

Cultural Geographies of Counter-Diasporic Migration: Perspectives from the Study of Second-Generation 'Returnees' to Greece

Russell King* and Anastasia Christou

Department of Geography and Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9SJ, UK

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to contribute to ongoing theorisation of diasporas by a specific focus on 'second-generation return' – the migration of host-country-born second-generation persons to the birth-country of their parents. We nominate the term 'counter-diasporic migration' to describe this particular migration chronotope. Although the ideology of 'return to the homeland' is inscribed into most definitions of diaspora, relatively few studies have been made of 'counter-diaspora', where the 'scattering' is reversed. Adopting a cultural-geographical perspective, the paper explores some of the core elements that are constitutive of second-generation relocation to the ancestral homeland: specifically the migrants' complex and ambiguous views of 'home', 'place', 'belonging' and 'identity'; or, from the emic perspective of the migrants, the 'who I am' in the 'where I am'. The paper draws on some results from ongoing research by the authors into the second-generation return of Greek-Americans and Greek-Germans to Greece, as well as on other studies of counter-diaspora around the world. Copyright © 2009 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Received 16 July 2008; revised 20 October 2008; accepted 28 October 2008

Keywords: diaspora; second generation; return migration; home; identity; Greece

*Correspondence to: Russell King, Department of Geography and Sussex Centre for Migration Research, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9SJ, UK. E-mail: R.King@sussex.ac.uk

INTRODUCTION

In this paper we contribute to theoretical debates on diaspora and transnationalism by introducing two new and closely-linked concepts: 'counter-diasporic migration' and 'second-generation return'. We do this with reference to our ongoing research into second-generation Greek-Americans and Greek-Germans who 'return' to Greece. There are no published statistics on second-generation returns to Greece, whilst the annual series on Greek return migration ceased in 1977. Generally it is thought that about a quarter of the 1.4 million Greeks who emigrated during the period 1945–74 – chiefly to the US and Germany but also to Australia and Canada – have returned (Fakiolas and King, 1996).

The paper is structured as follows. First we say more about counter-diasporic migration and frame this within debates about the nature of diaspora and typologies of orientation and movement to an imagined or actual ancestral home. Secondly, we focus on the definition and problematisation of the second generation. Established literature views the second generation largely in terms of integration and assimilation processes in the host society. Whilst the transnational paradigm in migration studies has opened up a discussion on links to the countries and societies of origin, relatively little of this is specifically concerned with return movements of the second generation. We introduce a new perspective which addresses important dimensions of second-generation mobility and 'return', including links between visits and more definitive settlement. Finally, and drawing on our Greek

material, we explore in some detail a number of key cultural-geographical implications of second-generation return relating to questions of 'home', 'place', 'belonging' and 'identity'. These questions are critical to the whole counter-diasporic experience. The somewhat unusual circumstance of the 'return' of the second generation to the land of their parents' birth puts this migrant 'cohort' in a unique position to express feelings of where 'home' is, where they 'belong', and how their 'place' in the homeland reflects their own identities.

Our research data come from the first phase of a three-year project on second-generation 'return' migration to Greece. The first phase included field research carried out in 2007 in Athens, Berlin and New York, three key nodes in the map of Greek diasporic and counter-diasporic movement. For this paper, the core research instrument is in-depth oral narratives from quota-samples of participants: 20 second-generation returnees in Athens, and 19 and 17 second-generation interviews in Berlin and New York respectively.¹ Interviewees were contacted through a variety of approaches, including personal contacts, ethnic organisations and snowball sampling. Often, one or more preliminary meetings preceded the more formalised, taped interview, in order that the participant was fully appraised of the nature of the research and of the interview itself. Interviews ranged from one to several hours. Following the ethical principle of informed consent, they were recorded and have been transcribed and (where necessary) translated. Transcripts were referred back to the participants for correction and further amendments; sometimes this led to further face-to-face discussion. The extracts we have selected in this paper are drawn from those narratives which, we feel, are both most reflective of the themes we wish to unveil and most revealingly eloquent. All names are pseudonyms. In addition to this ongoing Greek research, we also refer in this paper to other settings where second-generation homeland relocation has been studied, such as the Caribbean and Japan.

COUNTER-DIASPORIC MIGRATION: A NEW MIGRATION CHRONOTOPE?

The classical meaning of 'diaspora' connotes the scattering of a population, caused by some forced

or traumatic historical event (Cohen, 1995). However, the semantics and etymology of the term are unclear about return to the diasporic origin, and this situation is complicated by the fact that 'diaspora' has itself become a term of multiple and flexible meaning. Evidence of return is sporadically present in the literature on diasporas, but is not systematically conceptualised as a migratory flow. We introduce the notion of counter-diasporic migration to rectify this.

In his seminal article, William Safran (1991: 83–4) described diasporas as 'expatriate minority communities' with six defining characteristics:

- they, or their ancestors, were dispersed, most likely through persecution and genocide, from a specific original centre to two or more foreign locations;
- they maintain a collective memory, which may be mythical, about their homeland;
- they believe that they are not – and probably cannot be – fully accepted by their host country, and therefore feel separated from the host society;
- they see their ancestral home as their 'authentic, pure' home and as a place of eventual return;
- they are committed to the maintenance and restoration of their homeland to conditions of safety and prosperity;
- the group's consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by their ongoing relationship to their homeland.

Safran saw the Jewish diaspora as the 'ideal type' and acknowledged seven others as 'legitimate' in terms of all or most of the above criteria. These are the Armenian, Maghrebi, Palestinian, Cuban, Greek, Chinese and Polish cases. Whilst we are pleased to see the inclusion of Greece on this list, in some respects this seems an odd and incomplete selection.²

But is the 'desire for return' a necessary criterion for the specification of a diaspora, as Safran's list indicates? Not always, as Safran himself pointed out (1991: 86–90). African-Americans, products of the slave diaspora, do have a 'homeland myth', but it can no longer be precisely focused, and only a tiny minority have actually returned to Africa. Even for the Jewish diaspora, the classic case, return is problematic and variable as a condition for their diasporic identity. For many members of this diaspora, their Jewish

identity is expressed in the diaspora and a 'return' to Israel is never contemplated, for either practical or theological reasons.

A somewhat different approach was taken by Cohen (1997) who widened the definition of diasporas to include other historical processes, producing a five-fold typology: *victim* diasporas (Jews, Armenians, slave diasporas), *labour* diasporas (Indian indentured labour, Italians, Filipinos), *imperial/colonial* diasporas (Ancient Greek, British, Portuguese), *trade* diasporas (Lebanese, Chinese) and *cultural* diasporas (Caribbean). These types are not mutually exclusive; indeed, certain migrant peoples fit the characteristics of two or more diaspora types, either simultaneously or at different points in time. The Greek diasporas are a case in point, moving successively through imperial, trading and labour-migration phases. Diasporas are constantly under production, thus creating 'new diasporas' or 'diasporas-in-the-making' (van Hear, 1998). Existing diasporas may undergo new phases of scattering or 'rediasporisation' (cf. the Jewish and Greek diasporas; Clifford, 1994: 305).

