

From considerations of the quotidian elements of home, place, and belonging, the analysis broadens to the macrolevel of *polis* (city) and *civitas* (citizens), encompassing historical and contemporary exemplars and culminating, in the final section, in a frank exploration of notions of authenticity, artificiality, and the effects of nonplaces. The author undertakes a perceptive analysis of the Italian Forum in Sydney, a combination cultural space, shopping center, and dining mall built in 1999 that seeks to replicate the experience of a traditional Italian *piazza* but that fails to incorporate the migrant process of translation. This is a subject that Bartoloni has previously examined, and here in hindsight he offers a revised view on the inadequacy of an urban replica in capturing the experience of migration and identities that become hyphenated. The author's reflections on the negative impact of such projects on community building and identity probe at a deeper level the consumerist manipulation of materiality. By contrast, he also scrutinizes and affirms the authenticity of urban constructs such as the Sicilia Outlet Village, a large shopping mall built in the small central Sicilian town of Agira. He considers the economic, social, and cultural impact of such commercial projects on ordinary citizens as a simulacrum of village life and authentic identity that manages to combine the economic effects of large-scale consumerism with an experience of cultural inclusivity and valorization.

Throughout the book, Bartolini demonstrates a keen grasp of his subject, not only when he is exploring the scholarly landscape but also when considering broader themes and modalities, thus offering a balanced and discriminating analysis of the cultural life and value of objects in an Italian context. His typologies engage the reader and provide valuable theoretical and cultural insights for a more profound understanding of the life of objects and things.

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*Pre-Occupied Spaces: Remapping Italy's Transnational Migrations and Colonial Legacies.*

By Teresa Fiore.

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250 pages.

In *Pre-Occupied Spaces: Remapping Italy's Transnational Migrations and Colonial Legacies*, Teresa Fiore offers a unique contribution to a (relatively) new and compelling trend in migration studies related to Italy, one grounded in the

necessity of analyzing different Italian diasporas—outgoing migrations, old and new; colonial migrations mostly to the Horn of Africa and North Africa; intranational migrations from the rural South to the industrialized North; contemporary incoming migrations; Italy’s postcolonial diaspora—as a continuum rather than as separate phenomena. Such events, Fiore argues, have deeply influenced the ways in which the notion of Italian identity has been constructed and has consolidated over time. In order to analyze both historic and contemporary Italy, Fiore suggests, it is necessary to examine a space that is much larger than the conventional national space given that Italian national identity has been structured—and continues to be structured—in large part at a transnational level.

Fiore posits the category of space, and Henri Lefebvre’s notion of how spaces are controlled and how resistance is created within them, at the center of her analysis. She defines the spaces of migrations as simultaneously “pre-occupied” and “preoccupied.” Such spaces are pre-occupied because they have been previously occupied by native people and earlier migrants (and even by slaves, in the case of the heterotopic space of ships in transatlantic voyages) who have shaped the societies into which the newly arrived transplant their lives and their memories and leave their “traces.” Diasporic spaces are also preoccupied because, as Fiore highlights, they have a strongly emotional dimension and are often characterized by anxiety about the unknown. The “preoccupation” that migrants feel is ignited by the fear of crossing the ocean/sea, which are conflated in what Fiore calls the “*osean*” (23). This conceptual category brings together the histories of Italian emigrants, who crossed the ocean to reach the Americas and Oceania, and of contemporary migrants from Africa and Asia, who cross the Aegean and the Mediterranean Seas in the attempt to reach Europe. Migrants also develop anxieties about not being able to establish a home and find employment in the destination countries. On the opposite side of the spectrum a sense of preoccupation is also experienced by native people and earlier migrants in a given space who fear that living with the newly arrived might prove to be unsustainable, especially if the media constantly fosters the myth of invasion, as is the case in contemporary Italy. Such a myth, Fiore argues, is largely unjustified, since the number of Italians residing abroad is approximately the same as the number of migrants residing in Italy (and, I would add, since the number of outgoing migrants has surpassed the number of incoming migrants, and Italy has officially turned into a country of emigrants once again) (Knapp 2017).

