"WHERE IS HOME?" – THE TRANSNATIONAL LIVES OF TWELVE FINLAND-BASED YOUNG ADULTS OF THE SECOND-GENERATION

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines the transnational engagement of twelve young adults, aged 20 to 33 of the Finland-based Second Generation. Rather than attempting to draw conclusions in the light of their present-day transnationalism, this research employs a life course approach. Using a methodology of life history reconstruction and narrative analysis, it uncovers several themes, events, factors and patterns that over a span of years directly or indirectly influence the informants' choices to maintain, develop or forgo their transborder ties. The role played by three of these factors – generational makeup, ethnicity and the influence of resident society conditions – are focused on in greater detail.

The final findings suggest a high variation in the informants' transnational life trajectories. The maintenance of transnational ties into adulthood seems most closely connected to the individual's transnational capital – that is, the depth and extent of his transnational network, language proficiency and cultural and political membership. Though emotional factors and identitarian considerations also played a role, they were not a necessary precondition for transnational engagement to develop. Additionally, a tentative link between cosmopolitan ethics and the salience of transnational engagement was discovered. Finally, the role of ethnicity and host society turned out decisive in influencing the informants' transnational life choices, while the role of generational makeup – that is, having one or two foreign-born parents – had an impact less clear.

Key words: Transnationalism, Second Generation, Integration, Identities, Multiculturalism, Assimilation, Migration, Cosmopolitanism, Finland

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to the loving memory of Tamás Kubik (1989-2015). May you rest in peace.

Introduction

In the September of 2014, Hungarian users of *Facebook* begin posting poems en masse. The trend, spreading like wildfire, has its origins in a broader grassroots social movement, '100 Thousand Poets for Positive Change", in which ordinary citizens are invited to express their unspoken feelings borrowing the verses of known and unknown Hungarian poets. One among the countless participants is Balázs. He spends no time deliberating what to share, his poem of choice is clear. It is 'I am Hungarian' by Hungary's national poet *Sándor Petőfi*. The somber poem, written at the height of the Hungarian national romanticism, begins with the line: "I am Hungarian. The world's most beautiful country I call home."

Balázs's post is received by a few *likes* and several perplexed questions. "Most Magyar vagy Finn? – Are you now Hungarian or Finnish?" quips the first commenter. Balázs is not taken aback, for this is the question with which he has been dealing his whole life. "For the Hungarian, I am Hungarian, for the Finn, I am Finnish, for the Gypsy, I am a Gypsy, for the Jew, I am Jewish. My passport is Finnish, but for the Finn I will never be fully Finnish. My culture is Hungarian, but that is not enough for most Hungarians to consider me one. Just go and try to make up your mind in this pandemonium," comes his cool and contained response.

Balázs is not alone in his confusion. He is part of a larger, yet largely disconnected tribe of second generation transnationals, children born of transborder migration and international marriages. Their geographic location and ethnic makeup varies wildly, but the general dynamics of their experience are roughly the same. Rather than leaving their past behind and completely assimilating into the receiving society, their parents keep their ties to the country of origin alive

through frequent social, economic, political or religious cross-border engagement. They themselves, the offspring, are thus brought up in a space that is suspended between two societies, the destination country of their parents' migration and the parental homeland, or – in the case of children whose parents are of different nationalities – two parental homelands. They often grow up speaking two languages and having an innate understanding of two cultural and societal contexts. Usually, they end up receiving their schooling in one country, but frequently visit the other one with their parents or by using extended family connections during vacations and holidays. Coming of age, some drift away from their transnational roots while others keep them alive by actively engaging and expanding them as independent adults. But *why* do they choose as they do? And *how* does the form of their cross-border engagement differ on a case-by-case basis?

This thesis project was undertaken to answer these general questions. Not perhaps with a definite, final answer, but an answer that would bring new insight and perspective to the still developing scholarship of *Second Generation Transnationalism*. Transnationalism – often understood as sustained cross-border practices – is a relatively new perspective on the lives of contemporary migrants, and still newer to the study of their offspring. Thanks to a number of paradigmatic studies in recent years, we now know that the transnational practices of the second generation are real, significant and often maintained into adulthood in spite of concurrent assimilatory processes. We know some of the myriad forms and differences these practices take, as well as their historical precedents. However, for each bit of information uncovered a dozen questions come up. How do transnational practices manifest past adolescence? What is the effect of ethnicity, discrimination and national categorization on the maintenance of these ties? How do state institutions, such as the educational system and the military influence transnational

practices? And how does the form and extent of these ties and practices differ depending on whether the individual has one or two foreign-born parents?

This thesis engages these questions through the perspective of several Finland-based young adults, aged 20 to 33, of the second generation. These young adults were either born in Finland or migrated there at an early age, and have either one or two foreign-born parents of different national and ethnic backgrounds. Their transnational lives were explored through in-depth, biographical interviews with a special focus on the roles of family dynamics and networks, language acquisition, holiday visits, assimilatory experiences, identitarian considerations, schooling, military service, and adult-life reconnection attempts. These interviews were then transcribed, thematically coded and interpreted according to academic standards of qualitative content and life-history analysis, and analysed and presented in a cross-comparative format.

In addition to answering the aforementioned questions and gathering information on a hitherto underresearched sample, this thesis was begun with three overriding aims in mind. These aims were as follows:

1. To explore the difference in transnational dynamics between children of international marriages ("generation 2.5") and those with two foreign born parents ("generation 2.0").

2. To divorce the scholarship from its deep-seated tendency to focus on singular ethnic communities by promoting a microfoundational, cross-ethnic approach to the study of transnationalism in the second generation.

3. To shine light on how the second generation's transnational engagement and self-identifications are shaped by host society conditions, particularly its institutional structures and symbolic boundaries.

In the light of the analysed data, there was little to suggest a significant difference in transnational dynamics between the two generational cohorts. Although the samples were unevenly balanced, it can be safely concluded that differences in childhood surroundings, home atmosphere and family dynamics offered much better grounds for differentiating between the life histories of the informants than the fact whether they had one or two foreign-born parents. In contrast, the role of ethnicity and co-ethnics proved much more salient than expected. The informants who were connected with co-ethnics had much more expansive transnational networks and were, on average, more emotionally invested in the homeland than the informants who lacked these host-society ethnic links. In the case of one informant, assimilating into the local Swedish-speaking minority allowed him to lead a "bicultural" life without having to maintain ties to the other parental homeland (Sweden). Lastly, the influence of host society institutions and symbolic barriers proved very significant, as predicted. The role of pro-integrationist measures in the educational system were essential in helping some of the informants catch up with their Finnish peers in terms of academic ability and language proficiency, giving them the necessary capital to reconnect with the (other) homeland at a later age. On the other hand, the prevalence of ethnic prejudice as well as the pervasiveness of ethnically-bounded social categories caused several informants to partially or fully disindentify from their Finnish nationality.

Table of Contents

1. Second Generation Transnationalism: Theoretical Convergencies and Roads Less Travelled

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify and expand our understanding of how the second generation functions transnationally. While transnationalism is not a novel phenomenon, it is new to the social sciences as a combined methodology and theoretical body of understanding. Though the concept of transnationalism has become established since its inception in the 1990's and no longer needs defending, I find it helpful to give the reader a brief background to the birth and evolution of transnationalism as an analytical concept, as well as accounting for its relationship with the concepts of assimilation, diaspora and ethnicity. I will then review some of the research conducted specifically on the second generation, converging major findings into a sevenfold theoretical typology. Finally, I will outline three additional ways in which this thesis aims to contribute to the still budding scholarship.

Transnationalism: Origins and Basics

Transnationalism is a relative newcomer to the vocabulary of social sciences. It was first introduced by scholars of international relations in the early 1970's to describe nonstate institutions and governance regimes that transcended conventional boundaries. The word 'transnational' was used in place of 'international' to distinguish these novel trans-border actors and processes from older, internationally active corporate and state institutions whose borders

were coterminous with that of the nation-state.[1] The term has since taken root across disciplines, surfacing in a myriad of different contexts. In the business scholarship, transnationalism is nigh synonymous with globalisation, pointing to the ways in which cross-border flows of capital saturate the local with the global.[2] In political philosophy, it is closely related to the liberal discourse on postnationalism and cosmpolitanism. In this context, transnational describes a world where nation-states and nationally-bound actors no longer serve as the sole organizing force of social life and provider of political rights.[3]

In contrast, some scholars have put more emphasis on the cultural side of things, suggesting that transnationalism is better understood as a form of cultural internationalism, in which national cultures, to the extent they exist, would be contextualized in the broader framework of global, trans- and supranational cultural currents.[4] Others posit transnationalism as a conscious epistemic move away from methodological nationalism – that is, the unquestioned assumption that society is coterminous with the nation-state.[5] In this sense, the word 'transnational' becomes a mark of contestation, striving to challenge old paradigms rather than add new conceptual formulations. One such understanding comes from *Briggs et al*., who liken the purpose of transnationalism to that of the word 'gender'. In the authors' own words: "Transnationalism can do to the nation what gender did for sexed bodies: provide the conceptual acid that denaturalizes

[1] Joseph S. Nye and Robert O. Keohane, "Transnational Relations and World Politics: A Conclusion," *International Organization* 25, no. 3 (1971): 721–48.
[2] Peggy Levitt and Mary C. Waters, *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 7.
[3] Rainer Bauböck, *Transnational Citizenship: Membership and Rights in International Migration* (Edward Elgar Pub, 1994); Ulrich Beck, "The Cosmopolitan Perspective: Sociology of the Second Age of Modernity*," *The British Journal of Sociology* 51, no. 1 (2000): 79–105, doi:10.1111/j.1468-4446.2000.00079.x.
[4] Constance DeVereaux and Martin Griffin, "International, Global, Transnational: Just a Matter of Words," in *4th International Conference on Cultural Policy Research, Iccpr*, 2006, http://www.eurozine.com/pdf/2006-10-11-devereauxgriffin-en.pdf.
[5] Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, "Methodological Nationalism and beyond: Nation–state Building, Migration and the Social Sciences," *Global Networks* 2, no. 4 (October 1, 2002): 301–34.

all their deployments, compelling us to acknowledge that the nation, like sex, is a thing contested, interrupted and always short through with contradiction."[6]

By far the most prevalent analytical use of 'transnationalism' today is to employ it in migration research. Since the early 1990's, transnationalism has become heavily associated with the study of migrants, or more particularly, their economic, social and political cross-border activities, and has since become one of the dominant paradigms in the field. [7] In the literature, migrant transnationalism is most commonly conceptualized as the social, economic, political and religious ties that migrants maintain to their country of origin. Some scholars note that these ties need to be frequent and tangible to classify as actual transnationalism[8] whereas other definitions include symbolic and situationally mobilized, even locally-rooted involvements.[9] Common to most definitions of transnationalism is an underlying assumption that contemporary migrants no longer simply assimilate into the receiving society but keep their roots alive by travelling back and forth between the host and home country, becoming 'transmigrants' instead of immigrants.[10]

In some conceptual approaches, transnationalism is visualized as 'a transnational fields of relations' or simply 'transnational space'.[11] This space is seen as both multilayered and multi-sited, including not only the receiving and sending societies but sites and space in-between and

[6] Laura Briggs, Gladys McCormick, and J. T. Way, "Transnationalism: A Category of Analysis," *American Quarterly* 60, no. 3 (2008): 627.
[7] C.S. Blanc, L. Basch, and N. Glick Schiller, "Transnationalism, Nation-States, and Culture," *Current Anthropology,* 36, no. 4 (October 1995): 683–86.
[8] Alejandro Portes, Luis E. Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt, "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22, no. 2 (January 1, 1999): 217–37, doi:10.1080/014198799329468.
[9] Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society," *International Migration Review* 38, no. 3 (2004): 1002–39.
[10] Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc, "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration," *Anthropological Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (January 1, 1995): 48–63, doi:10.2307/3317464.
[11] Levitt and Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society."

around the world where migrants interact with their perceived kin. Both migrants and locals inhabit these sites, and they are seldom untouched by the dense flow of people, goods and money, as well as ideas norms and practices that take place in these fields.[12] What follows from this definition is a much broader understanding of transnationalism, where transnational engagement shapes and empowers not only the migrants themselves, but also the local people, institutions and communities it involves.

In its early days, the budding scholarship of migrant transnationalism was criticised for making too many ungrounded assumptions. Many rightly pointed out that not all immigrants engaged in transnational activities and relationships but followed more conventional routes of integration.[13] Furthermore, the scholarship's different uses and interpretations of transnational were seldom mutually conversant. Since then, efforts has been made towards a broader use of interdisciplinary knowledge and conceptual cross-fertilization.[14] Several typologies have been developed to interlink the social and legal-political dimensions of transnational migration.[15] History has proved particularly fruitful to the field, shedding new light on current trends of migrant transnationalism by presenting them in a comparative historical context.[16] Social anthropology,

[12] Peggy Levitt, "Roots and Routes: Understanding the Lives of the Second Generation Transnationally," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35, no. 7 (August 2009): 1225–42, doi:10.1080/13691830903006309.
[13] Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt, "The Study of Transnationalism."
[14] Ewa Morawska, "Disciplinary Agendas and Analytic Strategies of Research on Immigrant Transnationalism: Challenges of Interdisciplinary Knowledge," *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (2003): 611–40; Steven Vertovec, "Migration and Other Modes of Transnationalism: Towards Conceptual Cross-Fertilization," *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (2003): 641–65.
[15] Luis E. Guarnizo, "Notes on Transnational" (Transnational Migration: Comparative Theory and Research Perspectives, Oxford, England, 2000); Rainer Bauböck, "Towards a Political Theory of Migrant Transnationalism," *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (2003): 700–723.
[16] Nancy Foner, *From Ellis Island to JFK: New York's Two Great Waves of Immigration* (Yale University Press, 2002), 200.

too, has made a significant contribution in exploring and explaining the variations of transnational practices among different immigrant groups.[17]

Before moving on, I will quickly examine how transnationalism relates to three equally important and profilic concepts: assimilation, diaspora and ethnicity.

The scholarship of migrant transnationalism has evolved largely in parallel with the scholarship of immigrant incorporation, though the two schools have only been recently reconciled.[18] Theories of immigrant incorporation have steadily moved away from the 'straight-line' assimilationist paradigm of classical migration research – which viewed assimilation as a linear, generationally driven and a necessary prerequisite for successful incorportation into mainstream society[19]– towards a more multifacted theory of immigrant acculturation, sometimes called 'segmented assimilation'[20]. According to this understanding, assimilation is a multipath process, in which immigrants and their offspring incorporate into different segments of the host-society. This may refer to the mainstream middle class ('upward assimilation'), the struggling lower classes ('downward assimilation') or into an immigrant ethnic enclave on the margins of the mainstream society ('adhesive assimilation').[21] Moreover, contemporary understandings of assimilation differ from older paradigms in that they do not equate assimilation with homogenization. As *Rogers Brubaker* has pointed out, assimilation need not be ethnic or genetic in its essence or treat migrants as hapless ingredients in a salad bowl; in contemporary terms,

[17] Ewa Morawska, "Exploring Diversity in Immigrant Assimilation and Transnationalism: Poles and Russian Jews in Philadelphia," *International Migration Review* 38, no. 4 (2004): 1372–1412.
[18] Levitt and Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society," 1005.
[19] Levitt and Waters, *The Changing Face of Home*, 2.
[20] Alejandro Portes, "Segmented Assimilation among New Immigrant Youth: A Conceptual Framework," *California's Immigrant Children: Theory, Research, and Implications for Educational Policy*, 1995, 71–76.
[21] Morawska, "Exploring Diversity in Immigrant Assimilation and Transnationalism," 4.

assimilation is always something that is accomplished by the migrants themselves, if sometimes unconsciously or unwillingly.[22]

One of the greatest insights to have come out of the reconciliation of transnationalism and assimilation is that the two are not necessarily opposing, mutually exclusive processes. Rather, transnationalism and assimilation often coexist and interpenetrate[23] with a multitude of vastly different outcomes. In one comprehensive study, *Ewa Morawska* discovered over 60 variations in which transnationalism and assimilation interplay in the lives of America's immigrant cohorts.[24] Though there still exist groups and individuals that are inclined to follow the classical 'straight-line paradigm', the majority of immigrant groups, it seems, maintain some connections to their country of origin, remaining at least potentially transnational.

Diaspora is a concept that, like assimilation, is inextricably bound up with transnationalism. Diaspora is generally understood as a social form involving individuals living in a dispersed arrangement throughout the world, but identifying collectively with one another, as well as with the lands to which they are ancestrally related.[25] Used conventionally, it differs from transnationalism namely in its focus: diaspora is often used to denote religious or national groups living outside an (imagined) homeland, whereas transnationalism more usually refers refer to migrants' durable ties across national borders.[26] Moreover, diaspora often carries a political

[22] Rogers Brubaker, "The Return of Assimilation? Changing Perspectives on Immigration and Its Sequels in France, Germany, and the United States," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 24, no. 4 (January 1, 2001): 531–48.
[23] Alejandro Portes, "Conclusion: Theoretical Convergencies and Empirical Evidence in the Study of Immigrant Transnationalism," *International Migration Review* 37, no. i3 (2003): 19; Levitt and Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society."
[24] Morawska, "Exploring Diversity in Immigrant Assimilation and Transnationalism," 40.
[25] William Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return.," *Diaspora* 1, no. 1 (1991): 83–99.
[26] Thomas Faist, "Diaspora and Transnationalism: What Kind of Dance Partners?," in *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 9, http://pub.uni-bielefeld.de/publication/2466485.

undercurrent, pertaining to identity politics, or 'long-distance nationalism' as *Benedict Anderson* has famously called it.[27] In this sense, it is more easily distinguished from transnationalism. Those engaging in long-distance nationalism, it can be argued, are not truly transnational, for rather than superseding or transcending the nation-state, they seek to build one. They might live across borders, but the focus of their action remains back home.[28]

Finally, transnationalism is often discussed alongside ethnicity, though the two are not necessarily connected. Some ethnic groups have diaspora consciousness and maintain transnational connections, others do not. Likewise, belonging to a diasporic ethnic group is not a prerequisite to transnational engagement. Perhaps the most important lesson to take home from this is that ethnicity *can be* – and often indubitably is – a major transnational variable. However, there have been persuasive case studies of transnational networks where ethnicity was found not to be a common denominator.[29] Furthermore, ethnicity is sometimes a host-society creation, completely divorced from actual home-society involvement. For instance, children of immigrants brought up in ethnic enclaves may adopt ethnic markers that are endemic to their home society and would not be recognized, much less practiced in their parents' homeland.[30]

[27] Benedict Anderson, *Long-Distance Nationalism: World Capitalism and the Rise of Identity Politics*, Working Paper, Wertheim Lecture 5.1 (Amsterdam: Centre for Asian Studies Amsterdam, 1992).
[28] P. KaValerietz et al., "Transnationalism and the Children of Immigrants in Contemporary New York," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 101.
[29] See, for instance: Larissa Ruiz Baia, "Rethinking Transnationalism: Reconstructing National Identities among Peruvian Catholics in New Jersey," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 41, no. 4 (1999): vi, doi:10.2307/166193.
[30] Alejandro Portes and Rubén G. Rumbaut, *Legacies: The Story of the Immigrant Second Generation* (University of California Press, 2001), 302.

Transnationalism in the Second Generation: Important Insights

The scholarship of migrant transnationalism, as the name would suggest, has largely focused on the cross-border experiences of immigrants in the first generation. Their offspring, conversely, have received less attention, and often being included only as an afterthought or a footnote in their parents' transnationalism. In the last decade, however, there has been a surge of interest in studying the transnational practices of the second generation. Since then, the subfield of Second Generation Transnationalism has more or less found its place in the sun, forming an as yet small, yet quickly growing body of literature by scholars across disciplines, driven by a wish to better understand how transnational ties are maintained or developed in the non-immigrant generation.

The generational approach to the study of transnationalism was initially met with some reluctancy. Some senior scholars among the established migrant scholarship were disinclined to extend the transnationalist paradigm to include the second generation. They claimed that second generation transnationalism, if it existed at all, was weak to begin with and likely to rapidly decline as children forgot their parents' first language and became assimilated in the host culture through the influence of media and educational institutions. And even if transnational ties were somehow to survive, they would likely remain too shaky and infrequent to classify as real transnationalism.[31] Their skepticism was fanned by early quantitative inquiries, which concluded that the overall level of transnational engagement among American second generation cohorts was quite low. In the words of *Ruben Rumbaut*, there seemed to be "very little evidence that the kinds of attachments that are fundamental to pursuing a meaningful transnational project of dual

[31] Michael]ones-Correa, "The Study of Transnationalism Among the Children of Immigrants: Where We Are and Where We Should Be Headed," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 223.

lives are effectively sustained in the post-immigrant new second generation."[32] Similar sentiments were echoed by *Philip Kasinitz* and his colleagues.[33] And *Alejandro Portes*, who famously deemed transnationalism to be "a one generation phenomenon".[34]

Several persistent researchers have since taken issue with the skepticist argument. Employing a qualitative paradigm, focusing on long-term processes rather than isolated, quantifiable variables,[35] they have found second generation transnationalism to be a very much existing, and often quite salient and significant phenomenon. [36] Their research has shown that transnationalism in the immigrant generation functions very differently than it does in the lives of their children. Whereas transnationalism in the first generation seems to be fairly consistent throughout the years and revolve around travel and monetary and social remittances, second generation transnationalism is a much more varied and complex phenomenon. Whether and how the second generation becomes transnationally involved depends on a multitude of factors – both concrete and intangible – such as family upbringing and language learning, life-course events, given historical, cultural and political contexts, institutions involved, as well as processes of identity construction and network building. In my review of the research, I have picked out some of the more important findings and synthesized them into a seven-fold theoretical typology, presented below.