Debates on diasporas have taken on new vigour in recent years. Anthias (1998), for instance, argued that there are two dominant approaches to diaspora: a 'traditional' approach which considers diaspora as a *descriptive-analytical* category mainly concerned with specifying criteria for inclusion (cf. Safran, 1991; Cohen, 1997); and a more 'post-modern' use of the term as a *socio-cultural condition*, associated with writers such as Stuart Hall (1990) and Avtar Brah (1996). To some extent this distinction corresponds to the division proposed by Mavroudi (2007) into theorisations of diaspora as 'bounded' *homeland-oriented* ethnic groups and identities; or as 'unbound' *fluid, non-essentialised, nomadic* identities. Whilst there is undoubted heuristic value in the 'typologies of diaspora' approach, particularly in the Greek case where the sense of Greekness in the diaspora is so strong, we try to balance this with post-modern and post-structuralist reconceptualisations of diaspora. Hence we wish to guard against the danger of 'ethnic essentialism' in diaspora studies (one of Anthias's key criticisms), or its 'fetishisation' (Samers, 2003); and to explore instead the notion of diaspora as exemplifying 'multiple allegiances and belongings, a recognition of hybridity, and the potential for creativity' (Ní Laoire, 2003: 276). This poses a challenge to our analysis,

because many members of the Greek diaspora seem to subscribe, deliberately or unwittingly, to a kind of auto-essentialist discourse about themselves and the special 'qualities' of the Greek diaspora (Saloutos, 1964; Georgakas, 1987; Moskos, 1999). However, by focusing explicitly on the second-generation members of diaspora, we can perhaps draw attention in a more effective way to the complex intersections between diasporic identities, geographical positionality, class, gender, age and generations. Not all these intersections can be analysed in detail in this paper, but we set these out as an agenda to guide our ongoing research.

Not only do we zoom in on the second generation, but we also focus on its 'return'. The teleology of an eventual return to the homeland is variable between diasporas, across time, and of course amongst individuals. Van Hear (1998: 6) noted that, if diasporic formation has accelerated in recent time, so too has the 'unmaking of diasporas, seen in the *regrouping* or *in-gathering* of migrant communities . . .' (emphasis in original). Examples include the 'return' of ethnic Germans to unified Germany from the USSR, Poland and Romania after 1989, the large-scale influx of Russian Jews to Israel in the 1990s, and the 'return' of the Pontic Greeks from various parts of the USSR, also in the 1990s. In one sense 'return' is a misnomer, for many of these populations have not seen their 'homeland' for generations or centuries; indeed, they may not speak its language.

'Counter-diaspora' is not the only lexical term to describe the phenomenon we have under study. 'Ancestral return' (i.e. return to the land of the ancestors) was mentioned by Bovenkerk (1974: 19) and King (1986: 6–7) as part of the recognised typology of return migration, but it was dismissed as a 'marginal form of return' that is not 'true' return. 'Roots migration' is suggested by Wessendorf (2007) as an appropriate descriptor of second-generation Swiss-Italians who relocate to their South Italian parental home-towns; whilst Tsuda (2003) prefers the term 'ethnic return' to describe the large-scale migration of Japanese Brazilians to Japan over the past 20 years. Whilst we do not reject these alternatives, we prefer counter-diasporic migration because of its evident link to diaspora formations and theory; however, we need to distinguish analytically between the genealogical specificity of second-

generation return, and the wider phenomenon of counter-diaspora which, like ethnic and ancestral return, can extend across multiple generations.

Homeland orientation and a universal desire to return are thus questionable as necessary criteria for the definition of diaspora, especially for long-established diasporas dating back centuries. For newer diasporas which are the result of labour migrations or refugee flows over the past half-century or so, the more specific phenomenon of second-generation 'return' does seem to be gaining in significance. Evidence for this comes from two main geographical regions: the Caribbean and southern Europe, major migration reservoirs for post-war labour migration to Britain, Europe and North America. The South European case draws mainly on recent research by Christou on returning Greek-Americans (Christou, 2006; Christou and King, 2006) and by Wessendorf (2007) on *secondos*, second-generation Italians in Switzerland. The Caribbean case is more broadly based in an extensive literature on Caribbean multi-generational transnationalism (see, for instance, Byron, 1994; Chamberlain, 1998; Goulbourne, 2002), but has recently been spearheaded by important research by Potter and Phillips on second-generation return (see Potter, 2005; Potter and Phillips, 2006a,b).

THE SECOND GENERATION AND ITS TRANSNATIONAL LINKS

The narrow definition of the second generation is that it is made up of children born in the host country to two immigrant parents, the latter being the first generation. Complications set in when we begin to relax this definition, and when we realise that many children of migrant heritage do not fit this criterion. What about children with one immigrant parent? How do we view children brought to a host country when they are very small? Census and population-register statistics record the latter as foreign-born, and therefore first-generation immigrants, but sociologically they are practically indistinguishable from the narrow definition of second generation. In a study of African-Italians, Andall (2002) defined the second generation as those born in Italy or who arrived before the age of 6. This approach seems sensible, since it corresponds to the school starting age.

To a certain extent, this wrangling over definitions of the second generation misses the point. It may have some relevance in comparative studies of second-generation 'performance' (e.g. in school or employment) based on statistical or survey data; much less so in qualitative studies such as our own which are concerned with exploring the nuances and variations in the population of second-generation 'returnees'. There is a more fundamentally conceptual reason why we question the existing literature on the second generation: it is nearly always framed with reference to an expected trajectory of assimilation into the host society. For instance, Child's (1943) pioneering study of second-generation Italian-Americans (who have a similar immigration history to Greek-Americans) found them facing a dilemma: should they rush to assimilate, or should they assert their own ethnic identity? Subsequent landmark studies (Gordon, 1964; Glazer and Moynihan, 1973) reassessed this basic question with reference to other immigrant groups, but still adhered to the normativity of assimilation. Likewise, more recent revisionist challenges to classical or 'straight-line' assimilation, such as 'second-generation decline' (whereby the second generation underperforms the first; Gans, 1992), or 'segmented assimilation' (whereby multiple pathways reflect different immigrant national backgrounds; Portes and Zhou, 1993), still reflect the hegemonic assimilationist rhetoric characteristic of US immigration history and national self-identity.

The situation in Europe is not fundamentally different in this regard (Thomson and Crul, 2007). Whilst the term 'assimilation' tends to be replaced by 'integration', and by diluted notions of multiculturalism in some countries, the wider rhetoric surrounding immigration and minority ethnic communities is still based on an uncompromisingly one-track orientation to the host society, and therefore to a hegemonic understanding of 'integration' into the structures, values and practices of the destination country's economy, education system, and linguistic and socio-cultural spheres.

Meanwhile, another strand of recent research – based mainly on ethnographic methods – explores more complex articulations of second-generation integration and identity, including hybrid modes that reflect both the country of settlement and the origin. Studies from as far

apart as Boston, Massachusetts, and Senegal (Levitt, 2001, 2002; Leichtman, 2005), as well as many other settings, find that immigrant transnationalism is not a phenomenon confined to the first generation, but one that can extend to the second and subsequent generations. Moreover, a rapid and successful integration/assimilation does not preclude the second generation from engaging in a range of transnational/diasporic activities linking them back to their 'home' country. At the same time, the maintenance of a strong ethnic identity in the host society does not necessarily mean that the group has strong transnational ties to home. Indeed, it could be argued that the existence of a vibrant ethnic enclave which effectively reproduces most elements of the 'home culture' means that migrants do not need to visit their (parents') home country (Vickerman, 2002).

On the whole, however, it is remarkable how silent the now-burgeoning literature on migrant transnationalism is on the second generation.³ The major exception is the collection edited by Levitt and Waters (2002), which presented case studies of a variety of immigrant groups in the US, but not on Greek-Americans. Possible links involve various kinds of communication – letters, emails, telephone calls, visits, remittances, property inheritance, and so on – as well as participation in the more generalised transnational social spaces created and articulated by their parents' lives and by ethnic or home-country media. Yet none of the studies in Levitt and Waters' volume analysed the question of a more definitive 'return',⁴ once again reflecting the hubris of American immigration scholarship. Part of the reason for this is logistical: studies of second-generation return have to be based in the country of parental origin to which the migrants have relocated, and the chapters in Levitt and Waters focused on US-based field and survey work. Nevertheless, the case studies are fascinating for many reasons – the research methods used, the different historical contexts explored, and the contrasting results uncovered. For instance, Foner noted (2002: 247) the quite widespread practice amongst West Indians and Latinos for immigrant parents to send their school-age children back to live with their relatives, often grandparents. The reasons for this may be to avail of childcare, to expose the second generation to the cultural values of the home society, or – perhaps most

importantly – to protect teenagers from the dangers of inner-city high schools and street-life. This back-and-forth movement complicates the classification of children as second generation. In our own field interviews we found many cases where the respondents' early lives contained episodes of moving back and forth for a year or a few years. For instance, Kathy's parents had attempted to relocate back to Greece in 1981, when she was six years old. The family stayed in Piraeus for a year, 'but things didn't work out. They [her parents] couldn't find work, and ended up moving back here [New York]'. Kathy remembered her year in Greece vividly, especially the greater discipline in school – 'it was a total shock to the system' (interview, New York, August 2007).

