Introduction. Exploring 'Roots' Mobilities and Making a Homeland

> "We get out of the plane… A smile runs across my face as I see Armenian writing and hear the airport employees' converse in Armenian. Wait is it Armenian? It sounds like it, but I don't understand most of it. Oh no! My first feeling of culture shock. I get to the gate, fill out the proper paperwork and go straight to the immigrations officer. I end up conversing with the immigration officer for about 10 minutes!!! He looks through my passport and asks me probably the most thought-provoking yet simple question; 'What has taken you so long to visit Armenia?' Why has it? I had vacation time, I had money, and I have the stamina to survive a long flight, so why?"
> *(AVC Volunteer, 2007)*

This emotional statement describes the long-distance 'homecoming' experience of a young volunteer, a third-generation Armenian American from the Boston area, who arrived in Yerevan at the Zvartnots International Airport in June 2007 to 'discover' his 'ancestral homeland' and to 'move mountains' in modern Armenia. This was not a journey along a pilgrimage tour. However, the perception of encountering the 'holy' land, which has never been the country of his grandparents' exodus, is comparable to the meaningful experiences of a pilgrim making a long journey to a sacred site. Armenia as an imagined homeland, merged with the iconic symbol of sacred Mount Ararat to become the mythical land of one's cultural roots, appears to be a tangible place: a territory marked by immigration officers and national borders that one can hear, smell and interact with.

Post-Soviet Armenia is usually perceived as a region of out-migration, with a large number of labour migrants moving to Russia, sending remittances that are important to the Armenian economy. In this book, Armenia is conceptualised as a destination country for descendants of post-migrants commonly

referred to in the Republic of Armenia as *spiurk* – the Armenian diaspora. Over the last two decades, a new migration process from the North to the South has been gaining ground. This is the arrival of Armenian post-migrants from economically more developed countries (the US or Canada) in post-socialist 'developing' Armenia. Studies of post-socialist migration usually deal with immigration from Eastern Europe and the Middle East to Western countries, while overlooking the fact that Eastern Europe and Eurasia became a destination for diasporic people.

Particularly since the collapse of the Soviet Union, a new generation of US American diasporic organisations and individuals have emploed a variety of mechanisms to engage with the 'ancestral homeland': travelling, volunteering and investing money. This new generation of diasporic Armenians claims to 'feel' connected to the 'homeland' despite a century of living outside, mainly in the US or Canada. Due to the challenging political situation in countries like Turkey or Iran, they do not engage with the actual homeland of their grandparents. Instead, they turn their desires and activities to neighbouring post-Soviet Armenia. The Republic of Armenia, once the Erivan Governorate of the Russian Empire, existed from 1918–1920 after the collapse of the Russian Empire and was then a Soviet republic until it became a sovereign nation-state in 1991.

The origins of diasporic travellers include multiple places and experiences that originate in numerous diasporic centres in the US, Canada, Brazil, France, the UK, Australia and Russia. However, the majority of diasporic volunteers and travellers in Armenia come from North America (the US and Canada). Many descendants of Armenian migrants live in these areas, building a strong network of visible and invisible ethnic communities (Bakalian 1993; Panossian 2006). The Boston area and California serve as the main generators of transnational networks and translocal bridges linking global diasporic individuals with the imagined homeland in Armenia.[1]

According to official statistics, between 1995 and 2021, approximately 2.300 'roots' migrants from the United States, Canada and Western Europe entered Armenia and settled temporarily for one or two years in the Republic of Armenia including the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, an unrecognised state in the South Caucasus. While this would appear to be an insignificant number, if we include those who settle for businesses and work at numerous non-governmental and charity organisations, recent Armenian refugees from Syria, and online visitors to the websites offering to 'discover Armenia', then the picture changes.[2] Each year, hundreds of young people of Armenian de-

scent from North America, Europe, Australia and Brazil travel to Armenia in order to contribute their labour and skills to the country's social and economic development.[3] Their contribution and activities in the field of philanthropy, volunteering and knowledge transfer are considered to play a vital role in Armenia's economic, social and political development. However, there is an imbalance in power and expectations on both sides.

Drawing on a long-term multi-site ethnographic fieldwork in Armenia and the United States (2007–2015), this study highlights diasporic perceptions, desires and activities in relation to the 'ancestral homeland' and examines how post-migrants generate a variety of bonds to that homeland and in this way create new pathways for return mobilities and transnational engagement. More precisely, I discuss the ways in which migrants' descendants create and practice different levels of social and political attachment to the homeland – a phenomenon that sometimes conflates with homeland and heritage tourism.

In this study, I identify and outline 'roots' mobility as a pattern of voluntary journeys to the 'ancestral homeland' among those who enjoy the freedom of mobility. With 'ancestral homeland' I mean the notion of belonging and attachment to a real or imagined place of origin, which is not always conceptualised as a specific location with one specific place, a neighbourhood or a house (Sigona et al. 2015: 25). 'Roots' mobility, a global phenomenon of voluntary movement to construct bonds to the homeland and to 'engage' with the homeland, is becoming attractive for members of transnational diasporic communities and ethnic migrants' descendants as part of their social and cultural identity. However, the issue of 'roots' mobility remains unspecified and under-theorised in anthropology and the social sciences. Much has been written in the 1990s and 2000s about the ideals, narratives and paradigms involved in diasporic nostalgia (Safran 1991, 2004; Tölölyan 1991; Cohen 1997; Levy/Weingrod 2005; Sigona et al. 2015), but there have been few anthropological investigations on how diasporic people practice transnational attachment and generate new bridges and itineraries between 'homeland' and 'diaspora' throughout generations. I refer to the interactions between 'here' and 'there' that go beyond banal cultural nostalgia and state diaspora policies. Most of the literature is focused on the formation of diasporic identities outside the homeland within a single nation-state. I examine a variety of interactions and interventions that build an intermediary translocal arena between diasporic agencies and the homeland. This perspective emphasises the role of the diasporic post-migrants themselves and

less of the homeland as an engine of geographical mobility and loyalty that may link specific people to a specific space.

This study seeks to contribute to understanding cross-border 'roots' flows and mobile practices of homeland attachment that are framed within emotional metaphors of getting 'rooted' and shaped by routes of 'discovering oneself' in the twenty-first century.

