

Special Issue Roots Tourism

FUORI LUOGO

Rivista di Sociologia
del Territorio, Turismo, Tecnologia

Guest Editors

Tullio Romita

Antonella Perri

Philippe Clairay



Direttore Fabio Corbisiero
Caporedattore Carmine Urciuoli

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The Dilemma of Tourism Moral Economy and the Turismo delle Radici: Reflections on the Italian Diaspora in Brazil and Experiences of the Italianità as Authenticity²

Introduction

Roots tourism is noteworthy due to the strong emotional bond between the tourist and the “place of destination” even before the trip takes place (Barbuto, 2020, p. 60). It is also important to point out that roots tourism is related to the mobility regime of diaspora, qualifying the so-called “diasporic tourism” and many other markers of mobility related to genealogical and affective ties with an original community (Huang *et al.*, 2013; Tomczewska-Popowycz & Taras, 2022). In turn, the diaspora experience is characterized as a long-term process in time and space, usually prompted by an original traumatic event experienced collectively that conjures up for the extension of social ties between individual and collective trajectories through time and space, creating transnational communities and a complex sense of belonging (Glick, Schiller & Salazar, 2012) – in essence, those interconnected communities across different scales enable the experience of place attachment through sensorial-motor and emotive bonds in a unique fluid way, that produce and reproduce experiences of authenticity constituted as “identities in motion” interconnected through time and space. Eventually such mobilities engender many types of tourism experience and social fields in the globalized world.

It can be assumed that the roots tourism (specifically the *Turismo dell Radici* – TdR) is a type of mobility and tourism practice integrated broadly in a social system of multiple space-time scales (the regime mobility across the globe). On the one hand, it allows tourism practices to perform their function of producing senses and reflexivity of the Self based on the experience of different “gaze” upon the others – the experience of *Otherness* (Urry & Larson, 2011, p.17 ff.). On the other hand, it leads us to the paradox of experiencing *authenticity* in the space of tourism where the confrontation between the search for the ‘authentic’ as a legitimate experience of an “original value of reciprocity” and the commodified world of postmodernity (MacCannell, 2011), seems to expose the limits not only of the tourist experience but also each performance of our everyday mobile lives.

We believe that TdR can be understood as an analytically privileged sociological phenomenon, since it is a regular fact that is increasingly widespread in the liquid modernity, whether in its commodified or authenticated, cold or hot form (Cohen, 1988; Cohen, Cohen, 2012). The TdR seems to face paradoxes in a way that confronts critical social dilemmas in the daily coexistence of people, territories, cultural goods and services that “circulate” globally and, consequently, express the main forms of interaction in the formation of the multiscale and crisscrossed territory of contemporary communities and identities – contributing in a decisive way to think about the mobile lives of contemporary tourism and its embeddedness in a globalised regime of mobilities.

In this study we seek to investigate the sociological “mechanisms” that characterize the tourist experiences of TdR through an exploratory case study about the relation of the tourism experiences and the consolidation of the Italian diaspora community settled in Brazil. First, we or-

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ganized the text with the conceptual problematization of the TdR and its consequences for our understanding of the phenomenon of tourist practices and the constitution of communities and identities affected by the regime of mobilities across the globe (the formation of a transnational community and a very particular identity – the representation of the “Italianness”). We argue that the social function of TdR should be understood as a social mechanism associated with the type of diaspora that entails transnational spaces and communities at large (Coles & Timothy, 2004; Huang *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, an important question for understanding TdR today is to consider it as a type of mobility necessarily embedded in the context of multiscale globalisation that supports transnational communities and their territorially incorporated identities – as we will see, this is the foundation of a transnational space that strongly interconnects “two sides of the Atlantic”, the deep roots between Italy and Brazil, between physically and mentally constituted territories (the creation of the Self of Italianness; Croci, 2009).

In a second part, we discuss the TdR and the debate on *authenticity* and the performance in the tourism space (Wang, 1999; Taylor, 2001) highlighting the importance of understanding the interaction between people, places, goods, services, scales and distances under the framing of a “tension” provoked by the *new moral economy* in Modernity (Fourcade & Healy, 2007; Zelizer, 2010). Such discussion becomes relevant since the debate in recent decades about the development of tourist practices in relation to the globalised travel market, products and performances linked to the large tourism industry – especially from the beginning of the 20th century with the conspicuous mass consumption of a new middle class of workers – has led to the confrontation of different positions in the constitution of tourism in terms of its social, ethical, individual and collective development function. We contend the apparently contradictory position defended by MacCannell in sustaining a notion of *essentialized authenticity* of tourism as an “original”, free and spontaneous experience (i.e., a “tourist experience open to all” – 2020, p. 25; Wang, 1999).

