Italian Mobilities

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Abstract

This article explores the concept of mobility in Italian Studies by focusing on three key intersecting angles: geographies, histories, and stories. It investigates how a focus on mobility enriches the study of the traces left on the language, history, and cultural forms of the peninsula and islands of the modern Italian Republic by the multiple inward and outward flows of mobilities that have characterised the country's history. Italy's position as a crossing-point along global axes of encounter turns research in Italian Studies into a particularly productive site for the analysis of the intersection between geographical, cultural, social, political, and economic experiences of movement in both space and time.

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This article explores the concept of mobility in Italian Studies by focusing on three key intersecting angles: geographies, histories, and stories. It investigates how a focus on mobility enriches the study of the traces left on the language, history, and cultural forms of the peninsula and islands of the modern Italian Republic by the multiple inward and outward flows of mobilities that have characterised the country's history. Italy's position as a crossing-point along global axes of encounter turns research in Italian Studies into a particularly productive site for the analysis of the intersection between geographical, cultural, social, political, and economic experiences of movement in both space and time.

Keywords: Mobility; immobility; geography; itinerary; migration; Stephen Greenblatt

The study of mobility covers a broad span of humanities and social sciences disciplines, addressing intersections between geographical, cultural, social, political, and economic experiences of movement in both space and time. People are the index of these movements, but they drive or follow flows of commodities, artefacts, capital, ideas, and cultural practices which contribute to understanding of human mobility. The peninsula and islands that make up the modern Italian Republic have long been a crossing-point for multiple inward and outward flows along global axes of encounter, which have left their traces on the language, history, and cultural forms that constitute the main focus of Italian Studies as defined within contemporary university research and teaching. In a recent essay for a volume on *Cultural Mobility*, the historian Stephen Greenblatt calls on scholars to be alert to the elements of flux and contingency that will emerge from any concentrated study of culture, and to the mechanisms of movement, exchange, and

interpretation that constantly inflect human experience.[1] He also notes the complexity of analysing mobility, where societies value the movement of peoples in certain times and conditions, whilst in others, it provokes conflict and alarm. Italy in the current moment offers an arresting example, where mobility is often discussed in terms of crisis, whether related to inflows of refugees and tourists or outflows of talented thinkers and workers. Yet each of these instances also brings economic, social, and cultural benefits deriving from Italy's position at the intersection of European and global networks. As Greenblatt insists, careful avoidance of the 'presentism' which tends to structure research into mobilities allows longer and deeper patterns to be identified that at once augment the challenge of fathoming mobility and enable its complexity to be accurately charted. Again, the case of Italy is a prolific one in this respect. In the pages that follow, we seek to organise our reflections on such dualities and complexities within the theme of mobility through three intersecting angles: Italian geographies; Italian histories; and Italian stories. We hope that they will provide complementary perspectives on the rewards of enquiry into mobility, in some of its diverse categories and forms, across different areas of Italian Studies research.

Geographies

Those interested in Italian cultural history within the discipline of Modern Languages have tended since the nineteenth century to see the peninsula and islands of Italy from a north-west European perspective, reflecting the development of the disciplines within that region, as well as in the USA and Italy.[2] The idea of Europe developed in the era of nationalisms in the nineteenth century indicates the industrialised and imperial nations of the west of Europe as a model of the powerful and productive *polis* for the future. From this perspective, Italy's geographical position places the nation at the edge of the land-mass of closely interlocked nations sharing a particular vision of modernity.[3] According to this logic, Italy's peripheral geography in relation to Europe places the nation in close proximity to nations and peoples regarded as subaltern (the objects of western European dominion in North Africa) or regarded with anxiety (the Balkans, the

[1] Greenblatt, 'Cultural Mobility: An Introduction', in *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto*, ed. by Stephen Greenblatt et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 1-23.

[2] See Nicola McLelland, *Teaching and Learning Foreign Languages: A History of Language Education, Assessment and Policy in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2017).

[3] See Roberto Dainotto, *Europe (In Theory)* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).

Ottoman Empire, the eastern Mediterranean). Proximity to the land borders at the northern extreme of the Italian territory or to the sea borders which elsewhere delimit the national territory becomes a measure of the 'European-ness' – or not – of the nation: a measure according to which the condition of the southern parts of Italy becomes a 'questione' or 'problema'.[4]

Switching to the temporal position of either the pre-national or the post-national era yields a point of view locating Italy within the Mediterranean basin.[5] From this perspective, informed by the passage of people and cultures rather than by defined nationhoods, the Italian peninsula is not at the edge, but rather reaches into the centre, with the island of Sicily a geopolitical and geocultural hub. Italian territory appears as a place of arrival, departure, and transit, fostering a practice of multidirectional exchange with Africa, eastern Europe, the middle East. These movements have, of course, taken the form also of occupation and colonization, in the eastern Adriatic and Mediterranean, and North and East Africa. This repositioned perspective enables the political and economic geography of the Italian nation to be re-visioned so as not to apprehend proximity to north-western Europe as the key measure of power and instead to think of the wealth and influence generated by Italy's vast zones of maritime passage and by the vitality of its port cities in key periods of its history.

These port cities – such as Brindisi, Cagliari, Genoa, Naples, Palermo, Trieste – are located in places both connected to and disconnected from what are understood to be the economic and political powerhouses of modern Italy (such as Milan, Rome, Turin) and of the early modern and renaissance periods (such as Bologna, Florence, Venice). They draw attention to a different map of influence in Italian socio-economic and cultural history, and to the ways in which specific, dispersed localities can be sites of considerable national and transnational significance at particular historical moments.[6] Importing and exporting goods, people, and influence in ways which tug

[4] Antonio Gramsci, *La questione meridionale*, ed. by Franco De Felice and Valentino Parlato (Rome: Riuniti, 1966); see also Bruno Brunetti and Roberto Derobertis, *L'invenzione del Sud: Migrazioni, condizioni postcoloniali, linguaggi letterari* (Bari: B.A.Graphis, 2009).

[5] Iain Chambers argues that the 'Mediterranean' is a product of the same nineteenth-century discourse of the construction of 'Europe' outlined above, which has occluded longer and more complex histories of the region. See Chambers, *Mediterranean Crossings. The Politics of an Interrupted Modernity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008); see also the Special Issue *Italy in the Mediterranean*, ed. by Claudio Fogu and Lucia Re, *California Italian Studies* 1.1 (2010).

[6] Examples include the powerful communities of Genoese mariners and traders established in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries across a large part of the globe, from the Americas to (modern-day) Istanbul; the port cities of Sicily which, aligning with both intraterritorial and extraterritorial interests, determined the success of

outwards the boundaries of the territory, these sites connect cities and regions to others across the globe along lines which may disrupt our understanding of formal political and economic alliances.[7] The port of Gioia Tauro, north of Reggio Calabria, is Italy's largest container port, built in the 1970s. To the hypothetical Chinese captain of a container ship operated currently by COSCO and its crew of Chinese, Indian, and Filipino nationals, what primarily defines Italy's global identity may well be, alongside more conventional images of Italy, this massive and industrious port area in Calabria, populated by a multilingual and multinational workforce that materially connects Calabria across the globe.[8] This sketches a different geography of Italy from the maps that often hang on the walls of departments of Italian Studies. In order to investigate these complementary perspectives on Italy's geography, we here explore three salient examples: migration, culture, language.