Later on in the life-course, first-generation retirement back to the home country may also reinforce the second generation's ties: the (by now adult) second generation will make visits to see their parents, ensuring that the next (i.e. third) generation keep connected with their grandparents and their ancestral heritage. Financial and care duties may also be involved; the adult second generation may need to offer economic support, via remittances, as well as long-distance emotional support and emergency hands-on care during the last phase of their parents' lives (Baldassar *et al.*, 2007; Zontini, 2007).

Visits 'home' by the younger-aged second generation can have various outcomes. Such homeland trips – which are usually motivated by tourism, seeing family and friends, and learning and (re-)discovering elements of the ancestral culture – may end up by simply reinforcing notions of how 'American' (or 'German') the second generation are, and convince them that their parents' home country can never become *their* home (Kasinitz *et al.*, 2002; Kibria, 2002; Cressey, 2006). For others, the return visit may be the precursor to a longer-term project of return. Most of our interviewees had stories to tell of regular holiday visits to Greece, which were an important first step in getting to know their 'home' country. This is how Demetra, a second-generation Greek-American now living in Greece, recalled those childhood visits:

'... we saved our money, every penny, for the summer vacation. Summer vacation was the biggest holiday and since my parents were

economic migrants they saved every penny . . . to come back and see their homeland . . . it was engraved on me since I was 18 months old and my first trip . . . and since then it was back and forth, if not every year, every other year . . . We would come to Athens for maybe a week, maximum two weeks, and stay with my aunt, and then we would go to the village [her mother's village of origin] . . . or my dad's island, Cephalonia, and spend time by the beach . . . it felt like my big playground . . . I love those beaches even now . . . Was I getting close to my roots? Of course, because I would see my grandparents and the way they lived . . . but it wasn't until I moved here that I really got into understanding that I was getting close to my roots.' (interview, Athens, May 2007)

For yet others, the returns may subsequently evolve into an ongoing pattern of transnational living, constantly moving back and forth in order to sustain business ventures, family relationships or cultural identity (Foner, 2002: 250). Another of our New York second-generation interviewees, Harry, had wanted to relocate his business (he was a baker and a chef) to Greece, but his wife (who, interestingly, was a first-generation Greek in America) was not keen. An excerpt from Harry's interview relates key facts and feelings, and reveals how, in the end, he reconciles his Greekness and desire to connect to Greece by going there on frequent business trips:

'During the years I was growing up I went to Greece two or three times a year, so I feel more Greek than American . . . I'm, er, Greek-American, but culturally and family-wise I'm more Greek. (. . .) It's funny, I wanted to [relocate to Greece] but my wife didn't. Although she was born there, and I was born here, I wanted to go there and open a business, and continue what I do here. But she didn't want it. (. . .) It would be a nice dream. I think life would be a little more relaxed, a little more laid back, there's so much stress here, we're very disciplined, with work, with family, with everything. (. . .) When I go for business I go to Athens, I do my week-long trip every two months, but when I go on vacation I go back to my own village . . . I go where real Greeks live, and I enjoy it.' (New York, August 2007)

Another form of transnational linkage occurs when members of the second generation seek (or are pressured by their families to seek) spouses from the 'home' country. This usually ends up with the 'recruited' spouse migrating to the host society, but it can also be a mechanism by which the second-generation individual settles, upon marriage, in the 'homeland'. Beck-Gernsheim (2007), who has made a useful survey of transnational marriage practices amongst migrant communities in Europe, also shows how the parent-arranged second-generation holiday visit to the ancestral home can often be, in effect, a marriage-market exercise. This can frustrate and annoy the young visitor. Beck-Gernsheim quotes the reaction of a young woman of Turkish origin:

'You didn't have a holiday, you were always visiting people . . . What they usually want is for me to marry there in Turkey and bring them over here [Germany]. That's why they always came to see my parents.' Beck-Gernsheim (2007: 278)

From the above we can see that a key question which needs to be addressed when dealing with second-generation 'return' is the family context of this counter-diasporic migration: are second-generation 'returnees' acting independently (and thus perhaps leaving their parents behind in the host country); do they move as individuals or as (married) couples; are they moving to a partner in the 'home' country; are they moving as part of a multi-generation family return migration instigated by their parents; or are they moving, not with their parents, but perhaps to be closer to other kin, such as grandparents or cousins? Part of our interest in second-generation 'return' is the fact that, where it is an independent migration, it is not only counter-diasporic but also counter-intuitive, in that parental ties are sacrificed to a more generalised emotional link to the 'homeland'. Of course, there may be special circumstances – the parents could have died, a family rift might have occurred, the individual might be seeking a fresh start after some personal crisis such as job loss or relationship breakdown. But the fact that independent second-generation migration to the parental homeland *is* taking place, as the evidence cited earlier certainly indicates, suggests that there are broader questions

of migratory causes, identity, homing and belonging which need to be explored

THE SECOND GENERATION IN THE HOMELAND: PLACE, BELONGING AND IDENTITY

Diasporas exist in a triangular socio-cultural relationship with the host society and the homeland (Safran, 1991: 91–2). Hence notions of 'home' and 'belonging' for the second generation are likely to be highly ambiguous and multi-layered. In her recent review of the cultural geographies of migration and diaspora, Blunt (2007) draws attention to some of the creative interfaces between cultural geography and what has come to be labelled the 'new mobilities paradigm' (Hannam *et al.*, 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006). Here, again, there is a surprising silence on the second generation and its strategic positionality with regard to fundamental cultural-geographical questions articulated in the context of a 'return' to the homeland. In the remainder of this paper, we deploy more extracts from our field data to explore these questions further.

Where is Home and Where Do I Belong?

Amongst the second generation, the search for 'belonging' and 'home' is often an extremely powerful, emotional, and even life-changing experience: an enactment of family heritage across time and space. For second-generation Greek-Americans (less so Greek-Germans), it is also a search for ontological security from a world which is otherwise confusing or perceived as moving too fast or in the wrong direction (Christou and King, 2006). For Greek-Germans the drive to relocate to Greece has more to do with the fact that they never felt they 'belonged' to German society, which has traditionally sanctified German 'blood' and marginalised foreigners, even those born in Germany, as 'guestworkers'.

