of Interpersonal Problems (IIP-32): Psychometric Properties and Factor Structure in Clinical and Non-clinical Groups*. Frontiers in psychology. ISSN: 1664-1078, doi: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00341>.

- Mannino, G., & Caronia, V. (2017). *Time, Well-Being, and Happiness: A Preliminary Explorative Study*. World Futures. ISSN: 1556-1844, doi:10.1080/02604027.2017.1333849
- Mannino, G., & Giunta, S. (2015). *Psychodynamics of the Mafia Phenomenon: Psychological–Clinical Research on Environmental Tapping and White-Collar Crime*. World Futures, vol. 71, p. 185-201. ISSN: 1556-1844, doi: 10.1080/02604027.2015.1113774.
- Mannino, G., Giunta, S., Buccafusca, S., Cannizzaro, G., & Lo Verso, G. (2015). *Communication Strategies in cosa nostra: an empirical research*. World Futures, The Journal of New Paradigm Research, 71(5):1-20, December 2015. doi.org/10.1080/02604027.2015.1113770.
- Mannino, G., Montefiori, V., Faraci, E., Pillitteri, R., Iacolino, C., Pellerone, M., et al. (2017). *Subjective perception of time: Research applied on dynamic psychology*. World Futures, 73-2017, doi.org/10.1080/02604027.2017.1333850.
- Mannino, G. & Faraci, E. (2017). *Morphogenesis of work: application to the psychological well-being and psychosocial health*. Rivista Internazionale di Scienze Sociali, n.3, pag. 315-334, ISSN: 978-88-343-3431-7, ISSN (carta): 0035-676 X, ISSN (digitale): 1827-7918.
- Morozzo della Rocca, P. (Ed.). (2015). *Immigrazione, asilo e cittadinanza*. Santarcangelo di Romagna: Maggioli Editori.
- Portale Unico dei Dati della Scuola, n.d. Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca. February 8, 2019, from <http://dati.istruzione.it/espescu/index.html?area=anagScu>
- Nathan, T. (1996). *Principi di etnopsicoanalisi*. Torino: Bollati Boringhieri.
- Novara, C., Lavanco, G., Mannino, G., & Serio C. (2018). *Management and Human Factors: Exploratory Research With Focus Groups*. World Futures, ISSN: 1556-1844, doi.org/10.1080/02604027.2018.1492294.
- Palmas, L.Q. (2012). *Prove di seconde generazioni*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Pellerone, M., Iacolino, C., Mannino, G., Formica, I., & Zabbara, S. (2016). "L'influenza di Parenting su Cognitive maladattive Schema: una ricerca trasversale su un gruppo di adulti". Journal of Psychology Research and Behaviour Management. Doi: 10.2147 / PRBM.S117371.
- Pergola, F. (2011). *Alla ricerca delle in-formazioni perdute: L'inespresso transgenerazionale come vincolo alla crescita*. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Pergola, F. (2010). *In attesa del padre: psicodinamica della funzione paterna*. Roma: MaGi.
- Portes, A., Rumbaut, R. (2001). *Legacies: The story of the immigration second generation*. Berkeley-New York: University of California Press.
- Sayad, A. (2002). *La doppia assenza: Dalle illusioni dell'emigrato alle sofferenze dell'immigrato*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina Editore.
- Tajfel, H. (1999). *Gruppi umani e categorie sociali*. Bologna: Il Mulino.