The term, 'migration' itself, referring to humans, nowadays connotes the era of the nation-state, in which the movement of population across borders is recorded and measured (as far as is feasible) as one of the indicators of the socio-economic health of the nation. In the context of Italy, the term inevitably now calls to mind dramatic visual footage and journalistic reporting of landings, rescues, and drownings of migrants, and related political stand-offs around Italy's southern islands.[9] These are a reminder that the stakes of mobility are high for those deciding to or forced to migrate. In this case, the stakes for the destination country are also high, as the distinctive geographical position of Italy discussed above places the nation at the hub of migration movements by sea from the southern and eastern coasts of the Mediterranean, and also therefore as the first responder in managing and supporting – and indeed regulating and rejecting – these arrivals.[10] Italian policy and action in this demanding situation is under scrutiny

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Garibaldi's *Mille* in 1860 and so propelled the unification process; the more quotidian importance of Brindisi as long-standing hub of transport and trade from western Europe through Italy to Greece, and back.

[7] On the impact of these connections in narrative and literary culture, see Jason Jacobs and Sharon Kinoshita, 'Ports of Call: Boccaccio's Alatiel in the Medieval Mediterranean', *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 37.1 (2007), 163-95; David Wallace, 'Genoa', in *Premodern Places: Calais to Surinam, Chaucer to Aphra Behn* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 179-202.

[8] Maria Fusaro's work on early mercantile seafarers and professionalisation of crews and vessels provides a comparable shaking-up of perspectives and globalism(s) for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/history/staff/fusaro/ [all online references in this essay were last accessed on 10 February 2020].

[9] See *Destination Italy: Representing Migration in Contemporary Media and Narrative,* ed. by Emma Bond, Guido Bonsaver, and Federico Faloppa (New York: Peter Lang, 2015).

[10] See UNHCR data: https://www.unhcr.it/risorse/statistiche. For analysis of Lampedusa as symptom and symbol of the wider crisis of Europe's borders, see *Border Lampedusa: Subjectivity, Visibility and Memory in*

from multiple angles, including other European states and the European Union, the UNHCR, international NGOs, the agents who manage transport to north African ports and across the Mediterranean, and migrants themselves when calculating risk. The nation's geography and the forms of mobility which that stimulates place it in this instance in what comes to be seen as a front line.

In a longer view, the movement of individuals or large flows of people in and out of the Italian territory (and within), whether termed travel, exploration, colonisation, migration, or mobility, has contributed powerfully to how Italian culture is understood. In the medieval period, the influence of Marco Polo and of his description of the world, propagated through translation, borrowing, and reformulation, arguably created a genre and also a formative notion of what 'civilisations' are and how they interact.[11] The history of the unified Italian nation is also a history of migrations, with the first large-scale emigrations beginning in the 1880s, primarily to North and South America. Trajectories across the western Mediterranean thus begin to connect Italy across the Atlantic. Network migration, rather than individual journeys, is a dominant model in this period, beginning with family groups migrating together to establish a base which then, through largely local networks in the departure country, attracts groups of connected migrants to follow.[12] In this way, 'Italian' comes to include also hyphenated cultures, such as 'Italian-American'.[13] The impact of immigration from other countries into Italy, most widespread since the 1970s, has had comparable impact, forging connections between Italian culture and others across the globe, and also raising to the surface of national consciousness pre-existing associations. The histories of Italian colonialism and of Fascist visions of the *Oltremare* become part of the Italy of the

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Stories of Sea and Land, ed. by Laura Odasso and Gabriele Proglio (Cham, CH: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018); and on Lampedusa as spectacle, Federica Mazzara, *Reframing Migration: Lampedusa, Border Spectacle and the Aesthetics of Subversion* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019).

[11] See Simon Gaunt, *Marco Polo's 'Le devisement du monde': Narrative Voice, Language and Diversity* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2013); also *Marco Polo and the Encounter of East and West*, ed. by Suzanne Conklin Akbari and Amilcare Iannucci (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016).

[12] See Donna Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Washington, DC: University of Washington Press, 2000); *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana*, ed. by Piero Bevilacqua, Andreina De Clementi, and Emilio Franzina, 2 vols (Rome: Donzelli 2001, 2002); *L'Italia delle migrazioni interne: donne, uomini, mobilità in età moderna e contemporanea*, ed. by Angiolina Arrù and Franco Ramella (Rome: Donzelli, 2003).

[13] This has also led, in anglophone locations, to the formation of 'Little Italies': see Donna Gabaccia, 'Global Geography of "Little Italy": Italian Neighbourhoods in Comparative Perspective', *Modern Italy*, 11.1 (2006), 9-24.

present, exposing the multiple forms of mobility which are the undercurrents of Italian national identity.[14]

These sometimes occluded forms of mobility importantly throw into relief experiences of immobility or limited mobility. The racial politics of the early decades of the twentieth century saw emigrating Italians frequently denied entry to the USA, and the fascist-era law against miscegenation led to the mixed-race children of unions between Italian colonial soldiers and African women having compromised identity and rights as Italian citizens.[15] At the level of community and everyday economy, migration decisions may see able workers – often younger males – more likely to migrate in order to generate income abroad which can then be sent back in remittances to those less economically productive – often older, female, unskilled, or less able family members. Communities in the place of departure may thus become reliant on remittances to be sustainable, rendering those who have left unable to return and those who remained unable to leave.[16] Laws regulating residence, access to labour, and citizenship in contemporary Italy similarly restrict the mobility of immigrant subjects and of the families they establish in Italy. The principle of *ius sanguinis*, rather than *ius soli*, which underpins Italian citizenship endows, for example, an American citizen and resident of Italian parentage with the necessary mobility to claim Italian citizenship, but denies these benefits to a child of Nigerian parentage born, raised, and resident in Italy.[17]

Tensions between movement and containment are manifest also in the ways in which Italy's geography informs the notion of Italian culture that scholarship in Italian Studies has historically investigated. Greenblatt, in his introduction to *Cultural Mobility*, comments that in scholarly inquiry into national cultures, 'The phenomenon of mobility is acknowledged in passing, of course, but as the exception to the rule or as its more or

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[14] Nicola Labanca, *Oltremare: Storia dell'espansione coloniale italiana* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2007); *Postcolonial Italy: Challenging National Homogeneity*, ed. by Cristina Lombardi-Diop and Caterina Romeo (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

[15] The 'Manifesto della Razza' (14 July, 1938) decreed that Italians be prohibited from marrying Jewish or African partners, a principle formalised in the racial laws of October 1938. On the impact of this on children identified as *meticcio/a*, see Valeria Deplano, *La Madrepatria è una terra straniera. Libici, eritrei e somali nell'Italia del dopoguerra* (Florence: Le Monnier, 2017).

[16] On this and broader issues of immobility and exclusion in modern Italy, see David Forgacs, *Italy's Margins: Social Exclusion and Nation Formation since 1861* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[17] On this subject, see the documentary directed by Fred Kuwornu, *18 Ius Soli* (Struggle Filmworks, 2012); also Anna Tuckett, *Rules, Paper, Status: Migrants and Precarious Bureaucracy in Contemporary Italy* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2018), which addresses 'second generation' citizenship issues as well as those of migrants.

less violent disruption'.[18] The position outlined above of Italy in relation to the migration 'crisis' since 2015 is indeed one in which the historical mobilities associated with Italy signify as an emergency violently disrupting an established order, rather than a moment of concentration of existing patterns. Reflecting on academic disciplinary practice, Greenblatt notes, 'Although in the past twenty years or so many academic disciplines have formally embraced ideas of "cultural mobility," they have for the most part operated with tunnel vision: the times and places in which they see significant mobility occurring remain strictly limited; in all other contexts, they remain focused on fixity'.[19]

Evidence of such 'tunnel vision' in research in Italian Studies is visible in the narrative of a national culture mapped precisely within national borders to which the discipline has historically referred. This narrative is predicated upon the Italian canon defined most prominently by De Sanctis, and on its reflection in the curriculum taught in universities in Italy and also in the UK, other English-speaking countries, and other European contexts until probably the 1990s.[20] Populated by novelists, poets, dramatists, artists, musicians, film-makers, and thinkers 'native' to Italy, and largely to the peninsula rather than islands (with exceptions), this is a canon which communicates a history of Italian literature and culture that is, as Greenblatt puts it, 'fixed'. An intellectually important research and pedagogic practice of accurately contextualizing cultural production has generated a singular collateral effect of enabling these works to refer primarily back to the Italy in which they were created, consolidating the fiction of a territorially bounded national culture.[21] This is perhaps where the constructed 'exceptionality' of mobile forms of culture that Greenblatt identifies is most manifest. For example, Ungaretti's poetry is primarily investigated as an example of an Italian formulation of symbolism known as hermeticism, and as an articulation of the experience of Italian soldiers (and of Italy) in World War I. His own upbringing in Egypt and later Paris and his cultural formation partly in Arab Islamic and French cultures has tended to be 'acknowledged in passing', in Greenblatt's terms, rather than adopted as a

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[18] Greenblatt, p. 4.