As an illustration, Rebecca described how, especially as a child in Germany, she felt – or was made to feel – part of a minority:

'I felt different, I felt treated as different and this is something that I've carried throughout my life – being different... For a kid little

things are extremely important, like when people at school would look at you and say "what kind of name is that?"... It's also food... anything they were telling me they'd cook at home which is normal for other kids wasn't for me, and what I was eating wasn't for them.' (Athens, June 2007)

German-born Zeno, interviewed in Berlin, was much more vehement about his racist treatment, both in Germany and also during the year that he and his brother had been packed off to school in Greece when his parents had split up:

'The year I went to school in Greece... every day my brother and I got picked on by the other kids; they said to us "You Nazis, you fucking Germans... you have a better life than us". And when I came back to Germany I got problems here; they said "You have a black head and brown eyes and black hair... you are no German...". For Germans I look too much like Turks... Turkish people... When I go and buy my bananas, my apples... they always talk Turkish to me because [the shopkeeper] thinks I'm Turkish.' (Berlin, July 2007)

This explicit account of racism should be set in context: much of Zeno's interview was a rant from an obviously 'angry young man'. But there was a clear difference in the pattern of responses to the question 'Did you ever experience or feel any sense of discrimination whilst living in the United States/Germany?' Many second-generation Greek-Germans gave responses like Rebecca, whilst most Greek-Americans gave negative responses (in the sense of 'no discrimination'). Indeed, Harry went to the opposite extreme to Zeno:

'No, never. Anything I've done in life, it was never an issue. As a matter of fact, when they know you're Greek there's a sense of security for them; they know that Greeks never give anyone any trouble.' (New York, August 2007)

How can we interpret second-generation 'return' in terms of migration theory? We suggest that the homeland return of the second generation should be seen not so much as part of the new map of global mobility, with its diversifying rhythms and motivations, but rather as an act of

resistance against hypermobility and dislocation (King, 2002). Thus we see how different mobility regimes are substitutable. For instance, new East European shuttle migrants move to and fro to richer West European countries, gathering work opportunities on short-term contracts, precisely because they want to conserve their Polish, Slovakian or Ukrainian roots and *not* migrate for good. Second-generation returnees may do the opposite, seeking a final resting-place against their existential anxiety about their in-betweenness and where they belong. As several of our interviewees would relate, 'I am finally home, where I belong . . . the cycle is closed'. In other words, the exile's return is fuelled by nostalgia for the imagined stability and coherence of past times and places; the plan is to relocate the dislocated self somehow in an earlier, more authentic, time and place.

Nevertheless, a sense of impermanence about the homeland return often remained, sometimes because of family circumstances (e.g. ageing parents 'left behind' in Germany or the US), sometimes because of other objective difficulties like finding a job or earning a decent income (we come to these difficulties presently). One of our interviewees remarked that second-generation 'returnees' live for the first six years with the suitcase by the door, ready to pack up and return to their birth country.

Demetra, who was born in Oregon but lived most of her life in California before moving to Greece six years ago (and whose evocative account of childhood visits to Greece was featured earlier), had recently bought a little house by the sea outside Athens: her description of it, right at the end of the interview, reflected on her life as a journey which – possibly – might be coming to a settled end, or might equally continue on to new places. Interestingly, she projects her own uncertainty about her migratory trajectory onto her boxes of clothes.

'It's just weird to see my boxes here . . . you know, boxes full of clothes that, you know, keep getting packed and unpacked . . . I wonder if the boxes are ever going to have a home. I wonder if these clothes are ever going to have a home (. . .) This place, I'll never sell this place. Because it's by the beach . . . I'll never sell it . . . it's a great investment, right? If I ever have kids, or now that my brother [who

lives in California] is having kids, it can go to his kids. So . . . life is a journey . . . and it's about going through this journey, you know, going through the ride of the roller-coaster. Sometimes I think it's, you know, a nice cruise in a convertible, sometimes it's like riding the waves and you have to be careful of that wave crashing on you . . . so life is a journey . . . and you never know, you know, what the next day is going to bring . . . I think unpredictability is what keeps us alive. Yeah. We can end on that note!'

The second generation's 'return' is a profound homecoming at multiple levels. Certainly, it can be understood as an existential journey to the source of the self, as the diaspora's cathartic mission to reclaim its sacred sites and to re-enter its mythic space and time; but it can also be simply the discovery of that place where one feels one most belongs (Basu, 2004: 161), a search for 'grounded attachment' (Blunt, 2007: 687). In her landmark book *Cartographies of Diaspora*, Avtar Brah made her contribution to the discussion on the difference between 'home as where one is' and home as 'where one comes from'. On the one hand, she wrote, home is the 'lived experience of locality, its sounds and smells'. On the other, home is a 'mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination . . . a place of no return, even if it is possible to visit the geographical territory that is seen as the place of origin' (1996: 192). Once again, we note the lack of attention in writings on diaspora to the possibility of counter-diasporic migration; for Brah (and others) return is a desire, an imagination, perhaps a visit, but no more. As our research shows, definitive relocation of the second generation to the diasporic hearth does take place, although not always – in fact rarely – to the place exactly as imagined or anticipated. As we shall see presently, disappointment and disillusion may set in.

For members of the second generation relocating to the 'homeland', home is itself a two-way street. Narrative evidence for this dual allegiance comes from many interview accounts. Here is one which is pretty typical, from Lucy who had relocated to Athens at the time of her marriage to her Greek-American husband two years ago:

'I have to personally say that home is back in the States for me. When I am back there I tend to be Greek, I listen to my Greek music and I

keep my Greekness around me. I have Greek friends, I like to go to Greek restaurants . . . but I always felt very at home here [in Greece] when I came on vacation. But . . . I got so beaten up after being here almost two years by the sort of backwardness to a lot of things and by the mentality of certain people here that I began to realise . . . I was a lot more American than I thought I was. (. . .) So I tend to hold on to my Americanness here and when I am in America I tend to hold on to my Greek side, and I don't know why that is . . .' (Athens, May 2007)

Material evidence for this double allegiance comes from the decorative landscape of the domestic sphere. Much has been written about migrants' preservation and display of family photographs, landscape images and religious iconography – for two contrasting examples see Tolia-Kelly (2004) on artefacts in the British Asian home, and Walsh (2006) on the home decoration of British expats in Dubai. Likewise the transport of souvenirs or typical food and drink (as one of our participants put it, 'All that Greek stuff') from the ancestral homeland by migrants on return visits is a further signifier of the desire to incorporate 'origins' and 'nation' into everyday life, and even into the body itself. More generally, the tangible and visible display of the ethnos in one's home or office space constitutes a memorialisation of the place of origin, and the enactment of a cultural self whenever the objects are shown to or consumed with others.

For first- and second-generation returnees to the homeland, the cycle continues. In a now classic paper, Rhoades (1978) described the way in which Spanish labour migrants returning from Germany adorned their Andalusian village homes with 'Black Forest' cuckoo clocks and lavish German-made drinks cabinets. And in Greek homes of the returned Greek-Americans and Greek-Germans were also to be seen artefacts of their 'other homes'. Rebecca's father, although he had no plan to return to live permanently in Greece, had restored the family's old village home on the island of Lesbos where the family would visit and gather every year:

'And then at some stage we decided, well my parents decided . . . to go back to the house in Lesbos, Mytilene, which was abandoned . . . My father had this idea of "I want to fix this

house" . . . and he managed to put a little Germanised cottage in the middle of the village in the middle of nowhere . . . renovate it. It's his own way of dealing with things. And as of then – every year, Mytilene.' (Athens, June 2007)

Return as Rupture and Disillusionment

As we have seen, for the second generation, return migration is often viewed as a project of homecoming; as a return to the cradle of a partially-lost collective identity. But homelands do not always offer a welcoming embrace. Experiences of return (this may be true of the first generation too) often invoke feelings of disillusionment and rupture. In the words of Markowitz and Stefansson (2004), homecomings can be 'unsettling paths of return'.

Why is this? Hints of an answer have already been given; let us now develop our argument further. In an era of globalisation, increased mobility and cultural hybridisation, migrant identifications find meaning in the interrelationship between the ethnic culture and the homeplace, especially when the illusion of the homeland experience is frozen in space and time, or distorted through partial experience. For the second generation, images of the ethnic homeland are preserved through the prism of their parents' reconstructions of the 'homeland in exile' and by their selective memories and narratives of the 'old country'.