'Roots' and 'uprootedness' may be frequent leitmotifs in diasporic lives. Similar to Cohen, I use the botanic metaphor as a conceptual tool to capture the elusive domain of diasporic engagement and transnational scholarship (Cohen 2015). The 'roots' migrants in this study are volunteers, philanthropists, young professionals, and diasporic activists of Armenian descent, mostly living in North America and interacting with the Republic of Armenia transnationally and temporarily. An 'engaged' attachment and a 'meaningful' trip to Armenia can last more than two months, two years or longer. It can be seen by the travellers as an act that is not only associated with personal and family memories, but also with the opportunity of an individual powerful contribution to the transformation of social, political and economic life in the homeland. This is an important feature of engaged 'roots' travellers. Another important feature of the actors is that the majority of transnational diasporic travellers who claim to 'move' the homeland's future belong to the middle and educated classes in Western societies.

Diasporic *making* a homeland is the term that demarcates a proactive conceptual space, as a place of opportunities and start-ups, a meeting point for diasporic activists and travellers. The key figures of 'roots' mobilities differ from typical returnees and new migrants, as they do not intend to stay in the homeland. This book aims to highlight a new generation of diasporic organisations and individuals that address the issue of 'roots' mobility towards the homeland without a centralised bureaucracy. More specifically, it illuminates emerging pathways of transnational engagement among descendants of Armenian migrants in North America and elsewhere. Below, I begin with an outline of the different forms of 'roots' mobilities and return 'flows' to provide a broader framework for understanding the phenomenon of making a homeland and the ways this form of human mobility can be explored from the perspective of anthropology. Following this, I discuss the emotional dimension of 'roots' mobility as a specific fuel of transnational activities performed by diasporic post-migrants. As part of the Introduction, I also reflect on my experiences with multi-sited ethnography and the research methods I used in this study.

A Small Nation with Large Issues

Issues of migration and mobility have shaped Armenia's history. Armenians are worthy of special attention by scholars studying diasporas and cross-border mobility because of their rich history of transnational migration, displacement and diaspora worldwide. As Susan Pattie pointed out: "Ours, is a story of moving, rebuilding, moving again" (Pattie 2004b: 131). Along with Jews and Greek, diaspora literature considers Armenians as one of the three paradigmatic diasporic groups (Safran 1991; Tölölyan 1991). There are an estimated eight million ethnic Armenians around the world. Only up to three million of them live in post-Soviet Armenia, an impoverished post-conflict state in the South Caucasus with limited resources. There is a fundamental difference between the lines of global Armenianness: *Hayastantsi* (term for Armenians who live in the Republic of Armenia or those who recently migrated from the country) and *Spyurkahay* (Diaspora Armenians), which has led to the creation of different modes of being and feeling Armenian.

Most of the diasporic Armenians live scattered across Russia, the United States, Canada, Europe, and the Middle East, and relations between the global Armenian diaspora and the Armenian homeland are complex and ambivalent. The formation of Armenian diasporic communities worldwide has a long history and there is extensive research and literature on multiple Armenian communities in the US, Canada, France or Russia (Mirak 1983; Panossian 2006; Dyatlov/Melkonian 2009; Kaprielian-Churchill 2005). Historically, Armenian migration to Northern America involved their arrival as traders, merchants and students at the end of the nineteenth century. However, at the turn of the twentieth century, the majority of Armenian Americans perceive themselves as survivors of forced migration and the effects of expulsion and genocide on the territory of the Ottoman Empire during World War I (Mirak 1983).

Until the end of the 1980s, the connections between the Soviet Republic of Armenia and Armenian diasporic communities in North America and Western Europe were irregular. Over the twentieth century, diasporic organisations in the US and Canada were predominantly active in the development of local communities in Boston, Washington, Fresno, Montreal and elsewhere. These successful efforts involved the establishment of ethno-cultural centres, museums, churches and schools, which serve as local platforms for cultural and political debates on Armenian immigrants from different countries (Turkey, the Middle East and Iran). The Soviet Republic of Armenia was not at the centre of diasporic Armenian cultural and political identities and attachments in this

period. For a considerable time, western Armenian communities showed little interest in any political nation-building project within the territory of the Soviet Union.[4]

Throughout the twentieth century, diasporic elites, intellectuals and wealthy members of Armenian communities gathered around three political parties in exile such as *Dashnaktsutyun, Ramgavar* and *Hnchak* (Bakalian 1993; Phillips 1989; Panossian 2006), which developed an ambivalent and hostile attitude towards Soviet Armenia. Their activities were oriented more towards achieving the cultural and political advancement of ethnic Armenians in the host society. These centres successfully provided a voice and a lobby for Armenian migrants within the US American public sphere in the 1960s and 1970s. As a result, by the beginning of the 1980s and in particular in the 1990s, a special emphasis on attaining political recognition for the expulsion and genocide of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire emerged, which became the vital global identity marker among the heterogeneous and well-integrated Western diasporic Armenian communities (Tölölyan 2000).

It was the 1988 earthquake, which triggered one of the clear emotional outpourings and active responses to Soviet Armenia among members of North American diasporic communities. This dramatic event led to a rise in worldwide humanitarian aid activity for Armenia (Ishkanian 2005, 2008). Following Armenian independence in 1991, diasporic Armenian communities explicitly shifted their attention from the societies in which they reside towards the effort to 'discover' and support their 'ancestral homeland', which became idealised as a repository of ethno-cultural origin. This 'heritage turn' led to a reorientation of significant parts of Armenian diasporic activism from local to transnational forms of engagement with the 'homeland'.

In the 1990s, many members of the second and later generations of Armenian Americans and Armenian Canadians continued to donate to Armenia's impoverished economy (Dudwick 2003; Pearce et al. 2011), and a few of them occasionally undertook tourist trips to post-Soviet Armenia on an individual level. Since 2001, systematic trips to Armenia have become increasingly popular among diasporic Armenian youth for the purpose of volunteering and developing their own transnational engagement with post-socialist Armenia. A number of diasporic people of Armenian descent have become a visible part of everyday life in Yerevan (Abrahamian 2006; Marutyan 2009; Darieva 2011), forming a counter-movement opposed to the emigration of the local population of the Armenian Republic.