Gian Antonio Stella’s (2003) *L’orda: Quando gli albanesi eravamo noi* provided crucial inspiration for Fiore’s project. This pivotal text, written at a time when Italy had consolidated its position as a destination country for transnational migrants, urged Italians to remember their past as emigrants. The

recovery of this memory, Fiore suggests, needs to be combined with the deployment of empathy as a methodological tool: Such a combination can contribute to dispelling the preoccupation about current immigration to Italy at a time when the stigmatization of migrants and racism are on the rise. The strong connections existing among different Italian diasporas are shown through the analysis of a large number of texts originating in different times and geopolitical locations and through the examination of the many commonalities that these texts present in terms of the migrants' concerns, hopes, desires, and imaginaries.

The book is divided into three sections, "Waters," "Houses," and "Workplaces," and each of these underlines an important step, and a major concern, in the processes of migration and of "assimilation" (completing the voyage, settling into a new country and building a sense of home, becoming part of productive society). Each section is divided into two chapters and introduced by an "aperture." These openings function as snapshots that present the main theme of the chapter through one or more pivotal texts, contextualize the chapter, and invite reflections and provide guidance in the development of an analysis. To construct the book's theoretical foundations, Fiore utilizes a wide, complex array of texts from different disciplines and fields (literature, film studies, geography, history, and sociology, to name only a few); includes music, literature, and film; and embraces different genres (memoir, collaborative autobiography, novel, short story, film, documentary). In the six chapters that constitute the three sections, she then selects a number of texts—authored by (and/or depicting) Italian emigrants and subsequent generations; immigrants to Italy and postcolonial subjects; and Italian writers, directors, and singers—and analyzes them in relation to one another. The first section, to provide just one example of how the book is structured and of how such structure creates a dialog among different texts, opens with an aperture centered on the Compagnia delle Acque's show *L'orda*, based on Stella's book, which addresses the concerns of migrants—both those traveling from Italy to the Americas and those going from (mostly) Africa to Italy—about losing their lives at sea. Such concerns then constitute the persistent theme of the entire section. In the first chapter, Fiore constructs a dialog between Gilda Mignonette's emigrants' songs and colonial anthems from the 1920s and Emanuele Crialesi's depiction of Southern Italy and of the crossing to the Americas by rural Southern Italians in the film *Nuovomondo* (2006). Also centered on sea crossings is the second chapter, featuring an analysis of Vincenzo Marra's film *Tornando a casa* (2001), Kym Ragusa's memoir *The Skin Between Us* (2006), and Feven Abreha Tekle's collaborative autobiography *Libera* (2007). In Marra's film, the lives of African migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea intersect those of fishermen from Southern Italy, while the very notion of "illegal" immigration is deeply challenged through the questioning of who has the right, and in what capacity,

to trespass into international waters. In Ragusa's memoir, given the author's African Italian American origins, emigration encounters slavery, and the numerous relocations in the past and present reconfigure the racial perception of the subjects in question. Tekle's collaborative autobiography is centered on the flight of the author from Eritrea through the Sahara desert and then across the Mediterranean and thus connects contemporary postcolonial migrations to past Italian emigration and African slavery. By creating such textual encounters, Fiore creates cross-cultural and cross-national connections among texts that may be very distant from each other in time and place, and yet they lie on the same continuum and share similar concerns, themes, and preoccupations.

Through the analysis of a plethora of texts, some of which are unknown or little-known to the general public, and by virtue of the methodology employed, *Pre-Occupied Spaces* constitutes a groundbreaking work that makes an invaluable contribution to the analysis of nation formation in Italy through the transnational practices of migration in the past and at present. Fiore analyzes different cultural productions from an interdisciplinary and transcultural perspective to suggest an approach that seeks to uncover trajectories in texts produced in different diasporic contexts that connect, although in very different ways, to the Italian nation. Broadening the notion of Italian culture by including the cultural productions of diasporic Italian subjects, her work contributes to the strengthening of a critical and theoretical approach vital for examining Italian national culture as being shaped well beyond its borders. At the same time, Fiore promotes a way of looking at contemporary immigration to Italy and at the complex cultural productions that stem from it not only through the deployment of empathy but also through the recovered memory of a difficult chapter of Italian history that still has not received the attention it deserves. Such an approach contributes to rendering familiar the apparently unfamiliar legacy of past Italian migrations and to dissipating anxieties over present immigration to Italy, thus promoting the inclusion of migrants and their children into the national body of Italy.

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