Rebecca described her father (aged mid-70s) as typical among the older-generation Greek migrants in Germany who imagine Greece as a static place that exists exactly as it did when he left in the 1950s; this is the Greece that they try to pass on to their children. Even when return visits take place, they occur at a time of year (summer) and to places (villages, the seaside, islands) which are redolent of a holiday atmosphere where life is lived outdoors and at a leisurely pace. For the returning family on holiday, the homeland is indeed a 'big playground' (Demetra's words, quoted earlier) where life is to be enjoyed away from work, and money is spent and not earned.

It is clear that, for many returnees who are settling for the long term, the reality of life in the ancestral homeland clashes with the imagined notions of a mythico-historic homeland that

reflects only the subjectivities of migrant belongingness (Markowitz, 2004). We need therefore to critically extend the theoretical and empirical angles of second-generation homecomings beyond the notion of an emotionally compelling existential project that mythologises the diasporic subject's longing to be 'home', to that of a *social project* of return to the ancestral homeland (Stefansson, 2004). In this 'return of social realism', the challenges of finding a place to live (a real home in the homeland), economic security (usually a job) and a circle of friends become paramount. If these necessities are not achieved, or realised only with great difficulty, the homecoming dream becomes severely compromised. Experiences of return may be marked by confrontations with the social and cultural institutions in the place of origin; these institutions, together with wider behavioural norms and practices of the home society (which for the second-generation resettler becomes a host society), obstruct the social project of homecoming, to the frustration and annoyance of the returnee.

Practically every interview with second-generation returnees contained multiple instances of this tarnishing of the 'dream return'. Here are a few typical extracts on the three themes which cropped up the most consistently in the narratives. Firstly, the linked topics of *corruption and bureaucracy* loomed large in terms of both general opinions and personal experiences. Two examples from many:

'Is there corruption? Yes. Is there nepotism? Yes. Here in Greece it's completely disorganised. And I think if Greeks want to fight corruption they have to start from the top . . . The Greek system is such that it breeds corruption . . . they don't deal with citizens in an open, just way . . . So the citizen is not going to go back and treat the government justly, you know.' (Evgenia, second-generation Greek-American, Athens, May 2007)

The second example is from Kathy, who tried to relocate to Greece but was frustrated by the bureaucracy:

' . . . when George Bush became president we started doing our paperwork for the EU and tried to apply for dual citizenship . . . that was, like, 2001, 2002 . . . It's been awful. So that's

been kind of an eye-opening experience as to the bureaucracy in Greece and, you know, how things are . . . I guess if we had gotten our paperwork faster, who knows? I don't see myself moving back at this point but it was definitely something I want to do . . . not too long ago.' (New York, August 2007)

The second theme was a cluster of discourses around Greek *everyday behaviour and the environment*. Again, two interview clips to illustrate:

'The degree to which people are conscious of their surroundings disturbs me. I love Greece, my dear little Greece, and to see young people and older ones constantly spitting in the streets, the younger generation throwing rubbish in the streets . . . this is very alien to me.' (Sophia, second-generation Greek-German, Athens, May 2007)

'Things in the US are very simple, they're fast, they're quick, you get it done. You run your errands every day, you run to the bank, there is no queue or lines, people aren't shoving or pushing you. Here it's different. Here you run out and you spend half the day trying to find parking so you can go to the supermarket, find parking to go to the bank, waiting in line an hour at the bank, people are cutting in front of you, people are being rude to you, which we weren't used to back in the States.' (Lucy, second-generation Greek-American, Athens, May 2007)

The third theme related to *immigration in Greece*. A whole range of issues arise around second-generation returnees' reactions to the recent mass immigration into Greece of Albanians, Poles and other nationalities. For some, this immigration somehow sullies the image of the 'pure Greek homeland' (Christou and King, 2006). Our evidence also suggests a more critical stance whereby returnees are horrified at the xenophobia which has become so widespread in Greek society. Coming from Germany, Sophia had a preconception about 'warm, hospitable Greeks' compared with the 'cold, inhospitable Germans'. And yet:

'I was astounded when I noticed the hostile behaviour towards foreigners. One such bad experience . . . was on a bus I was riding on. Someone cursed at a lady of foreign descent who was boarding the bus along with her

children and a stroller. He shouted at her, saying "Why didn't you stay in your homeland rather than coming to Greece to give birth to so many children? We stay in our homes and do not crowd the space on the bus with strollers." Something like that. The incident sparked off a conversation with the other passengers on the bus and, although I imagined that some people would disagree with this stance, many of them agreed . . . It was the first time I opened my eyes and said OK, the fear of foreigners, xenophobia, exists everywhere. It does not have to do with an inhospitable race such as the Germans.'

Evgenia had a similar story to tell, also commenting on the treatment of immigrants in the Greek media:

'You know, Greece was a homogenous society and they were very comfortable being that way, and they were also very comfortable criticising other societies that were racist . . . But they don't see it . . . we don't see it in ourselves that we have become racist and prejudiced . . . Sometimes the media spend too much time . . . This morning for example, on a TV news channel, they were talking about a Polish man who was on a bus and he was drunk and being aggressive and threatening . . . And he [the news presenter] was going on and on . . . I mean, hey, what kind of news is this? Big deal! I mean the world is suffering in so many ways and we really don't have to hear five minutes' worth of a Polish man who was on a Greek bus and he was drunk, poor guy . . . My husband said, "If he were a Greek, would they spend so much time discussing it?" No. There is a phobia, it's obvious, a phobia in Greece . . . There are certain groups the Greeks don't like, certain groups they can't accept. (. . .) You know, there's this big problem in Greece with Armenians – I mean, sorry, Albanians, the big Albanian issue . . . You guys, what are you talking about? Albanians are people and I don't want to say I'm Miss Perfect . . . [but] . . . I can see things a little differently. Albanians are Albanians. And the way we treat them plays a major role in how they treat us and respond to us."

The Greek evidence is not the only case of counter-diasporic disillusionment. Other paths

of second-generation return exist which are equally unsettling, or perhaps unsettling in different ways. For the 'returning' Japanese-Brazilians, the ancestral homeland of Japan, an alienating and potentially hostile place for all those who are not 'pure' Japanese, has become a home even if it does not feel like a homeland. In this instance, economic reasons override the trauma of racism and social marginalisation, for their 'invitation' to return-migrate to Japan stemmed from the latter's shortage of labour to do factory work and other low-status jobs. Not speaking much Japanese, and without the benefit of preparatory homeland visits, the *Nikkeijin*, mostly second- and third-generation, have reacted to their rejection by Japanese society by reviving their Brazilianness with regard to their culture and social gatherings.⁵

Several themes emerge in studies of the second generation relocating from Britain to the Caribbean. Firstly, such individuals are seen, and see themselves, as agents of change (Conway *et al.*, 2007). Hence they have much to contribute economically and socially, especially in island-states such as Barbados where there has been strong economic development in recent decades, driven by tourism and service industries, notably offshore finance. According to Potter and Phillips (2006b), returnees enjoy an economically and culturally privileged status within Barbadian society. Elaborating further, the returned second generation occupy a structurally intermediate position of post-colonial hybridity; they are both black and (because of their 'British' upbringing and their 'English' accents) symbolically white. But, against this positive identification were set more contradictory and nuanced reactions. 'Bajan-Brits' (to use Potter and Phillips' term) were frustrated at the slow pace of life and delays in getting things done; they railed against the water and power cuts and found local people simple-minded and lazy. Barbadians, for their part, construct a 'madness trope' as a strategy for 'othering' the 'English' (Bajan-Brit) returnees, thereby fixing them outside the mainstream Barbadian society. They are constructed as mad because of their behaviour (rushing around in the heat, walking in the sun instead of in the shade, talking quickly, over-concern with punctuality), and because of stories of high rates of mental illness amongst the Caribbean population in Britain (Potter and Phillips, 2006a).