A Short Overview of Diaspora Scholarship

Conceptualising 'roots' mobility I confine my overview to the central definitions of 'diaspora' and outline the specific nature of Armenian experiences in the context of forced migration and identity formation. Deriving from the Greek verb διασπειρειν/diasperein (to sow out) the term 'diaspora' involves dispersal and displacement through expulsion and violence (in the Jewish and Armenian cases), or through colonisation and trade (in the case of the Greeks). There was an explosion of interest in diaspora studies that occurred in the late 1980s, when scholars started to theorise ethnic minorities' issues, effects of multiculturalism and migration processes worldwide (Vertovec/Cohen 1999; Brubaker 2005).[5] For a long time, the term 'diaspora' had been exclusively used for defining three groups: the Jewish, Greek and Armenian diasporas (Clifford 1994: 305; Cohen 1997: 507–508).

The early theoretical discussion on diaspora and migration studies elaborated two models of diaspora: a paradigmatic and a modern one. In the paradigmatic model of diaspora, the Jewish and Armenian models, William Safran (1991) argued that six of the following characteristics apply:

1) A history of dispersal and expulsion (in the distanced past or more recently);
2) Collective memory, a vision of and/or myth of homeland;
3) A feeling of alienation/insulation in the context of residence;
4) The idea of returning to the homeland;
5) Engagement/caring for the homeland;
6) Relating to the homeland is central to defining collective identity when 'abroad'.

By leaving aside the criteria like victimised identity and collective memory of expulsion, Clifford and Brubaker later on identified just three core elements that remain widely understood to be constitutive of any modern diasporic community:

1) Dispersion in space;
2) Orientation to a homeland;
3) Boundary maintenance.

The discussion on defining diasporic communities continued in the 2000s between 'old' and 'new', or 'bad' and 'good' diasporas (Brubaker 2005). While some scholars see ethnic diasporic groups as social formations that can bring potential benefits, others see them as inherently disruptive to national society and regional security. Throughout the past two decades, it has become clear that 'old' and 'new' diasporic groups are increasingly involved in diverse flows of international and transnational relations that provide a model for global politics, regional powers and mobilities within a specific trajectory.

Rogers Brubaker (2005) criticised the treatment of diasporas as unitary actors (*the* Kurds, *the* Tamils, *the* Russians). Similar to Clifford, he proposed to perceive diasporic groups as a claim, an idiom or a stance, as a way of "formulating the identities and loyalties of a population" and instead of using the adjective 'diasporic', he proposed to speak about diasporic projects, diasporic claims, diasporic religion, and so forth (Brubaker 2005). As a result, the meaning of diaspora underwent a shift in social sciences and moved away from being identified as a bounded localised nostalgic minority. Instead, the term diaspora is now associated with diversified transnational movements of people, with the global mobility of capital, commodities and cultural iconographies (Brah 1996). The use of the term 'diaspora' has proliferated massively after the collapse of the Soviet Union and has entered the academic, political and public discourses and everyday vocabulary as a keyword.[6] Commenting on this proliferation in the 2000s, the then director of the Moscow Institute for Ethnology and Anthropology, Valery Tishkov, has spoken of the "diasporization of the whole country" (Tishkov 2003: 467). The then editor of the Russian journal 'Diasporas' Natalia Kosmarskya (2006) recognised a "passion for diaspora" (*diasporal'noe pirshestvo*) in Eurasia.[7]

Following the debates in the early 2000s and the passion for studying 'diaspora' across disciplines, anthropologists and some sociologists rejected the term 'diaspora' as an analytical tool for its overuse and oversimplification. The reasons given for this included the 'blackboxness' of the term and the way it could be used in a conceptually vague manner, resulting in the obscuring or distortion of social processes. In response, these scholars turned their focus on the study of transnational social fields, translocalities, and mobilities 'from below'. This grounded research perspective puts more emphasis on the actors themselves, 'everyday' local practices of mobility and movement, cross-border exchange and transfer as lived experiences (Smith 2011; Stephan-Emmrich/Schröder 2018; Délano/Mylonas 2021). This perspective makes possible to access to non-state actors, individuals, social practices and contradictions.

In reference to the transnational paradigm and the rise of the debates on developmentalism, political scientists captured diasporic organisations under the notion of governance and diffusion (Délano/Gamlen 2014; Adamson 2016; Gamlen et al. 2017). Political scientists predict a rising power of global ethnic diasporas as a significant player in the international arena: on one hand, as a co-builder of nation-states and on the other hand, as an alternative to the nation-state model. Although this approach remains at the level of state regulations and legal discourses in the host countries, viewing diaspora from the top-down perspective as a bounded entity and an object to be governed, we should not overlook the multiple and dynamic character of diasporic identities and post-migrant engagement with the homeland 'from below'.

Following Roger Brubaker's (2005) critique of treating diasporic communities as unitary actors, I use the adjective 'diasporic' to de-substantialise a monolithic concept of 'diaspora' and understand it not as a reference to a bounded group, but as a category of practice, imagination and claim-making. Thus, in this book, I deploy the notion of 'diaspora' in reference to Armenians not as a unit of analysis, but rather as a metaphor and as a lived practice: historically complex social constructions and self-perceptions based on the transmission of imaginaries and distinctive identities across generations. Anthropologists are aware of the 'reification trap' and avoid treating diasporas as unitary actors. Their interest in deeper insights and micro-dynamics of social, cultural, economic and political relations reveal the complexity of the relationships at play. In this context, my aim is to de-essentialise the term by exploring the complexity and dynamic nature of migrants' descendant' identities and belongings. This book aims to examine the aspirations and practices of homeland tours that not only bind and attach individuals to the homeland but also promote a certain detachment, and imbalance and can contribute to the emergence of ambivalence within cross-border networks and belongings.

'Roots' and Return Mobilities: Moving Back and Moving Forward

Until the 1980s, studies of different migrant groups usually described the life and identification of displaced people from the perspective of the receiving society, without paying much attention to the role of migrants' links to their countries of origin. Consequently, throughout the twentieth century, migrant communities have been seen as a static phenomenon on the level of an isolated ethnic neighbourhood, on one hand, and as a transitional stage on the way to

assimilation into the mainstream society (the so-called melting pot ideology), on the other hand. This was one of the pitfalls of migration studies; scholars rarely addressed the middle way: a situation where migrants may claim to return to their homeland countries without completely giving up their ties to the residential land. The recent 'mobility turn' in anthropology and social sciences has criticised 'sedentarist metaphysics', a tendency to locate people in particular places with particular boundaries (Malkki 1992; Salazar/Jayaram 2016; Frello 2008).