The persistent reflections on the TdR tend to put a relational bias in the sense of focusing on the point of view of the “origin”, assumed in the analyses as a fixed and homogeneous territory of “return”, for example (Barbuto, 2020). This fact reflects the empirical phenomenon of “roots tourism” strongly associated with the existential and sentimental search for the places of origin of the ancestors, or the immigrant, refugee or exile person who establishes a real/imaginary emotional bond with an original place. However, as shown by Tomczewska-Popowycz & Taras (2022, p. 248, table 3) in a recent study, the conceptual framework of reference for roots tourism presents semantic complexity, correlating 41 terms with different meanings. We show that the analytical focus on the social mechanisms of TdR as an integrated aspect of the global mobility regime, according to the logic of the new moral economy, reinforces the search for authenticity related to moral feelings of belonging, through genealogies with a territorially rescaled community. TdR should not focus only on the perspective of the “original place”, real or imaginary. Another analysis must be attempted, considering the relational and re-dimensioned aspect of territorial scales according to the historical processes that interconnect origin and destination, local and global, constructed and imagined space, hot and cold.

To this end, we planned an exploratory case study related to the formation of the Italian diaspora communities in Brazil and the accelerated growth (in the last 10 years) of projects characterized as *Turismo delle Radici* connecting both local associations (of transnationalised identities) founded in Brazilian territory to their original communities in the Italian peninsula (*comuni* and *regione*). We highlight the social mechanisms of this moral economy that implies roots tourism as a vector of the *Italianness* – Italianness – that generates self-sustainability at different levels (local-global) balancing authentic experience out of the massive tourism industry. We suggest that *associationism* contributes for strong ties among Italian communities and exert a decisive role in the promotion of tourist experiences of “return” in a transnational social field (Ricciardi, 2018). Then, travelling experiences in the place of destination strengthen the sense of “atemporal” belonging, the *Italianness* feeling that protects one against *overtourism* while simultaneously preserving the moral field of dense ties and transactions to homeland. Methodologically, the

case study of the Italian diaspora in Brazil and the formation of the sense of belonging as Italianness makes it possible to problematize the phenomenon of TdR through the paradoxes of the authenticity of tourism practices in the moral economy of the globalised world.

1. Mobilities, Tourism and The New Moral Economy

1.1 *Tourism, Authenticity and Moral Economy: Experiencing the Self and Otherness*

The sociological literature has long debated the phenomenon of tourism after various perspectives that seek to characterize the tourist experience according to its fundamental ontological elements (such as the identification of *authenticity* and the search for the Self) or those that search for the social and economic functions of tourism (business of the hospitality industry, use of technologies, and structure of globalised tourism spaces). Based on the perspective of an economic sociology of tourism, we seek to define the social mechanisms that make the tourist experience part of the *moral economy* (Zelizer, 2010). It exposes the crucial association between tourism and mobility in a globalized world of multiple space-time scales that reshapes the notion and experience of social distances, as already anticipated by Simmel (Lechner, 1991).

This fact is fundamental to understand the phenomenology of practices in tourism as a genuine experience of *Otherness* and its consequences for the formation of the Self embedded in the network of social interactions and its “multiple gazes” (Urry & Larsen, 2011, p. 23). As Simmel pointed out, variations in the form of human interactions lead to degrees of social distancing, from the proximity of face-to-face relationships to estrangement and extended intermediation in situations of co-presence that sustain social circles and the Self as a reflexive tool for social consciousness development. The spatial-temporal compression in the last century has implied new possibilities for experiencing social distances due to the varied capabilities of moving of people, goods, and services across the natural and the constructed landscapes. The constitution of this global space that allows for integrated displacements, but at different scales, creates a new experience of the territory, materialized, and imagined in social identities and expanded communities (Glick-Schiller & Salazar, 2012). Analytically, tourism as a type of mobility is directly associated with the structure and composition of global migratory flows – we suggest that TdR, as part of this global mobility regime is also integrated in the diasporas and transnational communities as well (Coles & Timothy, 2004; Huang *et al.*, 2013).

In the second point to be highlighted, we must consider the intrinsic phenomenological quality of tourism while experiencing the Self confronting multiple gazes (*Otherness*), whether the tourist practice is massified or self-regulated, standardized or free style, distanced or intimate, cold or hot. This is a heuristic point because it gives relevance to the nexus between the authenticity experienced by the tourist and the limits implied by the global mobility regime in which such tourist practices are located. Thus, the relationship between authenticity and mobility is mediated by a determining aspect in contemporary capitalist societies, namely, the constitution of a global market under new moral principles. As the New Economic Sociology pointed out, sociology has long studied how economic actions are embedded in social relations, in structures that form institutions and social organizations in modernity, integrating culture through the incorporation of moral values and affective ties to the production, circulation, and consumption market – and so, how can we think of tourist activities in terms of their industry and embeddedness in the territory?