[32] Ruben Rumbaut, "Severed or Sustained Attachments? Language, Identity, and Imagined Communiuties in the Post-Immigrant Generation," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 90–91.
[33] Kasinitz et al., "Transnationalism and the Children of Immigrants in Contemporary New York."
[34] Alejandro Portes, "Introduction: The Debates and Significance of Immigrant Transnationalism," *Global Networks* 1, no. 3 (July 1, 2001): 190, doi:10.1111/1471-0374.00012.
[35] J. Yiu, "Theorizing Second-Generation Transnationalism: Practice versus Process." (104th annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA, US, 2009).
[36] Kara Somerville, "Transnational Belonging among Second Generation Youth: Identity in a Globalized World," *Journal of Social Sciences* 10, no. 1 (2008): 23–33.

1. In the lives of the second generation, transnationalism and assimilation are often complementary rather than competing processes.

Many have predicted that second generation individuals will assimilate rather than maintain their parents' transnational ties. Some have even suggested that the second generation may become in-betweeners, failing both at assimilation and transnationalism, and ending up with a reactive immigrant identity.[37] Although there is evidence that when assimilation is pitted against the maintenance of transnational ties, children may opt for ethnic adhesive assimilation and experience downward mobility,[38] the long-dominant assumption that belonging, loyalty and sense of attachment are part of a zero-sum game – that transnationalism is a first generation phenomenon and is squashed under the foot of second and third generation monolingualism and acculturation – has consistently been proven false on multiple empirical accounts.[39] In the lives of the Second Generation, assimilation and transnationalism are often concurrent, even synergistic processes.[40] In his research on Second-Generation Mexican-Americans, *Robert Smith* finds that assimilation actually fosters transnationalism "by giving the second generation a reason to want to redefine their Mexicanness in a new context".[41] *Reed Ueda*, exploring the transnational engagement of the Japanese-American *Nisei* in the interwar period, shows that the Nisei youth capitalized on their transnational ties to overcome racial marginality and establish an

[37] Levitt and Waters, *The Changing Face of Home*, 16.
[38] William Haller and Patricia Landolt, "The Transnational Dimensions of Identity Formation: Adult Children of Immigrants in Miami," 2005, https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/handle/1807/16706; Milton Vickerman, "Second-Generation West Indian Transnationalism," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 341–67.
[39] Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism* (Routledge, 2009), 78.
[40] Levitt and Waters, *The Changing Face of Home*, 5.
[41] Robert C. Smith, "Life Course, Generation, and Social Location as Factors Shaping SecondGeneration Transnational Life," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 147.

American civic identity.[42] *Lotta Haikkola*, likewise, detects similar patterns on her comprehensive study of Finnish children of immigrants, concluding that transnational ties are more likely to strengthen than weaken ties with the host country.[43] *Peggy Levitt* goes even further, maintaining that assimilation may be a necessary precondition to successful transnational engagement. In her biographical study of Thomas, a Second Generation Irish-American, she finds that Thomas could only meaningfully engage his Irish roots after finding stability and future in the United States first.[44]

2. The return visit is a key variable in studying second generation transnationalism

For many Second Generation individuals, the homeland visit is one of the strongest access points into transnational engagement. These visits may be infrequent and tied to specific life events, but they form the essential flesh around the symbolic and imagined skeleton of "roots and belonging". Travelling back to the parents' country of origin can highlight the boundedness of membership and challenge imagined notions of belonging.[45] Visits can also activate latent transnational ties or create new ones, opening doors to previously unseen economic and social opportunities.[46] It is through return visits that multifocal identies are shaped, family relations

[42] Reed Ueda, "An Early Transnationalism? The Japanese American Second Generation of Hawaii in the Interwar Years," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 33–43.
[43] Lotta Haikkola, "Monipaikkainen nuoruus: Toinen sukupolvi, Transnationaalisuus ja Identiteetit ('Multiplaced Youth - Second generation, Transnationalism and Identities')" (PhD thesis, University of Helsinki, 2012), 82.
[44] Peggy Levitt, "The Ties That Change: Relations to the Ancestral Home over the Life Cycle," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 129–131.
[45] Jennifer Mason, "Managing Kinship over Long Distances: The Significance of 'The Visit,'" *Social Policy and Society* 3, no. 04 (October 2004): 421–29, doi:10.1017/S1474746404002052.
[46] Nazli Kibria, "Of Blood, Belonging, and Homeland Trips: Transnationalism and Identity Among Second-Generation Chinese and Korean Americans," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 295–312.

rekindled and new transnational networks constructed.[47] For one hoping to understand transnationalism in the second generation, the importance of analysing the return visit cannot be overemphasized.

Not all visits are created equal, however. Haikkola has pointed out that travelling to the parents' country of origin using family networks is very different from casually visiting the country as a tourist or even partaking in official "reintroduction programs". Family ties often bring the individual closer to the life in actuality in the parents' home country. Rather than being presented an ideal-mythical image of the homeland devised by state-sponsored ethnopolitical entrepreneurs, the visitor is brought face-to-face with the mundane and the banal of everyday life in the country, and left with a memory not only of monuments and nature, but of possible socioeconomic woes, prejudice, and alienating cultural practices.[48]

Also of note is the very understudied phenomenon of 'roots migration', where second generation individuals return to their parents' homeland, not only to visit but to dwell, work and study for extended periods of time.[49] For children of parents who migrated from a poorer country to a wealthier one, the reason for returning is almost always an identitarian one, and the return is often accompanied by severe economic downward mobility.[50] The identitarian quest, too, may become challenged when expectations of automatic reintegration are met with indifference or ethnic exclusion. *Russell King* and *Anastasia Christou* call this the 'symmetry of strangehood' –

[47] Somerville, "Transnational Belonging among Second Generation Youth"; Lotta Haikkola, "Making Connections: Second-Generation Children and the Transnational Field of Relations," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37, no. 8 (September 2011): 1201–17, doi:10.1080/1369183X.2011.590925.
[48] Haikkola, "Monipaikkainen nuoruus: Toinen sukupolvi, Transnationaalisuus ja Identiteetit ('Multiplaced Youth - Second generation, Transnationalism and Identities')," 72.
[49] Susanne Wessendorf, *Second-Generation Transnationalism and Roots Migration: Cross-Border Lives* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2013).
[50] Ibid., 139.

poignantly showing how their second generation Japanese Brazilian informants, after their return to Japan, had found that the return had turned the feeling of being Japanese in Brazil into one of feeling Brazilian in Japan.[51]

3. Second generation transnationalism has a strong identitarian dimension

There is a fairly established consensus about defining transnational engagement as observable social, political, religious and economic activity that takes place across borders. Transnational identities, however, remain a topic much more ambiguous. Generally, it seems that the two are not necessarily connected – that transnational engagement does not require a transnational consciousness or an identity. Levitt and *Nina Glick Schiller* point to this by differentiating between ways of belonging and ways of being transnationally. According to this logic, migrants can be involved in transnational social networks without being consciously embedded in them, and vica versa.[52]

For the second generation, transnationalism often is, it seems, a way of belonging first and a way of being second. Glick Schiller and *Georges Fouron* point to this fact by calling the second generation "the generation of identity", arguing that the transnational experience plays a central role in the identitarian outcomes of those who grow up in a transnational social field.[53] *Yen Le Espiritu* and *Thom Tran*, in turn, emphasize that for the second generation, transnationalism

[51] Russell King and Anastasia Christou, "Diaspora, Migration and Transnationalism: Insights from the Study of Second-Generation 'returnees,'" in *Diaspora and Transnationalism: Concepts, Theories and Methods* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), 181, http://pub.uni-bielefeld.de/publication/2466485.
[52] Levitt and Glick Schiller, "Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society," 1006.
[53] Nina Glick Schiller and Georges E. Fouron, "The Generation of Identity: Redefining the Second Generation Within a Transnational Social Field," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 168–211.

consists not only of transnational practices but imagined returns to the homeland through memory, cultural rediscovery and longing. Among the second generation Vietnamese they studied, Vietnam occupied a large part of their sense of self although their knowledge of the country and the Vietnamese language was limited, and their tangible transnational practices were few and far between.[54] *Andrea Louie* reports similar findings among second generation Chinese-Americans, who consciously used their transnational activities as way of legitimizing their emotional attachments to China and constructing a clearly demarcated Chinese-American identity.[55] This is also *Diane Wolf*'s conclusion in her study of second generation Philippino-Americans, in which she uses the term 'emotional transnationalism' to describe a situation in which the parental homeland becomes an emotionally-charged and value-laden lens through which adolescence is lived and the future perceived.[56]

Lastly, growing up within a highly active transnational field may result in an identity that is more cosmopolitan and less clearly defined than the hyphenated ones listed above. In her study of Finnish second generation children and adolescents, Haikkola observes a natural tendency towards a relativistic, interdependent world view among her informants. In this outlook, different cultural practices and customs coexist freely and effortlessly, and knowledge and understanding of different cultures are valued higher than the total command of one. For the children interviewed, this was not so much a conscious choice as an automatic coping mechanism:

[54] Yen Le Espiritu and Thom Tran, "'Vi~t Nam, Nlioc Toi' (Vietnam, My Country): Vietnamese Americans and Transnationalism," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 367–99.
[55] Andrea Louie, "Creating Histories for the Present: Second-Generation (Re)definitions of Chinese American Culture," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 312–41.
[56] Diane L. Wolf, "There's No Place Like 'Home': Emotional Transnationalism and the Struggles of Second-Generation Filipinos," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 255–95.

growing up in a highly transnational reality had put them into the position of an insider-outsider, where membership was never a given but thing constantly challenged and contested on multiple fronts.[57]

4. Families and ethnic institutions lay the groundworks for transnational engagement in the second generation, for the better or worse

Despite differing considerably from their parents in terms of transnational engagement, the study of the second generation cannot be divorced from the context of the first generation. Before forging their own transnational ties at a later age (or choosing not to, whatever the case may be) the second generation are immersed in the transnational space of their parents. For children of transnationally active parents, the family home often takes the role of the main "transnational theater" where different social, economic and cultural currents intertwine.[58] When children grow up in transnational households in which people, goods, money, ideas and practices from different countries of origin circulate, they become socialised into the rules and institutions of two or more countries, acquiring social skills and contacts that enable them to act transnationally.[59] In some rare cases, the role of the family may be substituted or surpassed by a strong transnational religious or ethnic institution, as Levitt points out in one of her case studies.[60]

While being reared in a transnational family or a social network carries great opportunities, it might also place a great amount of pressure on the child. In many migrant families, children are

[57] Lotta Haikkola, "Monta paikkaa - Maahanmuuttajataustaiset nuoret, vierailut kotimaahan ja kosmopoliittisuus ('Many places - Second generation immigrant youth, visits to home countries and cosmopolitanism')," in *Lapsuuden muuttuvat tilat ("Changing Spaces in Childhood")* (Tampere: Vastapaino, 2012), 230.
[58] Wolf, "There's No Place Like 'Home': Emotional Transnationalism and the Struggles of Second-Generation Filipinos," 284–285.
[59] Levitt, "Roots and Routes," 1226.
[60] Levitt, "The Ties That Change: Relations to the Ancestral Home over the Life Cycle," 133.

expected to internalize their parents' home-society oriented values and actively take part in the maintenance of transnational ties, be it through phone calls, cable TV or compulsory social, cultural and religious gatherings. In such circumstances, transnationalism becomes an ever-present tapestry against which everyday affairs in the host society are constantly contrasted and evaluated. Such 'forced transnationalism', as *Nadje Al-Ali* calls it,[61] can be very burdensome to the child, often clashing with her own wishes and limiting her capacity to form close relationships with host society peers. Being embedded in a broader transnational ethnic or religious network can be even more oppressing, as such an institution can claim total monopoly over the child's growth, social interactions, past time and future plans, the reach and influence of such institutions extending far beyond the immediate family. Such institutions, as Smith points out, are often run with a strong first-generation diasporic agenda and often resist any sort of home society acculturation in the second generation.[62]

5. Adoption of a multipolar, network-based paradigm can yield fresh insights into second generation transnationalism

The home and host society is a conceptual pair deeply entrenched in the study of migrant transnationalism. Scholars use these concepts to illustrate what they believe to be the two main points of reference in transnational space. On one end, there's the receiving or host society, on the other the sending or home country, between which the social, political, economic and religious currents flow, much like a two-lane highway. This bipolar paradigm, though useful in

[61] Nadje Al-Ali, "Trans- or a-National: Bosnian Refugees in the UK and the Netherlands," in *New Approaches to Migration: Transnational Communities and the Transformation of Home*, ed. Nadje Al-Ali and Khalid Koser (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 96–117, http://eprints.soas.ac.uk/4884/.
[62] Smith, "Life Course, Generation, and Social Location as Factors Shaping SecondGeneration Transnational Life."

giving a basic idea of migrant transnationalism, constitutes a very simplified, rudimentary understanding of the phenomenon as a whole. It pays little attention to different social and geographic layers and specifities in either society, automatically equating the local with the larger and more abstract 'national'. Moreover, it by definition overlooks any possibility of transnational engagement involving third countries, or taking place at a supranational level. Finally, it is almost completely unsuitable for studying transnationalism in the second generation.

In his 2003 review of the literature on migrant transnationalism, *Steven Vertovec* suggests the analysis of the migrant's social networks as an alternative to the bipolar home-host society mode.[63] Though paradigm shifting, so far only a few researchers have made use of Vertovec's idea. Visualizing transnationalism as a web of contacts instead of a national binary yields a much more varied, multi-sited paradigm, in which localities and individuals take precedence over abstract and internally homogenous ethnic, national and religious categories. Networks, by definition, are cross-categorical and cross-institutional, and resist conventional sociological classification. A network-based approach does not presuppose that transnational engagement has to take place between the home and host society, and allows for individuals outside the immediate family and ethnic group to be included in it. As Haikkola has pointed out, networks are particularly suitable to analysing transnationalism in the second generation adolescents, whose degree of transnational engagement depends on both rekindling and extending the family network. If important connections are forged to people and places outside the parental homeland, the focus of the child's network can shift to a third country or even assume a broader, supranational or cosmopolitan character.[64]

[63] Vertovec, "Migration and Other Modes of Transnationalism."
[64] Haikkola, "Making Connections," 1203.

6. A longue durée, life-course approach is needed to fully understanding the transnational pratices of the second generation

The relevance of studying transnationalism in the second generation is often challenged on grounds of its infrequent and unpredictable nature. While the transnational pratices of the immigrant generation are shown to be fairly constant, their children often go long periods of time without showing much interest in their parents' transnational ties or developing their own. During childhood and adolescence, homeland involvement occurs mainly in response to special events such as births, deaths, national holidays, fund-raising efforts, political campaigns and homeland visits. As Levitt has pointed out, many researchers overlook these practices by "setting the bar too high" – that is, measuring second generation transnationalism by first generation standards.[65] She goes on to argue that though these practices may seem small and insignificant at the time, they are nonetheless the seeds from which full-blown transnational practices may eventually grow.[66]

How exactly these transnational seeds sprout and blossom in adulthood is as yet quite poorly known, as most of the research on the second generation has focused on childhood experiences and the adolescent years, rarely following the subjects beyond their college years. This has lead some researchers to assume transnationalism to peak at mid-to-late adolescence, after which adult responsibilities steadily push the individual towards rootedness and assimilation.[67] Others, such as Levitt, have suggested that transnational relations are akin to a savings account which is

[65] Levitt, "The Ties That Change: Relations to the Ancestral Home over the Life Cycle."
[66] Ibid., 140.
[67] Smith, "Life Course, Generation, and Social Location as Factors Shaping SecondGeneration Transnational Life," 148.

cashed when particular social and occupational challenges or opportunities – such a chance to work overseas or act as a cultural intermediary – arise.[68] In any case, it is clear that a long-term biographical approach is required to uncover the full extent and impact of transnational practices in the second generation. More information, in particular, is needed on how transnational practices and attachments influence the adult life decisions of second generation individuals, such as choice of partner, occupation, association memberships and domicile.[69]

7. Second generation transnationalism is greatly shaped by its historical and geographical context.

Many historians of migration have pointed out that transnationalism, while new to the social sciences, is a phenomenon that dates back at least two hundred years, if not more. While its historical precedents are known and well-recorded, there is little consensus on how much these historical cases differ from present-day examples of migrant transnationalism. The question is particularly pressing when studying the second generation, for whom the winds of history prognose swift assimilation. *Nancy Foner*, comparing recents currents of migration to New York City with pre-1965 waves, believes that transnationalism among present-day second generation cohorts might have a longer life-span than that of previous generations due to globalization, technological advances and cheaper and faster transportation, yet cautions against drawing definite conclusions.[70] Ueda's findings about the intewar transnationalism of second generation Hawaiian Nisei (Japanese-Americans) suggest a similar story. In an age when trans-pacific travel

[68] Levitt, "Roots and Routes," 1226.
[69]]ones-Correa, "The Study of Transnationalism Among the Children of Immigrants: Where We Are and Where We Should Be Headed."
[70] Foner, *From Ellis Island to JFK*.

was a rarity and dual citizenship an impossibility, the transnationalism of the Nisei was little more than a cultural-political ideal, lacking much of the transborder substance that scholars have come to equate with transnationalism today.[71]

Some scholars go even so far as to claim that the historical context is the most important factor in determing the shape and extent that transnationalism takes, both in the immigrant generation and its offspring. In the mind of *Susan Eckstein*, generations should be conceptualized historically rather than biologically. The historical context, claims Eckstein, when studied specifically enough, reveals that the political and economic *zeitgeist* – eg. cultural anxieties, state-level policies, macro-economic trends – shapes transnational involvement much more drastically than any intra-family relations and dynamics between parents and their progeny.[72] Many others agree that even if we were to ignore the broader historical dynamics at play, much could still be learned about the experiences of immigrants by taking our lens to present-day legal, political, social and economic realities, as well as technological and transportational possibilities. *Joel Perlmann* stresses the importance of studying the social-political status-quo in the receiving country, naming the political climate and the educational system as two possible forces in shaping generation transnational engagement.[73] Rumbaut, in turn, emphasizes the importance of legal recognition and political inclusion, pointing out that not being an American citizen or permanent resident greatly curbed the transnational possibilities of his informants.[74] Finally,

[71] Ueda, "An Early Transnationalism? The Japanese American Second Generation of Hawaii in the Interwar Years," 35.
[72] Susan Eckstein, "On Deconstructing and Reconstructing the Meaning of Immigrant Generations," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 215.
[73] Joel Perlmann, "Second-Generation Transnationalism," in *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 218.
[74] Rumbaut, "Severed or Sustained Attachments? Language, Identity, and Imagined Communiuties in the Post-Immigrant Generation," 88.

Kara Somerville makes the claim that much of second generation transnationalism would not be possible without present-day *Information and Communications Technology* (ICT), enabling individuals to stay embedded in transnational networks at an age when their real-life possibilities are limited.[75]

Last, but certainly not least, we must not forget about the geographic context. This can be broken down into two rough levels – the broader, continental level, and the more specific local, or national level. The continental context is important because it delineates not only geopolitical realities but also the boundaries within the scholarship of migrant transnationalism itself. While the major part of the scholarship comes from and focuses on migrant transnationalism in the North American context, there also exists a budding European branch, and while the two are closely interrelated, they do have their differences. For instance, *Susan Wessendorf* has shrewdly pointed out that the American conceptualizations of assimilation, ethnicity and labor migration differs considerably from post-war European understandings. In Europe, she argues, ethnic identification is linked to tangible transnational involvement and is rarely a host-society construct. More importantly, Europe has less geographic distance between sending and receiving societies, and as of the *Schengen Agreement*, few political and legal barriers inhibiting transnationalism. Finally, in European migration discourse, the word 'integration' has been preferred over assimilation, and is a concept more differentiated and less politically charged. Integration envisages immigrants becoming an integral part of, though not necessarily absorbed by, the receiving society and culture, giving greater space for ethnic and cultural difference than did earlier philosophies of assimilation.[76] The argument has weight beyond mere conceptual

[75] Somerville, "Transnational Belonging among Second Generation Youth."
[76] Wessendorf, *Second-Generation Transnationalism and Roots Migration*, 4–6.

differentialization, as tentative cross-continental comparisons have shown European second generation cohorts to fit rather poorly into American models of social mobility and assimilation.[77]

The importance of the national context, too, must not go unemphasized. Scholars of transnationalism have been traditionally reluctant to concentrate on the host-society, which is not all too surprising, given that the scholarship has its origins in the desire to transcend the nation-state as the fundamental category of analysis. Such a normative stance, however, goes against the grain of findings suggesting the importance of the national. Comparing the integration trajectories of Moroccan and Turkish second generation cohorts in various European countries, *Maurice Crul* and *Hans Vermeulen* found the national context to have considerable impact on the paths and prospects of their subjects.[78] This is not totally surprising. Nation-states can impact integration in myriad ways, such as through citizenship provisions and policies of naturalization and education, and these policies are often echoed on the level of civil society. For instance, restrictive immigration policies have been shown to encourage discourses of exclusion among the majority population.[79] Given the interrelatedness of assimilation experiences and transnational engagement, this is an issue not to be sidestepped.

[77] Mark Thomson and Maurice Crul, "The Second Generation in Europe and the United States: How Is the Transatlantic Debate Relevant for Further Research on the European Second Generation?," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33, no. 7 (September 2007): 1036.
[78] Maurice Crul and Hans Vermeulen, "The Second Generation in Europe," *International Migration Review* 37, no. 4 (February 23, 2006): 989.
[79] Thomson and Crul, "The Second Generation in Europe and the United States," 1037.

The Theoretical Aims of This Thesis

Generational research of transnationalism is still in its infancy. Rather than being seen as definite conclusions, the theoretical convergencies listed above ought to be regarded as cues for new scholarly discussions. Each of the points listed above asks as much as it answers, raising new questions and possibilities for further research. Out of the aforementioned theoretical propositions, this work is particularly concerned with expanding our knowledge of points three, six and seven: the identitarian, biographical and contextual components. In addition to these points, this thesis hopes to put forth three addititional theoretical propositions. Much like the points above, they should be taken as suggestions rather than authoritative arguments, seeking to amend rather than confine our understanding of transnationalism in the second generation.