Diasporic homeland engagement is rarely recognised as part of transnational mobility, as it may be 'invisible' or politically contested. However, an increasing number of second- and later-generation diasporic people of different descents undertake 'heritage' trips to their imagined or real 'ancestral homelands' (Basu 2007; Reed 2014; Kelly 2000; Brettel 2003; Stefansson 2004; Wessendorf 2013; Schramm 2010; Mahieu 2019). Susanne Wessendorf studied the relocation to the parents' country of origin and defined second-generation transnationalism among Swiss Italians as 'roots' migration, when the second-generation members migrate to a place where they originate from, but where they have never lived (Wessendorf 2007). The Armenian experience of individual homeland trips may be similar to the phenomenon of 'roots tourism' and 'genealogical journeys' made by people of Scottish descent ordinarily living in the United States and Canada (Basu 2007; Ray 2001). However, engaged travellers of Armenian descent do not perceive themselves as tourists in the Republic of Armenia and they are not involved in the intimate search for grandparents' graves.

It is not surprising that until the 2000s, return and homeland trips have been seen as structurally 'invisible and latent movements' and have been treated as part of individual biographies informally organised within family circles. Individual homecomings and even forced and voluntary mass return migrations are, indeed, areas with weak statistical evidence in both receiving and sending countries (Gmelch 1980; Markowitz/Stefansson 2004; Tsuda 2009; Darieva 2005, 2011). This situation started to change by the end of the 1990s with the emergence of transnational paradigms in understanding migration and multiple linkages to the homeland (Glick Schiller et al. 1995, Levitt 2001). At the same time, the transnational turn coincided with the development of modern technologies that technically provided better opportunities for global communication, as well as facilitating travel remittances to one's home country. What is crucial in this debate is that the global transnational paradigm questioned the notion of return as a one-way movement and instead sug-

gested the notion of circular and temporary migration modes. Studies of real return experiences have found that those who return still remain in transnational social fields. People often go back and re-emigrate to the host country (Cassarino 2013; Vertovec 2013; Abashin 2015).

Furthermore, a more dynamic perspective was developed by Jennifer Brinkerhoff (2008, 2012), who rightly appeals to flexibility in the types of returns by identifying short-term, circular models and virtual returns. In this context, the traditional notion of eventual return as a one-way movement cannot be applied to 'roots' mobilities. Most homeland travellers do not envision their homeland visits as permanent, and at the same time, the movement towards the homeland entails more than mere travel. In this regard, the term 'mobility' fits better than 'migration' as this book aims to take into account processes that go beyond migratory policies and includes social imaginaries, self-ascribed meanings and reflections on how 'people are moved by movements' (Svasek 2010; Elliot et al. 2017).

By looking at post-migrants' connections from these perspectives, we need to develop a more flexible understanding of diasporic engagement with the homeland. While scholars have paid more attention to labour and forced return migrations because these often occur during larger economic or political crises in the host- or homelands, less has been said about 'roots' mobilities and travel that can be organised in times of peace and relative stability (until 2022).

What's more, studies on return migration were predominantly focused on first-generation migrants, who can refer to a clear experiential one-way trajectory between host and home countries, as the latter is the birthplace of their parents (Cassarino 2013). George Gmelch (1980) who studied why people return and what the return means for them offered the following classic definition of this migration type: "Return migration is the movement of emigrants back to their homelands to resettle". Interestingly, Gmelch noted that pull factors (the attraction of the place destination) are far more significant than push dimensions in promoting return migration. At the same time, the author found that patriotic and family-related reasons have a greater influence than economic-occupational factors. Some scholars observed that family ties and obligations to elderly parents belong to the classic motivation and explanation of the return to hometown communities, especially in rural areas and among labour migrants (King/Kılınc 2014; Abashin 2015). Nevertheless, we should be cautious with these findings, as family and economy are entangled spheres of social life, which are not easy to separate from each other. In their interviews, returnees

usually do not admit to the economic dimension and financial incentives of their return process.

The anthropology of transnational migrants' networks has consistently focused on the voices of subalterns, working-class people, poor urban dwellers, peasants in the city, transnational villagers and refugees. Prominent scholars of migration studies such as Glick Schiller have pointed out that migrants and displaced people create transnational social fields 'from below' (Levitt/Glick Schiller 2004). Similarly, Levitt identified the mode of 'transnational villagers' who envision their cross-border networks and social remittances within local family and kinship networks. These influential studies focused on less privileged first-generation migrants between two concrete geographical places, usually the city of residence and a native village. Some scholars have argued that the hostile attitude in the residence society and negative experiences of diasporic people influence post-migrants' 'return to the homeland' (Potter/Phillips 2006; Mazzucato 2008; Ankobrey et al. 2022). The issue of second- and later-generation well-educated post-migrants of multi-cultural backgrounds as a social group has been rarely discussed.

Many studies show that transnational attachments continue to be maintained among all types of migrants and the central question is to what extent migrants maintain and reproduce their (grand)parents' identifications (Glick Schiller 2005; Levitt/Jaworsky 2007; Mahieu 2019). The diasporic activists I met and interviewed in Armenia and the Boston area are predominantly educated, middle-class American or Canadian citizens, are assimilated into the North American culture and have experienced little hostility from the mainstream society that surrounds them. I aim to examine middle-class transnational behaviour with the anthropological intention to 'study-up' and look closely at the post-migration phenomenon that creates new transnational and translocal 'privileged' intermediary zones between two and more poles. This entails looking at a group of people who, through education and economic success, have achieved a social status in their residence society that enables them to practice a generous trip and transnational philanthropy culture as a form of 'roots' mobility. Similar to what Noel Salazar identified as a 'momentous mobility' (Salazar 2018) as an indicator for social status, this is a temporary valued movement that can be a central element structuring the modern biographies of diasporic youth.

By looking at variations of movements related to the homeland, I argue that 'roots' mobility can be understood more broadly as it includes later generations of post-migrants, diasporic members who develop new connections and pat-

terns of attachment to the homeland. It is this 'floating roots' perspective that I address in this book. However, it is not my intention to define it as the essential characteristic of all diasporic second- and later-generation Armenians.

