

UNIVERSITÀ
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**Landscape and sense of belonging:
the relationship with everyday places in the
experience of immigrants in Veneto Region
(Northeastern Italy)**

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Landscape and immigrants: research context

- **PhD Thesis (2007/2009)**

«Landscape's role in the construction of identity and sense of belonging to place: investigations and comparisons among Italian and Foreign teenagers»

- **«Social Integration Of Immigrants» (SIOI – 2008)**

European Project Interreg. IIIA: focus on second generation immigrants – quantitative approach (telephone survey questionnaire)

- **Project «Landscape and Immigrants: Networks and Knowledge» (LINK – 2009/2010)**

Focus on second generation immigrants – sample: 40 12-14 year-old teenagers – qualitative approach (autophotography and foto-elicitation)

- **Project «Landscape and sense of belonging to place among first generation immigrants in Veneto region» (2014/2015)**

Focus on first generation immigrants – sample: 49 people, aged between 17 and 44 – qualitative approach (autophotography and foto-elicitation)

Theoretical framework

- **Landscape**

- Landscape as a **cultural product** and **reference** in the construction of individual and collective **identity** (Turri, 2008,1998; ELC, 2000)
- «**médiation paysagère**» **approach** (Joliveau et al., 2008; Fortin, 2007): landscape as a «**tool**» for research and action

- **Sense of belonging to place and migration**

- **Belonging** as an **affective** and **emotional relationship** with a place; it implies «**to feel at home**»: «**home**» as «a symbolic space of **familiarity** and **security**» (Antonsich, 2010; Hidalgo, Hernandez, 2001; Tuan, 1990,1980; Relph, 1976)
- **Migrants' experience** allows **overcoming rigid** and **fixed notions** of «**home**» and «**belonging**» (Ralph, Staeheli, 2011; Dwyer, 2000; Ahmed, 1999)