1. Exploring the place of international marriages in second generation transnationalism

One of the biggest hitherto unexamined assumptions of migrant transnationalism is that its subjects' migratation is economically grounded. In contrast, transnationalism born of international marriages has been left almost completely unexamined, despite its rise in global prominence. Few scholars in the field have taken note of the fact that the French president *Nicolas Sarkozy* is married to the Italian-born *Carla Bruni* or that both the Finnish and the Danish Prime Ministers have British spouses and transnational families. It is not a phenomenon endemic to the political elite, either. In 2011, *the Economist* reported that one in five marriages in Sweden, Belgium and Austria involved a foreign partner, and in some countries, such as

Taiwan and Switzerland, nearly half of all marriages took place across state borders.[80] Does marriage follow migration, or do people marry to migrate? Do the transnational involvement of international spouses differ from that of refugees or labor migrants? These are questions that few migration scholars have bothered to look at, much less attempted to answer.

If second generation transnationalism has been largely a footnote in the literature of migrant transnationalism, the transnational involvement of children born from international marriages has gone almost completely unmentioned, except as a hypothetical category. *William Warner* and *Leo Srole* gave them a passing mention in their 1947 book, *The Social System of American Ethnic Groups*[81]; more than a century later, Rumbaut termed them the '2.5 generation' to differentiate them from the foreign born '1.5 generation' and the native-born '2.0 generation' with two foreign parents.[82] Yet no scholar of transnationalism, to my knowledge, has hitherto looked at the the broader implications of studying the offspring of international marriages in a transnational context.

Including the children of international marriages under the rubric of second generation transnationalism by implication challenges the bipolar paradigm that pits assimilation against transnationalism and home society involvement against host society integration paradigm. Is it any longer meaningful to speak of a home society if the offspring has lineage in both countries? What is the role of integration or assimilation in the context of two homelands? Does dual membership at birth come with expectations and feelings of dual belonging? If not, which of the parental nationalities emerges dominant? Is it possible for an individual to achieve full

[80] "Herr and Madame, Señor and Mrs," *The Economist*, November 12, 2011, http://www.economist.com/node/21538103.
[81] William Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (Yale University Press, 1947).
[82] Rumbaut, "Severed or Sustained Attachments? Language, Identity, and Imagined Communiuties in the Post-Immigrant Generation," 48.

binationality, a state akin to full bilingualism where both nationalities are fully realized and set on equal footing? These are some of the question this thesis hopes to answer.

2. Promoting a microfoundational, interethnic approach as an alternative to the analysis of singular ethnic communities

One of the most potent criticism against studies of ethnicity and nationalism is that they so often unwittingly endow ethnic groups with agency. In his paradigm-shifting 2002 article, *Ethnicity without Groups* Brubaker argues that the field of ethnic studies has become mired with "groupness", the largely automatic tendency to treat ethnic groups as if they were clear-cut and single-minded actors: internally homogenous and externally bounded.[83] This trend has been particularly pronounced in the literature on migrant transnationalism. In most case studies of transnationalism, be it the first or second generation, the unit of analysis is almost invariably a specific migrant community. Though there are many comparative studied between transnationally active ethnic communities, very few studies bother to look at the variability of transnational engagement among co-ethnics.[84] Some scholars have argued that transnationalism's inability to escape the groupist paradigm greatly threatens its analytical usefulness, implying an unconscious slide back into methodological nationalism and essentialized national and ethnic categories, the very things the scholarship was founded to escape from.[85]

In empirical research, a move away from groupism calls for studies that are microfoundational, empowering the individual rather than the collective. More attention needs be paid to the

[83] Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups," *European Journal of Sociology / Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 43, no. 02 (August 2002): 163–89, doi:10.1017/S0003975602001066.
[84] Wessendorf, *Second-Generation Transnationalism and Roots Migration*, 9.
[85] Roger Waldinger and Charlie Fitzgerald, "Transnationalism in Question," *American Journal of Sociology* 109, no. 5 (March 2004): 1177–95, doi:10.1086/381916.

individual's relationship to her ethnicity than the ethnic construction itself, allowing us to account for ethnicity without taking belonging and social membership for granted.[86] This thesis aims to do just that.

The fixation on ethnicity is not only normatively problematic but may also overshadow the deeper psychodynamics of belonging. Studies of international identity formations outside the rubric of transnationalism suggest that the experience of having grown across predefined national and cultural categories offers a sense of commonality that can be more powerful than one's ethnic background.[87] This is particularly true when many individuals from different ethnic groups come together under the same roof without any single ethnicity forming a significant plurarity. Such is the case in many international schools or neighborhoods where migrants of mixed ethnic background live.[88] In these cases, the experience of being different and going beyond existing categories provides an identitarian rallying point more powerful than the categories themselves.

Perhaps the most compelling case against the primacy of ethnicity comes from the literature on children of internationally mobile adults, or 'Third Culture Kids'. These people, having spent a significant time of their developmental years outside their parents' home country (or countries), may have extremely different backgrounds. For instance, a biracial American woman born in South America and raised in three countries, a Finnish girl of Lutheran missionaries stationed in Central Africa or an Indian son of a diplomat to Australia might all consider themselves Third

[86] Anthony Paul Cohen, *Self Consciousness: An Alternative Anthropology of Identity* (Routledge, 1994), 133.
[87] Haikkola, "Monta paikkaa - Maahanmuuttajataustaiset nuoret, vierailut kotimaahan ja kosmopoliittisuus ('Many places - Second generation immigrant youth, visits to home countries and cosmopolitanism')," 232; Wessendorf, *Second-Generation Transnationalism and Roots Migration*, 139.
[88] Charlie B. Willis, "Transnational Culture and the Role of Language: An International School and Its Community," *The Journal of General Education*, 1992, 73–95.

Culture Kids. Yet extensive anthropological and social-psychological research suggest that they form a cohesive group with similar developmental patterns and points of identification.[89] The experience of having been reared in an uprooted, highly mobile transnational space provides a sense of belonging stronger than any singular or mixed cultural or ethnic category.[90] When these people meet as adults, they are said to immediately relate to each other, "reuniting as strangers", in spite of their wildly different cultural backgrounds and experiences.[91]

The scholarships of Third Culture Kids and Second Generation Transnationalism, though thematically similar, stand in stark contrast in their dealings with ethnicity. The latter is enamored with it while the former only pays attention to it as an afterthought. In this thesis, I would suggest a third way, in which ethnicity, though not forgotten, is dethroned from its assumed role as the greatest common divisor among second generation individuals.

3. Highlighting the role of state institutions and host society symbolic boundaries in shaping of transnational ties in the second generation

The scholarship of transnational has had a general aversion to studying the host society. Under point seven, I already wrote about the importance of looking at the national context if the assimilatory experiences of the second generation are to be properly understood. The impact of host society policies and political ideologies have been shown to yield very different integration

[89] Laila T. Plamondon, "Four Third Culture Kids: One Portrait," in *Writing Out of Limbo: International Childhoods, Global Nomads and Third Culture Kids* (Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2011), 263–77.
[90] Gene H. Bell-Villada et al., *Writing Out of Limbo: International Childhoods, Global Nomads and Third Culture Kids* (Cambridge Scholars Pub., 2011).
[91] Charlie C Pollock and Ruth E Van Reken, *Third Culture Kids Growing up among Worlds* (Boston: Nicholas Brealey Pub., 2009), 61, http://site.ebrary.com/id/10356691.

trajectories among second generation cohorts, yet few studies have examined their impact on the development of transnational ties.

Even less researched is the relationship between transnationalism and host society nationalism. By nationalism, I refer not only to the political agenda and rhetoric of certain right-wing parties and social movements but more so to the everyday categories, practices and discourses that arise from a social paradigm in which the existence of 'the nation' is seen as an unquestioned universal necessity.[92] This paradigm is most keenly manifested in the educational system and other state institutions, but it can also take form on the level of society through subconscious, everyday uses of the nation as a symbol and category of reference.[93] In countries where nationhood is conceptualized in ethnic terms, this might entail the portrayal of the country's citizens in a uniform fashion in everyday speech and visual imagery, or the implicit association of certain ethnic and cultural practices with the nation to the exclusion of others.

No matter our willingness as researchers of transnationalism to go beyond the nation as a category of analysis, the fact remains that much of transnational activity takes place in the context of nationally-molded categories and across national lines. In extreme cases, nationalist sentiments can jeopardize transnational engagement by imposing moral and even political constrains on leaving the country.[94] On the grassroots level, socially-embedded nationalist rhetoric often manifests as the overt or covert exclusion of the national other. Some researchers hypothesize that such exclusionist practices may lead to a greater reliance on transnational ties.

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[92] For a similar understanding of nationalism, see Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Cornell University Press, 1983).

[93] This phenomenon is detailed in Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (SAGE, 1995).

[94] The case of Hungary imposing a travel ban on its university graduates is a compelling example; BBC News, "Hungarian Government 'Traps' Graduates to Stop Brain Drain," *BBC News*, accessed April 19, 2015, http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-19213488.

In such a scenario, transnationalism would provide an escape route from everyday labeling and discrimination.[95] Others propose that persistent discrimination might impede the individuals' access to the necessary resources to realize their transnational capital, leaving them no choice but to assume a reactive ethnic/immigrant identity.[96]

In recent years, some pioneering studies have begun to shed light on the link between state ideology, nationalism and the maintenance of transnational ties among immigrant cohorts, suggesting that migrants and their children are often caught in a crossfire of conflicting societal attitudes and practices.[97] Official ideals of diversity and multiculturalism can stand in stark contrast to everyday experiences of ethnic discrimination and social exclusion. The significance of these findings, if anything, have only further highlighted the importance of studying the host society in a thorough, multi-layered way, accounting for not only the role of state institutions and political climate, but those of civil society and grassroots attitudes as well.

[95] Anna Rastas, *Rasismi Lasten Ja Nuorten Arjessa: Transnationaalit Juuret Ja Monikulttuuristuva Suomi ("Racism in the Everyday Lives of Children and Adolescents: Transnational Roots and Multiculturalizing Finland")* (Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2007), 109.
[96] Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou, "The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and Its Variants," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530 (November 1, 1993): 74–96.
[97] For instance, see Lisa Åkesson, "Multicultural Ideology and Transnational Family Ties among Descendants of Cape Verdeans in Sweden," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 37, no. 2 (February 1, 2011): 217–35; Haikkola, "Monta paikkaa - Maahanmuuttajataustaiset nuoret, vierailut kotimaahan ja kosmopoliittisuus ('Many places - Second generation immigrant youth, visits to home countries and cosmopolitanism')."

2. The Finnish Context: Multicultural Ideals, Discriminatory Realities

In this chapter, I provide the necessary historical and ethnographic background to my research. My aim is to give the reader an idea of what Finland is like as a country of residence for the first and the second generation. By drawing on some of the most prominent historical narratives and recent sociological inquiries, I will outline what historian *Pasi Saukkonen* has called "the Finnish paradox".[98] On the the level of policy and official discourse, Finland is arguably one of the most accommodating countries in Europe. In terms of policy evolution, it has followed a trajectory very close to that of Canada, going from state bilingualism and limited recognition of its indigenous populations to embracing broader principles of multiculturalism through developing policies of nonassimilative immigrant incorporation.[99] On the more grassroots level, however, Finland remains a provincial society where symbolic boundaries against immigrants are high, and racism and ethnic prejudice are common occurences in the day-to-day lives of its non-Finnish inhabitants. Principles of multiculturalism and immigrant inclusion, though part of the official agenda, rarely translate to concrete pratices on the level of society, where homogeneity remains the norm.

[98] Pasi Saukkonen, *Erilaisuuksien Suomi: Vähemmistö- Ja Kotouttamispolitiikan Vaihtoehdot ("The Finland of Differences: Alternatives to Politics of Minority Protection and Assimilation")* (Tallinn: Gaudeamus Helsinki University Press, 2013), 117.

[99] For the Canadian case and theory of multicultural citizenship, see: Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Clarendon Press, 1996).

The Making of the Bilingual Nation

Finland as a nation-state is unique in that it owes its existence to the visions and deeds of its national minority, the Swedish-speaking Finns. To this day, it remains one of few bilingual countries that are not federations. Rather than housing two autonomous national groups in the spirit of bicommunalism, it has followed the model of 'one nation – two languages'.

The building of the Finnish nation was undertaken by Swedish-speaking intellectuals in the decades following the annexation of the territory of present-day Finland to Russia in 1809. These were poets, philosophers and artists who idealized the rustic and pastoral lifestyle of the Finnish-speaking peasantry. Rallying under the banner of romantic Finnish nationalism, or *Fennomania* as it was known, they strove to instil national consciousness into the rest of the Swedish-speaking educated class while offering rudimentary schooling opportunities to the largely illiterate Finnish-speaking majority. Believing linguistic and cultural homogeneity to be a necessary precondition for nationhood, many leading figures of the Fennomans learned Finnish and Finnishized their names. This stance was crystallized in the views of the philosopher *Johan Vilhelm Snellman*, who, despite being monolingually Swedish, believed the eradication of the Swedish language to be an unfortunate but necessary precondition for the Finnish nation to emerge.[100]

Snellman's stance was understandably unpopular among the large part of the Swedish-speaking population, eventually provoking a counter-reaction that took shape as the Swedish national movement, or *Svekomania* as it was called. Its proponents claimed that the Swedish-speakers formed a nation separate from Finnish-speakers, to which they were culturally, morally and

[100] Saukkonen, *Erilaisuuksien Suomi: Vähemmistö- Ja Kotouttamispolitiikan Vaihtoehdot ("The Finland of Differences: Alternatives to Politics of Minority Protection and Assimilation")*, 96.

racially superior. The movement eventually established itself as the *Swedish People's Party* in 1906, basing its platform around demands of autonomy for Swedish-speakers. There was also some talk about a third alternative, in which bilingualism under the model of "one nation, two languages" was proposed. It had its origins in the national romantic writings of *Zachris Topelius*, whose magnus opus, *The Book on Our Land*, with its oft-evoked line "Our boys and girls are of the same folk, no matter which language they speak"[101], is sometimes considered the ideological linchpin of Finnish bilingualism.

Following the establishment of the first democratically elected unicameral parliament in 1906, the Swedish-speaking elite found themselves vastly outnumber by Finnish-speaking lawmakers, and their attitudes quickly hardened. The years leading up to Finland's independence in 1917 were marked by acrimonious debate between the two language groups. Eventually in 1919, a tentative compromise was reached, and Finland was declared bilingual on the Topelian model. Finnish and Swedish were set on equal footing on the level of the state, but municipalities were deemed either monolingually Finnish or Swedish, or bilingual, depending on their share of Finnish and Swedish speakers. A couple of years later, in 1921, the Åland islands were granted full autonomy while the rest of the Swedish-speaking coastal areas remained under Finnish rule.

The relationship between the two language groups remained tense for much of the first half of the 20th century, though no open conflicts broke out. Following the events of the Winter and Continuation Wars in 1939-1945, the postwar governments adopted an agenda of national unity in an attempt to curtail the possibility of a communist takover. This included concessions to Swedish-speakers, such as the passing of legal measures preventing Finnish-speaking Carelian

[101] Zachris Topelius, *Boken Om Vårt Land ("The Book On Our Land")* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1982), 13.

refugees from settling down in Swedish-speakings municipalities. The Swedish People's Party, too, changed its policy orientation, now selling itself as a moderate coalition partner to any government platform willing to safeguard bilingualism, which it considered central to the interests of its voters. During the course of the 1970's, the legal position of Swedish was not only upheld but strengthened through the passing of additional provisions, making it a compulsory subject on all levels of the Finnish educational system.

The Swedish-Finns have since become known as "the World's most pampered minority."[102] They are, on average, more highly educated and experience greater marital stability,[103] lower unemployment and disability rates and a higher active life expectancy[104] than their Finnish-speaking neighbors. Swedish-speaking pupils rank among the highest in the world in terms of literacy and language acquisition and exhibit record rates of bilingualism, even in families where Finnish is not spoken at home.[105]

Though Finnish bilingualism is often considered a success story, its future seems increasingly uncertain. Though the Swedish-speaking population has maintained a high degree of fluency in Finnish, their total share of the country's population has dropped almost threefold since the turn of the 20th century, amounting roughly 291 thousand individuals, or 5.2% of the population in 2014. Parallel to this decline has been the steady increase of non-Finnish and non-Swedish speaking immigrants to the country. In 2014, speakers of foreign languages outnumbered the

[102] Lizette Alvarez, "Finland Makes Its Swedes Feel at Home," *The New York Times*, December 25, 2005, sec. International / Europe, http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/25/international/europe/25finland.html.
[103] Jan Saarela and Fjalar Finnäs, "Social Background and Education of Swedish and Finnish Speakers in Finland," *European Journal of Education* 38, no. 4 (2003): 454.
[104] Markku T. Hyyppä and Juhani Mäki, "Why Do Swedish-Speaking Finns Have Longer Active Life? An Area for Social Capital Research," *Health Promotion International* 16, no. 1 (March 1, 2001): 55–64, doi:10.1093/heapro/16.1.55.
[105] Viking Brunell and Pirjo Linnakyla, "Swedish Speakers' Literacy in the Finnish Society," *Journal of Reading* 37, no. 5 (February 1994): 368–75.

Swedish speaking population for the first time at 294 thousand, or 5.4% of the population.[106] At the same time, many of the country's bilingual provisions have become under fire by Finnish-speaking civil society institutions. In the April of 2014, a citizen's initiative calling for the removal of compulsory Swedish on all levels of education passed the 50,000 signature threshold and was successfully brought before the Finnish parliament. Its proponents claimed that the compulsory status of the Swedish language was no longer a social necessity and imposed an unfair burden on Finnish-speaking pupils and students. Though the intitiative did not win the support of the elected parliament, the debate over the future of Finnish bilingualism rages on.

The History and Evolution of Institutional Multiculturalism

Despite its bilingual legacy, Finland remained culturally and ethnically homogenous until the end of the 20th century. A geographically isolated country on the periphery of Europe, it was spared of most postwar migration currents and attracted few outsiders. Like most other European countries at the time, it had come to see itself as a country of emigration, sending moderate numbers to North America and the neighboring Sweden during the 19th and 20th centuries. Until 1988, the number of foreign nationals in the country did not even exceed 20 000 and consisted of mostly non-permanent residents. *Immigrant* did not even exist as a legal category until 1983, when the first law concerning the rights of non-citizens was enacted. All in all, immigration

[106] Anna Lassila, "Vieraskielisiä ensimmäistä kertaa enemmän kuin ruotsinkielisiä ('Foreign language speakers outnumber Swedish-speakers for the first time')," *Helsingin Sanomat ("The Helsinki Times")*, April 24, 2014, HS.fi, http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/a1398343476708?jako=928352fc3df5f58fcac5f5d971cbf86a&ref=og-url.

remained marginal for years to come, and citizenship stayed a commodity reserved to the native-born population, with the sole exception of non-nationals married to Finnish citizens.[107]

The 1990's marked a turning point for the country's hitherto skeletal immigration policy. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Iron Curtain was followed by an unprecedented influx of foreign nationals into the country, mostly from the former Carelian and Estonian Soviet Republics. Many of these people had Finnish or Finno-Ugric ancestry, yet spoke Russian as their first language. This migration current was further compounded by Somalian and Bosnian asylum-seekers, as well as smaller amounts of other Eastern Bloc nationals, such as Poles and Hungarians. 1995 saw Finland's accession to the European Union and the implementation of the Schengen Agreement amongst its member states. In 1998, there were over 85 000 foreign nationals in the country, over a fourfold increase from the decade before.[108]

These demographic changes were reflected in policymaking, taking form as new legislation as well as amendments to the Finnish constitutition. Some legal and political rights were extended to non-citizen residents – including a provision for dual-citizenship in 2003. For the first time, special policies of minority protection were laid out for the indigenous Sami and the Roma, who had until then lacked even the right to vote. The newly drafted 17th article of the constitution guaranteed these, as well as other national minorities, the inalienable right to keep and develop their language, culture and lifestyle, obliging the state to help them in achieving these goals when necessary. Furthermore, the Sami tribes were given autonomy over their internal affairs, as

[107] Saukkonen, *Erilaisuuksien Suomi: Vähemmistö- Ja Kotouttamispolitiikan Vaihtoehdot ("The Finland of Differences: Alternatives to Politics of Minority Protection and Assimilation")*, 25.
[108] Tilastokeskus ("Statistics Finland"), *Ulkomaalaiset Ja Siirtolaisuus 2012 ("Foreigners and Migration 2012 ")*, Official Statistics of Finland, December 31, 2013, 13.

well as their own legislative assembly, the *Sámediggi*. Finally, the three Sami languages spoken in Finland were all given official status in the northernmost municipalities.

1999 saw the passing of the first comprehensive law about the incorporation of non-nationals into Finnish society.[109] Very progressive for its time, the 1999 bill outlined a model of political integration in which immigrants could work and be politically active without having to compromise their culture of origin. Though the bill itself was replaced in 2010 with a more nuanced piece of legislation, its core principle remains unchanged.[110] Its provisions entail some of the most progressive integrationist discourse in Europe, resting on the notion that immigration incorporation is a two-way process, in which society shoulders the responsibility of both accommodating the immigrants and supporting them in their right to maintain a cultural identity separate from the core population.[111]

During the early 2000's, principles of multiculturalism and minority protection were adopted by governmental institutions across the board. The aim to promote the equality and multiplicity of cultures was included in the agenda of the *Finnish Broadcasting Corporation* (YLE) as well as in the general guidelines of the *Finnish National Board of Education* (Opetushallitus). Supporting the pupil in building a cultural identity of their own as well as giving them the competency to traverse both the national and global milieus was listed among one of the fundamental goals of primary education in 2004[112]. In practice, this translated to the right of the

[109] FINLEX, "Laki maahanmuuttajien kotouttamisesta ja turvapaikanhakijoiden vastaanottamisesta ('Law about the incorporation of immigrants and the reception of asylum-seekers') 493/1999," accessed April 9, 2015, https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/kumotut/1999/19990493.
[110] FINLEX, "Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä ('Law about furthering integration') 1386/2010," accessed April 9, 2015, https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2010/20101386.
[111] Saukkonen, *Erilaisuuksien Suomi: Vähemmistö- Ja Kotouttamispolitiikan Vaihtoehdot ("The Finland of Differences: Alternatives to Politics of Minority Protection and Assimilation")*, 124.
[112] The Finnish National Board of Education, "Perusopetuksen Opetussuunnitelman Perusteet ('The Fundamentals of Primary Education')," 2004.

student to receive a limited amount of education in their own native language if studying at a school where at least two other parents demanded it. In addition, custom religious education, namely for those of Muslim background, was made available for students whose parents requested it.