As a global phenomenon, 'roots' mobilities are encouraged and driven by a variety of factors. Further, I suggest to take into consideration new dimensions of transnational mobilities that are empowered by external actors and aspirations beyond family and community associations. This is not just about economic reasons and the call of improved living standards (Knott 2010). First, it is a welcome policy launched by nation-states introducing legal frameworks for attracting and binding former citizens through dual citizenship, and admission programmes for co-ethnics living abroad (Germany, India, Croatia, Armenia). I hereby mean the role of the homeland state's ideology, affects and sentiments promoting the myth of return to a specific territory based on the idea of roots, blood connections, territory and the legislative right to return, which can be a main reason for resettlement with political implications. Diasporic expatriates are increasingly viewed by nation-states in Eastern Europe and the Global South as 'untapped' resources for a country's development and for solving demographic problems. The metaphors of expulsion, suffering, flight and famine are embedded in mass-migratory discourses and may become the key symbols in national resettlement programmes. After World War II, the calls for repatriation and 'diasporic return' became more prominent. Take for instance, the Israeli Law of Return (Markowitz 2004) and mass repatriations of ethnic Germans from Eastern Europe, Russia and Kazakhstan to Germany according to the *Vertriebenen- and Aussiedlergesetz* (Darieva 2005; Ipsen-Peitzmeier/Kaiser 2006). Similar to these movements is Kazakhstan's recent resettlement programme for ethnic Kazakhs *oralman* in Eurasia (Genina 2015; Finke et al. 2013), which grants millions of people the right to residence in the 'historical homeland', which is in compliance with the UN Conventions on Universal Human Rights (Article 13).[8] In this context, 'return' became possible not only to the parents' countries, but also to the countries of ancestral origin after living outside their homelands for generations (Tsuda 2009).[9]

Ironically, now in the age of transnationalism, the list of nation-states introducing the right of 'ethnic' return is growing. What began in Israel and Germany can now be found in other nation-states such as Ireland, India, Greece and Sweden, as well as in post-socialist countries such as Hungary, Bulgaria, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Armenia. All these countries are engaged in encouraging the feelings of ethnic diasporic members to strive for reunion with the kin state. In official national discourses, newcomers are usu-

ally represented as a reproductive force, as a 'national good', helping to combat demographic problems. In October 2017, the then Armenian minister of Diaspora, Hranush Akopyan, announced that 2018 had been designated the year of repatriation for the Republic of Armenia and appealed to ethnic Armenians living abroad to return to their 'ancestral homeland'. Since 1991, the inter-ethnic military conflict with neighbouring Azerbaijan and the energy crisis have caused a high rate of emigration in Armenia, mostly in the form of labour migration. Scholars warned that if current trends continue, the depopulation of Armenia may reach 1.5 million by 2050 (Poghosyan 2017). The then president of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan, was predicting that in this way Armenia's population would reach 4 million by 2040, not through increased birth rates, but through the return of diasporic Armenians. The repatriation law, which was designed to be in force for five years, has not been adopted, mostly due to the political changes in 2018 when the former President Serzh Sargsyan was forced to step down after weeks of mass protests. Following the Second Karabakh War (2020) with neighbouring Azerbaijan, the new Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has called the diasporic youth to return to the homeland. According to Pashinyan's speech, he gave in December 2018 following the 'Velvet' Revolution in 2018, the Armenia diaspora and the Republic of Armenia should form a single unit.[10] What is significant about these performative homeland calls is that it is not straightforward to engage a powerful and heterogeneous Armenian diaspora 'from above'. I describe in Chapter Two the calls of the Armenian nation-state to conceptualise a notion of 'flexible citizenship': a moral and legal framework for the symbolic repatriation of diasporic Armenians to create a sense of mutual belonging.

The second factor contributing to the mobilisation of diasporic attachments is the changing political discourse on migration, development and their effects on the homeland country (van Houte/Davids 2014). Some scholars have essentialised the bonds between diasporic members and the homeland by arguing that there is a growing sense of unity among diasporic people that leads to creating and maintaining linkages to the homeland, and, consequently, to increased investment of foreign aid in the development of the homeland (Merz et al. 2007).[11] This ascription of fixed belongings and teleological thinking was soon picked up in development discourses (Orozco 2005). As a result, international organisations have found 'the diaspora's activities' to be a potent (out)source of development, education, and to function as 'agents of peace-building' within conflict regions (Faist 2007, 2010; Hoehne et al. 2011; Brinkerhoff 2008).

These actors bring us to the third trendsetters in shaping diasporic homeland attachments and 'roots consciousness': international organisations. Global institutional actors promote return movements as a tool for the development of the Global South, as instruments for migration policy, which need to be managed, controlled and regulated (Skeldon 2008; Brinkerhoff 2012). Scholars of ethnic communities and diaspora studies have often overlooked the role of international organisations (International Organization for Migration) and global programmes (Volunteer Corps, World Bank) in supporting diaspora engagement with the homeland. International organisations are partly responsible for the worldwide proliferation of diasporic institutions (Gamlen et al. 2017) and contemporary Armenian experiences clearly demonstrate this trend.

The Emotional Dimension of 'Roots' Mobilities

What drives 'roots' flows and homeland attachments on an individual level? If it is not the desire for improved living standards or political repressions and negative experiences in the residence country, then what moves diasporic descendants towards the 'ancestral homeland'? These questions should be considered to understand the conditions, operation, and intensity of such movements.

Affects related to the possession of personal genealogies and parents' memories of belonging may play an important role as a crucial starting point and as a driver of mobility. Maruška Svasek and other scholars innovatively pointed out that "emotional processes shape mobilities, and vice versa" (Svasek 2010; Boccagni/Baldassar 2015; Elliot et al. 2017: 2). There is an increasing interest in the role of emotions and affects in transnational social fields, however the emotional dimension in the studies of return migration and 'roots' mobilities has been mostly overlooked (Wise/Velayutham 2017). Identifying an emerging field of research, Amanda Wise and Selvaraj Velayutham argue that studies of transnational communities need to focus on not only material flows and institutions, but rather on the circulation of emotions and affect for a better understanding of the viability of long-distance transnational social fields. This book draws on these concepts of transnational affect and suggests that the emotional dimension is linked to the capacities of return and 'roots' mobilities.

From an anthropological perspective, homeland travel and return mobilities can be seen as an emotional moment in a migrant's life based on ethnic

and cultural ties to their kin and ancestors (Markowitz 2004; Holsey 2004; Basu 2004a, 2004b). It is expected that members of a delocalised religious or ethnic minority will eventually 'go home' to their former community or nation-state from which they migrated. Anastasia Christou and Russell King (2011, 2015) characterise return and homecoming among members of the second generation as an 'existential journey to the source of the self', 'a desire, an imagination', a journey in which 'sacred sites' are claimed by the returnee. What these characterisations have in common is the view of the homeland journey as a sensual and to some extent as a ritualised activity. In this context, I elaborate on the emotional dimension of 'roots' mobility as an impetus for participation in diasporic transnational behaviour.