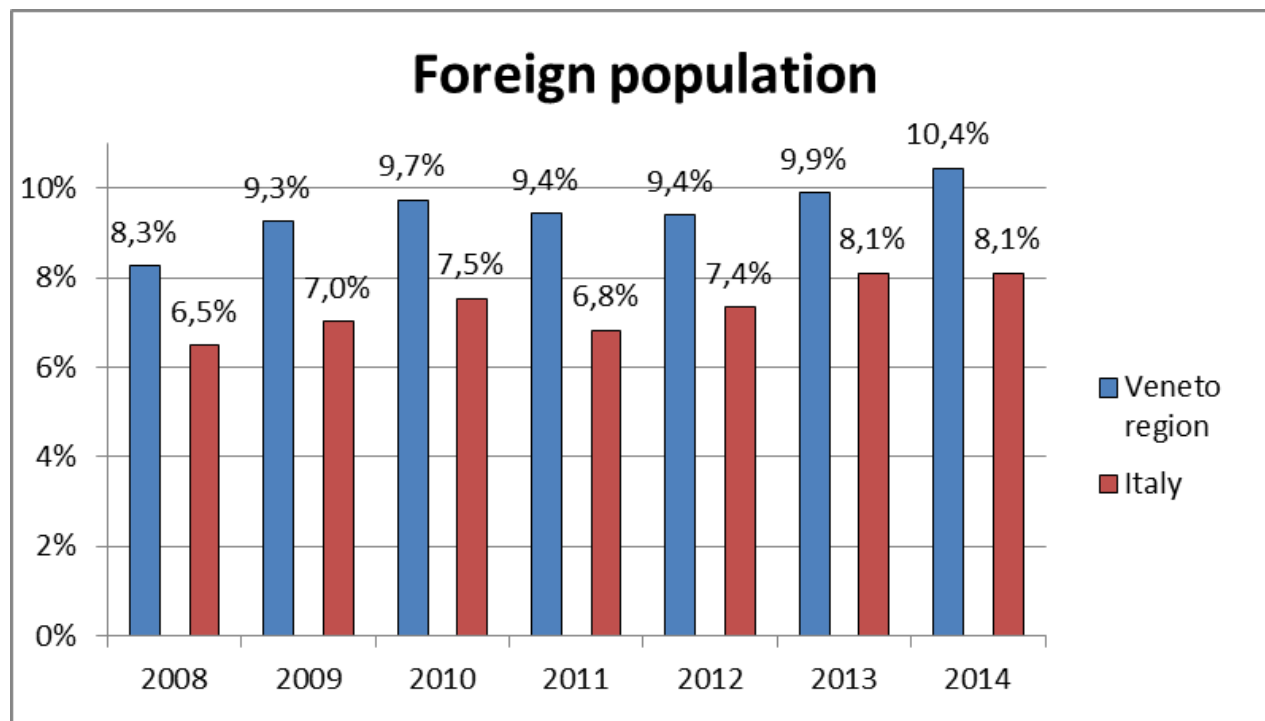
Research questions

1. Which relationship do migrants build with their current place of life?
2. How does sense of belonging to place rise and develop?
3. Which social usefulness can these researches have?

Territorial context

Veneto region
(Northeastern Italy)

- Everyday landscapes
- Multicultural context



Source: personal elaboration on ISTAT data

Total population of **Italy**:
60,782,668 mln inhab.

Total population of
Veneto: 4,926,818 mln
inhab.

(on 1st of January 2014)

First 3 nationalities in
Veneto:

Rumanian (23% of the
total foreign population);
Moroccan (11%),
Albanian (9%)

(on 31st of December 2013)