Though not officially recognized as such, multiculturalism has very much become part of the Finnish state agenda. From a pure legal-institutional perspective, naturalised immigrants are seen as fundamentally equal to the core population, and their right to maintain a separate cultural identity is rarely called into question. Cultural and linguistic multiplicity is seen as an asset rather than a challenge, and political membership is conceptualized in purely civic terms with citizenship provisions to match. According to the *Multiculturalism Policy Index* developed by *Will Kymlicka* and *Keith Banting*, Finland ranks among the most multicultural countries in the world, placing second in Europe after Sweden.[113] What Finnish multiculturalism amounts to at the level of society is a different story.

The Boundaries of Finnishness

Finland is a good example of a country where social realities lag behind political idealism. Despite the best efforts of policymakers and state officials to present Finland as a pioneer of immigrant incorporation, the multicultural ideal has largely failed to saturate the Finnish society. Though the door to Finnish citizenship might have become unlocked, the passageway to Finnishness remains barred from the inside. This is hardly surprising, giving how the public image of the archetypal Finn has not changed much since the day Zachris Topelius wrote his

[113] Will Kymlicka, *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future* (Transatlantic Council on Migration, Migration Policy Institute, 2012), http://www.miguelcarbonell.com/artman/uploads/1/kymlicka.pdf.

romantic visualization of the Finnish nation. In his sentimental account of the ideal-typical Finnish peasant, Topelius gives us the following description:

> *Let us not talk about [his] brothers and sisters, who are better behaved and cleaner in appearance, yet fail to match [his] pure heart […] God bless that strong arm, fair skin, haylike hair and honest mind! [He] has his flaws […] but when the Lord wills that stones be turned, He appoints [him] to the task.*[114]

In Topelius's image, Finns appear as an ethnically white people whose asocial manners are remedied by an unwaivering commitment to work and authority. Though Topelius himself was said to have based his description loosely on observations he made during his journeys in South-Central Finland, his account would become the visual linchpin around which successive generations based their tales about the Finnish language, historical customs and ethnic origin. From wartime efforts to the building of the welfare state in the 1960's, the Topelian peasant was routinely invoked as an expression of political will for the passing of sweeping economic reforms. As the welfare state became part of the patriotic narrative, the political ideals of universalism, equality and solidarity became subtly embedded with narratives of ethnic-cultural homogeneity.[115] When immigration levels first rose in the 1990's, many Finns perceived it as a threat not only to the nation's cultural integrity but the broader functioning of society as well. In a telling 2003 poll, almost half of the respondents agreed with the statement, "Some races are altogether incapable of living in our modern welfare society."[116]

[114] Topelius, *Boken Om Vårt Land ("The Book On Our Land")*, 129.
[115] Saukkonen, *Erilaisuuksien Suomi: Vähemmistö- Ja Kotouttamispolitiikan Vaihtoehdot ("The Finland of Differences: Alternatives to Politics of Minority Protection and Assimilation")*, 23.
[116] Ibid., 33.

Though these fear eventually proved unfounded, the notion that homogeneity was something worth preserving reigned on. In a 2011 survey, over a third of respondents expressed strong agreement with the statement that "Finland should effectively safeguard its national culture against foreign political and cultural influences", with 40% expressing partial agreement.[117] During the late 1990's, proponents of national homogeneity rallied around nationalist cultural associations such as *The Guts of Finland* (Suomen sisu) and the *Order of Finnishness* (Suomalaisuuden liitto), eventually finding their political voice in the *Finns party*, which rose to a major electoral victory in 2011 after nearly two decades of political obscurity. Though excluded from the government by a tacit agreement among the rest of the political spectrum, its supporters have been very active on the level of civil society, and can be credited with launching a nationwide debate about immigration, European Union membership as well as the compulsory status of the Swedish-language in the educational system.[118]

Meanwhile, the Topelian image of the honest, hardworking Finnish peasant has lived on. In 2011, the *Finnish Ministry of the Interior* (Sisäministeriö) published a handbook about Finland to be distributed to all newly arrived immigrats. Under the subheading "What are Finns like?" the following account is given:

> *Finns are quiet and peaceful. Finns believe it is polite to give everyone their own personal space. Finns are good friends when one gets close to them. Finns value work ethic and honesty and punctuality. Finns are law abiding and humble.* [119]

[117] Ibid., 143.
[118] Ibid., 36.
[119] Ibid., 143–144.

Apart from the absence of ethnic markers, the account is almost identical to the one written by Topelius over a century before. Also of note is the uncompromisingly bounded tone in which the description is written: "Finns are like this, Finns value that." Such an image leaves little room for alternative interpretations and does not invite outside participation. Moreover, not even a hint is given about the possibility of ever becoming a Finn or even of mixing with the core population.

Lastly, it serves to note that immigrants are not the only segment of society shut outside Finnish national symbology. As the irony of fate would have it, the Swedish-speaking population have never been considered part of the national core in cultural terms. This is baffling, considering the Finnish nation owes its existence in large part to the efforts of Swedish-speaking intellectuals. If anything, the Swedish-Finns have become increasingly under attack for their perceived privileged status and social otherness by the very people Topelius, Snellman and their ilk so passionately idealized and sought to defend.[120]

The Social Categorization and Exclusion of Finland's Immigrants

Depite recent increases in immigration levels, the number of immigrants in Finland remains low, both in absolute and relative terms. At the end of 2012, there were 285 471 foreign-born residents in the country, making up little more than 5% of the population. The largest immigrant group was made up of Russian-speakers from the former Soviet Union, numbering at 52 339. Estonians constituted the second largest cohort (34 984 people), followed by Swedes[121] (31 601). The largest non-European group, the Somalians, numbered at 7468.[122] In terms of numbers,

[120] Ibid., 103.
[121] Mostly made up of Sweden-born Finnish returnees.
[122] Tilastokeskus ("Statistics Finland"), *Ulkomaalaiset Ja Siirtolaisuus 2012 ("Foreigners and Migration 2012 ")*, 15.

Finland remains one of the most homogenous countries in Europe. (See figure at the end of this chapter.)

The relative newness and scarcity of immigration is reflected in the abundance of both symbolic and social boundaries in Finnish society. As the category of *Finn* is almost exlusively reserved for the core population, the non-national becomes a perpetual outsider, his or her place depending on the judgement of the onlooker. Those who are yet to master the Finnish language are most commonly filed under the label of *outlander/foreigner* (ulkomaalainen), whereas those further along the naturalization path are most often deemed *immigrants* (maahanmuuttaja). Other categories for foreigners include the *alien* (muukalainen), the *refugee* (pakolainen) and the racist *blackling/gypsy* (mustalainen, liberally applied). For the second generation, there is the nebulous category of *a person with an immigrant background* (maahanmuuttajataustainen).[123]

The category of the immigrant is perhaps the most commonly evoked, yet the most contested of the categories applied to non-nationals. With the recent electoral victories of the Finns party, the public discourse surrounding immigration has taken a sharply critical turn, encouraging the expression of opinions that would have been considered taboo a decade ago. In many of the views expressed, immigrants have been associated with the deterioration of law and order and asocial behavior, including a tendency towards sexual predation. These sweeping and for the most part anecdotal accounts have been left largely uncontested among the left and the liberal right, possibly out of fears of losing middle-of-the-ground voters to the conservative nationalist forces. In the meanwhile, the media, especially the Finnish tabloid press, has taken up the task of

[123] Rastas, *Rasismi Lasten Ja Nuorten Arjessa: Transnationaalit Juuret Ja Monikulttuuristuva Suomi ("Racism in the Everyday Lives of Children and Adolescents: Transnational Roots and Multiculturalizing Finland")*, 127.

reporting diligently about criminal behavior of the non-national population, further compounding the image of the delinquent immigrant.[124]

What is common to all of aforementioned categories is that they do not even attempt to distinguish between different nationalities and ethnic origins. At the same time, they all carry a subtle undertone of non-Europeanness and non-whiteness and conceal deeply entrenched ethnic hierarchies. Out of all the immigrant groups, the Somalis and Arabs/North Africans face the steepest social boundaries, with prejudiced attitudes mostly pertaining to culture and religion. In contrast, the discrimination encountered by "the more traditional" immigrant groups of Russians, Estonians and East Europeans is more historically rooted, stemming from old narratives of distrust and menace on both sides of the Baltic strait.[125]

In Finnish society, ethnic prejudice does not only take place within existing categories, but also outside them. According to the 2012 *Eurobarometer* on racism and ethnic discrimination, the expression of racist sentiments remains prevalent in Finnish society, with most foreign-born residents encountering some degree of racism and ethnic profiling on a regular to semi-regular basis.[126] According to *Vesa Puuronen*, racism has become deeply entrenched in the collective Finnish psyche through decades of seemingly innocuous ethnonationalist cultural practices. Growing up in Finnish society, one internalizes the Finnish racial system and its inherent prejudices towards the Sami, Russians and Roma by the means of jokes, stories and urban legends, many of which have at one point found their way into elementary school textbooks as

[124] Laura Huttunen, "Mikä Ihmeen Maahanmuuttaja? ('What Freaking Immigrant?')," in *En Ole Rasisti, Mutta... ("I Am Not a Racist, But...")* (Tampere: Vastapaino, 2009), 118.
[125] Inga Jasinskaja-Lahti, Karmela Liebkind, and Tiina Vesala, *Rasismi Ja Syrjintä Suomessa: Maahanmuuttajien Kokemuksia ("Racism and Discrimination in Finland: Experiences of Immigrants")* (Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 2002), 134–136.
[126] European Commission, *Discrimination in the EU in 2012*, Eurobarometer, 2012.

well as on the television screen.[127] Up until the late 1990's, words like *neekeri* (nigger) and *mustalainen* (blackling/gypsy) were considered acceptable descriptive markers, and comedy sketch-shows would regularly base their jokes on ethnic stereotypes, examples of which include the swindling Roma horsetrader and the drunken, violent Sami herdsman.[128]

Even after these images have fallen from grace, the white Finnish-speaking majority has retained its symbolic superiority, holding on to institutionalist structures that de-facto exclude non-Finns from power via racist practices.[129] Despite their best efforts at integration, many non-Western immigrants find themselves in the margins of Finnish society, unable to find employment that matches their qualifications. Often their qualification are not even properly examined, and even highly-educated individuals often end up working handyman jobs. *Marja Peltola* calls this strata of non-Western residents "the excluded middle-class*"*, pointing out that the weak employment status of non-European migrants cannot be solely explained with their poor language skills or a lack of professional competency, having its origins in the pervasive racist tendencies of the labor market and civil society instead.[130] Her argument is backed by survey data according to which four out of five of all immigrant job applicants report experiences of exclusion and discrimination during employment seeking.[131]

[127] Vesa Puuronen, *Rasistinen Suomi ("Racist Finland")* (Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 2011), 268.
[128] Kaisla Löyttyjärvi, "Erilainen Nuori ('A Different Kind of Youth')," in *En Ole Rasisti, Mutta... ("I Am Not a Racist, But...")* (Tampere: Vastapaino, 2009), 126.
[129] Puuronen, *Rasistinen Suomi ("Racist Finland")*, 268.
[130] Marja Peltola, "Ulossuljettu Keskiluokka: Maahanmuuttajataustaiset Nuoret, Perhe Ja Yhteiskunnallinen Asema ('The Excluded Middle-Class - Second Generation Youth, Family and Social Status,'" in *Maahanmuutto Ja Sukupolvet ("Immigration and Generations")*, Nuorisotutkimusverkoston Julkaisuja 106 (Helsinki: SKS, 2010), 66.
[131] Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, and Vesala, *Rasismi Ja Syrjintä Suomessa: Maahanmuuttajien Kokemuksia ("Racism and Discrimination in Finland: Experiences of Immigrants")*, 128.

Discrimination and Ethnic Prejudice in the Lives of the Second Generation

Given the novelty of immigration as a whole, most of the Finnish literature on the subject has focused on the experiences of the first generation, leaving the second generation less documented. Statistically, the second generation remains small, though their numbers are swiftly growing. In 2007, there were roughly 42 000 Finnish-born persons with two foreign-born parents, most of whom were non-Europeans with an asylum-seeker background. In contrast, children born out of marriages between a native and a non-native parent numbered much higher, consisting of slightly over 78 000 persons in the same year. This group was also much more ethnically Caucasian; in over half of the cases, the non-national parent was of European or North American origin. Whereas almost half of the people with two immigrant parents were yet to become naturalized citizens, only 1.5% of those with one foreign-born and one Finnish parent lacked Finnish citizenship.[132] To this day, the second generation remains very young. In both groups, roughly 90% were under 30 years of age in 2012.[133]

In the lives of the second generation, the boundaries of Finnishness are most keenly felt in the educational system. While most individuals report having had rather carefree childhoods until kindergarden, only a handful go through their nine years of compulsory education without experiencing some sort of systematic discrimination or ethnic categorization. According to Haikkola, very few of the non-European second generation grow up feeling part of the Finnish nation, despite often having Finnish citizenship, Finnish friends, and a total command of the Finnish language. In her observation, attempts to claim membership in the Finnish core

[132] Tuomas Martikainen and Lotta Haikkola, "Johdanto: Sukupolvet Maahanmuuttajatutkimuksessa ('Introduction: Generations in Migration Research')," in *Maahanmuutto Ja Sukupolvet ("Immigration and Generations")*, Nuorisotutkimusverkoston Julkaisuja 106 (Helsinki: SKS, 2010), 29.
[133] Tilastokeskus ("Statistics Finland"), *Ulkomaalaiset Ja Siirtolaisuus 2012 ("Foreigners and Migration 2012 ")*.

population are almost always met with failure, as there is always some ethnic criterion, no matter how minor or trivial, that they fail to fulfil. As such, many end up developing a reactive outgroup identity, identifying with the categories of the immigrant and the outlander despite being neither in any objective sense of the terms.[134]

Of the experiences of the mostly Western "binational" generation, very little is known, though they seem to have an easier time blending in, or at least keeping up with, the mainstream population. In terms of classroom perfomance, they are completely on par with the native population, even surpassing them in some areas, such as language competency. In contrast, pupils of non-European parents rank consistently behind the national average.[135] According to Peltola, this is not due to the undervaluing of education in non-European households but rather a lack of encouragement and support on the side of teachers and their Finnish peers. Those who start out motivated are quickly discouraged by the absence of seats reserved for educated non-nationals in Finnish society.[136]

Experiences of racism and ethnic exclusion are commonly reported, both by children of non-European and European parents alike. According to Rastas, even the slightest deviation from the ethnic norm can serve as an excuse for bullying and ostracizing, much of which goes unnoticed by teachers, who are often unwilling to discuss issues of racism and discrimination in the classroom. Though a significant number of second generation children experience discrimination

[134] Lotta Haikkola, "Etnisyys, Ulkomaalaisuus Ja Suomalaisuus Toisen Sukupolven Luokitteluissa ('Ethnicity, Foreigness and Finnishness in the Categorizations of the Second Generation')," in *Maahanmuutto Ja Sukupolvet ("Immigration and Generations")*, Nuorisotutkimusverkoston Julkaisuja 106 (Helsinki: SKS, 2010), 233–235.
[135] Elina Kilpi, "Toinen Sukupolvi Peruskoulun Päättyessä Ja Toisen Asteen Koulutuksessa ('The Second Generation in the Context of Primary and Secondary Education')," in *Maahanmuutto Ja Sukupolvet ("Immigration and Generations")*, Nuorisotutkimusverkoston Julkaisuja 106 (Helsinki: SKS, 2010), 111.
[136] Peltola, "Ulossuljettu Keskiluokka: Maahanmuuttajataustaiset Nuoret, Perhe Ja Yhteiskunnallinen Asema ('The Excluded Middle-Class - Second Generation Youth, Family and Social Status,'" 77.

on ethnic grounds, the prevailing attitude among teachers seems to be one of denial. Complaints of racism are often downplayed or contested, even in the face of serious emotional trauma and physical harm.[137] Despite the incorporation of multiculturalist principles in the national curricula, tangible measures to combat prejudice and discrimination are not yet part of the teachers' training.[138] As such, state level mission statements about tolerance and celebration of cultural diversity rarely match the actual atmosphere of the Finnish classroom.

Lastly, it serves to note that Finland is one of the few countries in the European Union to impose compulsory service obligations on its citizens. All male citizens are drafted upon turning 18 years age and given a six-to-twelve-month spell in one of the country's garrisons. Though an option for nonmilitary civilian service exists, most conscripts choose to serve in the armed forces; in 2010, roughly 80% of all conscripts chose to military service over it nonmilitary alternative, making Finland one of the most militarised countries in the world.[139]

The second generation presents a normative challenge to conscription regimes, which draw their legitimacy from bounded conceptions of citizenship. In these conceptions, the nation is usually imagined as emerging organically from a bounded cultural unit whose members are then called upon to prove their worthiness through feats of civic virtue.[140] Narratives about the sacrifices of past generations are often invoked to give additional moral weight to the argument. It goes

[137] Rastas, *Rasismi Lasten Ja Nuorten Arjessa: Transnationaalit Juuret Ja Monikulttuuristuva Suomi ("Racism in the Everyday Lives of Children and Adolescents: Transnational Roots and Multiculturalizing Finland")*, 113.
[138] Ibid., 118.
[139] Sami Myllyniemi, ed., *Puolustuskannalla ("On the Defensive: Finnish Adolescents and Military Service")* (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino oy, 2010).
[140] S. Pfaffenzeller, "Conscription and Democracy: The Mythology of Civil-- Military Relations," *Armed Forces & Society* 36, no. 3 (November 13, 2009): 481–504, doi:10.1177/0095327X09351226.

without saying that individuals of foreign backgrounds with multiple, often overlapping memberships fit poorly in this normative framework.

According to a comprehensive 2010 survey measuring the attitudes of young adults towards compulsory service provisions, patriotism emerged as the main motivating force for choosing military service over its nonmilitary alternatives. This was explained to entail a sense of duty towards the Finnish nation and respect for the veterans of the Winter and Continuation Wars.[141] Surprisingly, there was no significant statistical deviation between the answers of the second generation and the core national population. Both groups answered overwhelmingly affirmatively (54% and 60%) when asked if they were willing to die for their country, and both rated themselves closer to the patriotic end of the *patriotic – cosmopolitan scale* employed in the survey.[142] Rather than telling much about the moral compass of the second generation, *Päivi Harinen* and *Antti Kivijärvi* suggest the survey results be interpreted as a plea to belong. For the second generation, the military service represents the rare opportunity to prove their Finnishness through enthusiastic partaking in the most patriotic of activities. [143]

The Finnish Case in the Light of Broader European Realities

As I have tried to show, Finland is a country with a very unique social-political makeup. On one hand, it has a history of bilingualism and civic nationalism. Despite being a newcomer to immigrant accommodation, the country oversaw a swift adoption of progressive integration

[141] Myllyniemi, *Puolustuskannalla ("On the Defensive: Finnish Adolescents and Military Service")*, 40–41.
[142] Antti Kivijärvi and Päivi Harinen, "Kenen Joukossa? Kosmopoliittinen Sukupolvi Ja Kysymykset Kansallisesta Lojaliteetista. ('Amongst Whom? The Cosmopolitan Generation and Questions about National Loyalty')," in *Puolustuskannalla ("On the Defensive: Finnish Adolescents and Military Service")* (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino oy, 2010), 158–68.
[143] Ibid., 168.

strategies, including the core principles of multicultural citizenship. On the other hand, Finland remains an ethnically homogenous country with a very small number of immigrants and social attitudes to match. Though this might sound uniquely paradoxical, one comes to wonder whether the Finnish case is all that special when contrasted with other European nations.

Having compared the practices of symbolic boundary making in 21 European countries, *Chistopher Bail* argues that a certain degree of paradox seems to be the norm. In fact, the national boundaries projected by the public rarely correspond to the state philosophies of integration which are usually emphasized in the literature.[144] Symbolic boundaries usually pertain to the categories of language, culture, race and religion, and often conceal attitudes that are very different from official agenda. The putatively colorblind ethic of French *républicanisme* may mask a society divided along racial lines, while in Britain, the ideal of cultural pluralism might go against the reality of grassroots assimilative pressures. In Denmark, invoking the principle of *Grundtvigianism* or "bounded equality" to distinguish the nation from the colonial atrocities perpetrated by their neighbors might seem to some like the state washing its hands from the everyday racism of Danish society.[145]

In Bail's comparison, Finland ranks among South and East European Countries such as Portugal, Poland and Hungary where the symbolic boundaries pertaining to race, culture and religion remain the strongest. Common to these countries is the sidestepping of earlier waves of intra-European migration and a share of immigrants considerably below the European average.[146]

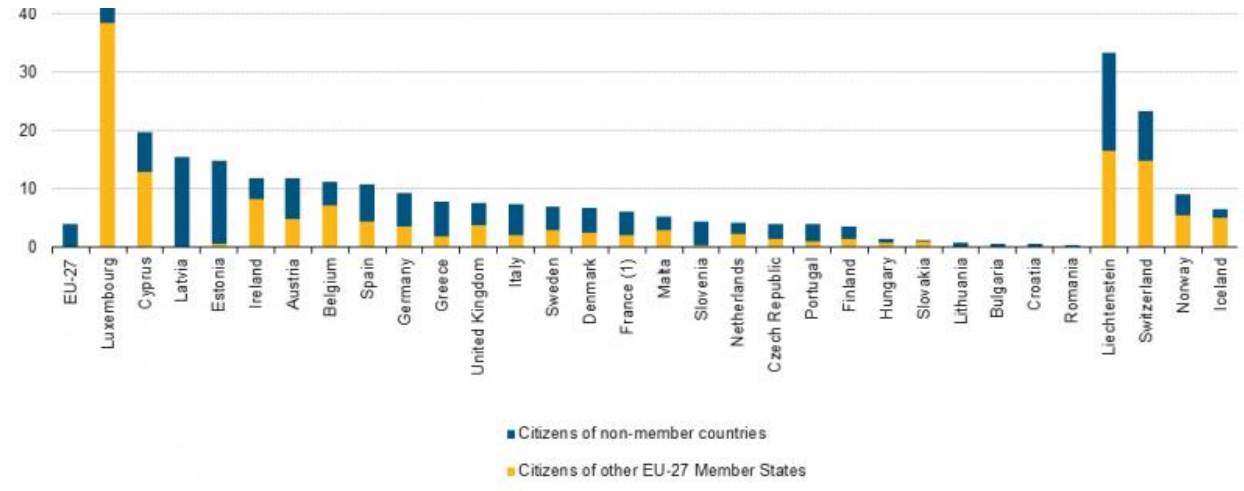
[144] Christopher A. Bail, "The Configuration of Symbolic Boundaries against Immigrants in Europe," *American Sociological Review* 73, no. 1 (February 1, 2008): 37–59.
[145] Ibid., 44.
[146] Ibid., 54.