Attachment to the homeland can take many different forms and meanings, from real to symbolic, from static to dynamic, and from cultural to political. In its more simple form, it can include just hanging an image of the homeland in the living room. In a broader sense, attachments can be expressed in the construction of a diasporic neighbourhood, community centre or a museum with a 'sacred' place reserved for 'worshipping' the symbols of the land of exodus, or through developing economic activities of remittances including public activities of political associations (hometown associations) in the residing country.

By looking at different practices and imaginaries, this book draws attention to the affective dimensions of mobility that foster a willingness and intensity to engage with the 'homeland'. Recently, anthropologists have highlighted the relevance of emotions as an important dimension of identity and belonging, as a top-down policy through which individuals experience and interpret the changing world (Svazek 2010; Boccagni/Baldassar 2015). The memory of certain events in the past, traumatic events and commemorations of loss may become central to a group's identity politics. Armenians have produced highly emotional discourses that construct their 'ancestral homeland' as a holy lost homeland and a landscape of violence, grievance and hope. Once located in family stories and suppressed by the Soviet regime, the remembrance of the Armenian loss became a visible part of the public recording and global morality in the twenty-first century (Levy/Sznaider 2002; Darieva 2008).

The emotional dimension of attachment to a lost homeland may fuel the descendants of migrants to mobilise the willingness to reach out and touch the homeland, thus rejecting the idea of an inaccessible and lost homeland and producing a powerful force for change. Moreover, I argue that nostalgic ties to the past may acquire a new future-oriented dimension. This process may expand the old-fashioned parochial ethnic understanding of diaspora, which

is more about the past and static, into a new trend that opens up new relational features, feelings of belonging and routes to the homeland.

In addition to official, state-regulated mass return migration, we need to consider an alternative 'invisible' and 'softer' form of transnationalism and homeland tours that takes place at a micro-level. Mainly developed in the context of tourism studies, some scholars highlighted the phenomenon of 'roots'-seeking among different groups.[12] Prominent examples of this modern form of short-term mobility include transatlantic African American pilgrimage tourism to Ghana (Schramm 2004; Santos/Yan 2010; Reed 2014), or the flourishing 'homesick tourism' among ethnic Germans to Poland or the Czech Republic (Peleikis 2010; Powers 2011; Marschall 2015). Pilgrimage tourism among African Americans is not just limited to travel, but it is something deeper and more meaningful (Reed 2014:18). African Americans undertake tours to the imagined homeland as an important trip in their lifetime, which are essential for the enactment of stories of 'victimisation' such as the slave trade in Ghana.

Such travel experiences seem to play a significant role in modern self-identification processes and lifestyle mobility. Scholars, who studied pilgrimage tourism and symbolic homecoming among African Americans identified the impact of a powerful heritage industry in the US mediated through popular books, TV channels and the internet.[13] Indeed, there is a contemporary global fascination with roots searching and in particular among members of the middle-class as a form of individual lifestyle expression. My studies refer to these findings, however, they only partially bear out these generalisations.

Paul Basu studied the 'spiritual' migration experiences of genealogy search and discussed heritage tourism in Scottish Highlands that was developed in the 1980s in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. What is characteristic for this form of mobility is that tourists claim a Scottish heritage in a modern age characterised by rootlessness (Basu 2007: 218). I agree with Basu's understanding that 'roots' tourism creates the practice of worshipping specific places in the 'ancestral homeland' and objects containing sacred substance, which 'roots' tourists carry back to the diasporic centres. In this sense, attachment to fixed locations can drive people and social groups to move. All these studies deal with short-term tours to ethnic homelands generated by a commercial infrastructure, the genealogy industry in the US and in Europe, as well as governmental efforts to promote diaspora tourism.

What Paul Basu has left out is the possibility of conceptualising homeland travel as an act with political meaning. An interesting example of modern

'roots' mobility with political implications is the Jewish American homeland trip to Israel. By examining the effect of 'Birthright Israel' youth trips to Israel, Shaul Kelner rightly identifies the 'rational' side of diaspora pilgrimages, their strategic and instrumental character employed by Israel to encourage young people to "be more inquisitive and concerned about their identity …to appreciate and remain in the Jewish fold" (Kelner 2010: 45). In contrast to Basu's approach, Kelner revealed that political socialisation is central to the 'tours that bind'. In this regard, I argue that renewed pathways to the homeland range from social to political one and create a new itinerary of desires, hope and pride, a trajectory of geopolitical claims in peripheral regions intertwined with the politics of emotions.

This opens up an innovative view on 'doing diaspora' between emotional adventures and political claims. When we consider 'heritage' and 'roots' movements among migrant descendants such as Irish Americans, African Americans, British Arabs and Armenian Americans, the parents' birthplace in one specific village or one specific town for most remains largely symbolic, but may be turned into a powerful metaphor, which mobilises new diasporic generations for a long-distance trip and civil engagement. The question to be explored here is: how and under what circumstances do second- and later-generation post-migrants construct new spaces of engagement and legitimisation beyond state institutions? To what extent and under which circumstances do 'roots' travellers claim their right to belonging and (re)possessing the homeland, thus participating in the making of a homeland? Which tangible and emotional infrastructures emerge that facilitate these interactions?

Reflections on Research Methods

Addressing the issue of methodology, I rely on a mix of qualitative research methods and anthropological tools of a long-term and multi-sited ethnography between the Boston area and the Republic of Armenia. More precisely, *Making a Homeland* is based on a set of empirical data gathered during several fieldwork trips undertaken in these two countries over almost ten years between 2007 and 2015. These long-term frameworks enabled me to return to my fieldwork again and again to observe the changing dynamics of homeland attachments among Armenians in the diaspora and the ways this relatively small country is vividly connected to different parts of the world.