According to Granovetter (1985), markets should be analysed as a sociological phenomenon in which the rationality of the economic agent (either atomized or undersocialized) is in fact inserted in a web of social bonds, strong and weak ties, that constitutes a constraining moral force and actually sustains the social institutions and organizations that define the course of exchanges

and their market hierarchies, both locally and globally. Zelizer (2010, pp. 366-7) goes further and states that the market must be analysed as one category of social relations that involves consumption, production, and exchange under a variety of cultural and structural settings. The theoretical and empirical "puzzle" thus turns on determining the social and cultural variation of these "multiple markets." (...) Economic processes should not be set in opposition to extra economic cultural and social forces but understood as one special category of social relations, much as is kinship or religion. Thus, economic phenomena, although partly autonomous, are interdependent with a system of meanings and structures of social relations.

In this study, when analysing the authenticity of tourist practices, we seek to frame it according to the idea of "multiple markets" of a moral economy that is established beyond the purely economic instrumental rationality. In fact, the search for the experience of authenticity involves the circuit of transactions concerning the globalised space of tourism in an integrated perspective (*embedded*) in networks of social relations with different actors, services, and places.

MacCannell initially identified the authenticity of the tourist experience strictly associated with a relational dimension in terms of material and immaterial transactions developed in the context of travel, the feelings of attachment to places and non-places, interactions that involve people, objects, events. The postmodern paradox in neoliberal societies now locates tourism at the core of a disjunctive arena where one's desire to experience *Otherness* confronts the programmed exaggeration of the businesses structures of the tourism industry, which promotes *overtourism*. According to MacCannell (2020) the moral economy in that arena is constantly under dispute since the foundation of the tourism global market. However, as Cohen (1988, p. 376 ff.) warns, the search for authenticity in the tourism experience also tends to occur at gradual levels of intensity according to the contexts of social interaction between visitors and natives, cultural institutions and heritage sites of collective memory, economic structures and tourist products shared and incorporated by the hospitality industry. The tourist experience should not be essentialized in aspects that are apparently self-contained in labelled moral values and hierarchies, as MacCannell seems to hold. Following Cohen, we defend that the authenticity of tourist practices, constructed between the search for the genuine experience of the Self and the performances staged more or less arbitrarily in a context marked by the economic logic of commodification (*staged authenticity*), can be heuristically linked to the mechanisms of the moral economy of "multiple markets" that organize and direct the mobility regime.

TdR should be taken as a special case of tourist mobility in which strong and weak social ties, original institutions and circuits of material and symbolic exchanges promote the embeddedness of tourism practices (such as relaxation, the pursuit of the Self, pleasure and leisure) in deep dimensions of community life, linking the experience of the authentic to the collectively shared trajectories in an emotional process of reinforcing identities. Romita (2021) follows this path by emphasizing the characteristics of TdR as a "mobility of return", often associated with a residential choice – tourists who have private residences, both at the origin and at the destination, which are linked to an affective memory of the place, experienced in childhood or through the genealogical ties of the family history. We can say that the embedding takes place due to the strength of the "proximities" that sustain the authenticity of the tourist experience over time (experiences of mobility in the trajectory of an individual, in the same generation, or the common experiences lived by several people linked between generations) and in space (the distances shortened through the possession of a private or shared residence, defining the borders of an expanded territory). As suggested by Romita (2021, pp. 126-8), the effect of postmodernity on tourism created a mechanism that allows 1) an experience of almost unconscious inauthenticity, when the tourist consumes products, standardized and massified tourist services and places in the hospitality industry, without reflexively evaluating the realization of the Self and *Otherness*; 2) an experience of inauthenticity but in a conscious way, characteristic of the post-tourist who becomes aware of the "staged authenticity" and playfully confronts the Self and the *Otherness* in a creative dialog in which mass tourism can be re-signified in a new moral logic, allowing for

the post-tourist a truly recreational experience with themselves; and finally 3) a conscious experience of authenticity in which the tourist mobility allows them to live the integration of places and the Self through remembered and re-signified affective bonds – as it happens with TdR strongly embedded through family ties and friendship between places and generations. Romita (2021, p. 128) suggests that today tourists can organize their own trip according to two different modalities: «a) acquiring tourist products available under the travel agency or tourist services under one or more wholesalers; b) packaging the holiday self-sufficiently, first deciding where to go and then using flexible services, structures and infrastructures aimed not only for tourism purposes». The Italian TdR, is the type of *fai da te* tourism in which the tourist defines their entire journey and experience of the trip, services, people and places, the type of tourism in which the moral logic of proximity, strong ties and affective experiences takes place. Finally, the TdR implies “andare verso le proprie radici” (*ibidem*, p.128) as a critical practice of embeddedness for the experience of authenticity in a fluid and commodified world.