This, he goes on to argue, manifests as a weak policy framework and an underdeveloped integration discourse.

In Finland, where the principles of social equality and multiculturalism are broadly accepted as political ideals worth pursuing, Bail's argument falls short of its target. Though the symbolic boundaries reign strong, they are much less overt than in Eastern and Southern Europe. Rather than converging on a single category, such as culture, they oscillate across a mosaic of attributes. Borrowing Haikkola's account from earlier, Finnishness can be seen to consist of a very broad criteria of feats both hard and soft, including, but not limited to one's culture, language, accent, appearance, values, personality, body language -- even hobbies and athletic activities.[147] This criteria is then used as a two-headed flail; on one hand, to flexibly to exclude perceived non-Finns from the national core, on the other hand, to subtly deflect accusations of privilege and racism. Should a perceived non-national come to view themselves as Finnish, sooner or later someone will call them out on one item that does not fit the classical national imagery. At the same time, there exists a prevailing normative view that national membership should be based on civic criteria and that racism is unacceptable. It is in this terrain that the lives of the second generation unfold.

[147] Haikkola, "Etnisyys, Ulkomaalaisuus Ja Suomalaisuus Toisen Sukupolven Luokitteluissa ('Ethnicity, Foreigness and Finnishness in the Categorizations of the Second Generation')," 234.

Figure 1: Share of non-nationals in the resident population of EEA/EU member states in 2013



(1) Provisional.
Source: Eurostat (online data code: migr_pop1ctz)

Table 1: Mean Scores of Six Symbolic Boundaries against Immigrants in 21 European countries in 2007

Country	Race	Religion	Language	Culture	Education	Occupation
Austria	2.04	3.27	7.57	7.14	6.67	6.92
Belgium	2.26	2.71	6.99	8.25	6.09	6.25
Britain	2.39	3.26	7.40	7.51	6.29	6.87
Czech Republic	3.64	3.69	6.29	8.24	6.33	7.42
Denmark	1.84	3.57	6.41	6.88	6.28	6.39
Finland	2.81	3.89	6.23	8.18	6.34	6.91
France	2.34	3.20	7.33	7.47	6.30	6.38
Germany	1.52	2.49	7.77	8.00	6.77	7.07
Greece	3.64	5.87	7.78	8.18	7.79	8.22
Hungary	4.12	4.69	7.68	8.95	6.83	8.13
Ireland	2.40	3.47	6.38	6.68	6.12	6.82
Italy	2.55	4.44	5.77	7.17	5.73	6.52
Luxembourg	.93	2.01	8.45	7.95	6.19	6.67
Netherlands	1.90	2.67	7.42	7.90	5.58	6.05
Norway	2.27	3.39	6.25	6.57	5.10	5.89
Poland	2.95	4.79	6.82	6.45	6.38	6.92
Portugal	2.94	3.83	6.00	7.08	6.08	7.47
Slovenia	2.95	3.45	7.50	7.98	6.32	7.21
Spain	2.94	3.91	5.92	7.35	6.09	6.67
Sweden	1.31	2.32	4.35	7.73	4.48	4.84
Switzerland	1.55	2.92	6.15	7.25	6.13	5.98
Mean (all countries)	2.44	3.52	6.78	7.57	6.19	6.74
Min	.93	2.01	4.35	6.45	4.48	4.84
Max	4.12	5.87	8.45	8.95	7.79	8.22
SD	.80	.91	.94	.65	.65	.76

Note: 0 = extremely unimportant; 10 = extremely important.

Source: Christopher Bail - The Configuration of Symbolic Boundaries Against Immigrants in Europe (American Sociological Review 73/1, 2008) p. 49

3. The Research Explained: Collecting and Analysing Narrative Data on the Second Generation

In this chapter, I will describe the empirical part of my research. I will first outline the research questions and the sample gathered, then give a detailed account of the methodology used both during the interview phase and the stage of analysis. Finally, I account for the limitations of my research.

The governing research question this thesis sets out to to answer is quite simply this: *Why do some members of the Second Generation maintain transnational ties into adulthood while others do not, and how do these ties and their underlying dynamics differ from one individual to the next?* In this broad sense, my research shares its central aim with most of the existing scholarship. However, given the intrinsically limited scope of any single research project – no matter how thorough or comprehensive – I chose to narrow my inquiry down to three thematic sub-headings. Although these questions have already been discussed at the end of the first chapter where they are contextualized with existing scholarly findings, I will repeat them here in abridged form. The three sub-research-questions are as follows:

1. How do the transnational choices and dynamics differ between individuals with two foreign-born parents ("The 2.0 generation"; "Second-generation immigrants") and those with one native-born and one-foreign born parent ("The 2.5 generation"; "Children of international marriages")? Though the scholarship of transnationalism

recognizes the need to differentiate between the experiences of the two cohorts, most scholars have focused nigh exclusively on the former to the almost complete exclusion of the latter. This is baffling, especially in the Finnish context, where the "binational" 2.5 generation greatly outnumbers the 2.0 generation.

2. How does ethnicity factor in the lives of the second generation when their lives are scrutinized across ethnic lines? Put differently, how does our perception of the second generation change when we extend our analysis from a singular ethnic group to a number of ethnically-mixed individuals? So far, most of the research has focused on ethnically-bounded samples, and cross-national comparisons have taken place between groups, not individual persons. In my research, I have purposely chosen to go beyond group-centric approaches and give more primacy to the *trans*- part of the transnational lives of the second generation.
3. How does the host society affect and shape the transnational engagements in the second generation? In particular, I wish to account for the effects of ethnic prejudice and discrimination, as well as for the influence of nationalizing and nationalistic discourses and practices (official or unoffical) on the individuals' choices to strengthen or discard their transnational roots. Implicitly included in this question is the need to review the relationship between assimilatory experiences and the creation and maintenance of transnational ties.

To answer these questions within the parameters of a Master-level research, I chose a qualitative, life course approach, conducting biographical interviews with members of the second generation. In gathering my sample, I asked around for people with one or both foreign-born parents, starting with my acquaintances, who then directed me to more people with similar backgrounds. This

method of "snowball sampling" proved very efficient, and I soon had the contact details of over twenty persons fitting the second generation criterion. In addition, two contacts were discovered spontaneously as a result of casual conversations in public. Of the twenty-two potential informants, only twelve were included in the final sample due to time-constraints and the lack of complete willingness on the part of a couple.

All of the interviewed individuals were young adults between 22 and 33 years of age, had Finnish citizenship and spoke fluent, unaccented Finnish.[148] All were unwed at the time of the interview and had no children. All but one were primarily Finland-based and had at least some tertiary education (college, university). Most came from middle-class backgrounds and were financially stable. Though I had not given my sample any concrete ethnic parameters out of a sense of politeness, I desired to avoid informants from the more stigmatized groups of Russians and Somalians, whose experiences have been well-documented in the literature[149] and would have called for an approach stressing ethnic boundaries and intergroup dynamics, which is something I specifically wanted to avoid. For a while, I was also unsure whether to include informants from both the 2.0 and the 2.5 generations in the final sample, or simply focus on the 2.5 generation in the context of past research on the 2.0 generation. In the end the differences between the two cohorts did not turn out as stark as I had expected, leading me to include both in my final sample. The final sample consisted of 12 informants, 10 of which had one Finnish and one foreign-born parent, and two who had two foreign born parents. The informants were given

[148] I am using the word 'unaccented' fully conscious of the fact that in the strictest linguistic sense, there is no such thing as a standard language or a non-accent. For a fantastic in-depth review of the relationship between accent, nationality and ethnic prejudice, see: Rosina Lippi-Green, *English with an Accent: Language, Ideology, and Discrimination in the United States* (Psychology Press, 1997).

[149] For a comprehensive overview of the Somali case, see: Anne Alitolppa-Niitamo, *The Icebreakers: Somali-Speaking Youth in Metropolitan Helsinki with a Focus on the Context of Formal Education* (Helsinki: Vaestoliitto, Vaestontutkimuslaitos, 2004).

fake names upon interviewing to ensure their privacy. The complete breakdown of the sample is as follows:

1. *Hakan* – age 27, university student, mother Finnish, father Turkish
2. *Donovan* – age 31, recent university graduate, mother American, father Finnish
3. *Alexandra* – age 30, employed, mother Polish, father Finnish
4. *Henryk* – Irena's brother, age 25, university student, mother Polish, father Finnish
5. *Irena* – Henryk's sister, age 31, employed, mother Polish, father Finnish,
6. *Valerie* – age 33, employed, soon to begin graduate studies, mother French, father Finnish
7. *Sven* – age 27, employed with studies on the side, mother Finnish, father Swedish
8. *Meriem* – age 29, employed, mother Finnish, father Algerian
9. *Charlie* – age 21, college student, mother Finnish, father British
10. *Anna* – age 26, university student, mother Hungarian, father Finnish

11. *Zhang* – age 24, university student, both parents Chinese
12. *Balázs* – age 21, volunteer worker and university student, both parents Hungarian

Methodology

Narrative Interviewing

Most existing qualitative studies about second generation transnationalism employ a mixed ethnographic approach – commonly in the form of neighborhood observation combined with ethnographic interviews. This is mostly due to the tendency of the scholarship to focus on one or several singular ethnic communities. For scenarios where no clearly bounded ethnic communities exists – or their existence cannot be presupposed – this methodology loses its cutting edge. In the Finnish case, there are very few ethnic groups that would qualify for such an approach,[150] and even the immigrant-heavy neighborhoods of most cities tend to be ethnically heterogenous. For a reasearch hoping to gather information on the binational 2.5 generation – who for the most part blend seamlessly with the mainstream population – the ethnographic approach becomes almost completely ineffective. In my research, I opted for the methodology of snowball sampling and narrative interviews for the reasons that they allow for the gathering of a more dispersed sample and approaching individuals without presupposing ethnic identification.

In social research, *narrative interviewing* (also sometimes called *life-history* or *oral history*)[151] is used mainly in research projects that are biographical in nature. In a narrative interview, the interviewee is asked to present a story of their life experiences - or a specific part or dimension of their lives – in an extempore narrative. The interviewer's task is then to make the interviewee tell the whole story somewhat consistently, while making sure that all events and themes relevant to the research are touched upon.[152]

[150] Namely the Somalian and the Russian communities come to mind, and even their boundedness is debatable.
[151] Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey, "From Structured Questions to Negotiated Text," in *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003), 79–81.
[152] Uwe Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (SAGE, 2009), 173–174.

The narrative interview is begun with a *general narrative question* in which the main topic of the study is roughly outlined. A successful general narrative question is phrased in a way that stimulates the interviewee's narrative account without limiting or overwhelming them. After the interviewee has finished their initial narrative, the interviewer proceeds with a strategy of *narrative probing*,[153] in which narrative fragments that were not completely detailed are inquired about and completed. The last stage of the interview is the so-called *balance stage*, in which the interviewee is invited to analyse their narrative from a bird's eye perspective. The balance stage aims at uncovering possible patterns of meaning and underlying themes that were not initially recognized by the interviewee. At this stage, the interviewees are treated as qualified theoreticians and experts of themselves.[154]

In a narrative interview, it is important that the interviewer take an unassuming role and not interrupt or obstruct the flow of the interview with their persona. A strategy of active listening – a demeanor of relaxed alertness combined with occasional signs of affirmation ('hm's, 'yeah's) – is often preferred to the interjection of comments and evaluations. On the other hand, sharing one's own experiences relevant to the topic is sometimes thought of as good strategy, as it might give the interviewee a sense of being understood and sympathized with.[155] Some researchers even emphasize the need for sufficient common ground between the interviewer and their informants, reasoning that significant cleavages in age, life situation, values, cultural

[153] Ibid., 173.
[154] Ibid.
[155] Mark Rapley and Alec McHoul, "Paying Attention," *Meanjin* 63, no. 4 (2004): 60–67.

backgrounds and/or social status might yield "nightmarish interviews" where no trust is established and there is no sense of meaningful communication between the two parties.[156]

In general, the narrative interview requires an air of relaxation and a willingness for storytelling on the part of the interviewee. Therefore, it is often deemed unsuitable for interview situations in which the relationship between the two parties is hiararchical or overly formal. An interviewee who is reserved, under oath, in a hurry, or otherwise used to giving formal, succint answers to well-delineated questions can easily become frustrated by the relatively unstructured, informal tone of the narrative interview situation. Furthermore, the method rarely works with shy, uncommunicative and reserved people. If the narrative has to be pried or forced, the narrative interview has failed at its purpose and information accrued from it cannot be considered scientifically valid or ethically sound.[157]

The narrative interview proved the ideal method for data gathering for my research. I conducted the first two interviews without any conceptualized methodoly in mind, and when I began familiarizing myself with the methodological literature, I was delighted to find out I had intuitively followed the guidelines to narrative interviewing almost verbatim. The unstructured nature of the narrative inteview proved an advantage, as it enabled my informants to employ their personal style of narrating and naturally emphasize the factors which they felt to be most central to their lives. Overall, all my informants seemed to share the belief about the fluidity and subjectivity of social reality; a more rigidly structured type of inquiry would have likely invited resistance and skepticism over the vocabulary employed, even turning the interviews into debate

[156] Anna Rastas, "Kulttuuri Ja Erot Haastattelutilanteissa. ('Culture and Differences in Interviewing')," in *Haastattelut, Tutkimus, Tilanteet, Vuorovaikutus. ("Interviews, Research, Situations and Communication")* (Tampere: Vastapaino, 2005), 78–101.
[157] Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 179.

situations. Having conducting the interviews, I find myself agreeing with *Jack Douglas'* take on interviewing, in which strict how-to guides, structured questions and methodological pedantism are abolished for a more free-flowing, situationally defined way of inquiring.[158] Allowing the interview to dart off in unexpected directions may yield insights that are truly fresh and not slave to the researcher's own agenda.

The interviews were conducted mostly in the summer of 2014, bar two, which were conducted during the winter of 2014/2015. Nine of the interviews were conducted in person and in the Finnish language, and took place in mostly relaxed surroundings, such as parks, cafés and restaurants. One interview was conducted spontaneously on an aeroplane and in Hungarian. In total, ten interviews were conducted, one which included three informants. Though triple interviews are not usually part of standard life history approaches, the one I conducted proved surprisingly fruitful, yielding some of the most informative data of all the inteviews conducted. This might be due to the fact that all the informants had known each other for years beforehand, and their individual narratives were to a high degree bound up with each other. All in all, most informants responded very favorably to the interviews, which they deemed as a welcome and often unique opportunity to talk openly about their often tumultuous experiences.

The interviews were begun with a general question, in which the informants were asked to tell their life story in the context of their parental background and transnational experiences. As the informants came from wildly different backgrounds and had diverging life paths, the interviews took very different courses, with no two narrative structures being completely parallel to one another. Though I had expected the informants to recount their lives in chronological order, I

[158] Jack D. Douglas, *Creative Interviewing* (SAGE Publications, 1984).

soon realized most people preferred a more thematic way of talking about their past, discussing bygone events in the context of other similar experiences over a span of years. After the initial phase of narrating, I inquired about the themes I felt most central to the narrator's account. During this stage, I also asked about the themes I believed to be important that had not been touched upon during the initial narrative. In the cases where my inquiries failed to trigger a substantial narrative account, I simply moved on the next theme. In the last stage, I invited the informants to comment on their own accounts through their present-day perspective, if they had not done so already during the previous narrative stages. At this stage, I also asked them about their identifications and sympathies vis-à-vis their (two) parental homeland(s).

Analysis of Narrative Data

Data gathered from interviews can be analysed in a variety of ways, the method of choice largely depending on the aims of the researcher. At its simplest, interview data can be treated like any other form of qualitative data, and analysed according to the general principles of *Qualitative Content Analysis* (QCA). QCA is, in reality, an umbrella term for various ways of going through verbal qualitative data in a principled manner, involving various strategies for coding and thematically rearranging textual segments according to the researcher's own design. *Hsiu-Fang Hsieh* and *Sarah Shannon* call it "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns"[159] whereas *Michael Patton* defines it as "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core

[159] Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," *Qualitative Health Research* 15, no. 9 (November 2005): 1278, doi:10.1177/1049732305276687.

consistencies and meanings".[160] In practice, QCA forms the methodological basis for any form of qualitative research which involves abductive reasoning and reconstruction of verbal data in a systematic fashion. Rather than forming a closed methodological system, QCA is better understood as the basic toolset which makes the use of more specialized methodologies possible. Most researchers whose work is qualitative in nature end up employing some form of QCA, irrespective of whether they conceptualize it as such.

Though QCA is often used on its own for analysing structured and semi-structured interviews to great effects, it is not so readily suited for the more thorough analysis of narrative data. *Gabriele Rosenthal*, whose work includes the reconstruction of German war memories through biographical inquiry,[161] points out that the analysis of narrative life accounts should always consist of two levels: the level of analysing the actual experienced life *history* and the level of analysing the narrated life *story*. The purpose of the former (analysis of the life *history*) is to reconstruct the biographical meaning of the experience *at the time it happened*, staying true to the original chronology of events. The purpose of the latter (analysis of the life *story*) is, in contrast, to dicover *the present significance* of the experience through looking at the way the story is narrated.[162] One of the way of separating the two is to distinguish between narration, which can be seen as representing a past perspective, and argumentation, which is always connected to the autobiographer's present state of mind.[163]

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[160] Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods* (SAGE Publications, 2002), 453.
[161] Gabriele Rosenthal, "German War Memories: Narrability and the Biographical and Social Functions of Remembering," *Oral History* 19, no. 2 (October 1, 1991): 34–41.
[162] Gabriele Rosenthal, "Reconstruction of Life Stories : Principles of Selection in Generating Stories for Narrative Biographical Interviews," *The Narrative Study of Lives* 1, no. 1 (1993): 2.
[163] Fritz Schütze, "Enticement and analysis of narrations of thematically relevant stories as part of sociological field research: described by means of a project involving research on municipal power structures," in *Kommunikative Sozialforschung: Alltagswissen und Alltagshandeln, Gemeindemachtforschung, Polizei, politische*

In Rosenthal's mind, reconstructing both the life history and the life story is the only way to discover the deeper, intersubective meanings of individual narratives. By subordinating the narrative data to a pre-determined category and analysing textual segments outside their broader narrative context, conventional QCA only manages to touch upon the life *history* while effectively missing the more subjective life *story*. In Rosenthal's own words,

> *The stories which are selected by the biographer to present his life history cannot be regarded as a series of isolated experiences, laid down in chronological order like so many strata of sedimentary rock […] life stories are always set against the backdrop of a biographical structure of meaning, which determines the selection of the episodes chosen and omitted by the autobiographer.*[164]

For the effective analysis of narrative accounts, Rosenthal recommends a fivefold procedure. First, the 'hard' or 'objective' biographical facts and events are extracted and shortly summarized. Second, the life *story* is reconstructed, meaning the presentation and analysis of the original narrative output. Third comes the reconstruction of the life *history* – the chronicling of experienced events and their biographical meaning at the time of their occurrence. In step four, the individual text segments are analysed in detail. In the final, fifth step, the life story and the life history are contrasted and the individual text segments then presented against this dual backdrop.[165] In this sense, the analysis and the reconstruction and presentation of the narrative accounts are inextricably linked; in fact, they are part of the same process.

Erwachsenenbildung, ed. Ansgar Weymann (München: Fink, 1976), 159–260, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-56350.

[164] Rosenthal, "Reconstruction of Life Stories," 3.

[165] Ibid., 5–6.

In my research, I settled for a mixed methodology, implementing aspects of both Qualitative Content Analysis and Rosenthal's method of narrative analysis. I first transcribed the recorded interviews in *Microsoft Word* with the help of an appropriate playback software. The final transcripts measured about 20.000 words, or 50 single-spaced pages. I then proceeded to code all of the transcribed text and arrange the coded segments under different thematic headings, with each theme linking to a specific time-period in the informant's life history. During this time, I also extracted the 'hard' biographic data, and separated the present-tense, argumentative textual segments from the past-tense, narrative accounts. Once all the coded segments had been restructured under their appropriate thematic headings, I arranged them in chronological fashion, effectively recreating the individual life histories. These life histories were then compounded by a briefer analysis of the narrated life *stories* – that is, the examination of the narrative choices, views, arguments and the general attitude of each informant.

My choice to focus on the life *histories* over the life *stories* was deliberate. Since my aim was to foremostly recount the informants' life choices and their reasons for making those choices *at the time they happened,* giving primacy to the reconstruction and analysis of the life *histories* over their underlying narrative dynamics seemed justified. In this light, the painstaking analysis of the narrative structure seemed both overly taxing and analytically excessive. My reconstruction of the life *stories* was thus more cursory in nature, while still providing an adequate narrative backdrop to the chronological retelling of the life histories.