[19] Greenblatt, p. 3.

[20] Francesco De Sanctis, *Storia della letteratura italiana*, 2 vols (Naples: Morano, 1870, 1871). On the curriculum in Italian Studies, see David Robey, '*Italian Studies*: the First Half', *Italian Studies*, 67.2 (2012), 287-99.

[21] Carlo Dionisotti addresses this practice in 'Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana', *Italian Studies*, 6 (1951), 70-93 (discussed further below); also commented on by Robey, p. 292.

fundamental perspective for understanding his own work and wider transcultural intersections in the early twentieth century.

Evidence may also be identified of ways in which scholarship in Italian culture defies Greenblatt's presumptions about the determination in literary-cultural studies to focus on what is understood to 'belong' to the national culture. The very processes of canonisation outlined above which tend to demarcate as peripheral the cultural production of large parts of Italy's regions and islands do the work also of signalling cultural diversity and mobility within the territory. Rather than the 'tunnel vision' that Greenblatt notes, a form of 'peninsular vision' – or better, 'archipelagic', following John Foot –[22] perhaps operates in the Italian context, determining an understanding of Italian culture which remains attached to the national territory but also acknowledges its dispersal and its porosity to mobile cultural presences and influences. Shifting land borders similarly signal the instability of the construct of a strictly national culture and the presence of, for example, Triestine literature, with cultural roots exceeding the national territory.[23] The adoption by Aron Ettore Schmitz of the author name, Italo Svevo, and his prominence in the national canon neatly articulate this point. Similarly, the presence of regional and dialect literatures, often bearing traces of extraterritorial influence, denotes a wide hinterland to the national canon. The 'phenomenon of mobility' which Greenblatt sees as rarely acknowledged in studies of cultures is, then, folded into understandings of Italian culture, albeit its visibility within the folds varies, and at times of particular social and political investment in the definition of national culture, such as the early years of unification and the fascist regime, a preoccupation with uniformity prevails.[24]

Importantly, this underlying mobility is both transnational and subnational, connecting the local of Italian regions and provinces with other localities within the nation, with the construct itself of the national culture, and also with other cultures beyond the territory. Perhaps the most notoriously localised of canonical Italian texts, Manzoni's *I promessi sposi*, opens with the increasingly precise focalisation of a specific Italian locality. Defined as the first novel of the Italian tradition, the first example of a

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[22] John Foot, *The Archipelago: Italy Since 1945* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018).
[23] On Triestine literature, see Katia Pizzi, *City in Search of an Author: The Literary Identity of Trieste* (New York: Continuum, 2002).
[24] Fascist policy and practice to limit the translation into Italian of foreign texts are a striking example of this: see Christopher Rundle, *Publishing Translations in Fascist Italy* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009).

literary form deeply imbricated with the construction of the nation-state, Manzoni's book seems 'focused on fixity' in order to produce for the reader the 'depth, authenticity, and wholeness' of the Italian culture which Manzoni's novel contributed to crafting.[25] As the reader's gaze sharpens upon named mountains, lake, and village, however, s/he is already aware, thanks to the narrator's contextualisation, that this is occupied territory, under the dominion of imperial Spain; s/he will also make the connection between this condition and Austrian imperial rule in the same region at the time Manzoni was writing.[26] As the narrative proceeds, it becomes increasingly predicated upon mobility: mobility within a tightly demarcated area, but by multiple means (foot, boat, carriage), across the borders of the rural and urban (Pescarenico to Milan and back), across borders of class and sub-cultures (the *bravi*, aristocracy, political elite, villagers, clergy at different levels), and across the borders of human conditions (including youth, seniority, gender roles, devotion, physical abjection). Manzoni's representation of local Italy reveals diversity and mobility.

The works of both Dante and Manzoni, often understood as definitive of Italian culture, also highlight the pivotal role played by language in its construction. Both differently identified as 'fathers' of the Italian language, their explicit initiatives to create a language shared by communities spanning the peninsula and islands call attention implicitly to the linguistic diversity which extends through everyday practice in many nations, and perhaps with particular vigour in Italy. Thanks to the forms of mobility already outlined, other languages inhabit regional forms of Italian.[27] This indigenous multilingualism gives the lie to the 'monolingual paradigm' upon which national languages and cultures rely. Yasemin Yildiz's critique of this paradigm challenges the assumption cemented in western modernity that possession of a particular 'mother tongue' links the individual to a specific ethnicity, nation, and culture, and argues instead for a perspective which recognises 'the proximate coexistence of many languages in the same space' – a condition which usefully describes the linguistic

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[25] Greenblatt, p. 3.

[26] For a detailed reading of the text in this vein, see Stephanie Jed, 'Glimpses of Resistance to Spanish (and Austrian) Rule: Reading *I promessi sposi* in a Transnational Frame', *Italian Culture*, 37.1 (2019), 26-46.

[27] The medieval to early modern mobility of Griko and Arbëresh languages offers one example; also the Armenian diaspora community in Venice; and the use of Judeo-Italian, Hebrew, Ladino, and Yiddish languages within Jewish communities.

diversity operating in the territory of Italy.[28] This diversity is not only a historical condition: a significant population now resident in Italy speaks Italian as an acquired language alongside languages introduced to Italian culture through the mobility of migrants and global flexible workers.[29] Yildiz notes that: 'the configuration of languages in aesthetic works shapes *how* social formations are imagined. That is, the particular *form* of multilingualism in a given cultural text encodes visions of social formations, individuals, and modes of belonging'.[30] This seems aptly to describe the diverse ways in which cultural texts from the centre to the margins of the historical Italian canon have summoned linguistic diversity in order to envision an expansive Italian culture.[31]

Scholarship on Italian diasporas has shown that the mobility of Italian people, practices, and products over centuries has also enabled forms of Italian language and culture to develop in locations across the globe.[32] Communities of Italians elsewhere may replicate in part the culture and community from which they departed, deploying practices of homing that assert both belonging in and difference from the destination environment as an index of pride.[33] Visibility is key to these practices of identification, producing an emphasis on ceremonies and rituals (such as the *passeggiata*),[34] on providing services coded as authentically Italian (restaurants, food retailers, tailoring, etc.) and on functional or monumental buildings which denote critical mass and demonstrate alterity-in-belonging.[35] Buildings, statues, urban design, and toponymy

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[28] Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), p. 2.

[29] It is also the case that many Italian citizens outside Italy hold Italian passports but do not speak the language, given the *ius sanguinis*. The AIRE (Anagrafe Italiani residenti all'estero) enables Italian citizens who move abroad or who are citizens but never resided or no longer reside in Italy to register to vote, receive consular assistance, etc. See https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/servizi/italiani-all-estero/aire_0.html.