1.2 The Regime of Mobilities and the Global Connections: Migrations, Diasporas and Tourism

We should note that «mobilities create an integrated system, which can be observed at a range of scales: family/household, community, national, and the constellation of countries linked by migration flows» (Glick-Schiller & Salazar, 2013, p. 2). The empirical connection between tourism and migrations in a regime of mobilities implies the simultaneity of the spatial-temporal scale (migration as a change of long-term residency and tourism as displacement between places without fixation with irregular and usually short duration) and a socio-political and existential scale (when displacement represents a mobility between symbolic borders that characterize the Self experiencing different people and places). With the development of intensive technologies of communication and transport, the global mobility regime has produced more overlaps, interdependencies and modified sociability in terms of social distances between people, groups and places providing new experiences of belonging (Glick-Schiller & Salazar, 2013).

As Huang and colleagues (2013) suggest, travel is directly linked to migrant communities separated by various routes between a place of settlement and the ancestral homeland. The collective experience of “travel” becomes an emotional and existential reference when it confronts the Self, deepening the social bonds in the space-time where communities and people interact ritually. In such an interactive process, that is increasingly diversified and technologically transformed, the overlapping of types of mobility in tourism and migration is entangled in diaspora form, in which the simultaneity of being in-between the homeland and the actual residential place allows new ways of experiencing places and temporalities – migrant communities become transnational, then the transmigrants and the tourists experience new existential possibilities (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004). Initially, as pointed out by Huang and colleagues (2013, p. 288), «The relationship between tourism and migration is twofold. On the one hand, tourism can generate two types of migration: (1) labor migration, which provides the labor needed in tourism-related services, and (2) consumption-led migration systems, which consist of tourists moving to their beloved destinations, such as retirement migration and second home development».

In addition to the structuring “economic” fact of this overlapping between forms of tourism and migration, there is also an immaterial and existential development of simultaneous experiences that definitively lead to the forms of the diasporic tourism. As Coles & Timothy (2004, p. 13) note, travel and tourism have crucial roles to play reflexively in the processes of learning and self-discovery that define the fluid, constantly unfolding nature of diasporic identities. Tourism does not just represent a vehicle for straightforward, practically automatic voyages of self-discovery and identity affirmation. Visits to homelands or elsewhere into the diaspora may result in troubling,

disconcerting and ambiguous experiences as well as new-found ambivalences. Tourism contributes to the construction of contemporary narratives of diasporic heritages which articulate to members of diasporas, (...), who they are and how they came to be.

The recent study by Tomczewska-Popowycz & Taras (2022, p. 255) present a conceptual model for defining roots tourism strongly associated with the diasporic mobility. According to the authors who evaluated the different uses and definitions in the literature on the topic of "roots tourism", the analytical categories most frequently associated with roots point to terms such as diaspora, ancestry, genealogy, family, ethnicity, heritage, personal and family memory, nostalgia, sentimental and existential. The varied combination of these terms according to 2 conceptual axes (the degree of emotional connectivity of the person with places, people and objects; and the degree of social proximity of the person in relation to the referential community - ethnic, ancestral, family and personal), allows defining roots tourism in a non-essentialized way, nuanced according to the degree of embeddedness of people, groups and their courses in the territory.

1.3 Italian Diasporas, Transnationalism and the Turismo delle Radici (TdR)

The Italian historiography on the Great Migrations has been systematically updated and revised, opening up major theoretical, methodological and conceptual debates. Perhaps the greatest impact was the idea defended by historian Donna Gabaccia (1997; 1998), who proposes to classify the general phenomenon of Italian migrations – which produced around 27 million international migrants, multiple communities of origin and destination, occupational activities, temporalities and types of travel – as *diasporas* (not just one Italian diaspora but the many and plural diasporas of Italy; Gabaccia, 2005, pp. 141-2).