Who Am I? Questions of Second-Generation Returnee Identity

Our final cultural-geographical theme touches on issues of identity amongst members of the second generation who relocate to the 'homeland' – the 'who I am' in the 'where am I' (Christou, 2006: 209). Earlier we suggested that evidence exists to link the second generation's 'return' with a powerful search for realising their 'true' identity – a kind of identificational closure, which results from the achievement of a well-thought-out, organised yet personal 'plan of action' to relocate in this way. We heard from Rebecca:

'Well I've come back to Greece . . . and I figured out there's something that feels different, and I started to look at this question of "who you are" in a different way. It's not who you want to be, it's who you are, and that's a different question, that you can feel with your body, your soul, with whatever you can . . . I have been able to find a sense of stability . . . I feel that I'm accepted and that people make me feel I belong . . . It's a part of my life I haven't discovered yet and I think I need to in order to become a whole.'

But other evidence, such as that presented in the section immediately above, contradicts this image of finding home and true identity in the homeland: disillusionment and even alienation set in as a result of experiences which pile up. In her interview, California-raised Demetra described losing her teaching post in Athens and having to fight for the redundancy pay she was legally entitled to; she criticised the corruption and laziness inherent in the public health service; the lack of a sense of customer service in shops and business; the bureaucracy which stifles every attempt to get ahead ('You need a thousand papers for everything . . .'). After a few years, she said, you learn how to play the game:

'I've been here six years. The longer you stay, you get to know how it works. Like, you know, playing Monopoly, or playing chess. If you practise you get to know the code, how the other person plays, so you're going to play better. . . .'

But there are compensations: the closer family bonds, the greater safety in which to bring up your children (Demetra recounted how a bullet

went through the door of a classroom in a school she used to teach at in California), the everyday friendliness (and the constant swearing!).

When it came to summing up her identity, Demetra struggled: was she Greek-American or American-Greek? Why was it always that the Greek part of the hyphenated word came first? 'Where do I belong? I belong in the Atlantic . . . like a global mailman . . .'. Such ambivalence over identity echoed through most of our sample. Likewise, Potter and Phillips found that some 'Bajan-Brits' did not 'belong' anywhere: their identities, too, were suspended in 'mid-air' over the Atlantic. Their status of living in the plural world of their parents' origin, after having been raised in the colonial 'mother country', is described as one of 'liminal, hybrid and in-between positionality' (2006b: 592). Such a complex identity statement reflects cross-cutting issues of race, colour, class, gender, age and friendship which are likely to be inherent in the experiences of second-generation transnational migrants. For Bajan-Brits and other second-generation Caribbeans, the return to the Caribbean is not necessarily to be regarded as so counter-intuitive as the return of some other widely dispersed diasporic groups, given these islands' 'culture of migration' based on economic necessity and flexibility, combining family loyalty with individual migration plans which can include the back-and-forth migration of the generations at different stages of their lives (Reynolds, 2008).

Undoubtedly there is much more that could be said about second-generation return and identity. The return adds another layer of complexity to the multiple, hybrid and hyphenated identities that have become increasingly discussed in the anthropological and cultural studies literatures on migration (e.g. Chambers, 1994; Rapport and Dawson, 1998). These authors (and many others, including ourselves) see identity in migration as relational, constructed, processual and situational. Rather than launch into an extended discussion of migrancy and identity, we close this part of the paper with a further commentary on what Rebecca says about her own relocation from Germany to Greece. Rebecca's case is particularly interesting because of the 'double duality' of her ethnic background (Greek father, German mother) and migration trajectory (born in Germany, living in Greece). Here, Rebecca

describes the dialectical duel that rained down on her as a small child from various members of her family asking what she preferred to be and what was better:

“‘Are you Greek, are you German? Do you like me more or the other one?’ Things like that. For a kid, it’s like, ‘What the hell do they want from your life?’ And I think that, what it was, for many, many years, was trying to figure out both sides. It was just a reaction of trying to please people. OK, so they tell me ‘You’re more Greek’, so you try to be more Greek. Or they tell me, ‘You’re more this’ and you try to be more this . . . So there was a long, long time in my life, until my mid-thirties, where I have felt this thing, until I figured out: ‘Listen, you’re just Rebecca. You’re not Greek, you’re not German, this is yourself and that’s what it is’ . . . Meanwhile I don’t feel split any more, I do just fine.’

CONCLUSION

Return migrants are the voices we rarely hear in migration history, which usually recounts the struggles and successes of those migrants who stay on (King, 2000: 7). This paper, by focusing on a particular form of return, that of the second generation, exposes an even deeper historical amnesia associated with this particular mobility form. Paul Basu, whose writing on ‘roots tourism’ we find inspirational for our own research, regards such homecoming trips as ‘heuristic journeys’ to ‘sites of memory, sources of identity and shrines of self’ (2001: 338, italics in original). Such journeys, as we have shown, provide an opportunity for self-discovery. Our dialogic approach has demonstrated how the second generation’s ‘return’ and the narration of this return are performative acts during which the migrant, through the story of the self, is (re)located in the story of the familial, the ancestral, and ultimately within the (trans)national diaspora.

But there are multiple ambiguities built into both our conceptualisation of counter-diasporic migration as a neglected chronotope of mobility, and in the ambivalent experiences of many of our participants, whose returns seem to hover uncertainly between the closure of a definitive return ‘home’ on the one hand, and an expression of ongoing transnational identity on the other.

Let us take the empirical dimension of this dual question first. As examples of the actors of global post-modernity, our interviewees globalise their personal biographies beyond the borders of the nation-state; they articulate feelings of being at home (and also not-at-home) in several places – what Beck (2000) termed ‘transnational spatial polygamy’. Many of our interviewees have quite complex mobility histories, the full details of which we have not revealed in our account above; their siblings, parents and grandparents, too, have had multiple migration experiences which, arguably, have shaped their families’ mobility narratives and identities. At a micro-scale, one of the most revealing objectives of diaspora research is to illuminate the complex processes by which migrants mediate and reconcile the contradictions between the diasporic condition, the notion of ‘home’ and the role of the homeland as an actual (or denied or destroyed) nation-state. In this context, ‘home’, as a context and as a symbol, should be problematised as a social and kinship space; a signifier that encapsulates actions, interrelationships and feelings; thus a social, cultural and political container of meaning.

As for the more theoretical part of the question posed above, is counter-diasporic migration – defined as the return of the second and subsequent generations to the diasporic hearth – counter-intuitive or is it, in fact, part of the very essence of diaspora? The answer to this question turns around the different ways the term diaspora is itself defined and conceptualised. In its Greek origins, its meaning is to ‘sow or scatter across’ – thus it is fundamentally a movement of dispersal. This reflects the colonising/imperial scattering and settlement of the Ancient Greeks across the Mediterranean and beyond; an aetiology which admits a diachronic long-term relationality with the Athenian hearth but does not assume any inevitability of return. In the other, now more-commonly-used, version of diaspora theory, the desirability or inevitability of return is part of the definition of a diaspora; reference to Safran’s (1991) six criteria shows that return figures prominently, and so in that sense counter-diasporic migration is the quintessential concluding moment of the diaspora cycle. And yet, viewed through the more temporally restricted prism of the migration and integration literatures, second-generation relocation in the

homeland is indeed illogical, unless it represents the deferred ambition of the first generation to return, transmitted explicitly or implicitly to the children of the immigrants.

The cross-generational deferral of return – desired by the first generation but actualised by the second – is an intriguing hypothesis. At first sight it does not seem too plausible: surely the first generation, born and raised in the homeland, would be more likely and able to return there than their foreign-born children, raised in a different society? But there are hints at this process of ‘return delayed by a generation’ in Reynolds’ (2008) work on second-generation return to Jamaica, as well as in our own data. The argument goes like this.