[30] Yildiz, p. 25 (italics in source text).

[31] Examples include Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana* (Milan: Garzanti, 1957), a variety of novels by Andrea Camilleri, and Gabriella Kuruvilla, *Milano, fin qui tutto bene* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 2012).

[32] See Gabaccia, 2000; 'The Transnational/Translational in Italian Studies' in this issue; *Transnational Italian Studies*, ed. by Charles Burdett, Loredana Polezzi and Marco Santello (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2020).

[33] See Paolo Boccagni, *Migration and the Search for Home: Mapping Domestic Space in Migrants' Everyday Lives* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); *Intimacy and Italian Migration: Gender and Domestic Lives in a Mobile World*, ed. by Loretta Baldassar and Donna Gabaccia (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010).

[34] See Grazia Del Negro, *The Passeggiata and Popular Culture in an Italian Town* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004). On the wide adoption of the *passeggiata* as a model of social interaction, see Andrew Mondschein, 'Passeggiata nuova: Social Travel in the Era of the Smartphone', in *The Routledge International Handbook of Walking*, ed. by C. Michael Hall, Yael Ram and Noam Shoval (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 137-46.

[35] St Peter's Italian Church in Clerkenwell, London (1863) is one example, or the Church of St Anthony of Padua in Beyoğlu, Istanbul (1912), both created in one of the periods of most acute flows of emigration from Italy.

enable civic spaces to signify histories of mobility. *Roma negata*, a photographic and textual account by Rino Bianchi and Igiaba Scego of Rome's colonial-era artefacts and place names, draws attention sharply to the palimpsestic histories happened upon in the urban everyday.[36] The volume re-attaches the signifiers of Fascist empire to the stories of individuals from Eritrea, Ethiopia, Libya, and Somalia inhabiting present-day Rome, enabling a re-telling of colonial history.

Productions of Italian culture elsewhere – as well as appropriations of other cultures within Italy – construct a dialogue with peninsular Italian culture, 'talking back' through political exchange, economic remittances, and the economies of care between distanciated individuals and groups. If we add to these mechanisms the work of migrant and diasporic communities, analysts, and artists within Italy talking back to other national cultural and linguistic models, then the complexity and dynamism of the cultural circuits which mobility produces become apparent. These circuits raise the question of where and whether it is possible to locate Italian culture geographically.

Histories

Since the various disciplines that constitute mobility studies often draw on social and cultural geography, and are attuned to notions of space and place, the shifting boundaries of state histories within the peninsula offer many openings to enquiries based around themes of mobility.[37] The patterns of pre-unification history still colour post-1861 experiences, whereby north-south dynamics can be read in terms of subjection, colonisation, and migration; and persistent regional inequalities have produced multiple shifts and flows of population during a post-Cold War experience increasingly perceived as becoming post-national within some 150 years or less after unification.[38] While many city- or region-based studies have sought to capture a sense of what is local, fixed, and enduring in the chosen community, a correlative interest in mobility mitigates the 'tunnel vision' critiqued by Greenblatt, to refresh historical and cultural enquiry.[39] In reviewing the multi-stranded possibilities for narrating historical Italian mobilities, three categories – itinerary, transaction, and force – provide entry-

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[36] Bianchi and Scego, *Roma negata: percorsi postcoloniali nella città* (Rome: Ediesse, 2014).
[37] For 'place' and 'space' in social sciences and cultural studies disciplines, see Jen Jack Gieseking and William Mangold, *The People, Place and Space Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2014).
[38] See for instance Dainotto; Foot.
[39] Greenblatt, p. 3

points for thinking about experiences defined by movement flows, but also stasis, within and across peninsular territories.

Network- or itinerary-oriented approaches to cultural history accommodate the length and complexity of pre-unification experience, and invite re-evaluations of centre and periphery, and of the transactions between them.[40] The political, social, and cultural cartographies of a peninsula divided for centuries into multiple small states underscore the relevance of accommodating mobility and interconnection into the historical perspective when investigating how places and spaces have been inhabited over time. Thinking with the categories of network or itinerary highlights intersections between node-based studies of particular places, and relationship-oriented studies of the mobile itinerancies that run between them. Such work may for instance produce histories of itinerant writers or visual artists whose creative projects come into being in different locations, or of the performers, printers, film équipes, and so on who help make and disseminate the works.[41] As protagonists of high culture, itinerant scholars and religious personnel have historically enjoyed relatively easy mobility, often in careers characterised by plurilingualism and transnationalism – Renaissance intellectuals like Petrarch or Ciriaco d'Ancona, for instance, travelled widely and enjoyed international patronage –, yet also to some extent limited by sectorialised expertise and financial constraints: they often inhabit small worlds, albeit via geographical dispersion. Alongside the sometimes hypermobile careers and political or cultural production of elite protagonists, research can also recover the historical and cultural traces left by those in the lower echelons of, say, court or army life, where cooks, tailors, sex workers, engineers, entertainers, and messengers, not to mention their dependents, served and followed the movements of those more socially privileged.[42]

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[40] On networks and itinerancy, key approaches deriving from theorists such as Arjun Appadurai, Pierre Bourdieu, Bruno Latour, Duncan Watts, and others influence multiple branches of Italian Studies scholarship.

[41] See for instance how the role of itinerancy in the careers of Renaissance preachers, writers, and performers emerges from the European Research Council funded project led by Brian Richardson, 'Italian Voices: Oral Culture, Manuscript and Print in Early Modern Italy, 1450-1700' (2011-2015): https://italianvoices.leeds.ac.uk/publications/. In the visual arts, see David Young Kim, *The Traveling Artist in the Italian Renaissance: Geography, Mobility, and Style* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014). The University of Chicago Press series *World Film Locations* includes several volumes on Italian cities, discussing their role in hosting actors, directors, and crews during film-making, as well as their representation in both Italian and international cinema.

[42] Jean Dunbabin, *The French in the Kingdom of Sicily, 1266–1305* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) charts how princes, courtiers, and clerics, but also humbler musicians or gardeners, moved around the Angevins' multi-territorial domains in the Neapolitan *Regno* and beyond; William Caferro, in *Petrarch's War:*

Literary and cultural cartographic research contributes to mobilities history by tracing relationships and interconnectedness in the archives that scholars interrogate, whether we deal with contemporary oral, screen-based, or print resources, or the documents and material culture witnesses of older centuries. Carlo Dionisotti's *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana* (Turin: Einaudi, 1967) articulated the relevance of considering mobility and network, *avant la lettre* of these terms' modern scholarly usage, to understand the contexts in which literary texts have been produced.[43] More recently, atlas-based histories of Italian literature, both large- and small-scale, attest the increasing incorporation of models of network, mobility, and transaction within humanities research.[44] Atlas projects, whether or not accompanied by visual cartographic tools, have emerged especially in parallel with the so-called 'spatial turn' or 'mobilities turn' in cultural scholarship.[45] These 'turns' stress the importance of interrogating the flows of information, artefacts, people, and capital within places and through spaces, often adopting cartographic, visual, and quantitative tools as ways of understanding the interactions of bodies and objects.

Cultural historians are increasingly likely to develop their fields of study with data-driven research methods whose speed and connectivity facilitate large-scale enquiry. Digitally-supported mobility studies research on contemporary Italy can see collaboration between cultural protagonists or consumers, scholars, and commentators at the moment of production and archiving; it is fruitful also for studies of twentieth-century or earlier – even much earlier – periods.[46] GIS (Geographic Information System) technology lets scholars produce cartographic representations of historical Italian spaces and analyse mobilities operating within them: work and leisure patterns of residents; sensory and emotional experiences connected to specific places; itineraries

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Florence and the Black Death in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), highlights the mobility of both elite and artisanal protagonists serving the Florentine *comune* in the Trecento.