Methodologically, I used different techniques for tracing and following geographically dispersed persons, Armenians in North America and in the Republic of Armenia. My multi-sited research included selected localities in the US and Armenia with two central sites: Yerevan in Armenia and the Boston area in the US. Embedded in two completely different political, economic and cultural environments, these places are two separate poles, yet connected by cultural ties– diaspora-homeland relations, which are not necessarily personal and intimate. The methods and tools I used during my fieldwork were predominantly qualitative, anthropologically informed and based on participant observations, expert and biographical interviews and informal talks with key informants and diasporic members. However, during the course of the project, I have noticed a need for additional materials such as texts and online data. For instance, valuable data was found in the application forms of volunteers, museum and NGO guest books, and organisations' narratives, as well as through systematic long-term online research in websites and Facebook entries.

Overall, the collected data includes 27 in-depth interviews with homeland travellers, mostly young volunteers I interviewed in Yerevan and suburbs. The volunteers were usually English-speaking young men and women between the age of 21 and 35. Additionally, I collected and analysed written sources gathered from diasporic organisations, such as 72 motivation letters of young volunteers recruited by Armenian Volunteers Corps and Birthright Armenia between 2005 and 2008. Furthermore, I rely on the analysis of fifteen interviews I conducted with experts in both countries and ten biographical interviews with Armenian Americans in the Boston area that donate to the homeland on a regular basis. These interviews are supplemented with the results of participant observation in Yerevan and the Boston area (Watertown), diary notes from informal conversations, including those with local Armenians, from gatherings and email correspondence between the United States (Boston), Armenia and Germany. These ethnographic field notes helped me reflect on what I had heard in the interviews and seen in online research materials and visuals. English, Russian and Armenian were my languages of communication in the field. Finally, I had a chance to collect a set of guest book entries at museums and diasporic volunteers' centres that provided insightful sources and references for understanding the emotional views and individual experiences of homeland travellers. Although diasporic travellers identify their tours to the homeland in different ways, they generally tend to see themselves as 'roots' pilgrims with a meaningful destination, specific motivations shaped by a 'mission to improve' life in post-Soviet Armenia.

Reading about the research methods, one may ask what is anthropological about these two settings of research and the application of qualitative and ethnographic methods. Perhaps, the best way to describe my long-term study experiences is by the term 'translocal research', coined by Ulf Hannerz (2003). Multi-sited ethnography is sometimes criticised for its 'thin character' and fragmented data. Karen Fog Olwig noted that for those who study migrant family networks claim to implement an in-depth multi-sited ethnography, which is in fact a difficult task that results in 'jet-set ethnography' (Olwig 2002). During my research, I did not follow travellers and volunteers physically on their tours, but conceptually through online research, travelogues, and online data stretching across continents. Additionally, I tried to keep a double gaze on the field sites. This is a challenging task for anthropologists who used to locate their issues in small places. Researchers studying mobility, global transnational and translocal connections should aim to simultaneously capture local lived practices and macro processes that structure the world we study. To do this, we need a transdisciplinary view on the issues and phenomena we study, bringing together different discussions, analyses, and large-scale perspectives in neighbouring disciplines (political scientists and economics) such as the debates on diaspora, return mobilities and political regimes. This double gaze was not always systematic; rather it depended on continuous interactions and adjustments of research questions.

During my fieldwork, case studies of significant individuals and situations were relevant to understand the actors' inner motivations and the logic of strategies, in particular the role of a key person. Anthropologists use those techniques, such as following a key person and key informant, which can counteract the fragmentation of multi-sited research. As Marcus suggests, field studies, although framed in multi-sited imaginary, should remain 'site-specific and intensive' (Marcus 1995). My case study involves long-term observation of one specific organisation in a specific place, with longer breaks in between. Following the same person over different periods means an attempt to continue having relations even after finishing the research. Anthropologists do share their experiences with other social scientists by 'entering the field' and gathering information, but we do not necessarily share the same rule of 'departing the field' as non-anthropologists usually do. For instance, the continuous effort to monitor the sustainability of Armenia-oriented transnational engagement among Armenian American diasporic organisations required not only a systematic updating of online data, but also a physical return to the field for participant observations and face-to-face contact with a 'key person'.

This approach provided a valuable source for testing hypotheses and obtaining reliable data for understanding the dynamics of diasporic mobilities and the changing logic of their motivations.

The Outline

Chapter One, 'Repositioning the Homeland', starts with a discussion of multiple homeland geographies and the issue of ambiguous relations between the diaspora and the homeland. Over the twentieth century, global diasporic Armenians did not consider the territory of former Soviet Armenia as their homeland. However, after gaining independence in 1991, many diasporic Armenians whose actual roots are in Turkey and the Middle East started to collectively view the former Soviet Republic of Armenia as their 'ancestral homeland'. In discussing this shift in relations between diasporic communities in North America and the post-Soviet Republic of Armenia, I emphasise the centrality of cultural icons in the reconfiguration and production of homeland attachment. These affective imaginaries, which take material form in maps and museum artefacts, are focused on reviving the memory of loss and its global performance. The Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan evolved as the central 'iconic place' of Armenian loss and pain. I show how the unspoken idea of loss and pain was transformed over two decades into a material world of politics of (re)possessions. Representations of loss make up the core of contemporary global diasporic Armenian identity politics and the emotional framework for mobilising diasporic 'roots' mobility.

Chapter Two, 'Discovering the Homeland', traces emerging transnational infrastructures facilitating the modern diasporic engagement with the 'ancestral homeland'. Through the lens of an ethnographic approach and interviews with stakeholders, I identify a new generation of diasporic organisations that differ from conventional ethnic hometown associations in political, social and geographical dimensions. I describe a variety of diasporic civil initiatives and cultural techniques established in the 2000s, some of which are explicitly homeland-oriented and employ travel and volunteering as instruments to forge new cultural and political connections between diasporic centres and the Republic of Armenia. The organisations that best represent this tendency are Birthright Armenia, Armenian Volunteer Corps and RepatArmenia.

Researching the institutionalisation of homeland trips also involves examining legal frameworks of cross-border mobility and state diaspora

programmes developed by the Armenian nation-state. The post-socialist Armenian state is an important actor in attempting to attract the powerful Western Armenian diaspora and is increasingly interested in the strategic use of diasporic investment to assist with the development of its impoverished economy. Based on the legacy of Soviet nationalities policy, the Armenian governmental authorities have developed the concept of 'spiritual repatriation' as a regulatory form of immigration. However, these policies have a limited effect on Western diasporic members and their political integration into the Armenian nation-state.