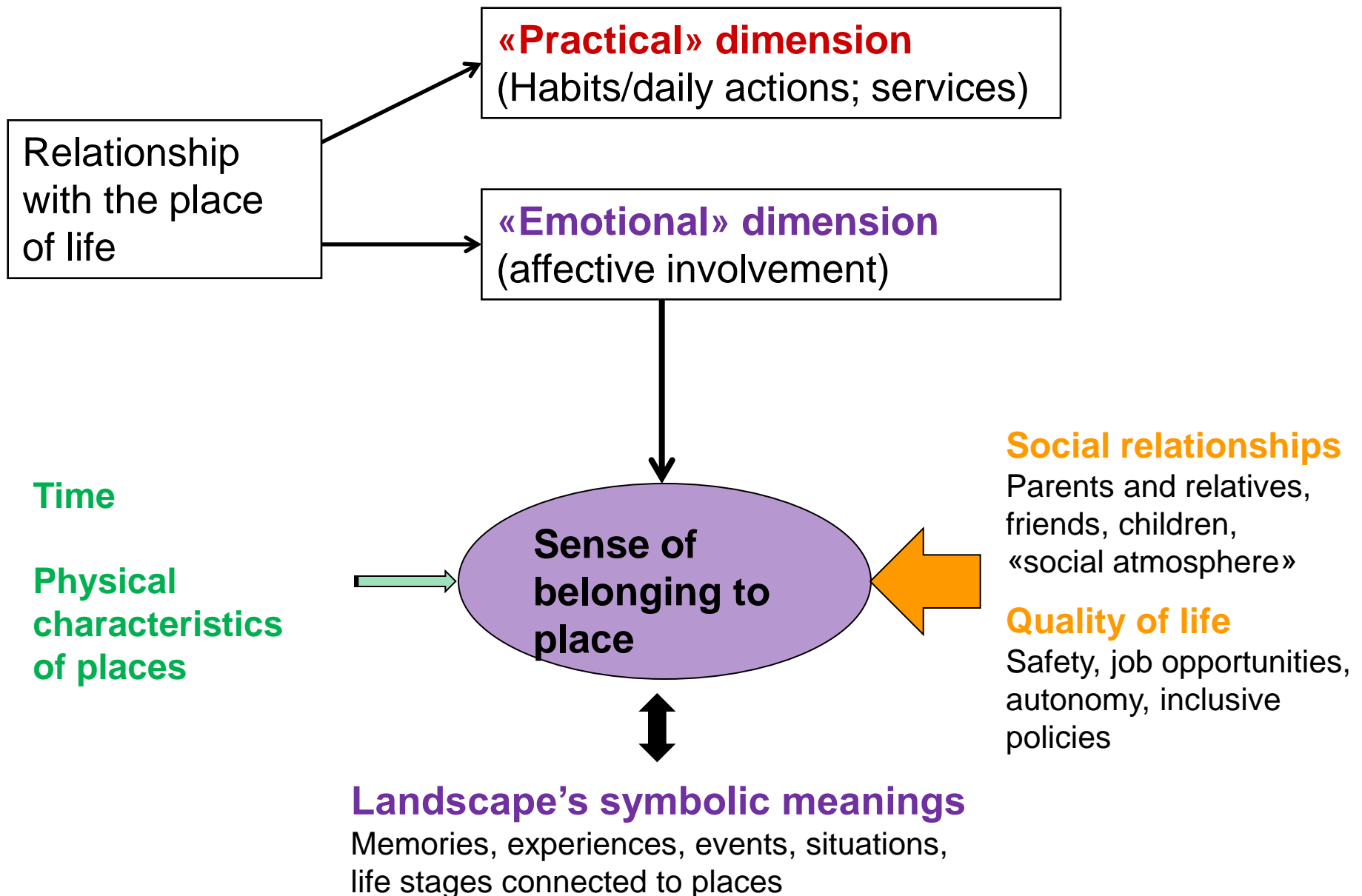
Methods

- Qualitative approach
- Visual methods
(autophotography, semi-structured interviews and focus group with photo-elicitation)



- Effectiveness at exploring the meanings attributed by people to places (Stedman et Al., 2014; Lombard, 2013; Simkins e Thwaites, 2007)
- Possibility of reducing the distance between researchers and subjects involved in the project (Dodman, 2003)
- Innovative approach in exploring «the relevance of “place” for migration processes» (Mendoza e Morén-Alegret, 2013).

Sense of belonging to place



«Practical» dimension

Habits/Daily actions



«I go shopping here, also because near here there is the supermarket where I always go»