[43] The volume's title essay was first published in this journal: see above.

[44] For instance, *Atlante della letteratura italiana*, ed. by Sergio Luzzatto and Gabriele Pedullà, 3 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 2010-2012); *Storia mondiale dell'Italia*, ed. by Andrea Giardina et al. (Rome: Laterza, 2017).

[45] The bibliography on these 'turns' is vast: entry points in recent collections include: *Geocritical Explorations: Space, Place, and Mapping in Literary and Cultural Studies*, ed. by Robert T. Tally Jr (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); *Literature and Cartography. Theories, Histories, Genres*, ed. by Anders Engberg-Pedersen (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017).

[46] See for example *The Italian Academies: The First Intellectual Networks of Early Modern Europe*, project led by Jane Everson, Denis Reidy, and Lisa Sampson, and funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC): http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/ItalianAcademies/. In Italy, the *Archivio delle corrispondenze letterarie di età moderna (secoli XVI-XVII)*, directed by Emilio Russo, also uses a database model: http://www.archilet.it/. On digital humanities research, see also the essay by Guyda Armstrong and Emanuela Patti in this issue.

followed by cultural products produced, stored, or exchanged in those environments.[47] To disseminate spatial and network-focused research engaged with Italian mobilities beyond the academy, apps and imaging tools for use on hand-held devices, as well as more traditional paper maps or guided walking tours, permit twenty-first-century subjects to follow interactive tours around project locales in ways that bring past and present together diachronically 'on location'.[48] These studies and tools provide means to encounter the mobile traces of past voices and patterns of life within the spaces and places of contemporary life.

Digital humanities methods complement 'analogue' research with a cartographic or cognitive emphasis not only in mapping and tracking the mobility of historical agents and cultural artefacts, but also in analysing mobilities within literary, cinematic, musical, and oral narratives.[49] Petrarch's 1341 letter to Giovanni Colonna from Rome offers a striking early witness to the practice of cognitively re-imagining the cartographies of past ages, recalling their walks around Roman ruins that 'rebuilt' the broken city through recall of ancient and early Christian texts (*Epistolae familiares*, VI. 2); while Petrarch's own epistolary networks attest the mobility of his intellectual career, and the equally itinerant experiences of his correspondents.[50] For contemporary Italian Studies, the way that sensory and affective experience activates different

relationships to the places and spaces through which mobile subjects move is discussed in studies such as Jennifer Burns's research on walking in Italian-language texts produced by migrant authors, and – as the title suggests – by many of the contributions in John Foot and Robert Lumley's volume on *Italian Cityscapes*.[51]

A significant aspect of the study of mobilities and cultural itineraries is to follow the historical networks that enable cultural products themselves, or those who produce them, to move around. Greenblatt looks back to Goethe's essay on *Weltliteratur* to invoke the importance of accounting for 'the restless process through which texts, images, artifacts and ideas are moved, disguised, transformed, adapted and reimagined in the ceaseless, resourceful work of culture'.[52] We may, for instance, follow the mobility of a given poetic text, or a specific material book-object that contains it, along trajectories of transmission and exchange. These spread outwards spatially and temporally, opening research avenues around processes of adaptation and linguistic manipulation in the course of literary material's movement from one location to another;[53] or offering insights into relationships of friendship, patronage, diplomacy, commerce, warfare, or theft, in explaining why a particular book or artwork produced in one known place and historical moment should now be housed in a collection far away: Boccaccio's autograph *Decameron* manuscript in Berlin, for example; or the obelisks transported over two millennia to Rome from north Africa, and then moved about the Roman cityscape, which raise pressing questions of ownership and identity for modern viewers.[54] Ethical and affective as well as historical concerns are at stake in tracing the passage of texts and objects between places, and addressing how their local, national, and global meanings interact.

Mobile experience is often characterised by in-betweenness, contingency, and transactionality. Different aspects of mobility can require scholars to consider, for instance, the role of proxy and substitution within large-scale networks. Where a human

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[51] Jennifer Burns, *Migrant Imaginaries: Figures in Italian Migration Literature* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2013); *Italian Cityscapes. Culture and Urban Change in Italy from the 1950s to the Present*, ed. by John Foot and Robert Lumley (Exeter: Exeter University Press, 2004).

[52] Greenblatt, p. 4.

[53] These approaches can be exemplified in work like Wallace's *Premodern Places*; Guyda Armstrong's *The English Boccaccio: A History in Books* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013); or the essays in *Italian Studies* 72.2 (2017), a Special Issue on 'The Italian Angevins: Naples and Beyond, 1266-1343', ed. by Jane Gilbert, Catherine Keen, and Ella Williams. More generally, see *La letteratura italiana fuori d'Italia*, ed. by Luciano Formisano (Rome: Salerno, 2005; vol. 12 of Salerno's *Storia della letteratura italiana*, gen. ed. Enrico Malato).

[54] Bianchi and Scego, pp. 54, 68.

subject or material artefact cannot be physically present, mechanisms exist to stand in for the absence, and to enact a form of mobility without direct movement. In diplomacy, a state or office is represented by a deputised official whose mobility duplicates the nation itself, holding proxy authority for the home power. In the premodern period, many Italian states maintained extensive diplomatic networks whose surviving reports constitute valuable sources for national, international, and global historiography.[55] The marriage politics of premodern states often involved lengthy negotiations in which letters, portraits, gifts, and legal deeds circulated along with the personnel, both elite and humble, who transmitted them. Wedding ceremonies themselves could be conducted by proxy, as in the marriage of Bianca Maria Sforza to Emperor Maximilian I in 1493, or of Maria de' Medici with Henri IV of France in 1600. But at a more humble level, and until surprisingly recently (into the 1970s), similar long-distance matchmaking and proxy marriages were practised among Italian emigrant communities, when single men who had left Italy as economic migrants 'sent home' for a bride to join them, on what was usually a once-in-a-lifetime, one-way trip.[56] In diaspora households and Little Italy neighbourhoods, these transplanted families then often replicated the rituals and habits, both religious and domestic, of their Italian origins, as noted above.

Involuntary as well as voluntary mobility is also a major area of study for Italianists, and has fostered problematisation of teleological and nationhood-oriented approaches to the peninsula's human histories. Research often draws attention to populations or activities overlooked in historiography before the nineteenth or even twentieth centuries, or narrated from one dominant viewpoint: movements of the poor, in periods of famine; of minority confessions, in times of religious repression; of banishment, on political or criminal charges; of capture and deportation, both during warfare and in Italy's uncomfortable histories of enslavement and colonisation.[57] Many of these experiences are twinned with equal-but-opposite examples of constrained immobility: impoverished *contadini* whose landlords tied them to unproductive land;

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[55] Isabella Lazzarini, *Communication and Conflict. Italian Diplomacy in the Early Renaissance, 1350-1520* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); *Italian Renaissance Diplomacy: A Sourcebook*, ed. by Monica Azzolini and Isabella Lazzarini (Toronto: PIMS, 2017).

[56] Gabaccia, 2000; Susanna Iuliano, '*Donne e buoi dai paesi tuoi* (Choose Women and Oxen from your Home Village): Italian Proxy Marriages in Post-War Australia', *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 34.4 (1999), 319-35.