In Chapter Three, 'Travelling the Homeland', I develop my arguments by shifting the focus to the individual narratives of travellers. I analyse the concepts and practices behind a 'meaningful trip' among young professionals of Armenian descent who claim to come to Armenia to 'move mountains'. The chapter deals with the question of how diasporic youth 'discovers', 'travels' and 'makes' the 'ancestral homeland' as a destination and a place of opportunity in the twenty-first century. In reference to these observations, interviews and written documents, I outline the ways in which the Republic of Armenia is perceived, experienced and incorporated into the modern biographies of post-migrant activists. To do this, I delve deeper into cross-border motivations and youth's aspirations. This material is exemplified though three different portraits of ordinary volunteers and their ways of 'making a homeland'. In this sense, the chapter highlights the temporary dimension of 'roots' mobilities that produce different pathways for 'journeys to the future' among diasporic youth.

Chapter Four, 'Constructing Bonds to the Homeland', examines the most popular and important way of 'doing diaspora' that exemplifies the culture of diasporic philanthropy, which contributes significantly to constructing and maintaining bonds to the homeland. By focusing on motivations, structure and techniques of giving among Armenian Americans in the Boston area, I discuss diasporic culture of giving, cross-border monetary transactions, between the Western type of instrumental NGO giving and the spontaneous emotional notion of giving.

Chapter Five, 'Making the Homeland', addresses the notion of long-distance 'visceral' connections by examining why and how diasporic Armenians were 'getting rooted' within the 'ancestral homeland' despite the lack of intimate (family) links to the Republic of Armenia. I apply an ethnographic approach to gain insights into the formation of modern 'visceral connections' through examining new materialities of diasporic 'sanctuaries', such as the idea of tree planting and reforestation projects on selected territories. Nature

and the idea of 'roots' are used as a metaphor and instrument for a tangible intergenerational connection. The main actor in this section is the non-profit organisation Armenian Tree Project. Based in the Boston area and inspired by the global idea of reforestation, the Armenian Tree Project creates a new emotional power for maintaining philanthropic culture and emerging diasporic patriotism. Finally, the Conclusion summarises the key mechanisms behind 'roots' mobilities identifying new research opportunities for the study of 'roots' mobility.

Notes

1 There is a solid literature on the life of French Armenians and their relationships to the homeland in Armenia. This study is focused on English language literature and does not claim to cover all Armenian diasporic networks.

2 According to the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs of Armenia, in 2019–2021, 27.000 foreign citizens have received citizenship of Armenia, around 5000 others have received a permanent or special residence status. Since the full scale war in Ukraine (February 2022), Armenia witnessed a large flow of Russian citizens to Armenia, many among them are of Armenian descent. See armenpress.am/eng/news/1092958.html.

3 According to Birthright Armenia, during the pandemic in 2020–22, even though the number of volunteers and homeland travellers has diminished, the trend remained constant.

4 There was a number of Western Armenians who were repatriated to Soviet Armenia in the 1940s after Stalin's call to repopulate the lost territories to be reclaimed from Turkey (Mouradian 1979; Suny 1993a; Stepanyan 2010; Pattie 2004a; Ter Minassian 2007; Melkonian 2010; Lehmann 2012). In fact, Soviet repatriation campaigns started in the early 1920's and continued during the interwar period, and after Stalin's call around 100.000 Western Armenians arrived in Armenia in 1946–48, representing around 10% of the Armenian population. During the thaw period and in the 1970s, Western communists of Armenian descent organised visits to Armenia for the younger generations. In this sense, the emergence of the diasporic return idea and practice is observable even before the end of the Soviet Union.

5 At the beginning of the 1990s, discussions of diaspora began to include many other cases, and as Tölölyan argued, the term diaspora "now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest-worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community and minority", even as they have been largely assimilated into the host community (Tölölyan 1991). This rather broad conception has led to a kind of devaluing of the term 'diaspora' and demands for further clarifications. Cohen tried to clarify global diaspora as a sociological category (Cohen 1997) and proceeded to distinguish among various types of diasporas, such as 'victim diasporas' (Africans and Armenians), 'labor diasporas' (Indians), 'imperial diasporas' (British), 'trade diasporas' (Chinese and Lebanese). However, given that diasporic communities demonstrate high levels of internal heterogeneity and that various types of diasporic categories can be applied to one group, this definition did not advance theoretical discussions. Some scholars refrained from providing a definitive list of criteria and preferred to stress social and cultural dimensions of the term diaspora. Steven Vertovec (Vertovec/Cohen 1999) proposed "diaspora as a social form", "diaspora as a type of consciousness", and "diaspora as a model of cultural production".

6 Putting the term 'diaspora' into the Russian search engine Yandex resulted in 82 million hits as of January 2019. Google gives over 5.9 million hits for 'Armenian diaspora' and over 350.000 for new diasporic communities in Eurasia such as Kazakh or Uzbek diasporic communities.

7 Natalia Kosmarskya suggested to use the term *dvizhenie protiv techeniya* (counter-movement) for those ethnic Russians in Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan) who decided to 'go back' to Russia after the decline of the Soviet Union.

8 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) states in article 13 that "everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country."

9 The destination of the 'homeland' is rarely questioned, although the homeland may appear diffuse and diverse, as in the case of ethnic Jews, Armenians, Kazakhs, or Germans. For instance, Jewish immigrants in Israel can become Israelis with a relative ease, Russian Germans in Germany experience difficulties and disillusions, while Brazilian Japanese emigrants remain Brazilians, a marginalised social group known as *nikkejin* in Japan.

10 The Ministry of Diaspora, which was launched in 2008, should be abolished as part of wider government reforms in order to achieve more effective governance and exchanges. See in: https://armenpress.am/eng/news/958743.html"\l"_blank". Last accessed on 16.01.2019.

11 The meaning of economic and social remittances for migrants and their families in sending countries has been widely discussed in the literature (Levitt 1998, 2001; Lacroix et al. 2016).

12 Such as Jewish Americans (Kelner 2010), Chinese Americans (Louie 2004), Lithuanian-Americans (Kelly 2000), Greek and Scottish heritage homecomings (Basu 2007) or recent pan-African pilgrimage tourism in Ghana (Schramm 2004; Reed 2014).

13 The most prominent among them is perhaps the television series "Roots: the Saga of an American Family" (Haley 1976), which captured the imagination of Americans of all ethnic backgrounds (Reed 2014) and opened up a space for Americans to search for their identities beyond their living rooms.