Given the sheer length of the individually reconstructed life histories and the analysed narratives, several omissions had to be made. In the end, I decided to present the life histories in one simultaneous, interplaying narrative. An abridged and annotated form of this narrative is presented in the next chapter.

Limitations and Caveats

No single research project can hope to capture all facets of the researched phenomena, and this thesis is no exception. In spite of hoping to provide new insights on the transnational lives of the second generation as a whole, I cannot claim to have absolute knowledge about all the possible trajectories their lives may take. At most, my findings can hint at possibile scenarios hitherto overlooked or underplayed in the scholarship.

Neither the sample nor the research can be considered representative, unbiased or objective in the strictest sense. Firstly and foremostly, the size of the sample and the type of the sampling method, though sufficient for a research of this level, remains much too small and random to serve as a basis for reliable generalizations. Secondly, the information gathered from interviews cannot be regarded as objective – it is a well-known fact that when it comes to social reality, the observer's account cannot be separated from the observed phenomena. Concepts such as transnationalism are at the very best helpful markers in delineating social reality, but they do not have an objective existence of their own. Even in the narrower sense where objective is deemed as "sufficiently factual", narrative accounts should not be used to gain factual accounts of events.[166] Instead, subjectivity and a certain degree of interpretation, even fictionalization, must be expected and indeed embraced.

Thirdly and finally, the final sample has a decided middle-class-bias, with all of the informants having completed or planning to complete a degree in higher education. In the same breath, it must be said that Finland has a very highly educated average population, with almost a third of its citizens ending up with a Master's degree or an equivalent. Though the second generation

[166] Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*, 180.

cannot be easily extracted from these numbers, qualitative inquiries indicate that they follow largely in their parents' footsteps.[167] In the case of most European, North-American and East-Asian nationalities, this would mean eventually obtaining a college/university education. It should also be noted that Finland offers free university access to all Finnish and European citizens, including unqualified financial support for all students permanently residing in the country. Therefore, the highly educated nature of the informants cannot be considered completely exceptional.

[167] Tilastokeskus ("Statistics Finland"), *Ulkomaalaiset Ja Siirtolaisuus 2012 ("Foreigners and Migration 2012 ")*, 47.

4. The Comparative Reconstruction of the Twelve Life-Histories and the Analysis of the Narrated Life Stories

In this chapter, I present a comparative reconstruction of the informants' life histories in a sequence of chronologically arranged themes or events. This sequence could be divided into three rough stages. In the first stage, the informants recount their backgrounds, revisit their old family homes, and recall memories of holiday visists to their (other) home country. At this stage, accounts of language acquisition and host-society networks are also given. In the second stage, the informants recall their school years, reconstructing their experiences of assimilating and conforming to the categories and expectations of Finnish society. In the third stage, the informants give accounts about their adult-life transnational experiences, including descriptions of their present-day transnational ties as well as experiences of reconnecting with the (second) parental homeland.

Following the reconstruction of the life histories, I conduct a brief comparative analysis of the original narratives, or the narrated life *stories,* using Gabriele Rosenthal's terminology. During this phase, I also give accounts of the self-identification the informants and their present-day relationship with their (other) parental homeland.

The Backgrounds of the Informants

The twelve informants are a diverse lot, coming from nine distinct cultural backgrounds: Turkish, American, Polish, Algerian, French, Swedish, British, Hungarian and Chinese. Ten of the informants – Hakan, Donovan, Meriem, Alexandra, Henryk, Irena, Valerie, Sven, Charlie and Anna – could be characterized as members of the so-called generation 2.5, having one foreign-born and one Finnish parent. In most of the cases, the two parents had met in the foreign-born parent's home country and later relocated to Finland to start a family. Hakan, Donovan, Alexandra, Henryk, Charlie and Anna were born in Finland shortly after their parents' relocation to the country. Irena was born before her family had completed the move, being four at the time her parents moved to Finland. Sven was born in Finland while on a family visit. The family lived in Sweden for a very brief period, settling down in Finland when Sven was one.

Of the ten aforementioned informants, Meriem and Valerie stand out in having spent most of their childhood in their non-Finnish father's home country. Meriem was nine when her Algeria-based family decided to relocate to Finland due to the outbreak of the Algerian civil war. In contrast, Valerie was eleven when her parents separated and her Finnish mother made the decision to leave France and take her children with her.

The remaining two informants, Balázs and Zhang, have two non-Finnish parents. Balázs was born in Finland some years after his Hungarian parents' decision to seek employment in the country. In Zhang's case, his Chinese parents did not leave for Finland until he was four.

What follows below is a comparative reconstruction of the twelve life histories. Hoping to preserve as much of the original voice of the informants as possible, I consciously eschewed paraphrasing in favor of direct quotations.

Childhood, Family Networks and Holiday Visits

Home Atmosphere and Language Acquisition

When recounting their childhood experiences, most of the informants recall their family home as a place where both of the parental cultures were present in some way. The way the two cultures were balanced was usually connected to family dynamics, with the culture of the dominant parent often ending on top.

> Donovan: *Our home was very American. Mom was in charge of the house, dad was the breadwinner. […] Mom cooked American – basic Finnish foods like fish or potatoes did not have any role in her kitchen. […] Mom saw to it that I got an American upbringing – politeness, charisma and social skills were all emphasized. It was not strict, though […] My sisters and I were given the freedom to experiment, and we could watch as much TV as we wanted.*
>
> Alexandra: *My mother was dominant, my father… he was your stereotypical quiet Finn. […] Home was a mix of Polish and Finnish influences, maybe more Polish. We had Polish customs. We went to a Roman Catholic church and us kids had to go to Sunday school. […] Mother would read us Polish fairytales. Then we'd say our evening prayers together.*
>
> Meriem: *Our house was Algerian, though we had some Finnish things. […] Father was a strong figure in our family. Maybe even authoritarian, but not overly so. He did not demand that my sisters and I wear the veil, or anything like that. [Yet] he was the one to decide about things and had the legal authority to do so. When mother wanted to do something, she'd wait father to come home and ask him first.*

In the instances where the other parental culture was not actively enforced, the children nonetheless had access to toys, pictures or media which encapsulated that culture. These cultural artifacts would often become a treasured possession.

> Hakan: *Dad was opposed to conservative, Muslim Turks and their nationalism. We nonetheless had Turkish TV channels at home. I would watch a lot of Turkish cartoons. I really liked them. […] They had a special significance to me as a kid.*
>
> Valerie: *[Living in France] I had Finnish books, and Finnish records – for me, it was extremely important that I had Finnish music. I would listen to [my Finnish records] over and over and sing along. I even had a notebook where I'd write down the lyrics – my French peers would then ask me to sing; they were so interested in my Finnishness!*

In the case of Balázs and Zhang, home appeared as a cultural island in an otherwise Finnish ocean. Whereas Balázs's parents saw this as a challenge, Zhang's parents did not think much of it.

> Balázs: *Our household was Hungarian. My parents always emphasized how important it is to preserve my Hungarianness, to be proud of it. […] They made doubly sure I did not get too Finnish or develop an accent.*
>
> Zhang: *Home was Chinese. Not because my parents insisted on it, but because it was the only way it could have been. […] I was encouraged to go out and learn the [Finnish] culture. […] Before going to school, my parents even got me a Finnish tutor.*

Family dynamics also had an influence over the informants' language acquisition. In families where the foreign-born parent was dominant or the (second) parental culture strongly embedded, the children inevitably acquired both languages. The process was not always cheerful, however.

> Donovan: *Mom never learned Finnish well, […] [so when mom was present] everyone in our family spoke English to one another. When it was me and dad, he'd speak Finnish to me.*
>
> Alexandra: *Yeah, [mother] spoke Polish to us and expected us to speak back. If we responded in Finnish, she'd say "I don't understand". It was frustrating – as kids, we would've liked to speak Finnish. […] Polish felt weird and embarrassing, somehow.*

For some of the parents, bilingualism very much a conscious aim, and in the case of Sven, something that was taken for granted.

> Sven: *Swedish was the predominant language at home, though mom and I spoke Finnish to each other. […] Most of my friends were bilingual [in Finnish and Swedish]. It was nothing special.*
>
> Zhang: *At home, we spoke Chinese, before and after coming to Finland. My parents taught me Chinese in a very systematic way, with schoolbooks and all. And good thing they did – it let me with a relatively high proficiency in the language.*
>
> Anna: *Mother addressed us in Hungarian, Father in Finnish. Even to each other, my parents would speak in their own languages. We had an equal share of books and*

> *cartoons in Finnish and Hungarian. It was all very evenly balanced. Only later did I learn this was something [my parents] had decided beforehand.*

Of the twelve informants, Hakan, Meriem and Valerie were the only ones not raised bilingually. For Meriem and Valerie, this would prove a particularly regrettable decision.

> Valerie: *Mother decided against teaching us Finnish. In the 80's, bilingualism was thought to be a problematic thing – something that confuses children. So, for practical reasons, I was addressed in French. […] This was bad, since I had to learn the language from scratch [upon relocating]*.
>
> Meriem: *For whatever reason, mother did not speak Finnish with me when I was little. A crappy choice, if you ask me. […] I ended up struggling quite a bit because of it.*

Transnational Ties, Family Visists, Migration and Host Society Co-Ethnics

All twelve informants report having had active family links to the (second) parental homeland during their childhood and adolescent years, though the size and intensity of these connections varied somewhat. The fathers of Sven and Charlie had no siblings, and their family network was limited to their paternal grandparents. When their grandparents passed away, the only meaningful connection to the second parental homeland fell away and their families stopped visiting. For Anna, the lack of immediate family was compensated for an abundance of family friends who took over as the primary "transnational hubs" when her grandmother's health lessened. In the case of Donovan, Balázs, Alexandra, Henryk and Irena, the family network was extensively developed, comprising of multiple, geographically separate hubs in the second parental homeland. These networks would also function symmetrically; the families would not only visit but sometimes also receive visitors in Finland.

Memories of holiday visits to the (second) parental homeland were vividly recounted in all of the narratives. During childhood, these visits were almost always anticipated and joyful occasions and would leave strong emotional imprints on the informants. Many of the recollections entailed vivid sensory descriptions of sights, smells, colors and temperature. The (second) parental homeland would thus be perceived not only through stories and concepts, but with whole-body cognition.

> Donovan: *My first memories are from the US. From St. Petersburg, Florida, in fact. […] The white sandy beaches, the lizards crawling in the garden in the morning… the ambience of the sea, the unhurried, spontaneous way people seemed to carry themselves. I have so many intensive memories from those times!*
>
> Valerie: *We had a cottage in the Turku archipelago which we would visit every summer. […] [In addition] we'd spend every second Christmas with my Finnish grandparents. […] Finland had a huge place in my imagination. It was almost like a scene from a fairy tale – [In France] I would dream of the magical feel of Finnish summers and winters. We lived in shabby, congested neighborhoods, so it helped. […] Whenever I needed to escape, I'd invoke the smells and sounds of [the Finnish countryside].*
>
> Anna: *[Looking back to my mother's hometown in Hungary] I most remember the warmth and that it would get very dark at night. The pidgeons would sit on lamp posts and rooftops and croon all the time – I'd often wake up to their sound. […] Family friends would often come over spontaneously, they'd stay and talk, and […] no one seemed to mind. Time and schedules did not seem to exist there.*

For Sven, the two parental homelands were not perceived as separate due to their geographic and cultural proximity.

> Sven: *Sweden was a place for family visits – when grandmother was still alive, I'd spend my summers there. […] All in all, Sweden felt very much like Finland. When I was little, I did not even think of Sweden as a foreign country. […] My Swedish grandmother's house was very much like my Finnish grandmother's house. [In both places] I'd go out and play with the other children and blend right in.*

In addition to transborder networks, several of the families had local connections to other families of similar backgrounds. In Donovan's case, this network was more ephemeral and

lacked a common ethnic denominator. In the case of Sven, Alexandra, Henryk and Irena and Balázs the local network was highly developed and consisted of co-ethnics.

> Donovan: *Our family knew a lot of other families that had similar, binational backgrounds. […] It felt like the most natural thing in the world – that at least one of your parents was from somewhere else. […] In elementary school, I had a friend with Ethiopian parentage and another whose father was Tunisian. […] I suppose our experiences [of not being fully Finnish] united us, though it did not occur to us to think of it like that back then.*
>
> Sven: *[When it comes to Swedish-speaking families], the circles are really small. All Swedish-speaking youth in my region knew one another, and our families knew each other through the kids, sometimes because they themselves were former classmates. […] Swedish-speakers call this the duckpond effect – if you make your nest here, you cannot avoid being part of the flock.*
>
> Alexandra: *[Our hometown] had a tightly knit network of Polish families. Our parents knew one another and even had an association, the group for Finnish-Polish friendship. It was one big family. […] We [pointing to Henryk and Irena] would hang out with other juniors of the tribe.*

In contrast, Hakan's father made made the conscious choice not to associate his family with co-ethnics.

> Hakan: *When I was a kid, my father did not like other Turkish people so much and would not associate with them. He though that – how should I put it – he criticized them for not being able to navigate Finnish society […] the fact that they all seemed to have a Kebab restaurant and speak bad Finnish annoyed the hell out of him. […] He would not get close to them, and as a result neither would I. […] to this date, I still don't know any other Finnish Turks personally.*

Society and Assimilation

Though central to their childhood experiences, many of the informants report a waning of interest in their family backgrounds as they reached their teenage years. During this time, the informants would feel vulnerable, even embarrassed about their parentage and strive to cover it up by assimilatory practices. Many would attempt to forgo their childhood interests for a more

socially acceptable collection of hobbies and personality traits. As the informants matured, however, they would inevitably come out of repression and begin to reconnect with their background. Alexandra, Henryk and Irena gave expression to this dynamic brilliantly at a particularly memorable triple-interview moment.

> Irena: *I was ashamed of my Polishness. On the bus, I'd get red faced when my mother spoke Polish within earshot of the other passangers. I didn't want to accentuate it in any fashion.*
>
> Alexandra: *Yeah, one was ashamed of it, somehow. Especially in elementary and middle school. Poland was an embarrassing country, being eastern and Slavic…*
>
> Henryk: *[…] though in high school, it started to feel like a big advantage.*
>
> Alexandra: *And now it is the coolest thing ever!*

Charlie, Anna, Hakan and Sven report having experienced a gradual loss of interest in the other parental home country during their middle school years. This manifested as less frequent visits and more time spent with Finnish peers. For Meriem and Valerie, change came much more abruptly upon their families' decision to relocate to Finland. Living in the country turned out to be a very different experience from holiday visists, and rosy memories soon became soiled by somber experiences of foreigness and exclusion. The trauma caused by suboptimal social realities was further exacerbated by a complete upheaval of parental dynamics, eventually leading to the breaking up of the family.

> Meriem: *Everything changed. My mother became the head of the family. This was her country, and she alone could speak the language. Father had to rely on her […] and his authority shrank. […] My sister rebelled and insisted on her independence. This was too much for father. […] Eventually my parents got divorced. [...] I missed Algeria, I did not feel at home in Finland. I felt as though everything had been okay in Algeria. I didn't accept the way things had changed. I became sullen and resistive. […] I felt as though I had to reconstruct myself really fast, but I didn't. It was such a big shock – a person just cannot take that much change at once and not get disoriented*

> Valerie: *The move to Finland very rough. I had idealized Finland so much, and the society we moved to did not correspond to my fantasies. In '92, Finland was very much a backwater place compared to France. People were simply not used to diversity. I remember the ride on the school bus. Everyone stared – the kids, even the driver, they stared at my non-Finnish features. I found it very disturbing and hurtful. […] Then there was the language barrier – add that to the foreigness of the culture and the general tumult of the teenage years, the fact that dad did not come with us and eventually got divorced from my mom… yeah, it was quite a shock. I felt I had to bury much [of my negative emotions] within me. [Those years] left many scars, some of which I bear to this day.*

During childhood, many informants developed an intuitive understanding of the symbolic boundaries of Finnish society. Even those who looked Finnish and spoke the language would occasionally encounter situations where their background was exposed to the public. In these situations, the informants often felt embarrassed about their non-Finnish side, and many later chose to hide it.

> Donovan: *When I was a child, there were very few non-Finns in the country. I remember how heads turned whenever my mother and I spoke English to one another in public. It was pretty embarrasing.*
>
> Charlie: *I hated it when dad would accompany me to soccer practice. […] As we approached the field, I'd ask him to pretend he was Finnish.*
>
> Anna: *There was a time when I felt ashamed about my mother's Hungarianness. […] I felt vulnerable when there were other people around us when we spoke [in Hungarian]. In my mind's eye, I could see them judging us, thinking that we were Russian, or something.*

Not everyone had the choice to hide their non-Finnish side. Like Valerie, Meriem felt herself marked by the way people looked at her.

> Meriem: *I could read it from the stares of others that I looked different. I didn't think I looked any special or abnormal. I was used to the different ways the members of my family looked. For me, difference was normal. […] others started telling me my father was dark and my mother was white. Soon enough they'd tell me I was different, too. At that point I realized I was not Finnish. But neither did I want to be one! I just could not get it in my head that people insisted on categorizing me.*

Differences often became accentuated in the classroom. At this stage, some of the informants were given special attention in the form of language education and tutoring. However, these integrationist endeavors were often pitted against a general lack of common ground and understanding on the behalf of peers and teachers, many of whom felt bewildered, even challenged by the informants' special backgrounds.

> Donovan: *My American side manifested as constant chatting. I couldn't just sit quiet and concentrate. I was much more active than my [Finnish] classmates, who seemed more naturally predisposed to sit in silence. […] English lessons were especially painful. I spoke better English than any of my teachers. […] It was very awkward for both parties involved.*
>
> Meriem: *I found the Finnish classroom really foreign. The way the other children behaved – I thought it was so disrespectful. […] I was always the different one. I took Finnish as a second language, Arabic classes and lessons in the Qu'ran. I was always being removed from the classroom to attend my special things. I was the kid with special needs. I suppose it was really good they provided all that extra teaching, but it didn't help me fit in and find friends.*
>
> Valerie: *I was placed in a normal Finnish class, though [my sister and I] received special tutoring. So it wasn't as if we weren't cared for. The school went great lengths to see that we would acquire a high enough level of proficiency in Finnish. It was not much fun though. […] French classes were an especially bad time and they made me really sad and insecure. My teacher did not know what to do with me so she gave me crossword puzzles. I'd just sit in the corner and do them. It was disenheartening. During this time, my French deteriorated considerably.*

Incidents of namecalling, bullying and discrimination due to one's background come up in six of the narratives. For Irena, Henryk, Meriem and Valerie, the bullying was more systematic and went on for years, whereas for Hakan and Balázs, the incidents were more sporadic and spontaneous in nature.

> Meriem: *I was excluded right away. [My classmates] told me I didn't speak, act or look like a Finnish person. One girl even called me nigger. I looked her in the eye and realized she really meant it.*

> Valerie: *[At school,] the kids would point out my darker features. […] they called me a French fry.*
>
> Balázs: *I have been called a dirty Jew, a gypsy, whatnot. Whenever someone wanted to pick on me, my Hungarianness was always the first item on the table.*

Out of the twelve informants, only Charlie, Zhang and Sven report feeling completely welcome and accepted among their native-born classmates. Zhang was eventually enrolled in an international school which, despite consisting of a predominantly Finnish student body, had a positive and tolerant atmosphere. For Sven, going to Swedish-speaking schools resulted in his almost complete assimilation into the local Swedish-speaking minority.

> Zhang: *During elementary and middle school, I went to an international school with a good reputation. It had a very open-minded atmosphere. All the teaching was given in English, too. The kids were well-mannered and didn't suffer from growing pains. I felt as if I was part of an upper-class clique. I never had any issues, I fit right in.*
>
> Sven: *As I grew up in Finland and went to school with [the Swedish-Finnish kids], I became more Swedish-Finnish. I can see it in the way I speak [Swedish]. When I was little, I'd speak Rikssvenska like my father; nowadays, I find myself speaking with a Finlandssvensk coastal dialect,*[168] *especially when I hang out with my [Swedish-speaking] Finnish friends. I don't think anyone could tell I am not originally Swedish-Finnish [in the minority sense], nor do I think anyone would care – as long as you speak the language, it doesn't matter what your background is.*

In the informants' narratives, high school often became an important turning point for the informant's relationships with the (second) parental homeland. For Hakan, Donovan and Anna, their high school years became marked by a conscious desire to identify and reconnect with the second parental homeland. It was during this time that Balázs, Valerie and Charlie decided they would either go on a student exchange or continue their studies in the (other) home country. For

[168] *Rikssvenska* denotes Swedish as it is officially spoken in Sweden. By contrast, *Finlandssvenska* refers to the Swedish dialects spoken alongside the Finnish coast and in Åland.

Meriem, this period was characterized by finding her own niché among other foreign-born students.

> Hakan: *High school was a much nicer story. Because of the more open and tolerant atmosphere, I'd wear my Turkish side more visibly. I'd look at it and seriously ask myself, what does this, you know, mean to me? What's its relevance to my life? Suddenly I didn't want to be totally Finnish anymore, I wanted to be closer to my father's culture.*
>
> Donovan: *High school was a therapeutic experience. […] Most my rascal friends either dropped out or opted for a vocational education, and I was left to my own devices. This turned out to be a good thing. I would spend a lot of time alone, figuring stuff out. During this time, my American identity began to blossom. I'd start playing American football and follow American politics. When 9/11 happened, I was devastated by how trivially most Finns seemed to respond to it. During the war in Iraq, attitudes towards America got deeply negative. […] Though I opposed the war, I couldn't stand the way most people would paint [the whole American nation] with a broad brush. […] Whenever I'd hear stereotyped comments about Americans, I'd let them hear about it.*
>
> Meriem: *At the end of middle school, I decided to go to a high school on the other side of Helsinki. It was so refreshing to start with a blank slate. […] [The school] was in a poorer neighborhood but the atmosphere was much more welcoming. There, I'd get to know others like me, the so called 'New Finns'. Your accent, your clothes and your parents didn't matter all that much anymore. […] Some of the people I befriended in high school are with me to this day.*

For the male informants, their coming of age at the end of high school meant having to select between military service and its civilian alternative. Charlie, Donovan, Henryk and Sven decided on a spell in the army, whereas Hakan and Zhang opted for civilian service. Balázs was exempted from service due to a physical condition. Out of the seven informants, Zhang alone reported basing his decision on his non-Finnish background. For most of the rest, their choice was more a matter of convenience, the military alternative being preferred for its shorter duration. None reported even so much as thinking about the potential incompatibility of their background with the philosophical underpinnings of the Finnish army during their period of service. Overall, the general attitude of the informants seemed to be one of pragmaticism and nonchalance.