[57] Some of these groups are discussed in the volume, *At the Margins: Minority Groups in Premodern Italy*, ed. by Stephen J. Milner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), and by David Forgacs, in *Italy's Margins*.

the ghettoisation of Italian Jews, or other religiously-motivated confinements such as enforced conventualisation; political imprisonment; and the harshly surveilled conditions of enslaved and trafficked workers. Histories of gender and sexuality often reveal significant cultural, moralistic, and economic constraints enforcing the immobility, or constraining the marginalisation and expulsion, both of women and of any individuals whose behaviours transgressed strict heteronormative conventions.[58]

Some patterns of enforced Italian mobility are tied into geographical and environmental factors to which different states and their regimes have historically provided varying responses. Physical Italy's tectonic fragility periodically causes abrupt, involuntary relocations as earthquakes or volcanic eruptions displace communities settled around geological fault lines. These often produce dual flows, both of migration by displaced residents, but also incoming movements of rescue and reconstruction, as for the earthquakes at Messina in 1908 or Irpinia in 1980.[59] Vesuvius or Etna's eruptions have historically been countered not only by monitoring and relief work, but by propitiatory rituals such as religious processions, putting communities on the move in orderly rites aimed at preventing the need for more urgent, disordered flight.[60] Flood, famine, and disease have mobilised large-scale population movements, where nature and human regulation may strain against each other as disaster victims are sanctioned and expelled from some places, or provided with support in others, drawing boundary lines between citizens and outsiders on economic, hygienic, or religious grounds.[61] Venetian history provides telling examples of how mobility and correlative immobilisation provide two faces of the coin in responses to natural and environmental

[58] Useful entry points for these issues are Silvia Mantini's, 'Women's History in Italy: Cultural Itineraries and New Proposals in Current Historiographical Trends', *Journal of Women's History*, 12.2 (2000), 170–98; Charlotte Ross, Julia Heim and SA Smythe, 'Queer Italian Studies: Critical Reflections from the Field', *Italian Studies*, 74.4 (2019), 397-412.

[59] John Dickie, *Una catastrofe patriottica. 1908: il terremoto di Messina* (Rome-Bari: Laterza, 2008); Serenella Iovino, 'Three Earthquakes: Wounds, Signs, and Resisting Arts in Belice, Irpinia, and L'Aquila', in *Ecocriticism and Italy: Ecology, Resistance, and Liberation* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp. 83-124.

[60] David K. Chester, Angus M. Duncan, and Christopher J. L. Dibben, 'The Importance of Religion in Shaping Volcanic Risk Perception in Italy, with Special Reference to Vesuvius and Etna', *Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal Research*, 172.3-4 (2008), 216-28; Sean Cocco, *Watching Vesuvius: A History of Science and Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

[61] See George Dameron, 'Feeding the Medieval Italian City-State: Grain, War, and Political Legitimacy in Tuscany, c. 1150–c. 1350', *Speculum*, 92.4 (2017), 976–1019. On plague and epidemic disease, see Samuel K. Cohn Jr, *Cultures of Plague: Medical Thinking at the End of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Caferro; John Henderson, *Florence Under Siege: Surviving Plague in an Early Modern City* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019). For modern disasters, see *Disastro! Disasters in Italy since 1860*, ed. by John Dickie, John Foot and Frank M. Snowden (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

threat: the historical porosity of the wealthy city as hub for international exchanges was counterbalanced from early centuries by a complex geography of hygienic regulation across the central and peripheral islands, with evolving quarantine regimes in the Lazzaretto Vecchio and Nuovo and on Poveglia, the so-called plague island, and segregation of mental illness via the *manicomii* of San Servolo and San Clemente. Similar hospital and asylum controls in other Italian cities were only less visible because less distinctly distributed around an island infrastructure.[62]

The most notorious example of Venetian enforced immobilisation remains the Ghetto. The confinement of a Jewish community within a walled space that part-protected from persecution whilst it also surveilled and exploited a whole community on ethno-confessional grounds has become synonymous with Venice, with the term 'ghetto' now extended to indicate all kinds of restrictive zoning and segregation of populations. The Venetian Ghetto's formalisation in 1516 crystallised a phenomenon with a long history in many Italian centres, where Jewish populations had been subject to residential restrictions for centuries.[63] Historically, prostitution also was frequently a target for civic authorities' attempts to limit the mobility of a stigmatised sub-population into managed brothels or defined urban zones.[64] Modern Rome's populations of migrants and asylum seekers, and its Roma and Sinti populations, living often long-term in makeshift zones of semi-toleration with limited access to state services such as education and healthcare, confront comparable challenges in navigating precarious pathways between enforced immobility and anxiety over possible displacement, or exploitation for sex work and other stigmatised or illegal activities; the pattern repeats across other Italian cities in the same way.[65]

Zoning, segregation, and uneven investment in and exploitation of the built environment within Italian city and state infrastructures over the centuries recall some patterns of modern colonialism. Italy's imperial/colonialist experiments of the

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[62] Jane L. Stevens Crawshaw, *Plague Hospitals: Public Health for the City in Early Modern Venice* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012); Forgacs, 'Asylums', in *Italy's Margins*.

[63] Riccardo Calimani, *Storia del ghetto di Venezia (1516-2016)* (Milan: Mondadori, 2016). More generally, see Bruno Segre, *Gli ebrei in Italia* (Florence: Giuntina, 2001); the Italy-focused first section of *The Ghetto in Global History: 1500 to the Present*, ed. by Wendy Z. Goldman and Joe William Trotter, Jr (New York: Routledge, 2018).

[64] Elizabeth S. Cohen, 'Seen and Known: Prostitutes in the Cityscape of Late-Sixteenth-Century Rome', *Renaissance Studies*, 12.3 (1998), 392–409, notes the close chronological succession of the Roman ghetto's formalisation in 1555, and the 1566 creation of the Ortaccio 'red light zone'.

[65] Forgacs, *Italy's Margins*; Ross, Heim and Smythe.

nineteenth and twentieth centuries often settled colonial incomers in zoned neighbourhoods separated (at least notionally) from local populations, and provided schools and public services in patterns separating 'European', 'mixed', and 'indigenous' communities.[66] From earlier centuries, another significant historical category of mobility where ethnic categorisation and enforced displacement coincide is that of enslavement. Well before the development of the triangular transatlantic slave trade, from at least the thirteenth century Italian ports, cities, and mercantile networks were actively involved in slave trading both across the Mediterranean with north African and Mamluk states, and into the Balkans and Black Sea regions.[67] Tens of thousands of captured or purchased slaves were transported to the peninsula at the trade's height during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and this traffic has left lasting linguistic and cultural traces in Italian historical, literary, and artistic documents.

Slaves were both visible and invisible as mobile subjects in the premodern social world, as their dispersal into domestic work and their diverse ethnic and confessional origins made them in some ways more individually integrated into the receiving communities than the ghettoised Jews, who nonetheless enjoyed greater, if still limited, legal and civic privileges. Similar ambiguity surrounds other premodern victims of enforced displacement, in the mobility of exiles and immobilisation of war captives, who appear regularly across the historical record. Several famous Italian literary documents of the premodern periods owe their production to the mechanisms of capture and imprisonment (Marco Polo and Rustichello, a Venetian and a Pisan meeting in Genoese captivity); of punitive *confino* to a designated location (Machiavelli, but *mutatis mutandis* also Novecento anti-fascists like Carlo Levi or Cesare Pavese); or of banishment or pre-emptive flight beyond the borders of the author's native state (Brunetto Latini, Dante Alighieri, Albertino Mussato, Francesco Filelfo).[68] Historically, exile sometimes conferred exceptional autonomy on women, who could exercise a kind

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[66] Charles Burdett, 'Journeys to Italian East Africa 1936-1941: Narratives of Settlement', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 5.2 (2000), 207–26; Giulia Barrera, 'Mussolini's Colonial Race Laws and State-Settler Relations in Africa Orientale Italiana (1935-41)', *Journal of Modern Italian Studies*, 8.3 (2003), 425–43.