The first generation mostly emigrated to North America or Europe during the 1950s or 1960s; poorly educated, their origins were mainly rural or island Greece, and Greek society at that time was still seen as traditional and economically underdeveloped. Although periodic holiday returns took place, these were, by definition, brief and generally to rural, island or seaside locations, where a summer vacation atmosphere prevailed. Later on in life, 30, 40 or 50 years after their original emigration, a return is theoretically possible for the first generation, but they have not really kept up with the momentous changes in Greek society, which now has an urban-centred service economy, 1 million immigrants and a more European and materialistic identity. The second generation, meanwhile, can be seen to have accrued a better preparation for moving to Greece. Firstly, most have good education, including many with university degrees. Secondly, they are at least bilingual, their knowledge of Greek having been nurtured within the close-knit family circle and at special after-school classes. Their holiday visits to Greece, initially with their parents and perhaps subsequently as independent travellers, have kept them in touch with their homeland and their kin there. Given their age and education, they are more likely to be able to tune in to the rapidly changing Greek society of recent decades. Hence for them a productive and successful return – despite some disappointments, as noted – is more achievable than it is for their parents, for whom even a ‘return of retirement’ might be problematic and turn into a ‘return of failure’ (cf. Cerase, 1974, on returned Italian-Americans).

Lucy’s narrative contained some revealing insights into some of the issues speculatively raised above. Lucy’s parents had emigrated to the US and settled in Connecticut in the 1960s. Lucy herself was born in Connecticut and ‘raised in a Greek household that was Greek to the bone’. She ‘returned’ to Greece in 2005, aged 32 and just married.

‘They [her parents] seem to be perfectly happy there [in Connecticut]. They always wanted to come back to Greece . . . but ever since we got them a Greek satellite TV and they watch the news . . . which of course always tells you all the bad stuff going on in the world . . . they’ve gotten extremely frustrated with the country [Greece] . . . My father always had this vision that he would move back and he was retired and . . . um . . . after my brother passed away five years ago, I sent them to Greece to spend a few months to sort of, you know, leave Connecticut and what they remember behind and sort of relax. But . . . being here in Greece I think just got them more annoyed. They were seeing a lot of things that they said “Oh, now I know why I left, now I know why people don’t like being here”, and they complained about this and that, and what’s wrong with everything. They were just constantly complaining about the government and how the cities were run and the health system and all that kind of stuff. (. . .) We had thought that after we came here . . . we would move them over here as well because they don’t have any other children in the States or anything, but my husband and I realised that it’s going to be a very difficult thing to get them reacquainted with their own country. I feel that we get by easier here than they do, which is a little scary [laughs] . . . When my parents come to visit in Greece, they’re constantly throwing out that hybrid language – the Greek-Americans have created their own language, they’ve created this ‘GrenGLISH’ – and I found we are constantly correcting them, which I find ridiculous, that I have to correct my Greek parents, you know, when they speak . . . So I’m not really quite sure how we are going to acclimatise them and not have them constantly complain about everything . . . It’s going to be quite a challenge . . .’

In this lengthy concluding extract we indeed can see hints of the possibility that, having been made aware of the sacrifices their parents made for them, as well as their parents' repeatedly stated aspiration to return (but also that this gradually becomes more problematic), the second generation are acting out their parents' unfulfilled wish to go back.

Our final point highlights the apparent paradox of the 'pull of return' for these second-generation hyphenated Greeks set against their experience of disappointment and frustration at many aspects of Greek life, such as the corruption and the lack of concern for the environment. In fact, most existing studies of return migration seem to focus on 'questions of unhappiness and dissatisfaction' (King, 2000: 19), reflecting the fundamental migrant condition of life experience in two (or more) places which are inevitably subject to comparison. Nevertheless, one may wonder why these migrants continue to stay in Greece, and not return to their host countries. Whilst we did come across a very few instances of return 'the other way', back to the birth country, as well as cases of transnational moving back and forth, in general second-generation returnees to Greece continue to privilege the emotional rationale of return, and the hope that things will improve, over their actual experiences of disillusionment. They do this also because of the impracticality of yet another migration of return – the 'burnt bridges' syndrome – and their fear of admission of failure and bad decision-making. Perhaps above all they fear the ontological rupture which would result from a U-turn, which would fundamentally undermine their lifelong sense of who they are (ethnic Greeks above all) and where they ultimately belong (in the Greek homeland).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is one of the first outputs of our AHRC project on 'counter-diasporic migrations'. We gratefully acknowledge the financial backing of the AHRC under its 'Diasporas, Migration and Identities' programme (grant no. AH/E508601X/1), and the support of the programme director Professor Kim Knott. Thanks, too, to our project team colleagues, Prof. Ivor Goodson and Janine Givati-Teerling, and to Dr Tracey Reynolds, who became a *de facto* team member

during her secondment fellowship at Sussex from London South Bank University. We also acknowledge the helpful comments of the journal's referees.

NOTES

- (1) A few of the interviews in Berlin and New York were with small groups; hence the total number of interviewee voices (67) is larger than the number of interviews (56).
- (2) There is no space to justify this remark here, but see Clifford (1994) who also pointed out that even the Jewish diaspora fails to meet the full set of criteria, notably the 'real desire' for return. We also wonder why Safran described each of the listed diasporas in turn, except the Greek one which is completely omitted!
- (3) This is not the place for a review of this transnational migration literature which, to some extent, overlaps with the literature on diasporas. For a geographer's overview, see Bailey (2001).
- (4) How the notion of a 'definitive return' is operationalised is far from clear. Rather than measuring it statistically by reference to a threshold time spent in the 'home' country of return, we opt for a more subjective interpretation through the intention of the informants to stay more or less long-term in Greece. However, at the same time, there is a sense of 'impermanence' amongst many who have returned, as we shall see in more detail later in the paper.
- (5) There are some special features of the Japanese-Brazilian counter-diasporic migration which need emphasising. Firstly, this is a form of labour-migration recruitment which is not dissimilar to that which characterised Northwest Europe in the early post-war decades. Like this European guest-worker migration, the movement of *Nikkeijin* started as temporary employment in the late 1980s, but has since matured to semi-permanent settlement bolstered by family reunion. The Japanese for their part look down on their co-ethnic cousins from South America for several reasons: their origins are perceived as low-status Japanese who left Japan because of poverty and unemployment; they continue to be classed as of low status because of the low-grade factory jobs they are employed to do, often on short-term contracts; and they are socially marginalised because of their poor Japanese language skills and their unavoidable loss of 'Japaneseness' by virtue of their living outside of Japan for most of their lives. For the definitive study, see Tsuda (2003); see also Linger (2001), Lesser (2003).