According to Colluci & Sanfilippo (2010), with the historiography based on a macro-structural interpretation of the Braudelian *longue durée*, we could identify a profusion of life courses in movement, integrating different space-time scales, revealing 3 quite distinct phases in the mobility regime of the Italian peninsula: first, in the long pre-modern period from the Middle Ages until the 18th century with commercial migrations, pilgrimages, military campaigns and travels of exploration, population displacements to short-distance colonization, transhumance between ecological systems and political and diplomatic refugees. The movements were characterized as short, circular, ruled by seasonality and of reduced quantity; in a second phase, in the beginning of the 19th century, in the pre-unitary period, movements made up of revolutionary political activists, dissidents, eventually associated with the poorest and dispossessed workers (*braccianti*), adventurers and street artists, small regional entrepreneurs, artisans linked to specialized manual activities. The period known as "The Great Emigration", included the unfolding of the impact of transport technology (railway networks and expansion of steam naval companies) and communications (telegraph and postal services between Atlantic countries) on the labor market generated a potential surplus of internal and international migrants – added to the economic crises (hunger and segmented unemployment) and European demographics (accelerated population growth) that remained until the end of the First World War. With the establishment of a state bureaucracy politically linked to the new Italian ruling classes (industrialists, bankers and landowners) and a new nationalist liberal ideology, the state turned to the management of emigration as a fundamental policy for the economic and social development of the post-unified Italy; in a third phase, after the Second World War, in the midst of a shattered and republican Italy, Europe had a need for manpower, which led to a new wave of migratory flows, often circular and of short and medium distances, but which gradually spread with globalisation to more distant destinations in the Americas and Oceania. These movements intensified until the beginning of the 1970s and later cooled down, only returning at the end of the 20th century and especially from the beginning of the 21st century, although without the same impetus.

We highlight the continuity of ties between people and groups with diverse origins and destinations, not least because of the intensity and the circular dynamics of exits and returns that allowed a proliferation of *ethnicized identities* in regionalism (*campanilismo* – localist phenomenon in the constitution of the Self based on the strength of kinship and friendship ties established at the level of the most local territorial units), until the gradual consolidation of an *expanded identity* under nationalist tones that came to constitute the very representation of the Italianity (*italianità*), both in the Italian communities integrated in the destinations and even in the original communities in the *regioni*, with the circulation of people, objects and social representations (Devoto, 1994; Luconi, 2011).

The fact is that between 1860 and 1975, approximately 30 million Italians left their homes, travelled for work, migrated (established permanent or temporary residence), returned and re-emigrated to a host of new, often unknown places, with different local characteristics, social organizations and integration processes (Gabaccia, 2005). Furthermore, according to Tirabassi (2005, p. 5, n.8), from those millions of emigrants, there are currently approximately 60 million Italian-descendants – one *Nuova Italia* outside Italy –, around 2 million residing in Europe, 17 million in North America, 40 million in Latin America and just over 500 thousand in Oceania. Many of the Italian citizens residing abroad and registered in the Ministry of the Interior's Anagrafe Italiani Residenti all'Estero (AIRE) are native Italians (3 million), and an increasing category of Italian descent with recognized citizenship (2.5 million) (Licata, 2020, p. 7).

It is not by chance that it has become common to treat the Italian mobility regime in the global world as fundamentally a diaspora encompassing transnational spaces. Luconi (2011, p. 148) states that both terms, diaspora and transnationalism, have come to be used recurrently in studies on Italian migration because they emphasize the simultaneity of “being there” and “being here” that cements the feeling of belonging to one community on multiple scales – temporal (different connected generations) and spatial (local and global territories affectively located). With the intensification of information technologies, material and immaterial transactions in these new territories create the sensation of “overcoming limits” (crossing borders) that allow individuals to feel paradoxically connected even over long distances. Hence, one can understand the stability of a sense of belonging, such as the *italianità* that derives from a traditional *campanilismo* (supported by the kaleidoscope of regional identities from the early times of the Great Emigration, going back to pre-national unification social hierarchies) gradually modified in the direction of a kind of national identity (*ethnicized*) that starts to be negotiated and resignified in contexts of mobility and transactions (of sociability in a moral economy of multiple markets and gazes). Although Luconi criticizes the application of the diaspora concept to the phenomenon of migrations – as focusing on essentialized diacritics of the phenomenon such as the characteristics of self-segregation, strong endogamy and resistance to cultural assimilation (*ibidem*, p. 162) – we must emphasize its heuristic utility, as advocated by Gabaccia (2005).