[67] Steven A. Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery: Color, Ethnicity, and Human Bondage in Italy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001); Hannah Barker, *That Most Precious Merchandise: The Mediterranean Trade in Black Sea Slaves, 1260-1500* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019). A notable earlier study is Iris Origo's 'The Domestic Enemy: The Eastern Slaves in Tuscany in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Speculum*, 30.3 (1955), 321–66.

[68] Journal Special Issues on exile and literature in Italy include *Annali d'italianistica* 20 (2002), Special Issue on 'Exile Literature', ed. by Dino S. Cervigni; *Bollettino di italianistica,* n.s. 8 (2011), Special Issue 'La letteratura italiana e l'esilio', ed. by Alberto Asor Rosa. On Marco Polo, see Gaunt; Akbari and Iannucci.

of voluntary immobility to retain residence rights, and then act as guardians for properties and minor children, lobbyists for repatriation of their menfolk, and informants to the exiles regarding political developments at home.[69] In the twentieth century, the Fascist regime revived the mechanisms of punitive detention and proscription against its opponents, and self-exile soared, especially after the 1938 proclamation of the *leggi razziali*. Colonialism gave rise to new applications of spatial coercion, as Italian authorities imposed systems of internment, resettlement, *confino*, and exile on indigenous subjects within and between colonial territories, and between colonies and metropole.[70] Although in each case the subject's mobility was enforced in different ways, sometimes by re-immobilisation elsewhere, each fractured the individual's social and cultural ties to a place of origin. Yet, as several of the previous examples recall, and as will be explored in more detail below, the results of some of these individual experiences of dislocation have paradoxically assumed centrality within later narratives of Italian national identity and the evolution of a shared cultural patrimony. Returning to Greenblatt's scrutiny of the tension between fixity and mobility, the cases of Dante's *Commedia* or Machiavelli's *Il principe* invite reflection on the dynamics that over the centuries have made these products of an individual's displacement symbolic of broader cultural belonging for larger, later populations within the territory of the peninsula, but also of its far-reaching networks across oceans, islands, and pathways of personal and cultural connection and exchange.

Stories

Those who bear witness to experiences of mobility, either as protagonists or observers, acquire significant symbolic and cultural capital as the tellers of stories which continue to signify through time and space. Mobility animates stories that can be shared, positing models of human distinctiveness as the challenges of travel, culture shock, hospitality, or hostility are encountered. Interestingly, the itineraries discussed above place the human very often in close interaction with her/his nonhuman environment, whether

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[69] Susannah Foster Baxendale, 'Exile in Practice: the Alberti Family In and Out of Florence, 1401-1428', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 44.4 (1991), 720-56; Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi, *Letters to Her Sons (1447-1470)*, ed. and trans. by Judith Bryce (Tempe, AZ: Centre for Renaissance and Medieval Studies, 2016).

[70] Michael Ebner, *Ordinary Violence in Mussolini's Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Francesca Di Pasquale, 'The "Other" at Home: Deportation and Transportation of Libyans to Italy During the Colonial Era (1911–1943)', *International Review of Social History* 63.S26 (2018), 211-31; from the 'Italy in the Mediterranean' issue of *California Italian Studies*, several essays discuss colonialist and racist experiences, especially with regard to Libya.

using land, water, and climate as expedients of mobility or experiencing them as barriers to it, and similarly finding nonhuman animals to be a source of transport or food, a commodity to be traded, a knowing companion or a threat along the journey.[71] Life stories of mobility, self-narrated or narrated by another, carry the mythical and historical charge of epic (and many of its thematic and stylistic features) and, as suggested by examples such as Dante and Manzoni cited above, are apprehended as defining a period and a culture both in terms of the moment of writing and of subsequent shifts in reception. Yet this does not apply to all stories of mobility, nor to those stories of immobility which highlight the privilege underlying certain kinds of mobility, exile being a salient example of this. Stories of women are a rich source in this respect, often telling the lesser-known or apparently mundane experiences of mobility alluded to above: forced remaining as economically fitter family members migrate, sex work, distanciated caring for children or elderly relatives elsewhere, domestic instability owed to abuse, poverty, political dissidence, or war. These stories are recognized as telling but rarely elevated to the status of paradigms of human experience in a specific culture and time. Aleramo's *Una donna*, Ginzburg's *Le voci della sera* and *Lessico famigliare*, Morante's *La storia*, Sapienza's *L'arte della gioia* all sit liminally within modern 'Italian literature', narrating the complex interactions of agency and dependency informing many stories of women's mobility precisely because they are stories of confined or compromised mobility, apprehended as less spectacular, less quintessential than the adventures of men.[72] Significantly, those cited above are all examples of mobility within Italy, or even within regions or cities, and so underline firmly the principle that even the 'sedentary' who do not cross national borders or figure in migration statistics do not remain static.[73]

Italian food tells a similar story of multiple mobilities within what is widely regarded as a highly distinct national cuisine deeply imbricated with the climate and

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[71] See Sharon Kinoshita, 'Animals and the Medieval Culture of Empire', in *Animal, Vegetable, Mineral: Ethics and Objects*, ed. by Jeffrey J. Cohen (Washington, DC: Oliphaunt Books, 2012), pp. 37-65.

[72] See Sharon Wood, *Italian Women's Writing, 1860-1994* (London: Athlone, 1995); Alberica Bazzoni, 'Agency and History in Morante's *La storia* and Sapienza's *L'arte della gioia*', in *Goliarda Sapienza in Context. Intertextual Relationships with Italian and European Culture*, ed. by Alberica Bazzoni, Emma Bond, and Katrin Wehling-Giorgi (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2016), pp. 147-62.

[73] The topos of the 'viaggio in Italia' carried out by Italian citizens as curious traveller-observers within their own national territory becomes prominent with Guido Piovene's *Viaggio in Italia* (Milan: Mondadori, 1958); Anna Maria Ortese's travel writings offer a similarly 'estranged' view of Italy, e.g. *La lente scura: scritti di viaggio*, ed. by Luca Clerici (Milan: Adelphi, 2004).

soil of the national territory and fortified over centuries. A nexus of different mobilities have, for instance, made it possible for citizens of modern Italy to consider dishes of *pasta al pomodoro* as typical, local products. What are now considered symbols of authentic Italian tradition are the product of numerous itineraries, enabling the historical acclimatization of the tomato plant in the peninsula, and drawing on the long and entangled Mediterranean history of durum wheat cultivation and processing.[74] Any single, locally-produced dish can tell global stories of the complex interactions of trade, agriculture, technology, travel, medicine, religion, and custom, that place the foodstuffs, the cook, and the eaters within a web of mobilities. Researchers explore the different rhythms (is it 'fast' or 'slow food'?), ecologies (origins, seasonality, and food miles), ethnographies (who grew, harvested, packaged, transported, and prepared the dish's component parts?), and other dynamics embodied within a plate of food, and the large-scale, temporal and spatial, dispersive and connective patterns that enable its production. *Pasta al pomodoro* even became a symbolic target in the Futurists' radical programmes for cultural renewal, an uncomfortable target for internal colonialist discourse against the Italian South; while in the 1970s Sofia Loren's cookery books reversed the story, making Neapolitan cuisine the hallmark of the authentic *italianità* of the mobile international movie-star.[75] More recently, the success of Italian chefs, of Italian food, and of Italian foodways outside Italy derives in part again from the production of 'authenticity' through emphatic reference to ingredients replicating those available in specific regions of Italy, and to techniques of preparation passed down over generations. In this way, the outward mobility of Italian food produces both stories of migration and assimilation, where Italian cuisine adapts to local ingredients and tastes (spaghetti with meatballs) and also sustains narratives of constructed purity (pasta made from *tipo 00* flour).