> Donovan: *I didn't think much of the whole thing. During my six months, I did not bring up my American side in any way. In the army, you just go along with the rest. No one knows your first name, much less your background. It is not about you as an individual.*
>
> Sven: *[The Army] is a democratic institution. Everyone is the same age, looks the same and dresses the same. No one asks about your past. You do your duties and keep your mouth shut.*

For Zhang, serving in the Finnish military seemed not only an unappealing, but an outright preposterous idea.

> Zhang: *My relationship with Finland is strictly business. I have no intentions to die for this country. Finland is not mine and will never be.*

The Maintenance and Development of Transnational Ties into Adulthood

By the time they reached adulthood, most of the informants had become transnational in name only. Only Balázs, Alexandra and Irena had maintained relatively frequent contact with their transborder families, and even these links had often been eclipsed by their Finland-based social lives. Hakan, Meriem, Valerie, Anna, Zhang, Alexandra and Henryk report feeling at least somewhat distanced from their (second) parental homeland when they turned eighteen. For Anna, Zhang Hakan and Valerie, the maintenance of crossborder ties had become a chore. Rather than seeing the family network as social capital, the informants recalled feeling guilty about the lack of commonalities between them and their family members and embarrassed about the decay of the second parental language. All of them recognized the need to built new connections should they wish to preserve their relationship with the (second) home country.

> Hakan: *I like my Turkish family and all but the fact remains I am not very close to them. I don't have much at all in common with them, I speak poor Turkish, and our lives are just too far apart. […] I only started building real ties to Turkey when I lived there for a year as an exchange student. It was my first chance to reconnect with the country for real.*

> Valerie: *By the time I was in my late teens, my ties to France were almost completely gone. I wanted to abandon them. [The notion of returning] felt too painful and repulsive. […] My French was in shambles, and my friends no longer wrote me. I didn't even talk with my father that much. […] Had I not decided to go on a student exchange, chances are [my French side] would have left me.*
>
> Zhang: *I have never been in direct touch with my [China-based] family. When I've gone there, it has always been with either mom or dad. I don't think I'd have much in common with them. Our lives are so different. […] My Chinese is not strong enough for writing meaningful letters or for chatting online. […] I hope [my upcoming internship] will help me re-experience the country on my own terms.*

For those wishing to build and reinforce their personal links to the homeland, study, internship and volunteer work opportunities provided a particularly lucrative avenue for reconnecting. Out of the twelve informants, Hakan, Alexandra, Valerie and Anna ended up completing part of their university degree in the second parental homeland, whereas Meriem and Zhang chose to intern at the Finnish diplomatic mission in their (other) home country. Charlie and Balázs's return was more long-term in nature; Charlie began a four-year degree in an English univerity, whereas Balázs got involved in humanitarian volunteer work followed by studies at an Evangelical Christian academy.

Reconnecting often turned out to be hard work. Many informants realized their language skills were either outdated or simply not up to par with their (second) home country peers. Other found that they did not fit in the (second) parental home society or that their perception of membership was not being reflected back to them. Hakan, Valerie and Alexandra felt the pressure to improve their language skills and improve their cultural capital. For Anna and Meriem, reconciling their own self-image with the identifications of others became the most pressing issue. Many of these experiences were initially uncomfortable and humbling, leading the informants to re-evaluate their relationship with both home countries. Successful resolutions, however, were rewarded by an intense sense of satisfaction and personal expansion.

Hakan: *What annoyed me about Turkey is that whenever I'd speak Turkish to people – in a store or restaurant – they'd compliment me on my Turkish skills, then ask for my name. When I would give them my name, they'd be really surprised and ask: "How can you speak such poor Turkish?" In the end, I'd just tell them I was from Finland. It became such a drag to be shamed for my language skills. […] Also, in Turkey, people are so chatty. I realized I was very Finnish when I found myself wishing people would stop talking to me […] and just leave me alone in my quiet for a moment.*

Alexandra: *When I arrived in Krakow, I quickly realized my Polish was not as well-developed as I had hoped. I didn't get discouraged, I went to Polish lessons three times a week alongside my actual classes. I also made an effort to hang out with the local students, not just the international ones. After the first semester, I was really getting into it. I got friends among the locals, who introduced me to more people outside the university. I eventually met a group of Poles who studied Finnish. Figure that out! We had gettogethers where I'd speak Polish and they'd speak Finnish […] When the year came to an end, I felt like the party was just getting started. I had became totally enamored with the country. I even contemplated moving there for good, but then my reason got the best of me.*

Valerie: *I lived with a host family because my father was busy with work. Though it was a bumpy road, I got so much satisfaction from that year. My French came back with a vengeance. […] in the end, I could even read Rousseau and pass the French matriculation examination which is kind of a big deal, even for the locals. […] I felt though I had been reconstructed, rejuvenated. When I returned to Finland, I felt like a totally new person.*

Anna: *Returning to Hungary, I realized how badly my Hungarian side had atrophied. Neither my language skills nor my cultural know-how were up to date. […] I quickly realized I did not qualify as Hungarian in the eyes of the locals. If anything, they treated me like a very sophisticated tourist. It was a humbling, often humiliating experience, and I lost my temper a couple of times. […] eventually I conceded to the role that was being pointed to me. I'd accept that people viewed me as an outsider, and started asking questions and listening instead of insisting on being seen a particular way. As soon as I let go of my expectations, I started to get on with the society.*

For Valerie and Alexandra reconnecting with the homeland could be characterized as a full revival of transnationalism on the identitarian level. For Balázs and Charlie, transnational ties turned into a more lasting return, though their outcome is not year clear. For Hakan and Anna, revisiting the homeland served as a self-decribed reality check, giving new insights on their role and place vis-à-vis the other parental society. In Meriem's case, reconnecting had particularly

therapeutic effect, providing emotional closure and helping to put an end to many unresolved questions.

> Meriem: *Algeria has changed very much. That Algeria that I have thought and fantasized about is still there, but I can't seem to get a hold of it. I just cannot. The places are largely the same, but the people have changed. […] The war had a big impact on their psyche. Our mentalities no longer match. Or it could be that I never had an authentic Algerian mentality to begin with. My mother's Finnishness may have impacted me more than I have thought. I now realize that I am half-Algerian and half-Finnish, fully neither. […] Up until I started visiting, I though many of my personality traits were due to me being Algerian. I now realize that this is not the case. This was a big revelation for me. […] I can now say I am also Finnish. I've learned to accept it, even appreciate it.*

Sven, Zhang and Donovan were the only three informants who, at the time of the interview, had not developed extra-familial transnational ties by living, studying or working in the other parental country. Sven and Donovan still report visiting the country occasionally – to very different effects. While Sven feels as though he has become a complete outsider, Donovan still feels the childlike wonder and with it, a strong sense of belonging.

> Sven: *Now that I have been to Sweden [as an adult] on business trips and short vacations, I feel like Sweden has changed a lot during these fifteen-something years. Now when I go, I get the feeling that I am abroad, whereas it was not previously like that, not at all. […] It could be connected to how [Swedish people] experience me. When I speak Swedish, they [upon hearing my Finlandssvensk accent] immediately think I am Finnish. So they treat me like a tourist. Never mind the fact that my Swedish is better than my Finnish!*
>
> Donovan: *Whenever I go [to the United States], I feel like I am going on an adventure. […] I have never been stuck with a touristy image. My family have always taken me to the most exciting and authentic of places. I've gotten to meet some really weird and wonderful people and see some funny and odd stuff. And though I have not lived there for any extended period of time, I am certain the day will yet come. […] There is no way America will ever fall from my heart.*

In addition to rekindling their transborder links to the (second) parental homeland, many informants would end up developing active and sustained transnational connections to third

countries. For Valerie and Meriem, cultural capital and language skills over the years of second homeland engagement enabled them to extend their transnational networks to other countries with a similar cultural makeup. At the time the interviews were conducted, Valerie had been living in Montréal, Quebec for over a year, where she was soon to begin her second postgraduate degree. After Meriem's internship in Algeria ended, she found more lasting employment that would eventually take her to neighboring Tunisia. Both informants cite their knowledge in their respective homeland cultures as keys which made transitioning to the third country relatively smooth and effortless. For Irena, Alexandra and Anna, living across borders has become business as usual. All three have lived, studied and worked in several countries since turning eighteen and reconnecting with their cultural heritage, reporting an extensive cross-border network of contacts spanning much of Europe and North America.

A Brief Analysis of Narrative Dynamics in the Context of the Informants' Reported Self-Identifications

Though the informants' reconstructed life histories reveal a great deal about the impact certain life-course event can have on the development of transnational ties, they cannot be readily used to gain information on the more identitarian aspects of transnationalism – that is, the way the informants see and understand themselves vis-à-vis their (second) parental homeland in the present day. To shed light on their self-understandings, I asked the informants to give short accounts of their sympathies and identifications at the end of each interview. I then contrasted these answers with the informant's original narrative as well as their reconstructed life history. In

analysing the original narratives (life *stories*), I used the five parameters suggested by Rosenthal for deciphering narration.[169]

1. *Ease of narration*. Is the narrative being deliberately created or told spontaneously? Is it slow and painstaking, or fast and free-flowing? How much does the informant have to say about the topic?
2. *Relevance*. How much of the interview is relevant to the informant? Is the narrator emotionally or intellectually invested in his or her narration?
3. *Choice of language*. What kind of language and/or terminology does the informant use in recounting his or her experiences?
4. *Focus*. Which topics and and events does the informant address? What topics or events does he or she leave out or avoid?
5. *Detail.* In which details does the informant recount his or her specific life experiences? Which topics are left vague? Which are more vividly detailed?

Using these parameters, I divided the original narratives of the twelve informants into four rough categories. Interestingly, these four categories strongly correlated with the kind of answers the informants gave upon being asked to identify themselves.

The first category was made up of Charlie and Sven. Both informants told their narrative deliberately in a nonchalant manner and chose to focus on recent events instead of past memories. The themes of family dynamics, childhood experiences and homeland visists were left vague and undetailed. Neither information seemed to consider the general topic very relevant or interesting. Of the twelve narratives, theirs were the most succint, straightforward, laconic and

[169] Rosenthal, "Reconstruction of Life Stories," 9.

report-like. When asked about their identifications, they answered feeling 'completely' Finnish. Overall, they seemed to regard the issue of nationality in an entirely pragmatic light, and the mere possibility of having a more complex or problematic relationship with their background seemed like a strange idea to them.

> Charlie: *Yeah, I am Finnish. I have been born and raised here, so why would I even think I was something else? […] I don't really see why [nationality] is an issue to some people. You kind of need to pick a category, so ultimately it should not matter much. […] I don't know. I just find such talk quite uninteresting and unimportant.*
>
> Sven: *I feel fully Finnish. I have never even entertained the thought of being somehow different. [Chuckles][…] I have always considered myself part of the [core Finnish population]. […] Having Swedish as one's mother tongue does not make one different on the outside. Most Swedish-speakers speak Finnish exactly like [monolingual Finnish-speakers]. […] I have never been excluded or called out, not even when queueing at the grill in the wee hours.*

The second category consisted of Zhang, Donovan and Balázs. These three informants thought the interview topic relevant and were intellectually invested in their narrative while maintaining a semblance of emotional detachment. Their narratives were relatively structured, yet free-flowing and expansive, containing vividly detailed descriptions of past memories and events. All three informants put more focus on their transborder memories rather their Finland-based experiences. When asked about their identifications, Donovan and Balázs reported identifying primarily with the (other) parental homeland, whereas Zhang chose to characterize himself in supranational terms. Though different in terms of content, all three answers shared a sense of having been deliberately chosen or thought-out by the informant. Rather than stemming from social experience, the answers seemed to originate from an emotionally-driven desire to belong to an imagined community.

> Donovan: *I strongly identify with the American way of life and feel very much home in the States. […] My American cousins consider me Finnish – like one hundred percent. I*

suppose some could say I am more Finnish than American in objective terms, having lived here all my life, but it still bugs me when they automatically assume I root for the Finnish hockey team when the two face-off in the World Championships (chuckles). I am, like, no, my sympathies are on the American side!

Balázs: *I feel Hungarian, yet I feel as though most Hungarians will see me [as being fully one]. […] For Finns, I will never be fully Finnish, either, but that I don't care about.*

Zhang: *I don't feel Finnish. I feel as though the concept is very ethnic, and I don't have any need to be included in it. Then again I don't feel Chinese either. If I had to choose an identity, it would be European or Nordic. The Nordic political culture and European civilization are two things I strongly identify with.*

The third category consisted of Hakan, Alexandra, Henryk, Irena and Valerie. These five informants narrated their life stories in a very spotaneous and wildly fluctuating manner, displaying a high level of emotional and well as intellectual investment in both the topic and their personal experiences. Their narratives addressed both distant and more recent events in roughly equal measure, and included vivid, detailed descriptions of both the actual experiences and their present-day significance. Though the narratives also addressed emotionally painful moments, one got the impression they had been largely resolved at present telling. Upon being asked about their identifications, all five informants characterized themselves as *half-half* – that is, identifying with both homelands while not feeling completely part of either. Upon further questioning, all five assured they were content with the thought of not belonging fully to any one national category and expressed discomfort and irritation at the notion that they should do so. For them, having the possibility to opt out of national identification was more useful or satisfying than the conventionality of unquestioned belonging.

Hakan: *I was irritated by the way some Turks would insist that I was Turkish just because my father is Turkish. I don't feel one hundred percent Turkish […] whatever people say, I am only half-Turkish, and I don't view it as a negative thing. In a way, it is very relieving.*

Alexandra: *Neither [Polish or Finnish] suit me completely. In both worlds, I am kind of an outsider – always a bit different.*

Henryk: *[Many times in the past] I have felt as though I was an infiltrator. […] In Poland, I can assume a semblance of Polishness and blend in with the crowd. In Finland, I can be so Finnish that you would never know I was also from somewhere else.*

Irena: *The only place I feel like totally accepted and understood is with these people right here [pointing to Alexandra and Henryk] When I say something to Alexandra in Polish, she knows exactly what I mean, down to the smallest nuance. […] I feel very conflicted about the notion of belonging to this or that nationality. When I am in Poland, I feel like I am Finnish, and when I am in Finland, I feel more Polish. […] Emotionally, it can be jarring, but it is very convenient at times.*

Valerie: *In Finland, I feel Finnish, and in France, I feel French. For the most part. […] Now that I've been living in Montréal, I feel more strongly French than before. It might be a personal reaction to the local Quebecois culture and dialect, which is spoken very differently [from standard French] and borrows a lot from English. It really makes me want to keep my beloved French side pure and clear.*

The fourth and final category was made up of Anna and Meriem. Like those in category three, they were strongly interested in the general interview topic and gave spontaneous, sprawling and highly detailed narrative accounts. Unlike those in the previous category, however, they focused more on their Finland-based experiences, spending ample on detailing the more emotionally painful aspects of growing up transnationally. During these recollections, they often referenced their present-day experiences of similar kind, creating an emotional continuum between past and present-day interpretations of events. The salience of this emotional continuum suggested that the two informants were still partially conflicted about their past. When asked about their present-day identifications, both refused to characterize themselves in terms of either of the parental homelands, opting for an-open ended, humanist-cosmopolitan description instead.

Meriem: *I very much identify with being international. I have been always interested in different cultures, difference and multiplicity. […]I could never confine myself to one single country anymore – stuff like roots and nationality have little significance to me. I realize I don't just have to be two – I can be three, four or five things or more. Through foremostly, I will always be human. I've realized a lot of people have real problems accepting this – they want to define you, squeeze you in a box, and expect you to accept it.*

Anna: *I have lost the need to identify myself. Nationality is such a tiny little thing, yet people blow it out of proportion. Sure, there are times when I choose to present myself as Finnish, Hungarian or both, but those labels are just that. Labels. They don't define me any more than the color of my hair defines me. If I had to put myself in one single category, cosmopolitan would come close, but even that can be confining.*

5. Discussion: Understanding the Transnational Life Trajectories of the Twelve Informants

In this chapter, the main analytical findings from the twelve life histories are compiled and discussed in the light of the research questions. In the first section, the general transnational trajectories of the informants are summarized, grouped and contrasted with one another. The relationship between different life history events and themes as well as the maintenance of transnational ties and identitarian outcomes is then discussed. In the second section, the three sub-research questions – the role of generational factors, ethnicity and host society conditions – are discussed in more detail. In the concluding third section, a succint summary of this thesis and broader theoretical questions are raised about the future of transnationalism as a social and scholarly phenomenon.

The Informant's Transnational Lives Compared and Discussed

The life histories of the twelve informants bear both striking similarities and marked differences. As a researcher of transnationalism, I am naturally inclined to emphasize the former to the downplaying of the latter – to claim that all informants share at least some of the core dynamics of second generation transnationalism and thus form a rather clearly delineated sociological category of analysis. Therefore, all generalizations presented in this chapter need to be taken with a grain of salt and are better regarded as *plausible interpretations* rather than definitive conclusions. Even in the context of individual life histories, no absolute answers can be given. Though well past adolescence in the numeric and legal sense of the term, even the eldest of the

informants (Valerie at 33) can be considered young in the general scheme of things. As such, the true *longue durée* impact of the analysed life-course events can only be guessed.

With this caveat in mind, certain commonalities and cleavages as well as general trajectories can nonetheless be extracted from the analyzed data. These trajectories become salient when the informants' life-course events and choices (the reconstructed life *history*) are contrasted against their present day transnational ties and identitarian configurations (the narrated life *story*). Rather than accounting for each informant, event and narrative argument separately in text, I have compiled them into a double-table. (See Table 2 at the end of this section.)

In general, the transnationalism of the twelve informants can be roughly divided into four camps. The first and most clear of these consists of Alexandra, Irena and Balázs. These informants are indubitably transnationally active and have always been so. Their transnational ties form a more or less unbroken, inter-generational continuum between the lives of their parents and their present-day adult selves. These informants inherited a strong family network of relatives, friends and co-ethnics in both the sending and resident society, which they thence rekindled and/or expanded through their own transnational endeavors. In identitarian terms, they report a strong emotional orientation towards the (second) parental homeland, identifying as either fully (Balázs) or partially (Irena, Alexandra) with their (second) parental nationality. In addition to their home-country orientation, these informants share a strong cosmopolitan outlook on life and have created new transnational connections to third countries.

The second camp, consisting of Hakan, Anna, Valerie and Meriem, is somewhat less clearly delineated. For them, transnationalism has been a bumpy road, containing episodes of total inactivity as well as intense and salient engagement in the form of long-term residence. Their

moderately-sized family networks, while allowing for childhood transnationalism in the form of family visits, was not strong enough to provide a solid and lasting transnational bridge into their adult lives. In the case of Meriem and Valerie, their family's decision to relocate during their early adolescent years brought about a complete reversal of transnational dynamics, resulting in a period of identitarian turmoil during which many of the old transnational links were either left behind or restructured. Upon reaching adulthood, however, all four informants felt the need to reconnect with the second parental homeland took a conscious effort to do so. At present, all four can be considered at least potentially transnationally active, though in the case of Hakan and Anna, the future form of their transnational engagement is not yet clear. Identity-wise, they report a neither-nor identity alongside strong cosmopolitan sympathies.

The third camp entails those who are transnationally oriented but are yet to take their level of engagement beyond that of nostalgia, curiosity and infrequent family visits. Donovan, Zhang and Henryk can be seen as belonging to this category, possessing moderate-to-large family networks as well as a desire for a more intensive and personal kind of relationship with the (second) parental homeland. Though their past transnational connections have been sporadic, their open-mindedness, language proficiency, social capital and cosmopolitan orientation makes future transnational engagement quite likely.

The fourth camp consists of Sven and Charlie. In their lives, transnationalism has been little more than a footnote. Their small family networks, entailing only grandparents and no siblings or close family friends, died out when they were at a relatively young age, and no attempts to reconnect were made on the part of their parents. Though bilingual and culturally connected to the second parental homeland, the two informants grew up with little emotional or intellectual interest in their second nationality. Feeling home in Finland, neither have felt the need to

consider themselves anything else than Finnish. In Sven's case, his family's assimilation into the local Swedish-speaking middle-class enabled him to lead a bilingual (and to some extent, bicultural) existence without ever having to form meaningful links with Sweden itself. Charlie's decision to begin his university education in Britain was seemingly unconnected with having no social or emotional ties to the country. For him, the promising academic and economic opportunities of his second homeland made return a viable choice despite the absence of transnational connections.

What, then, were the main factors that shaped the informants' transnational life trajectories? At least eight thematic spheres can be extracted from the reconstructed life histories and analysed narrative accounts: (1) parental background and generational dynamics (2) cultural inheritance and language proficiency, (3) family networks and visits, (4) ethnicity and the role of co-ethnics (5) assimilation and host society conditions, (6) home-society opportunities, (7) identitarian considerations, and (8) international orientation and travel to third countries. Three of these themes – parental generational factors, ethnicity and host society influences form the theoretical foci of this thesis and are elaborated on at length in their own respective sections below. For the rest, a more cursory glance is in order.