H.
She was born in Mauritius, **40 years old**;
she has lived in Italy for **4 years**

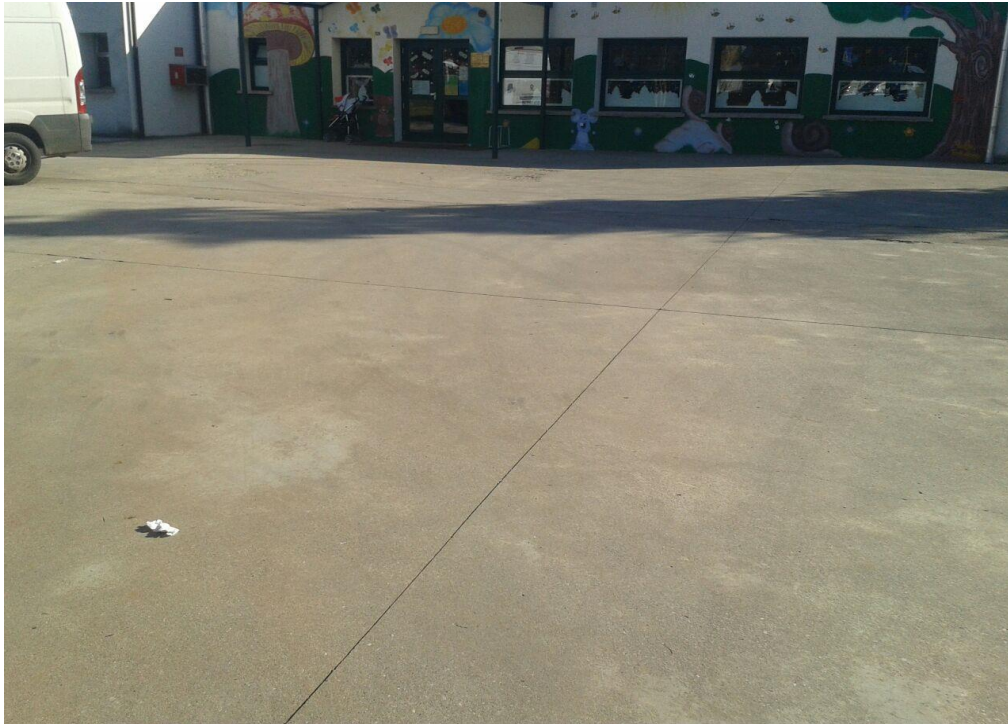
Services



Bank: «It is near my house and my mother goes there»

A.
He was born in Italy, **13 years old**; he lived in Italy until the age of 10, then moved to Romania and later came back to Italy. He has lived here for **1 year**

«Emotional» dimension



Kindergarten: «[If I went away from Montebelluna, I would miss] my three children's kindergarten; all of them attended this school»

F.
She was born in Morocco, **30 years old**;
she has lived in Italy for **9 years**

«The negative thing in Montebelluna is the lack of welcome... they look at different people... especially the women wearing a headscarf are looked at in a different way...»

Social relationships

Experiences/Memories



San Francesco Street:

«I took this photo because when I arrived to Italy I lived for a year at my sister-in-law's house, in this street»



Bus stop: «this is the most beautiful place in Arcella for me»

«[Sanski Most] was clean, beautiful. It resembles this park here very much, that's why I like it! Because there was a similar park, where I often went to, when...»

A.
She was born in Macedonia, **33 years old**; she has lived in Italy for **4 years and 3 months**

I.
He was born in Bosnia, **14 years old**; he has lived in Italy for **6 years**, in Padua for **1 months and a half**

Safety



«It reminds me of my country»

«I feel at home in Montebelluna, because it is a safe place, I feel safe when I go out for a walk... in Casablanca I didn't!»

K.

She was born in Morocco, **35 years** old; she has lived in Italy for **4 years**

Quality of life/job



«My second child was born in this hospital»

«My heart is half here [in Italy], half there [in Macedonia]... there for my family, here for living a better life. (...) Living a better life... because here my husband works...and when you have a job, you have everything, you can bring the children to school, pay the rent...»

M.

She was born in Macedonia, **29 years old**; she has lived in Italy **2 years and a half**.

Landscape as intercultural mediator

**Landscape as
intercultural
mediator**

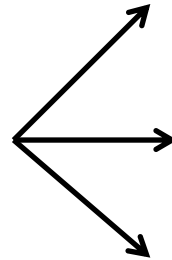
Effective at making sensations, emotions and memories emerge

«Bridge» between different places and between places and life stages

Able to encourage intercultural dialogue, foster immigrants' integration process and support the construction of open and dynamic identities

Social usefulness of these researches

For the migrants involved in the research

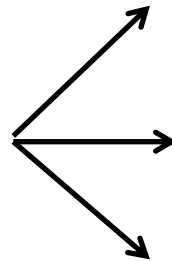


Deeper knowledge and awareness of their place of life, also in relation to their country of origin

Reflection on their migrant experience

Realizing that their experiences are interesting to somebody and so that it is important to share them with other people

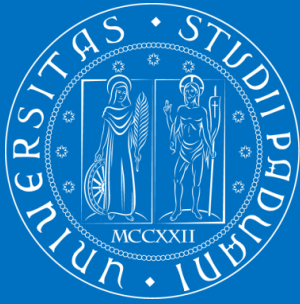
For people concerned with international migrations



Understanding the role of place in the process through which migrants take root in the host country

Identifying operative strategies to facilitate migrants' integration and to encouraging intercultural dialogue

Increasing migrants' social inclusion in the community in which they live



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Thank you for your attention!

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