In the last two centuries, the Italian global mobility regime has paradoxically developed under the axes of innovative economic activities (transnational entrepreneurship as a way of overcoming local poverty), political activities (organization of the state and civil society in the search of recognition of the *Nuova Italia* outside Italy) and cultural activities (appreciation of familism through religious and educational institutions and regional associations). The combination of these activities, responsible for the resignification of the diasporic community and identity, allowed for an expansion of the contexts and experiences of the Self and *Otherness* of the travellers in general, harmonizing globally the feeling of belonging as Italianity constantly experienced through tensions and resolutions (we can think of those radical and paradoxical “ideational campaigns” like the one carried out by entrepreneur Piero Bassetti, the *Italicità movement* – promoting the congregation of a transnational community of “lovers of Italian things”, see Bassetti, 2017). As a crowning achievement of these movements, we understand that *Turismo delle Radici* emerges as a consequence of an experiential search for a solution to the tensions of a globalised regime of transnational displacements, which seeks to mediate paradoxes according to solid

moral principles that integrate characteristics of traditional social life (such as the familism, *campanilismo* and strong associative life) with characteristics of liquid modernity in which authenticity can be experienced through unconventional mechanisms of mobility (whether in person or virtual, ritualized in a strict or creative way, as a journey into self-knowledge).

2. A Case Study – Brazil and the Italianità

2.1 Defining the Case Study

Here we focus on a typical case that expresses one of the many faces of the Italian diaspora to assess the general picture presented in the previous topic. The question to be answered is: how does tourism, and more specifically TdR, work towards the integration of the transnational Italian community and provide meaning to the feeling of belonging even far from home? How does tourism support the management of the territory by creating bonds of identity between origin and destination even across generations and distant places? Our hypothesis is that the TdR achieves a moral force (an emotional and immaterial motivation that links people and groups) that enables the construction of an "identity in motion" (*Italianità*), continuously resignifying the authentic experience of the Self and *Otherness*, reinforcing strong social bonds to overcome distances and regional differences. Therefore, the TdR must be understood as a social mechanism that integrates simultaneously the Italian-Brazilian communities on both sides of the Atlantic, leading individuals and groups to recognize themselves in a common ground of memory and experience. Each tourist activity, cultural goods or services in the hospitality industry linked to Italian communities in Brazil can thus be taken as examples of the performance of these mechanisms.

The emigration that started in the 19th century from the peninsula to Brazil, on the other side of the Atlantic, reveals singularities of a social and demographic context, but tourist activities emerged much later – from the oldest records there is something related to the popular festivities of Italian settlers in southern Brazil, but still a tourist product not elaborated as such (Panis, 2016). Any tourist activity that would connect origin and destination simultaneously on each side of the Atlantic had not been found at least until the beginning of the 1990s (when the FIFA Football World Cup took place in Italy). Thus, it is important to note that tourism only begins to effectively enter the global mobility regime between Italy and Brazil very late.

Anyway, over 120 years (1840-1960) there has been the displacement of millions of people who kept the arteries that connect the two nations alive. Around 1.5 million Italian immigrants arrived in Brazil,³ settling unevenly in various parts of the territory, often without any strategic planning (Trento, 2001). Many immigrants remained settled in the same place and created more stable *colonies* (*Colônias*, especially in the extreme south of Brazil, receiving around 80,000 Italian immigrants who went to the new colonies created in rural areas; Cenni, 2003, p. 131). However, there have been also a great variation in terms of the flows of immigrants from different regions of the peninsula, being initially predominantly peasants and artisans from Veneto (1874-1898), followed by the *braccianti* and artisans from the south (Campania, Calabria and Sicilia) and finally manual and specialized workers (miners, masons and builders) especially from northern regions (Lombardy, Tuscany and Emilia Romagna, 1891-1914 –Maria, 2015).

The destination regions in Brazil also enforced a diversification in the settlement process on arrival due to the uneven territorial development of the country – and this would have conse-

3 It is currently believed that something around 1.5 million Italian immigrants entered and settled in the Brazilian territory (*stock migration*). However, it is estimated that something around 4.1 million Italians "visited" (*flow migration*) Brazil between 1886 and 1934. São Paulo, as the most active urban and industrial centre, as well as the political centre ruled by the coffee industry capitalists, attracted just over 50% of the flows and even more of the migration stock (Trento, 2001, p.107).

quences for the development of tourism as well. In southern Brazil, immigrants quickly adapted to the regional land structure favourable to small entrepreneurs. The immigrants settled there could found agrarian colonies that become later economically successful – this fact would have a strong impact on the conservation of the family system, associationism and the cooperative entrepreneurship (characteristics of the *Made in Italy*, replicated extensively in the culture of the *oriundi* community and its descendants; Colognese, 2004). In São Paulo, Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro (three states in the south-eastern region of the country) immigrants met a very different context with very particular regional characteristics and social constraints (it is important to note that the fourth state in this region, Espírito Santo, also developed agrarian colonial settlements very similar to those found in the south).