Cultural inheritance and language proficiency. All of the informants grew up in homes that were at least partially transnational, and grew up with influences from both cultures. Cultural artifacts from the (second) homeland – whether in the form of music, cartoons, books or pictures – often made a lasting impression on the informant as a child. This impression would often serve as the identitarian basis on which the informant would orient him or herself towards the (second) home country later in life. Even more important than the presence of these cultural artifacts, however, was whether or not the informant ended up acquiring both home languages as a child. From the

life histories it becomes clear that language is the single most important tool in recreating and maintaining transnational ties. Though all twelve informants ended up acquiring some proficiency in their (second) parental language, the parents' choice over whether or not to teach their child both languages would have far-reaching impact, especially to Meriem and Valerie, who would end up receiving most of their schooling in their second parental language. In general, those informants that reported full bilingualism (both languages spoken at a native-level) had a considerably easier time assimilating/reconnecting with the (second) homeland than those who were either partially bilingual or had to learn the second parental language at a later age.

Family networks and visits. Much like language proficiency and cultural inheritance, the family network and holiday visits provide the foundations for adult-life transnationalism. Holiday visits are especially important, since they bring the child into direct contact with the (other) parental home culture, giving him or her an intuitive, first hand experience of him or herself as a transnational subject. In the case of the twelve informants, all had experiences of visiting the (second) parental homeland using family networks. For some, the family network was extensive enough to serve as the centerpiece for transnational engagement in adulhood. For these informants, their own adult-life transnational engagement was a direct outgrowth of the established family networks and experiences accrued during earlier transnational experiences. For the majority of the informants, however, the family network alone was not enough to provide for lasting transnational engagement. These informants had to construct much of their transnational network from scratch as adults, using venues and contacts other than relatives and family friends.

Identitarian considerations and *host-society opportunities* are sometimes posited as the two main contenders for explaining transnational behavior in the second generation. Those who like to stress identitarian aspect contend that the maintenance of transnational ties depends greatly on whether or not they are incorporated into the individual's sense of personality. Those who do not feel personally attached to the other country are much less likely to be transnationally involved, goes the argument. In contrast, those who put more emphasis on the opportunities dimension argue that homeland involvement depends largely on whether it can yield tangible social or economic rewards to those involved. If the homeland offers no clear material prospects to the offspring, emotional attachment alone is not likely to result in strong and sustained transnational involvement.

In the case of the twelve informants, both perspectives ring true. For the majority of the informants, identitarian considerations played a salient part in their decision to reconnect with their (second) parental homeland. For some, such as Meriem and Valerie, their adulthood transnational endeavors were largely motivated by the desire to answer unresolved identitarian questions – to complete or repair a sense of self fragmented along national lines. The claim that identitarian investment is a necessary precondition to transnationalism is checked, however, by the cases of Charlie and Zhang. Though neither were emotionally invested in their (second) parental homeland, they nonetheless ended up reconnecting with the country due to lucrative school and work-related opportunities.

The impact of *international orientation* or cosmopolitan ethics on the development of transnational ties has not been properly explored in the scholarship, despite their conceptual similarities. Though this thesis is not primarily concerned with exploring this otherwise very interesting connection, some observations can be made on the basis of the twelve informants. In

general, cosmopolitan sympathies seem to stem from identitarian conflict, or a failure to find personal closure in the context of the (two) parental nationalities. Growing up, most informants first saw themselves as members of both nationalities. At a later age, these assumed membership were often contested, either directly by peers or indirectly by social experience. Those informants who, upon repeated tries, failed to renegotiate their membership with either or both countries would eventually come to characterize themselves in postnational or cosmopolitan terms. Their failure to fit in first lead to a period of national disidentification, followed by a more emotionally detached transcendence of these categories upon maturation.

Even in those life histories where cosmopolitan allegiances were not consciously stated, a type of cosmopolitan outlook on life can nonetheless be detected. This outlook comes close to Ulf Hannerz's now famous definition, in which cosmopolitanism is understood as an internal willingness towards open-minded interaction with other cultures.[170] In most of the informants, this attitude of cultural open-mindedness seemed to be completely internalized, manifesting as a desire to understand difference and the hesitation to judge or paint with a broad brush. During their narrations, most informants displayed a remarkable ability to switch cultural perspectives on the cuff, and find redeeming factors even in those culturally bound events and practices that had clearly caused them upset or emotional burden at the time they happened.

Lastly, cosmopolitanism should not be automatically equated with the expansion of the transnational network to third countries. Though all informants had travelled, even resided in third countries, most of these ties were of temporary nature with no lasting links created. In some of the informants, however, new transnational ties of the sustained and frequent nature had come

[170] Ulf Hannerz, *Transnational Connections: Culture, People, Places* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 103.

into existence. Only in the case of Meriem, however, were these connections an outgrowth of the original family network. Though her connecting with Tunisia was a result of her employment, some of her existing Algerian connections had also moved over the border. For Valerie and Alexandra, new study and employment opportunities prompted them to relocate to Canada and Sweden, respectively, despite not having any pre-existing transnational ties to those countries. In the case of Balázs, his membership of a humanitarian organization based in Sweden had brought about a close and frequent economic contact with the country.

Table 2: The Transnational Lives of the Twelve Informants

	Hakan	Donovan	Meriem	Valerie	Alexandra	Henryk	Irena	Sven	Balázs	Zhang	Anna	Charlie
Childhood												
Childhood residence country	Finland	Finland	Algeria	France	Finland	Finland	Finland	Finland	Finland	China	Finland	Finland
Dominant home culture	Finnish	American	Algerian	French	Polish	Polish/ Finnish	Polish/ Finnish	Nordic (Swedish-Finnish)	Hungarian	Chinese	Hungarian/ Finnish	Finnish
Language spoken at home	Finnish	Both	Algerian	French	Both	Both	Both	Both	Hungarian	Chinese	Both	Both
Childhood visits	Annual	Annual + 1 year of res.	Annual	Bi-annual	Bi-annual+	Bi-annual+	Bi-annual+	Annual	Bi-annual+	Infrequent	Annual	Annual
Size of family network	Small	Large	Medium	Small	Large	Large	Large	Small	Large	Medium	Medium	Small
Co-ethnics in res. society	No association	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (official minority)	Yes	No	No	No
Adolescence												
Ease of integration	Smooth	Smooth	Rough	Rough	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Smooth	Moderate	Smooth	Moderate	Smooth
Existing transnational ties	Diminished	Maintained	Diminished	Diminished	Maintained	Maintained	Maintained	Died out	Maintained	Diminished	Diminished	Died out
Discrimination	Some	None	Intense	Intense	Some	Some	Some	None	Some	None	Some	None
Early adulthood (-present)												
Role of family networks	Small	Large	Moderate	Small	Large	Large (latent)	Large	Not maintained	Large	Small	Small	Not maintained
Transnational modus operandi	Student exchange	Family visits	Employment	Student exchange	Student exchange	Family visits	Family visits	Tourism	Indefinite return	Internship	University studies	University studies
Expansion to 3rd countries?	No	No	Tunisia	Québec, Canada	Sweden	No	No	No	Sweden	No	No	No
Present proficiency in (2^{nd}) home language	Moderate	Native	High	High	High	Moderate	High	Native	Native	High	High	High
Present day transnational ties	Family + friends	Family only	Extensive	Family + friends	Extensive	Family only	Extensive	None	Extensive	Family only	Family + friends	Friends only
Identitarian considerations												
Transnational consciousness	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Self-identification	Fully neither	Primarily American	Fully neither	Both	Fully neither	Both	Fully neither	Finnish	Hungarian	Neither	Neither	Finnish
Identitarian conflict	Light, ongoing	Light, ongoing	Strong, ongoing	Strong, ongoing	Light, resolved	Light, ongoing	Strong, ongoing	None	Light, resolved	None	Ongoing	None
Cosmopolitan leanings	Some	Some	Strong	Some	Strong	Strong	Strong	Not reported	Some	Strong	Strong	Not reported

The Nebulous Influence of Parentage and Generational Factors

One of the overriding theoretical aims of this thesis was to explore the possible difference in dynamics between the transnational involvement of the so-called 2.0 generation ("children of immigrants") and the 2.5 generation ("children of international marriages"). As discussed in the first chapter, the question whether and how having one or two foreign-born parents impacts the child's assimilative and transnational trajectories has not been directly addressed in the literature before. The 2.5 generation, especially, has been largely left out of most qualitative inquiries, or treated as an add-on or footnote to the putatively "purer" 2.0 generation. Consequently, this thesis has given conscious primacy to the experiences of this cohort.

What was the role of the generational dynamics in the lives of the twelve informants? Conventional wisdom says the 2.5 generation has a definite advantage over their 2.0 brethren, possessing family heritage in both the resident and the sending society, thus avoiding the social and emotional burden of having to grow up with a rootless immigrant background. Following this logic, one could also hypothesize that the 2.5 generation is more likely to develop full bilingualism and have less to catch up with their mononational peers. The findings of this research, however, go against both of these assumptions. Both Zhang and Balázs, the only two informants with two foreign-born parents, ended up learning both Finnish and their parental first language and fully acculturating to Finnish society due to their parents' home society orientation and favorable host society conditions. In fact, they seemed to have, on the whole, a considerably easier time doing so than most of the binational informants.

This proficiency gap becomes particularly evident in comparing the cases of Balázs and Anna, both of whom were of (partly) Hungarian parentage and were raised in middle-class households with a strong emphasis on Hungarian language and culture. Both inherited a moderate-to-large family network and frequently visited Hungary as a child. Growing up, however, Anna slowly fell behind Balázs both in terms of language proficiency and cultural competency and ended up with a transnational network far less comprehensive and meaningful. As adults, Anna had a far more difficult time reconnecting with Hungary than Balázs, who reported more or less fitting right in upon returning. Though other factors were undoubtedly at play, the role of having grown up in a completely Hungarian household – where both parents spoke only Hungarian and projected an uncompromising Hungarian identity – as opposed to a partially Finnish and partially Hungarian one – where Hungarian, while taught, was always *just an alternative* to the surrounding Finnish culture – cannot be ignored in accounting for Balázs's advantageous position.

Generational factors can also be important in understanding the identitarian dimension of second generation transnationalism. In the case of the binational 2.5 generation, 'inheriting' two homelands often means growing up with roles and expectations that are less clear and more conflicted than those experienced by the 'more traditional' 2.0 generation. In cases where the individual's symbolic membership in one of the home societies is contested, the notion of "This is also my home; I should belong here" is often more painful than "This is not where my roots are, so it is understandable if I don't belong", as exemplified by the experiences of Meriem and Valerie during their attempts to assimilate into Finnish society. Coming from an "outsider background" can also yield a welcome degree of pragmaticism in daily dealings with host society affairs. This is perhaps best demonstrated by Zhang, who could easily ignore the moral obligation to serve in the Finnish military, never having to face the social stigma attached to "failing to serve" due to his fully Chinese parentage.

The Surprising Importance of Ethnicity and the Role of Co-Ethnics

The second aim of this thesis was to re-evaluate the importance of ethnicity in the context of second generation transnationalism. For this, I employed a microfoundational, cross-ethnic approach, in which more primacy was given to the individual and his or her experience rather than his or her ethnic background. In the initial stages of the research, one of my main hypotheses was that the scholarship had overblown the role of ethnicity by focusing primarily on the transnationalism of bounded ethnic groups. In contrast, research conducted on other types of individuals leading cross-border lives (the so-called "Third Culture Kids") tended to emphasize developmental factors, arguing that what these individuals had in common was due to the underlying dynamics of their experiences rather than their cultural and ethnic specificities.

In the light of the twelve life histories, a mixture of these two perspectives turned out to be the case. The role of co-ethnics proved very important where they existed. This sense of ethnic commonality, however, did not override the importance of transnational dynamics. Those ethnic kin who did not also share the informants' transborder backgrounds were not automatically regarded as close or important. Though many of the informants reported knowing other second generation individuals, their sympathies were strongest towards those who were *also* part or close to their own ethnic background. This was the case with Alexandra, Irena and Meriem, who all reported feeling the most home among other uprooted young adults of their own (second) nationality. Conversely, they did not readily identify with their homeland-bound co-nationals whom they often found distant and small-minded. As such, both ethnicity and transnational dynamics played a role in their identifications.

The influence of ethnicity was strongest when interwoven with the individuals' family networks. For Alexandra and Irena, growing up in a closely-knit network of transnationally active Polish-Finnish families gave them not only an outstanding transnational capital but a strong sense of "Polish-Finnishness", which formed the basis for their adult-life identity. Balázs reported similar experiences, although in his case the identitarian outcome was more completely home-society oriented. In Sven's case, the networks of host-society co-ethnics[171] was so comprehensive and institutionally complete that they effectively substituted for actual transnational ties to Sweden, making actual cross-border engagement unnecessary.

For the rest of the informants, the sense of ethnic belonging was either completely absent or remained dormant, manifesting only during specific key events. Most often these events involved a projection of ethnicity on the informants on the behalf of a third party. For instance, Meriem reported other people bringing up her Algerian origins whenever events from North Africa would make the news. In contrast, Anna, Donovan and Hakan reported taking refuge in the other parental nationality whenever feeling the need to distance themselves from a less attractive aspect of the present residence country. Anna, for instance, reported presenting herself as mostly Finnish whenever her Hungarian peers would start debating politics during her stay in Hungary.

The Hidden Role of Institutions and the Salience of Symbolic Boundaries

The third and last of the main aims of this thesis was to evaluate the impact of host society institutions on the transnationalism of the informants. I was particularly concerned with the symbolic and social barriers present in state institutions, namely the educational system and

[171] I am using the word *ethnic* liberally here. Most Swedish-speaking Finns see themselves as a special language group rather than a separate nation or an ethnic minority.

the military, but also on the grassroots level. These symbolic and social barriers could take many different forms, including the expression of nationalist maxims and sentiments, practices of ethnic prejudice and discrimination and a habitual projection of labels and categories onto the individual.

Given the egalitarian nature of Finnish society, the overwhelming majority of its population irrespective of their social or ethnic background goes through the same basic institutional stages. The most important of these stages is the nine-year-long publicly funded compulsory comprensive school system in which individual schools have a high degree of autonomy and students are not selected, streamed or tracked according to their academic ability. After that, students are given a choice between secondary general academic education ("high school") and vocational education ("trade school"). Following their graduation (usually at the age of 18), all able-bodied men are expected to either serve a spell in the country's military system or opt for a longer period of nonmilitary civilian service. Most young men tend to opt for the former due to social expectations and peer pressure.

At first glance, the role of institutions can be hard to extract from the life histories of the informants due to their embedded nature. All twelve informants had been transnationally immobile during their mid-to-late adolescence. During this time, they were more or less immersed in Finnish society and socialized according to its customs and traditions. All had taken the same educational path – going to high school and then on to university. Later in life, they would all end up integrating into mainstream society – though in the case of Valerie and Meriem, the road to full integration was bumpier and took a heavy emotional toll. In Sven's case, the existence of an institutionally complete, well-to-do Swedish-speaking minority opened a particularly smooth path to assimilation. Given the embeddedness of the Finnish institutional structures into the informants' consciousness, their role only becomes salient when viewed through a lens of hypothetical alternatives.

In general, the impact of the Finnish institutional structures, especially that of the educational system, on the transnational trajectories of the twelve informants seems to have been much larger than the life histories would lead us to believe. All informants were provided with a certain access to high-quality education, many receiving special care and support on the part of society to ensure they would not be disadvantaged due to their background. The importance of these structures becomes very apparent in the cases of Meriem and Valerie, both of whom entered the educational system not only at a great disadvantage but also during a period of great social and financial upheaval in the family. Had they lived in a society where quality education cost money and no special assistance was provided for those coming from different language and cultural backgrounds, both their assimilatory and transnational trajectories might have turned out very differently. Overall, the indiscriminate availability of quality general education also meant an easier access to higher education, which in turn yielded the opportunity reconnect with the homeland through student exchange programs. The importance of these opportunities is clearly reflected in many of the analysed life histories.

The effect of symbolic boundaries, on the other hand, was much clearer. The informants that reported running into symbolic boundaries or discrimination of any degree were much more driven to develop transnational ties than those who for whom assimilating into Finnish society had been a smooth and comfortable affair. Experiences of discrimination also left a clear impring on the informants sense of self and their relationship vis-à-vis the core population. All of the informants who had had their Finnishness contested came to view Finland much more critically and were much less appreciative, even oblivious, to the multiculturalist and pro-integrationist aspects of Finnish society. Meriem and Valerie – the two informants who had been most discriminated against – even went through periods of complete national disidentification, during which they came to see Finland with contempt and

sought emotional refuge in memories of the second homeland. Had these conflicts not been resolved at a later period, they might have resulted in a very different kind of transnational outcome.

Finally, the effect of compulsory military service obligations turned out much less important than initially hypothesized. Though most of the male informants had opted for a spell in the army, they regarded it as a largely irrelevant experience from the perspective of their backgrounds and identities. None reported encountering (or at least paying attention to) any symbolic or social boundaries or nationalistic discourse during their service. After their service was over, the experience and its normative implications (such as having made a legally-binding vow of absolutele allegiance to the Finnish fatherland) were quickly discounted or forgotten. Of those who opted out of serving in the armed force, only Zhang did so on the grounds of national identity. Though the absence of historical and national consciousness is a documented phenomenon among Finnish conscripts[172], it seemed particularly baffling in the context of the informants, who were otherwise quick to draw links between their life events and transnational backgrounds.

Conclusion: What Does the Future Have in Store for Second Generation Transnationalism?

This thesis has been concerned with the transnational choices of Finland-based individuals of the second generation. Its main aim has been to shed light on some of the possible factors that impact the maintenance and further development of transnational ties during the life-course of individuals with one or two migrant parents. To achieve this aim, the life histories of

[172] Mikko Salasuo, "Nuorten Suhde Sotiemme Suureen Kertomukseen. ('Adolescents' Attitudes towards the Great Patriotic Narrative')," in *Puolustuskannalla ("On the Defensive: Finnish Adolescents and Military Service")* (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino oy, 2010), 191–219.

twelve such individual were recorded and analyzed. Though the interviewed individuals came from a wide variety of backgrounds and narrated their life stories very differently, their reconstructed life histories nonetheless had much in common. Though no absolute causal conclusions can be drawn, the transnational life choices of these individuals were intricately linked to the presence and weight of several thematic variables. Of these variables, home atmosphere, cultural inheritance, language acquisition, the transnational family network, holiday visits, economic and educational opportunities, identitarian considerations, cosmopolitan ethics, parental and generational dynamics, ethnicity as well as host society conditions were the most salient.

Though the impact of each and every of the aforementioned themes can be considered significant and worthy of additional research, in this work most attention was given to the intricacies of the last three – that is, the role of parentage, ethnicity and host society conditions in shaping the transnational trajectories of the twelve interviewees. In the end, parentage and generational factors turned out less influential than hypothesized. Whether the individual had one or two foreign-born parents was much less important than the home atmosphere and the parents' own cultural agenda, though it can be reasonably hypothesized that the informants with two foreign-born parents were more likely to develop full bilingualism due to greater exposure to the parental language.

Ethnicity, where it existed, played a much bigger role than intially expected, being an important contributor to both the transnationalism and the identitarian makeup of the affected informants. Informants connected to transnationally active co-ethnics had access to more resources and were more likely to characterize themselves in ethnic terms than those informants who were not ethnically networked. Lastly, the influence of home society institutions and symbolic boundaries was predictably great. The egalitarian nature of the Finnish educational system and the existence of pro-integrationist measures such as special

tutoring played a great part in the unfolding of the lives of those who had not been born in the country, though their effects were not always realized. On the other hand, the salience of symbolic boundaries prevented many of the informants from fully identifying with the category of Finnishness. What often resulted was a paradoxical situation where the informant had internalized Finnish political values while feeling emotionally distanced from the core population.

Although the analysis of individual themes and events can help us trace the causal chains of specific transnational outcomes, the fundamental importance of a biographical, *longue durée* approach must be emphasized. Had the informants lives been looked at through a presentist-positivist lens, their transnational *gestalt* would not have been accurately recorded. Looking at their present-day situation alone, some of the informants might not have been regarded as transnationally active at all. In reality, all twelve informants, even those with no meaningful present-day ties to the (other) homeland, can be considered at least *potentially* transnational. During the course of their lives, all but one had gone through times of intensive homeland involvement (including long-term residence) as well as times of transnational dormancy when the (second) homeland was not engaged at all. Yet even in cases where the existing transnational connections to the homeland were weak or had not been maintained for years, significant transnational engagement, including long-term return, could still emerge.

Rather than merely looking at the current form and frequency of transnational engagement (remittances, number of visits etc.), we as researchers of the second generation should also account for the latent factors that make future transnationalism more likely. These factors could be conceptualized as different types of transnational capital, including but not limited to: political and social membership, language proficiency, meaningful transnational ties and emotional investment in the homeland. Though the last two require conscious, deliberate transnational orientation on the part of the individual, this research shows that the first two

can emerge even in persons who are neither socially connected nor emotionally attached to their (other) parental homeland.

Whichever way we look at it, the outcomes of this research prompt the question, "But what about the future?" What course will the informants' transnational trajectories take as they get older, reach their midlife and eventually enter their senior years? How will their choice of partner or the decision to raise a family affect their transnational behavior? If the transnational ties are sufficiently strong, will they be passed down to the third generation? And what about the future lives of second generation returnees, such as Balázs? Will these people decide stay, or eventually return to the society where they were raised? Only time – and a sufficient body of biographical research on the part of scholars – will tell.

Finally, the future of second generation transnationalism – both in the practical and scholarly sense – is intricately bound up with the broader implications of globalisation. This is especially true for Europe, where more and more young people choose to spend significant portions of their lives studying, working and living abroad and borders are becoming increasingly porous. In such a context, is it any longer meaningful or analytically justified to speak of transnationalism in the context of generations, or to pit migrants against the mainstream population? Such considerations are crucial when we, as researchers, choose to employ transnationalism as a category of analysis. Whom do we let in, and whom do we exclude? So far, the category of transnationalism has been largely sheltered from expansion in hopes of maintaining its analytic edge. However, such narrow definitions can only be held on to if they are societally justified. "Because it makes our work easier" is not a credible reason for drawing undue lines of demarcation

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