REFERENCES

- Andall J. 2002. Second-generation attitude? African-Italians in Milan. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 28: 389–407.
- Anthias F. 1998. Evaluating 'diaspora': beyond ethnicity. *Sociology* 32: 557–580.
- Bailey AJ. 2001. Turning transnational: notes on the theorisation of international migration. *International Journal of Population Geography* 7: 413–428.
- Baldassar L, Baldock CV, Wilding R. 2007. *Families Caring Across Borders: Migration, Ageing and Transnational Caregiving*. Palgrave: Basingstoke.
- Basu P. 2001. Hunting down home: reflections on homeland and the search for identity in the Scottish diaspora. In *Contested Landscapes: Movement, Exile and Place*, Bender B, Winer M (eds). Berg: Oxford; 333–348.
- Basu P. 2004. Route metaphors of 'roots tourism' in the Scottish Highland diaspora. In *Reframing Pilgrimage: Cultures in Motion*, Coleman S, Eade J (eds). Routledge: London; 150–174.
- Beck U. 2000. *What is Globalization?* Polity: Oxford.
- Beck-Gernsheim E. 2007. Transnational lives, transnational marriages: a review of the evidence from migrant communities in Europe. *Global Networks* 7: 271–288.
- Blunt A. 2007. Cultural geographies of migration: mobility, transnationality and diaspora, *Progress in Human Geography* 31: 684–694.
- Bovenkerk F. 1974. *The Sociology of Return Migration: A Bibliographic Essay*. Publications of the Research Group on European Migration Problems 20. Nijhoff: The Hague.
- Brah A. 1996. *Cartographies of Diaspora*. Routledge: London.
- Byron M. 1994. *Post-War Caribbean Migration to Great Britain: The Unfinished Cycle*. Avebury: Aldershot.
- Cerese FP. 1974. Migration and social change: expectation and reality. A case study of return migration from the United States to Italy. *International Migration Review* 8: 245–262.
- Chamberlain M. 1998. *Caribbean Migration: Globalised Identities*. Routledge: London.
- Chambers I. 1994. *Migrancy, Culture, Identity*. Routledge: London.
- Child I. 1943. *Italian or American? The Second Generation in Conflict*. Yale University Press: New Haven, CT.
- Christou A. 2006. *Narratives of Place, Culture and Identity: Second-Generation Greek-Americans Return 'Home'*. Amsterdam University Press: Amsterdam.
- Christou A, King R. 2006. Migrants encounter migrants in the city: the changing context of 'home' for second-generation Greek-American return migrants. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 30: 816–835.
- Clifford J. 1994. Diasporas. *Cultural Anthropology* 9: 302–338.
- Cohen R. 1995. Rethinking 'Babylon': iconoclastic conceptions of the diaspora experience. *New Community* 21: 5–18.
- Cohen R. 1997. *Global Diasporas*. UCL Press: London.
- Conway D, Potter RB, Phillips J. 2007. Caribbean transnational return migrants as agents of change. *Geography Compass* 1: 25–45.
- Cressey G. 2006. *Diaspora Youth and Ancestral Homeland British Pakistani/Kashmiri Youth Visiting Kin in Pakistan and Kashmir*. Brill: Leiden.
- Fakiolas R, King R. 1996. Emigration, return, immigration: a review and evaluation of Greece's postwar experience of international migration. *International Journal of Population Geography* 2: 171–190.
- Foner N. 2002. Second-generation transnationalism, then and now. In *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, Levitt P, Waters MC (eds). Russell Sage: New York; 242–252.
- Gans H. 1992. Second-generation decline: scenarios for the economic and ethnic futures of the post-1965 American immigrants. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 15: 173–192.
- Georgakas D. 1987. The Greeks in America. *Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora* 14: 5–53.
- Glazer N, Moynihan D. 1973. *Beyond the Melting Pot*. MIT Press: Cambridge, MA.
- Gordon MM. 1964. *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion and National Origins*. Oxford University Press: New York.
- Goulbourne H. 2002. *Caribbean Transnational Experience*. Pluto: London.
- Hall S. 1990. Cultural identity and diaspora. In *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, Rutherford J (ed.). Lawrence and Wishart: London; 222–237.
- Hannam K, Sheller M, Urry J. 2006. Mobilities, immobilities and moorings. *Mobilities* 1: 1–22.
- Kasinitz P, Waters MC, Mollenkopf J, Anil M. 2002. Transnationalism and the children of immigrants in contemporary New York. In *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, Levitt P, Waters MC (eds). Russell Sage: New York; 96–122.
- Kibria N. 2002. 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*, Levitt P, Waters MC (eds). Russell Sage: New York; 295–311.
- King R (ed.). 1986. *Return Migration and Regional Economic Problems*. Croom Helm: London.
- King R. 2000. Generalizations from the history of return migration. In *Return Migration: Journey*

- of Hope or Despair?, Ghosh B (ed.). International Organization for Migration: Geneva; 7–55.
- King R. 2002. Towards a new map of European migration. *International Journal of Population Geography* 8: 89–106.
- Leichtman MA. 2005. The legacy of transnational lives: beyond the first generation of Lebanese in Senegal. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 28: 663–686.
- Lesser J (ed.). 2003. *Searching for Home Abroad: Japanese Brazilians and Transnationalism*. Duke University Press: Durham, NC.
- Levitt P. 2001. *The Transnational Villagers*. University of California Press: Berkeley, CA.
- Levitt P. 2002. 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*, Levitt P, Waters MC (eds). Russell Sage: New York; 123–144.
- Levitt P, Waters MC (eds). 2002. *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*. Russell Sage: New York.
- Linger DT. 2001. *No One Home: Brazilian Selves Remade in Japan*. Stanford University Press: Stanford.
- Markowitz F. 2004. The home(s) of homecomings. In *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, Markowitz F, Stefansson AH (eds). Lexington Books: Lanham MD; 21–33.
- Markowitz F, Stefansson AH (eds). 2004. *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*. Lexington Books: Lanham MD.
- Mavroudi E. 2007. Diaspora as process: (de)constructing boundaries. *Geography Compass* 1: 467–479.
- Moskos CC. 1999. *Greek Americans: Struggle and Success*. Transaction: New York.
- Ní Laoire C. 2003. Locating geographies of diaspora. *International Journal of Population Geography* 9: 275–280.
- Portes A, Zhou M. 1993. The new second generation: segmented assimilation and its variants among post-1965 immigrant youth. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 530: 74–98.
- Potter RB. 2005. 'Young, gifted and back': second generation transnational return migrants to the Caribbean. *Progress in Development Studies* 5: 213–236.
- Potter RB, Phillips J. 2006a. 'Mad dogs and international migrants?' Bajan-Brit second-generation migrants and accusations of madness. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 96: 586–600.
- Potter RB, Phillips J. 2006b. Both black and symbolically white: the 'Bajan-Brit' return migrant as post-colonial hybrid. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 29: 901–927.
- Rapport N, Dawson A (eds). 1998. *Migrants of Identity: Perceptions of Home in a World of Movement*. Berg: Oxford.
- Reynolds T. 2008. *Ties that Bind: Families, Social Capital and Caribbean Second-Generation Return Migration*. University of Sussex, Sussex Centre for Migration Research Working Paper 46: Brighton.
- Rhoades RE. 1978. Intra-European return migration and rural development: lessons from the Spanish case. *Human Organization* 37: 136–147.
- Safran W. 1991. Diasporas in modern societies: myths of homeland and return. *Diaspora* 1: 83–99.
- Saloutos T. 1964. *The Greeks in the United States*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, MA.
- Samers M. 2003. Diaspora unbound: Muslim identity and the erratic regulation of Islam in France. *International Journal of Population Geography* 9: 351–364.
- Sheller M, Urry J. 2006. The new mobilities paradigm. *Environment and Planning A* 38: 207–226.
- Stefansson AH. 2004. Homecomings to the future: from diasporic mythographies to social projects of return. In *Homecomings: Unsettling Paths of Return*, Markowitz F, Stefansson AH (eds). Lexington Books: Lanham, MD; 2–20.
- Thomson M, Crul M. 2007. 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: 1025–1041.
- Tolia-Kelly D. 2004. Locating processes of identification: studying the precipitates of re-memory through artefacts in the British Asian home. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 29: 314–329.
- Tsuda T. 2003. *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland: Japanese Brazilian Return Migration in Transnational Perspective*. Columbia University Press: New York.
- van Hear N. 1998. *New Diasporas: The Mass Exodus, Dispersal and Regrouping of Migrant Communities*. UCL Press: London.
- Vickerman M. 2002. Second-generation West Indian transnationalism. In *The Changing Face of Home: The Transnational Lives of the Second Generation*, Levitt P, Waters MC (eds). Russell Sage: New York; 341–366.
- Walsh K. 2006. British expatriate belongings: mobile homes and transnational homing. *Home Cultures* 3: 123–144.
- Wessendorf S. 2007. 'Roots migrants': transnationalism and 'return' among second-generation Italians in Switzerland. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33: 1083–1102.
- Zontini E. 2007. Continuity and change in transnational Italian families: the caring practices of second-generation women. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33: 1103–1120.