The State of São Paulo, in 1887, implemented the policy of subsidizing the industry of intensive recruitment of manpower and immigration-directed to the Coffee Farms (Alvin, 1986), improving the management of regional development of territory. Initially, the coffee industry in São Paulo concentrated the demands and resources that attracted the whole immigration. Confronting the context of immigrant colonies, farms demanded another profile of workers and charged a high price in the process of integration in a society still structured on the enslavement of black workers. Many families re-emigrated to urban centres or even farther regions of the expanding agrarian frontier (especially to Minas Gerais) in the expectation of economic success in the agricultural industry. Unlike the colonies in the south, the Italian immigrants who spread across the southeast, centre-west and northeast of Brazil experienced another path of adaptation and regional development, competing for niches in the specialized labor market both in industry and in the service sectors, commerce and even public administrative and political professions (Colbari, 1997; De Oliveira, Tisott, 2011; Bonato, 2013; Pandolfi, 2020). Many immigration centres in these regions promoted contact and interaction between Italian immigrants from different regional origins of the peninsula, the contact of Italian immigrants with other international immigrants and native Brazilians as well. Over time, these interactions and sociability created a melting pot where Italianity developed in a multifarious way.

First, in this heterogeneous complex of individual and collective life courses, the experiences of the Self and *Otherness* that command the formation of identity and the feeling of belonging generated great flexibility and innovativeness regarding Italianity. Second, such Italianity has also developed, over time, representations of Italian nationality through new narrative and instrumental forms in people's everyday lives. The sense of *Italianità* became popular in different regions of Brazil due to the social integration through marriages between Brazilians and Italians, the spread of Italian familism through the religiosity of Catholicism and the political and economic associationism by cooperative entrepreneurial work embedded in the social circles of strong ties (family, friendship and neighbourhood; Colbari, 1997; Colognese, 2004).

The kaleidoscopic character of the *campanilismo* that marked the first phase of Italian emigration, which covers the period before and immediately after the unification, adjusted itself over time according to the different patterns of the Brazilian territorial context that gradually lead to the emergence of an increasingly transnationalised and connected sense of belonging between the two sides of the Atlantic (Croci, 2009; De Andreis & Bernardini, 2018). It should be noted though that the *campalinismo* paradoxically endures in the evolution of the *Italianità* – then, the importance of the TdR that promotes tourist manifestations in different regions of Brazil, expressing authenticity in the experience of the Self enthralling multiple perspectives of Italianity, or how to become *truly Italian* through the shared memory with other people, objects and places of the peninsula.

2.2 TdR and the Italianità in Brazil: in Search of Authenticity in-between

The tourism industry developed slowly in Brazil during the 20th century. Finally, from the mid-1980s post-democratic restoration, the opening of the national market and the reform of financial institutions led to the currency stabilization and administrative reform of the state bureaucracy. From the 1990s onwards, a set of structuring public policies in the field of tourism could be implemented in the following years, generating a positive impact on the massification, decentralisation and expansion of tourism industry (Carvalho, 2016; Lohmann *et al.*, 2022). Tourism activities and products have diversified, taking advantage of existing potential in the country such as natural attractions, and artistic and cultural heritage, complemented by the large investment in global tourism businesses that brought to Brazil a large industry of arts and sports mega-events and business tourism (Lohmann *et al.*, 2022, p. 7). At the same time, more experiential types of tourism were also developed for different audiences, such as adventure tourism (sustainable ecotourism). Thus, various public and private investments intensified in areas that already existed, but were poorly equipped and less standardized, expanding the offer of tourist practices to a heterogeneous public, causing the formation of new tourist niches that became very popular in Brazil, such as the rural tourism in addition to community-based tourism on cooperative work and solidarity. This niche also encompasses the common activities of popular festivities, religious celebrations and return tourism for internal migrants who return to *family reunion parties* in their communities (Castro *et al.*, 2013).

This niche is associated with practices in search of authenticity, such as experiential tourism, and in the last 40 years in Brazil it has become an alternative for economic and social development for several vulnerable communities in rural areas, close to natural sites of environmental protection and cultural heritage as in the case of European colonization regions, especially Italian ones in the south of the country (Panis, 2016). At the onset of the 21st century several inclusive policies of regionalised territorial development were encouraged in the field of cooperative experiential and sustainable tourism. There has been a flourishing of initiatives to rescue cultural heritage that “comes from below”, promoting types of residential tourism that takes advantage of government investments in communication technologies (social media) with market practices that provide innovative infrastructure (such as Airbnb and Coach Surfing) (Rodas Vera & Gosling, 2017). Popular festivities make it possible to plan calendars articulated with religious, gastronomic, cultural and experiential adventure tourism, reinforcing the logic of the moral economy of embedded social ties at multiple scales. The autonomous style of tourism *fai da te* (Romita, 2021) also develops and establishes firmly in the warmer Brazil from deep roots interconnecting identities and communities across the Atlantic. Not only between “twin cities” (movements of official recognition increasingly frequent between regional associations and public authorities) that develop projects encouraging the exchange of cultural and historical experiences, but also tourist projects with territorially elaborated itineraries – such as the “immigrant routes” connecting various cities, regions and businesses. There is an open field to be explored that is heating up the tourism economy in Brazil and the Italianity cultivated also by the TdR unfolds rapidly in Brazil along integrated projects on both sides of the Atlantic.