Inward mobility to and through Italy produces analogous narratives of sourcing and failing to source the flavours and ingredients of other food cultures. A short story by Igiaba Scego has attracted wide critical attention for its foregrounding of culinary shock:

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[74] John Dickie, *Delizia! The Epic History of the Italians and their Food* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2007); David Gentilcore, *Pomodoro! A History of the Tomato in Italy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

[75] Mariana Aguirre, 'The Jazz Age, Neapolitans and Primitivism: Futurist Cuisine at the *Exposition coloniale internationale* (1931)', in *Transatlantic Trade and Global Cultural Transfers since 1492*, ed. by Martina Kaller and Frank Jacob (New York: Routledge, 2019), pp. 54-70; Danielle Callegari, 'The Politics of Pasta: *La cucina futurista* and the Italian Cookbook in History', *California Italian Studies* 4.2 (2013); Sofia Loren, *In cucina con amore* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1971); Dickie, *Delizia*.

'Salsicce' describes the Somali Italian and Sunni Muslim protagonist's abrupt decision to buy and eat a large quantity of pork sausages as a test of her identity.[76] She comes to identify this visceral trial of hybridisation, enacted through attempting to digest the foodstuffs which nourish the bodies of 'Italians', with the Italian state's requirement introduced by the 'Bossi-Fini' legislation (law no. 189, 30 July 2002) that non-EU citizens in Italy have their fingerprints recorded. Displacement and exclusion are in this way articulated by means of the bodily experience of distaste. Dante similarly exploits the power of food imagery to represent the suffering of political exile from Florence in the lines from *Paradiso* that explain 'sì come sa di sale | lo pane altrui' (XVII. 58-59). There is instantly recognisable symbolic intensity in the image of salt-tasting bread, its dough flavoured by tears and acquired through painful dependence on *altrui*, providing not so much a culinary as an affective statement about the bitterness and vulnerability of exile. And the bareness of bread and of temporary shelter appear also in Dante's epistolary rejection of return to Florence on any other than honourable terms: 'What then? [...] May I not meditate on the sweetest truths under any skies, with no requirement to be reconciled ingloriously or even ignominiously with the Florentine city and people? Nor shall I lack for bread' (*Epistole* XII. 9).

The affective intensity that the simple trope of the 'bread of exile' affords recalls how commonly upheavals in Italian political communities from the medieval period onwards produced widespread experiences of displacement and mobility.[77] The nation-building ethos of the Risorgimento accorded prominence to the literary voicing of exile received from Dante and other authors in the emerging canon of national literature.[78] Voices and stories of exile from medieval and renaissance literary sources could be appropriated and reinterpreted in a heroic, proto-nationalist key. Among the most famous such creative misreadings or rewritings is the case of Guido Cavalcanti's so-

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[76] Igiaba Scego, 'Salsicce', in *Pecore nere*, ed. by Flavia Capitani and Emanuele Coen (Bari: Laterza, 2005), pp. 23-36.

[77] Luzzatto and Pedullà chart sixty-two prominent literary figures in exile, with measurements of the duration of banishment, between 1200-1400 (*Atlante*, I, 69): since their list only counts literary writers, it captures just a fraction of the larger populations affected. Municipal registers and court documents indicate far larger numbers: see Randolph Starn, *Contrary Commonwealth: The Theme of Exile in Medieval and Renaissance Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Christine Shaw, *The Politics of Exile in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Giuliano Milani, *L'esclusione dal comune: conflitti e bandi politici a Bologna e in altre città italiane tra XII e XIV secolo* (Rome: Istituto storico italiano per il Medio Evo, 2003).

[78] Giuseppe De Marco, *Mitografia dell'esule: da Dante al Novecento* (Naples: Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1996).

called 'ballata dell'esilio', which begins 'Perch'io no spero di tornar giammai, | ballatetta, in Toscana'. For Risorgimento readers, the toponym 'in Toscana' transformed the lyric's framing scenario of distant love from a literary motif to a concretely historicised one, following an ideal chronology that linked its composition to Cavalcanti's *confino* outside Florence in 1300. Ugo Foscolo's notebooks project onto the poem an imagined situation of enforced mobility and marginalisation, to which his own patriotically displaced and mobile situation has sensitised him: 'se non forse che io la lodo un po' troppo per la pietà che sento di Guido esule, innamorato e morente, che scriveva gli ultimi versi d'amore'.[79] Though modern scholarship rejects an exilic dating for the *ballata*, readers like Foscolo – or later De Sanctis, who proclaimed the lyric one of the founding texts of a *national* literature –[80] generated a productive misinterpretation, part of a mythologisation of exile around Cavalcanti, Dante, and other medieval voices. Paradoxically, this legend has cast banishment and displacement as central elements in the Italian national story of belonging, to which witnesses from opposite ends of the political and social spectrum have repeatedly turned, in articulating the imagined and affective work of situating themselves within peninsular culture.

Edward Said, in his seminal 'Reflections on Exile', draws a stark distinction between the literature of exile as literary studies recognise it, and contemporary experiences of exile for 'the uncountable masses for whom UN agencies have been created'.[81] Uniting these experiences dichotomised by Said is the potency of stories of exile: stories of the exclusion of powerful intellectuals and writers (largely white and male), rendered suddenly powerless by being or becoming dissident, and the stories of the flight of individuals often within large human flows, whose mobility is caused by their powerlessness in the face of political, economic, or climatic change, and who are largely of mixed age, gender, and ethnicity. The stories of the first may become literary classics and their exile mythologised, as noted above, whilst the stories of the latter may also become best-sellers and acquire critical acclaim and media profile.[82] They may circulate in different forms as well – anecdotes, blogposts, documentary films – but

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[79] Ugo Foscolo, *Prose politiche e letterarie dal 1811 al 1816*, ed. Luigi Fassò (Florence: Le Monnier, 1933), pp. 377, 381.

[80] De Sanctis, *Storia della letteratura italiana*.

[81] Edward Said, 'Reflections on Exile', in *Reflections on Exile and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. 173-86 (p. 176).

[82] A recent example in Italian is Fabio Geda, *Nel mare ci sono i coccodrilli: Storia vera di Enaiatollah Akbari* (Milan: Dalai, 2010), for which author and protagonist received wide media coverage; the book was successful also in translation and as a school text.

what this expansive mobility of the very stories of mobility reveals, alongside the human currency of tales of adventure and struggle, is the authority of the banished or excluded voice which claims the right to tell her/his tale. It is no coincidence that the UNHCR website, in both its English and Italian versions, includes alongside data and statistics about migration and refugee experiences a section dedicated to 'Stories'/'Storie' collecting narratives of individual journeys.[83] Attempts to 'humanise' migration and forced mobility are wide-ranging and familiar, to the point of appearing exploitative of both mobile subjects and those who read, view, or listen to their stories, but they also bear witness to the acute emotional and ethical efficacy of the voice of a human survivor speaking her/his experience to another presumed to share core human experiences and emotions. As Said also reflects, exile is 'a condition of terminal loss', and the first-person voicing of this condition can be relied upon to produce a response, whether of empathy or not.[84] Stories (and histories) tell the lives of the powerful but also of those excluded from or relegated to the margins by power. The long-standing prominence of mobility as the subject matter and even catalyst to story-telling is an insistent reminder that the voices which do not stably occupy the centre but rather slip through borders and no-man's lands as well as across nation states have the capacity to tell and make meaningful the life stories, opinions, cultures, and languages of those who live in movement, whether inter-continental, inter-regional, or internal to a space defined by others.

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[83] See https://www.unhcr.org/uk/stories.html and https://www.unhcr.it/news/storie.
[84] Said, p. 173.