3. Reflections on the TdR and the Moral Economy of a Transnational Community: a Conclusion

This is a preliminary and exploratory research effort to study an empirical phenomenon that is still incipient and very little understood, and as such it has limitations. First, we restrict our focus to the few examples of genealogical and diasporic tourism in Italian-Brazilian communities that are not yet institutionally recognized (by the government or market). Thus, here

we present a very partial and biased view of the Brazilian perspective on the early formation of a roots tourism market. Second, the deficiency of quantified and systematic data on *Turismo Delle Radici* and the interaction between Italy and Brazil, imposed a limiting methodological decision regarding the analysis of the development of *Italianità* along with the types of mobility and the multiple markets of tourism. Therefore, much of our findings should be taken with caution, suggesting likely trends that warrant further investigation.

We offer a reflection on the development of tourist activities in Italy and Brazil as a process of social integration (in fact, transnational) grounded in the mobility in a broad and unrestricted sense – the embeddedness of people, goods and representations between places of belonging and experience of the Self. We have argued so far that tourism, and in particular TdR, has become a fundamental mechanism of community integration in postmodernity, and that this mechanism has strongly contributed to the re-signification and strengthening of a sense of belonging that re-elaborates traditional customs (the *campanilismo*) in a new view of fluidity and dynamism that invigorates communities and their members through tourist practices. The TdR is important not only for its direct economic consequences both in Italy and in Brazil, but above all for the necessary contribution to the persevering of Italianity, the preservation of affections that interconnect generations and distant places and the possibility of an existential experience in the constitution of the Self and its positioning in the globalised world. Additionally, we sought to show that this integrative and experiential mechanism contained in the TdR is strongly associated with a moral economic logic of productive interdependence that inspires people to become embedded in a network of close relationships strengthening social participation and involvement in activities that reinforce the existential quality of living in the knitted social fabric.

When we observe the recent development of tourist practices that involve Italian-descendant communities in Brazil, from the analytical point of view of an economic sociology of tourism, we realize the formation of a *circuit of exchanges* strongly interconnected between the two sides of the Atlantic, that transversally integrates “multiple markets” of production and consumption of authentic experiences of the Self and *Otherness*. In the last decades, both in Italy and in Brazil, several experiential itineraries, circuits, tourist routes have been projected and created regarding the historical and cultural event of migrations. The Italian diaspora has become a recognized term in the public sphere, and the idea of *Italianità* has become an increasingly referred attribute – both in business and institutional relationships (commercial agreements under auspicious of the Italia System, such as the business of *agriturismo*) as well as in affective ties (search for Italian citizenship in Brazil and genealogical tourism in Italy) – reinforcing the model of a strong moral economy around roots, mobility and tourism (Guida Alle Radici Italiane, 2019; Guida Agli Affari in Brasile, 2020). In an interesting survey, Panis (2016) assessed the overwhelming growth in the last 15 years of roots tourism in Italian communities in several Brazilian states. In general, new circuits are created every year in different regions, based on local initiatives, by public or private authorities, family groups or civil regional associations connected to those in the Italian regions (a lively expression of a *campanilismo* that persists). These circuits move the economy of several small and medium-sized cities, promote cultural and artistic interaction between people from distant places, encourage the learning of Italian language and culture (from literature to enogastronomy), contribute to the strengthening of genealogical or ideological affective ties (religiosity or political activism), and accomplish the dream of many descendants in search for the official recognition of Italian citizenship through genealogical journeys in collective memory - which often leads to the crossing of the Atlantic more than once to visit the places of origin of the families (a phenomenon that deserves to be studied much more properly).

Finally, given the increasing encouragement of the Italian government to projects to rescue the collective memory of the diaspora, the expansion of the recognized population of descendants who enrol in the AIRE every day, we can say that the TdR is a type of ineradicable mobility of Itali-

anity, and supports a deep-rooted sense of belonging. It is a type of mobility that strengthens the conservation of traditions but that is always in motion, through sentimental journeys that lead to self-knowledge and unpredictable encounters between origin and destination, past and present.

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